



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2018-2019

## THE NEED

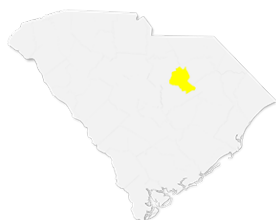
### IN SOUTH CAROLINA:

**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 LEE COUNTY:

**869**

children under age 5

**44%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**75%**

of kindergartners are considered "not ready" for school

## OUR MISSION

Collaborating with other entities, Lee County First Steps helps South Carolina families and caregivers prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private resources to ensure that children arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.

## OUR APPROACH



High quality programs and services for children and families



Intensive training, resources and support for childcare providers



Strategic partnerships and community education

## OUR IMPACT

**948**

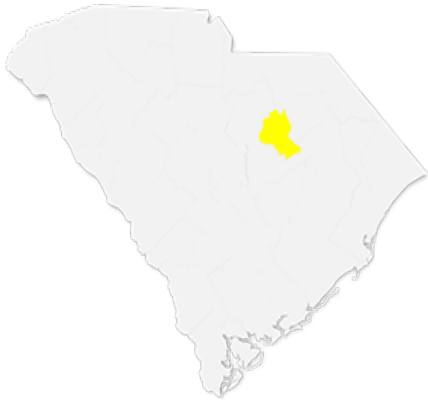
number of children and adults served by ABC County First Steps in 2018-2019

## 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.

722 West Main Street, Bishopville, SC 29010 | 803-484-5110 | <http://scfirststeps.com/lee/>

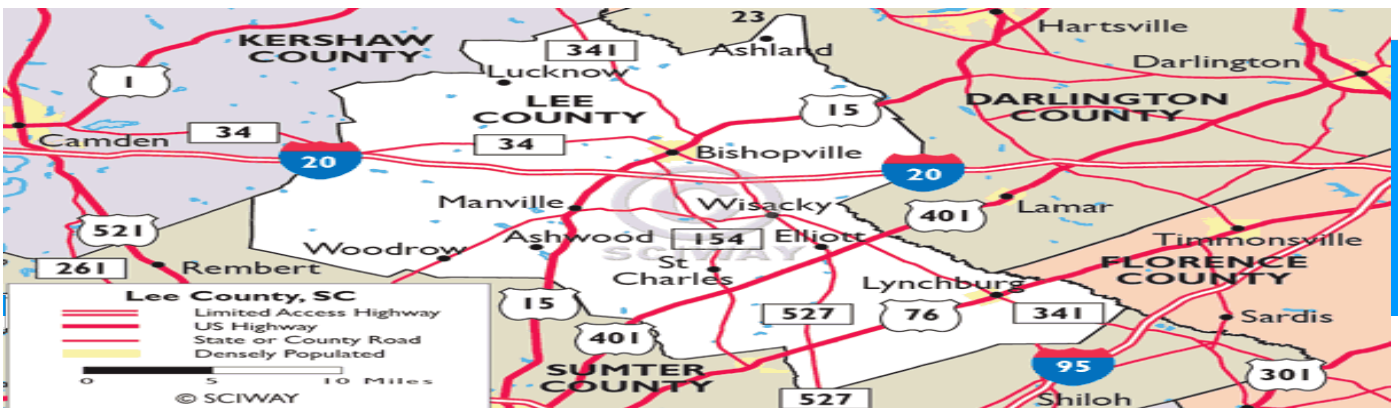
Data provided by:



## OUR STORY

The value add and advocacy which Lee County First Steps (LCFS) continues to provide with impact, and visibility for children, parents, and families in Lee County, the Pee Dee and Wateree Regions. Although local resources are limited, LCFS is still passionate about its commitment to help children and their families strengthening collaboration efforts with the Lee County School District, Wateree Community Action Partnership Head Start, private child care, and other collaborative partners to secure additional funding and resources. LCFS has maintained its focus on addressing parenting, home visiting, quality child care with limited child care scholarships, childcare staff training, school readiness, and family strengthening.

