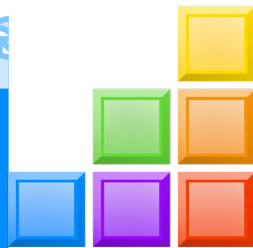




MARION COUNTY



**FIRST
STEPS**

Getting children ready for school.

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 MARION COUNTY:

1,824

children under age 5

39.4%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

77%

of kindergartners are considered "not ready" for school

OUR MISSION

Collaborating with other entities, First Steps helps Marion families and caregivers prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance, and expand high-quality early childhood services.

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

7478

number of children and adults served by Marion 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.

415 South Coit Street, Florence SC 29501 | 843-629-0202 | www.florencefirststeps.org

Data provided by:



Spencer R. Scott
Executive Director
Marion County First Steps

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As Fiscal Year 2019-2020 (FY19) school year begins, we reflect on our 20th Year Anniversary, and the tremendous work accomplished by the children, parents, and all our educational partners throughout First Steps existence. We have so much to be proud of since the inception of Marion County First Steps. As a community, we have raised over \$776,702 to match our total state allocation of \$4,683,277. That's .17 per state dollar provided for evidence-based programs implemented in Marion County.

Last year, we saw the continued success of our Literacy Initiative, Child Care Quality Enhancement, Child Care Training, as well as Child Care Scholarship program. Marion County First Steps was able to:

- Serve 932 children between the ages of 0 and 5 years.
- Provided 16 parenting meeting and 54 parents attended.
- Read to approximately 700 children and distributed 9,020 books to 3 and 4-year-old.
- Served 18 children and 7 facilities received ABC Vouchers.
- Provide training to 62 Early Childhood staff from 17 programs.
- Provide 56.5 hours of technical assistance to 34 childcare providers from 3 childcare facilities.

Our success was due, in part, to our partnerships with Marion County childcare providers, Marion County School District, SC DSS, and our local and state Early Care and Education alliances. Although Marion County First Steps funds are limited, every dollar is allocated to our ultimate goal of assisting our youngest citizens in becoming successful learners as they enter school.

We want to ensure that Marion County children have access to the highest quality childcare programs that employ highly trained and knowledgeable staff. MCFS has provided our childcare center providers with opportunities for training throughout the year that ensures the quality of teaching is at the most optimal level for all young learners. Finally, by providing ABC Childcare Vouchers, we make it affordable for parents to send their child to a high quality childcare of their choice while they are working and/or attend school.

Spencer R. Scott

It is my passion and desire that every child in Marion County is given the same opportunity to be successful and enter Kindergarten ready! - Board Chair, Annette Gerald



CHILD CARE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT



an evidence-based program

Many private child care centers strive to provide high quality care but lack the resources often available to publicly-funded early childhood programs. Our Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) program aims to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children.

Our services include:



Rigorous quality assessments



On-site technical assistance at least twice monthly



Funding for equipment and materials



Training and workforce development



Coordination with community partners

QE BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

3

child care providers served

61

number of TA visits provided

129

number of children 0-5 enrolled in provider classrooms



100% of participating FQE childcare providers participated in MCFS childcare trainings and found the trainings to be very beneficial.



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:

PHONEMIC AWARENESS IN THE CLASSROOM 2 hours in Curriculum

FUN WITH ARTS AND CRAFTS 3 hours in Curriculum

CLASSROOM CENTERS SET UP 1.5 hours Prof. Dev.

KEYS TO DISCIPLINE 2 hours in Child Guidance

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE 1.5 hours in Prof. Dev.

LEADING TO SUCCESS 2.5 hours in Program Adm.

PARENT & HOME CONNECTIONS: BUILDING THE BRIDGE 2.5 hour in Program Admin.

FINE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT 101 2 hours Growth and Dev.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE BRAIN 1hour Growth and Dev.

GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT 101 2 hours Growth and Dev.

TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

400

total training attendance

62

child care teachers and
directors served

10

number of training
sessions offered

I enjoy attending the trainings for Marion County because the presentations are so engaging and fun! I learn so much to help my children grow and develop!

Aretha Davis,
Re Re's Open Arms Daycare



CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



an evidence-based program

For many families in Marion County, the cost of quality child care is out of reach. Our scholarship program makes payments to child care providers to care for children from low-income families with a minimal of two risk factors so their parents can return to school or work.

