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
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
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.
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
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.
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
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.
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
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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

16
Literacy Trainings

4
Community Meetings
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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Type</th>
<th>State Funding</th>
<th>Federal Funding</th>
<th>Private Funding</th>
<th>In-Kind Contributions</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC Vouchers (Scholarships)</td>
<td>$78,924.94</td>
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<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$17,564.14</td>
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<td>Child Care Quality Enhancement</td>
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<td>Child Care Training</td>
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<td>Raising A Reader</td>
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<td>$11,605.96</td>
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<td>Family Literacy</td>
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<td>Core Functions</td>
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<td>Administrative Support</td>
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<td>Total Expenses</td>
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<td>$1,592.60</td>
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<td>$215,034.92</td>
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### 2018-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

### 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