## OUR GOALS



## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



### Alexis D. Pipkins, Sr., Ed.S.

Executive Director  
ABC County First Steps

Fiscal Year 2019 was a highly successful and impactful year for Lee County First Steps (LCFS). The partnership relocated to our permanent headquarters office owned by the LCFS. In addition, the partnership has managed to sustain effective collaborations and partnerships to ensure that children, parents, and families receive high quality, research-based programs and quality services. Although, LCFS receives limited funding from SC First Steps, the partnership board has innovatively and aggressively partnered with state, and national agencies to expand the scope and quality of funding and staff: home visiting programs, child care scholarships and center staff training and professional development to both early care professionals and parents, Kindergarten Readiness, Strengthening Families Program (6-11), and early literacy with the Vroom Curriculum

## OUR GOALS

1	By 2020, increase diversity (age, race/ethnicity, gender, and geographic location) of the board to have 33% of the current county population reflected on the local partnership board.
2	Increase community outreach through more partnerships to include the annual meeting, state of the young child, health and community fair, more partnerships, Blue Print for Lee County Health, Child's Trust, Prevention Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Month, Kindergarten Ambassador Program.
3	By 2020, increase board's funding goal by 100%.
4	Increase the awareness and commitment of state local and state official on the needs of Lee County First Steps.
5	Increase serves to the rural areas outside of the city limits of Bishopville to include the Tri County, Pee Dee and Wateree regions.
6	By 2020, increase the implementation of county programs which are promising practices and/or research-based.

“ It is about the families and children, and nothing else. ”

Danielle Boyd, Board Secretary



# PARENTS AS TEACHERS



*an evidence-based program*

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 IN THE NEWS

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 LEE COUNTY in collaboration with KERSHAW COUNTY FIRST STEPS 2018-2019

10

families served

220

total home visits

"Families are always asking for more books to read to their children..."



Parents as Teachers®



# COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN



*an evidence-informed program*

Developed by South Carolina First Steps – and identified as a promising state practice by the National Governor’s Association in 2005 – Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a home visitation program pairing the families of rising kindergartners with their future teachers during the summer before school entry. Teachers complete six visits with each family, establishing strong connections during the summer that facilitate classroom learning throughout the year.

## CTK BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**3**

kindergarten teachers  
trained as home visitors

**20**

children served

**119**

total home and school  
visits





## CHILD CARE TRAINING



*an evidence-based program*

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce. Our training programs are certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and include topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Our 2018-2019 trainings included:

### Training Topics Include:

**Understanding the Feeding Behavior of Toddlers (Nutrition)**

**Planning for the Whole Body (Part 1 and 2) (Growth and Development)**

**Mistaken Behavior: Understanding Conflicts and Aggression (Part 1 and 2) (Guidance)**

**Block Play Stimulates Learning in All Domains (Curriculum)**

### TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**23**

total training attendance

**89**

child care teachers and  
directors served

**23**

number of training  
sessions offered

We like the Saturday trainings! We like the collaboration with people coming from both the child care centers and family homes being able to share and learn from each other.

**Jerlene Atkinson, Family Child Care Provider**





## CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



*an evidence-based program*

Affordable, quality child care is a need for many Lee County families, and child care scholarships has continued to be identified as an essential value-add for Lee County families especially with there not being a large amount of subsidy for the child care industry. Our scholarship program makes payments to child care providers to care for children from low-income families so their parents can return to school or work.

Lee County First Steps offers scholarships to families enrolled in our Save the Children Early Steps to School Readiness Program to parents with children birth to age 36 months or in our collaborative partnership with Kershaw County First Steps Parents As Teachers Program to parents with children 3-5 year old children, as well as income-eligible children whose parent attends school or works at least 20 hours per week.

### SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

21

number of children  
served

3

number of providers  
served

21

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 Lee County.**



# 4K

## FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN



*an evidence-based program*

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

### FIRST STEPS 4K IN LEE COUNTY 2018-2019

# 20

children enrolled

# 1

participating classrooms

### 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.





## EARLY STEPS TO SCHOOL READINESS



*an evidence-based program*

Early Steps to School Success (ESSS) is a language and pre-literacy development program operated by Save the Children, a leading international nonprofit helping children in need. ESSS is the birth-to-five component of a continuum of Save the Children programs which focus on literacy and language development, physical fitness and nutrition programs for children birth to age 12. ESSS provides early childhood education services to pregnant women and children birth to five years of age, education services to their parents, and ongoing staff training to the community early childhood educators involved with the program. In Lee County, ESSS is implemented in collaboration with Lee County School District.