Marion County First Steps successfully provided wrap-around services with Quality Enhancement (QE), Childcare Trainings and Scholarships. Scholarships were given directly to childcare facilities that participated in QE and income-eligible children with a minimal of two risk factors whose parent attends school or works at least 20 hours per week eligible to apply..

SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

18

number of children
served

6

number of providers
served

18

number of
developmental
screenings provided

**100% the money paid to child care providers
goes back into our local economy to benefit the
citizens of Marion County.**



FAMILY LITERACY



an evidence-based program

Raising A Reader (RAR) is a proven and evidence-based family engagement and early literacy program for children ages 0-8. The program helps families develop, practice, and maintain the home-based literacy routines necessary for school success. The goal of RAR is to substantially increase the number of families that share picture books and stories with their children frequently and routinely each week.

RAISING A READER BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

174

children served

7

parenting classes offered

170

adults served



Children are made readers on the laps
of their parents.

- Emilie Buchwald



LITERACY PROGRAM



an evidence-informed program

Our Literacy programs offer an integrated and family-friendly approach, helping both parents and children to improve their literacy skills. Our literacy services integrate all of the following:

1. Distribute books to children/parents
2. Interactive Parent/Child Activities
3. Training in storytelling techniques
4. Parenting classes

LITERACY BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

525

children served

45

classroom served

23

providers served



After Literacy Coordinator, Beryl Collington aka “Ms. B” finished reading to her 3 year old classroom at Tender Loving Care (TLC) owned and operated by Renee Davis, she distributed books to the children and they began reading themselves. As a follow-up, she would ask the children to read aloud to her and ask them questions relating to what’s in the picture.



PUBLIC AWARENESS



an evidence-informed program

Marion County First Steps participates in many community events to inform the community of its programs. At these events, brochures along with helpful reading tip flyers are given. Children can play games and receive prizes.

Marion County First Steps participated in the following community events:

Marion Foxtrot
Marion Fall Walk
Mullins Fall Walk
Belk's Charity Day
Marion Easter Walk
Nichols Community Day
Marion Easter Egg Hunt
Marion County Author's Visit
Marion County Back to School Bash
Marion County Healthcare Appreciation Day

525

materials distributed

10

events held

4150

total event attendance





OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

State of South Carolina: \$200,000
(*through South Carolina First Steps*)
SC Department of Social Services \$100,375
SC Center for Childcare Career Development: \$2,000

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Marion County Academy of Careers and Technology Center
ABC Child Care \$12,600
Academy of Early Learning \$1,220
Florence County First Steps \$26,914



JOIN US

For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at
marionfirststeps.org



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Marion County First Steps has leveraged **\$776,702** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.17** for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
ABC Vouchers (Scholarships)	\$78,924.94	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$17,564.14	\$96,489.08
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$28,445.03	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,210.96	\$36,653.99
Child Care Training	\$9,632.20	\$0.00	\$1,247.09	\$7,435.99	\$18,315.28
Raising A Reader	\$11,605.96	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,605.96
Family Literacy	\$16,897.76	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,220.00	\$18,117.76
Core Functions	\$15,802.01	\$0.00	\$263.67	\$6,010.32	\$22,076.00
Administrative Support	\$9,227.37	\$0.00	\$81.84	\$2,467.64	\$11,776.85
Total Expenses	\$170,535.27	\$0.00	\$1,592.60	\$42,909.25	\$215,034.92



LEADERSHIP

2018-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NAME	POSITION	CATEGORY
Annette Gerald	Chair	Early Childhood
Donald Fling	Vice-Chair	Parent
Lula Coleman	Secretary	Non-Profit Organization
Tanya M. Hodge	Asst. Treasurer	Healthcare
Victoria Belin	Past Chair	Senate Appointment
Holly Evans	Member	Library
Georgette Washington	Member	School District
Michelline C. Williams	Member	Healthcare
Tameka Swinton	Member	Head Start
Sylvia Jackson	Member	Family Educator Provider

STAFF

Spencer R. Scott, Executive Director

Nicole Weeks, Program Coordinator

Beryl Collington, Literacy Coordinator

CONTACT US

415 South Coit Street, Florence SC 29501 | 843-629-0202 | www.marionfirststeps.org

