Georgetown County First Steps mission is to ensure that all children in Georgetown County should be prepared for school and school success. They should arrive to school healthy, happy and ready to learn.

**Our Need in South Carolina:**
- 42% of people live in a childcare desert, where there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots.
- 53% of children ages 3 and 4 are not enrolled in nursery school or preschool.

**In Georgetown County:**
- 2,787 children under age 5
- 56.7% of young children live in poverty or low-income households
- 50% of kindergarteners are considered “not ready” for school

**Our Impact:**
- 906 number of children and adults served by Georgetown County First Steps in 2018-2019

**Our Approach:**
- High quality programs and services for children and families
- Intensive training, resources and support for childcare providers
- Strategic partnerships and community education

**Join Us:**
We rely on a community of partners, donors, and volunteers—people like you—who believe in a brighter future for children and families in our community.
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Georgetown County First Steps (GCFS) serves as an early childhood community portal to support children, families, and other community agencies in getting children ready for school. It is the mission of GCFS to provide programs and services to all young children to have equal access to developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education. GCFS staff and board members work diligently to educate early childhood practitioners and the community on understanding the unique learning styles of each individual child to be successful.

Georgetown County First Steps will continue to provide comprehensive early childhood programs focusing on the child’s holistic needs in the classroom as well as in the homes. While supporting children in the classrooms, GCFS will continue to offer parenting programs to enlighten parents on the importance of their roles in their child’s education.

GCFS in collaboration with all key stakeholders will continue to work together for all children to be successful and ready for school.

The goals of GCFS are:

• Serve as a local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services to ensure the school readiness for children.
• Increase comprehensive services to children while providing and promoting high-quality preschool programs to provide healthy learning environment.
• Serve as a community liaison to address the needs of children, families, and providers, while supporting state level school readiness.

OUR GOALS

GCFS has been wonderful in assisting directors, the children we serve, and their families in the county.

Linda Greene, Owner of Small Minds of Tomorrow I & II
Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed. PAT services include:

- Personal visits from a parent educator at least twice monthly
- Monthly group connections with other PAT families
- Screenings and assessments to identify developmental concerns
- Connections to outside resources that families may need to succeed

PAT recently received the highest rating from the federal Prevention Services Clearinghouse. This recognition validates the effectiveness of Parents as Teachers as a strategy for improving parenting practices, promoting early detection of developmental delays and health issues, preventing child abuse and neglect, and enhancing school readiness and success.

PAT IN ABC COUNTY 2018-2019

12 families served

24 total home visits

Briefly describe other evidence of program effectiveness and/or client satisfaction here.
Local childcare trainings are a life saver for providers in this areas due to the distance of various conference in the state.

Geannie Britton, Director of Noah Academy
For many families in Georgetown County, the cost of quality child care is out of reach. Our scholarship program makes payments to child care providers to care for children 3 years of age, leaving from Early Head Start and low-income families so their parents can return to school or work. This is our 3K pilot program housed in GCSD elementary schools.

Georgetown County First Steps offers scholarships to families enrolled in our Parents As Teachers program, as well as income-eligible children whose parent attends school or works.

**SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS**
**2018-2019**

- 28 number of children served
- 3 number of providers served
- 28 number of developmental screenings provided

100% of the money paid to child care providers goes back into our local economy to benefit the citizens of Georgetown County.
South Carolina First Steps provides eligible children with free enrollment in full-day four-year-old kindergarten programs. In coordination with First Steps local partnerships and more than 200 private, faith- and community-based preschool providers, First Steps 4K expands access to quality child care across the state.

**ELIGIBILITY**

To qualify for enrollment, a child must:

- Be 4 years old on or before September 1
- Qualify for Medicaid or a free or reduced-price lunch program
- Live in one of 64 qualifying school districts

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**FIRST STEPS 4K IN ABC COUNTY 2018-2019**

- **72** children enrolled
- **7** participating classrooms

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**4K NEWS**

In fiscal year 2019-2020, South Carolina First Steps is launching a pilot program to expand 4K enrollment within underserved communities. Age- and income-eligible children residing in any SC school district may qualify for a slot in a participating center that also serves students from eligible districts.
GCFS participates in community education program and public awareness campaigns listed below:

**Palmetto Giving Day**

**Trick or Treat Halloween Awareness (Special Needs Children)**

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**Georgetown County Annual Meeting/ Christmas Party 2018-2019**

- 500 materials distributed
- 2 events held
- 200 total event attendance
Partnerships are arrangements where parties agree to advance their mutual interest while achieving a mission or amplifying their reach. In addition to providing services to families and support for childcare providers, Georgetown County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Georgetown County begin school ready to succeed. We serve as a:

**LOCAL PORTAL**
connecting preschool children and their families to services

**CONVENER**
of community stakeholders to develop an effective and comprehensive early childhood system

**CHAMPION**
of the importance of school readiness to our children’s future

**OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS**
2018-2019

9
Convener Meetings

2
Community Events
Through partnerships and collaborations, as well as financial support from grants and contributions, Georgetown County First Steps leverages state dollars to enhance and expand services to children and families.

**FUNDING SUPPORT**

Esther Bynum Sharp - $4,000  
Carolyn Ellis  
Precious Blood of Christ Catholic Church - $500.00  
The Francis P. Bunnelle Foundation - $15,000

**IN-KIND SUPPORT**

Georgetown School District  
Dr. Randy Dozier, Superintendent of GCSD  
Fredrick Cohens, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Principals - Mack Burgess and Sabrina Goff - Mark  
The Early Learning Council of Georgetown County

**JOIN US**

For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at georgetowncountyfirststeps.org
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY
Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type

- Evidence-based
- Evidence-informed

ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Georgetown County First Steps has leveraged $3,503,374 from sources outside of state government.

That’s $0.65 for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

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<th>Program Type</th>
<th>State Funding</th>
<th>Federal Funding</th>
<th>Private Funding</th>
<th>In-Kind Contributions</th>
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tiffany Jenkins, Board Chair
Carolyn Ellis, Vice Chair
Anita Floyd, Secretary
Quentin Lance
Yolanda Bradford
Diane Owens
Shannon Hazel
Shelia Sullivan

Patricia Canada
Gwendolyn McNeil
Kiara Logan
India Bright
Lakisha H. Myers

STAFF

De’Shaud Cox, Executive Assistant
Harolyn Addison, Parent Educator/ Literacy Coach
Ayesha A. Smith, Executive Director

CONTACT US

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