Our EI&R program:

**Provides early detection of developmental delays and health issues**

**Promotes services and activities that promote child development**

**Increases children's school readiness and school success**

### Early Steps to School Readiness BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

# 59

families served

# 1018

total home visits





## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROGRAM



*an evidence-based program*

The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) 6-11 is an evidence-based family skills training program designed to strengthen the skills of both parents and their children so that they will be better equipped to deal with life's challenging situations. The SFP provides 14 weekly sessions of family educational training for both parents and their children age 6–11 in addition to meals, prizes and program incentives.

Here is what our SFP Program provides:

- 14 weekly educational skills training sessions for both parents and their children age 6–11.
- Child care services for non-participating children.
- A delicious family meal during each training session.
- Transportation provided for families, if needed.
- Prizes and program incentives i.e., gift cards, gas cards, household items, etc.
- Incentive for families who successfully complete and graduate from the program by attending 12 or more training sessions.
- Incentive for families for perfect attendance who attend all 14 sessions with Perfect attendance.

### Strengthening Families (6-11) BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

89

families served

980

total sessions attended





# VROOM



*an evidence-based program*

Children's first five years are when they develop the foundation for all future learning. Every time we connect with a child, it's not just their eyes that light up – it's their brain, too. During these moments, half a million neurons fire at once, taking in all the things which adults say and do. Save the Children has established a partnership with Vroom, an initiative of the Bezos Family Foundation, to help turn shared moments into brain building ones. Regardless if it is during mealtime, bath time, or anytime in between, there are many opportunities for parents to nurture a child's growing mind.

Vroom has five principles – look, chat, follow, stretch, take turns – that Vroom teaches parents helps them understand the science behind their child's learning.

## **vRoom BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019**

# 37

families served





## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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Addressing the needs of young children is a shared endeavor. In addition to providing services to families and support for child care providers, Lee County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Lee 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

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## OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**67**

Community Events

**1530**

Total Attendance







## OUR SUPPORTERS

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### FUNDING SUPPORT

State of South Carolina: \$202,102.00  
(*through South Carolina First Steps*)

Children's Trust of South Carolina: \$274,458.00

Save The Children (ESSS) \$150,656.00

South Carolina Office of Rural Health \$20,000

Department of Social Services: \$13,300.00

Preschool Development Grant (PDG) \$7,1523.00

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

Lee County School District  
DSS Child Care Scholarships  
Save The Children

### JOIN US

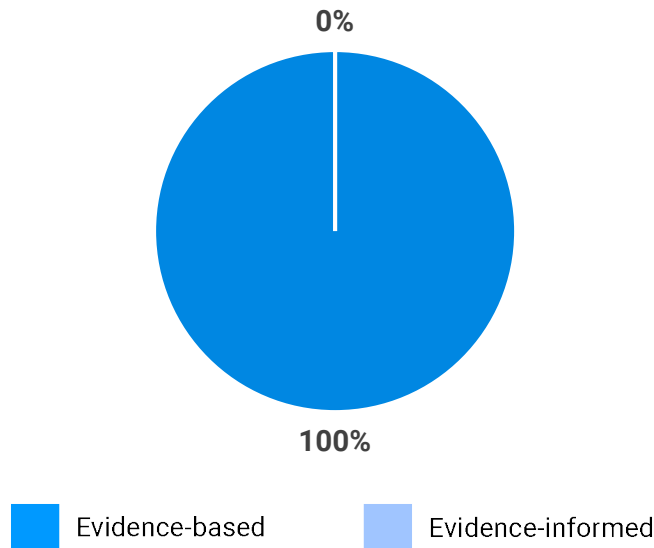
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at  
<http://scfirststeps.com/lee/>



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

#### Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



### ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Lee County First Steps has leveraged **\$3,984,005** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.86** for every state dollar.

## SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parent Training	\$3,380.37	\$0.00	\$19,693.54	\$0	\$23,074.91
Early Steps to School Readiness	\$60,188.00	\$0	\$137,518.84	\$13,137.00	\$210,843.84
Child Care Training	\$14,889.26	\$0	\$2,933.90	\$0	\$17,823.16
Strengthening Families Program	\$9,736.19	\$0	\$274,458.34	\$0	\$284,194.53
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$12,733.92	\$7,152.84	\$172.51	\$0	\$20,059.27
Scholarships	\$65,490.00	\$0	\$201.00	\$10,500.00	\$76,191.00
Core Functions	\$18,427.00	\$0	\$3,917.62	\$0	\$22,344.00
Administrative Support	\$17,258	\$0	\$3,193.91	\$0	\$20,452.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$202,102</b>	<b>\$7,153</b>	<b>\$442,090</b>	<b>\$23,637</b>	<b>\$674,982</b>





# LEADERSHIP

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board Member	Place of Employment	Board Category
Andrew Moses, Chair	Lee County School District	Legislative Appointee
Beauty Murphy	Lee County School District	Early Childhood Education
Belinda Butler	Select Health	Business Community
Bertha Scott	Lee County School District retired	Family Ed. Training & Support Provider
Betty D. Addison	Retired, Lee County School District	Non-profit Organization
Danielle Boyd, Secretary	Wateree Head Start – Bishopville Site	Head Start
David “Keel” Addison	Addison Barber Shop	Parent of Preschool Children
Diana C. Williams, Assist. Secretary	Retired, Lee County School District	Early Childhood Education
Eloise W. Witherspoon (deceased August 3, 2018)	Lee County Adult Education(retired)	Family Ed. Training & Support Provider
Jacqueline Josey	Lee County Council	Lee County Council
Jeanette Isaac	Lee County School District	Preschool through Primary Education
Jerlene Atkinson	Kiddie Land Daycare Center	Early Childhood Education
Beverly Jackson, DSS representative for Andrea Favor	Lee County School District	Lee County DSS
Julia Young	Colonial Neurology	HealthCare Provide
Kateisha Simmons	Parent of Preschool	Lee County School District
LaToya Hopkins	Wateree Head Start	Parent of Preschool Children
Lillie M. Patterson	Bishopville Lee Child Development Center	Childcare & Early Childhood Dev. Ed. Provider
M. DeLoris LeGrant	Retired, Sumter County School District	Early Childhood Education
Mary Lee Arthur	Lee County School District	Lee County School District
Maverick Wilson	Wateree Correctional Inst./ Retired	Legislative Appointee
Patricia Toney	Retired, Lee County School District	Faith Community
Regina Nesmith	DHEC	DHEC
Sandra Holmes	Lee County School District	Health Care Provider
Sandy Jenkins	Wateree Regional Trans. Authority	Transportation
Sheila Moses, Vice-Chair	Fresenius	Health Care Provider
Victoria McCray	Bishopville Lee Child Dev. Center	Legislative Appointee





## LEADERSHIP

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## STAFF

### Full-Time Staff:

**Elder Alexis D. Pipkins, Sr., Ed.S., Executive Director**  
**Mrs. Gloria M. Burris, Early Childhood Coordinator, ESSS**  
**Ms. Felicia Evans, Early Childhood Coordinator, ESSS**  
**Ms. LaTonya Hickmon, Early Childhood Coordinator, ESSS**

### Program Consultants:

**Ms. Danielle Boyd, Vroom Coordinator, ESSS**  
**Mrs. Mamie C. Bostic, MBA, Senior Program Manager SFP (6-11)**  
**Mrs. Bessie Sanders-Gordon, MA, Program Manager, SFP (6-11)**  
**Ms. Diana C. Williams, Site Coordinator, SFP (6-11) Lee County**  
**Ms. M. DeLoris LeGrant, Site Coordinator, SFP (6-11) Sumter County**  
**Ms. Debra Judge, Site Coordinator, SFP (6-11) Florence County**  
**Mrs. Lisa Canty, Site Coordinator, SFP (6-11) Sumter County**  
**Ms. Rudine McLeod, Data and Program Support**  
**Mrs. Rosa Bowman, Fiscal Support**  
**Mrs. Earth Wactor, Program Support**



## CONTACT US

<http://scfirststeps.com/lee/>

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