To collaborate with other partners, Oconee County First Steps helps Oconee County 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.

High quality programs and services for children and families
Intensive training, resources and support for childcare providers
Strategic partnerships and community education

3,871 children under age 5
57% of young children live in poverty or low-income households
70% of kindergartners are considered "not ready" for school

3,619 number of children and adults served by Oconee County First Steps in 2018-2019

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

Oconee County First Steps (OCFS) saw many changes and improvements in its programming during the year. Our home visitation program changed to Healthy Families America. We linked our Child Care Scholarships with the Evidenced-Based program Triple P (Positive Parenting Program). There was expansion of our Child Care Training program with new Certified Trainers.

Palmetto Basics with 5 fun, simple and powerful ways that help foster brain growth in the first three years of life, was introduced to the community. Throughout the year, OCFS continued its vision of “All children in Oconee County will have the care they need to grow and develop to their full potential”. The agency continued long standing events and activities, and we concluded the year partnering with Oconee Pediatrics and Oconee County Public Library (OCPL) to provide books and tips to help families implement Palmetto Basics Tip 5: “Read and Discuss Stories”. The family gets a “Birthday” sticker after their well child visit, to redeem at the OCPL for a book (compliments of OCFS). We also purchased infant and toddler toothbrushes for area events as well as pens and insulated grocery bags. Look to get some of these at your next community event.

In closing, we were recognized as a 2018 United Way of Oconee County Outstanding Community Partnership recipient. We look forward to expanding our relationship with the Oconee County community in the coming year.

Monica Alles White
OCFS Executive Director

OUR GOALS

Our partnership’s work, in collaboration with state and local partners, is focused on advancing Oconee County towards these strategic goals in support of the Profile of the Ready Kindergartner, South Carolina’s description of school readiness:

• By 2020, Oconee County First Steps will have maintained, if not increased, its current investments and levels of success.

• By 2020, as resources allow, Oconee County First Steps will have invested in Palmetto Basics.

• By 2020, as resources allow, Oconee County First Steps will have worked with local childcare facilities to improve the existing quality of care available to young children.

• By 2020, as resources allow, Oconee County First Steps will have expanded or deepened its community partnerships.

"We are thrilled to continue working with Oconee County First Steps; they have a true passion for serving families and understand the value and need for collaboration. Working with the OCFS team allows Heath’s Haven to provide parent education to families in our community who value the opportunity to become the best parents they can be.

LISA FIELDS, HEATH’S HAVEN DIRECTOR"
Healthy Families America (HFA) is a program of Prevent Child Abuse America designed to support parents who may be experiencing a range of current or past challenges, including single parenthood, low income, a history of maltreatment, substance abuse, mental health concerns, or domestic violence. HFA is designed as a prevention program; thus, visits begin prenatally or within the first three months after a child's birth and continue until children are between 3 and 5 years old.

**HEALTHY FAMILIES AMERICA BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019**

9 families served
145 total home visits

Children in the HFA program have very few areas of concern identified through developmental screening instruments; which further documents the preventive impact HFA program is having on these high-risk families!

HFA SUPERVISOR
Triple P-Positive Parenting Program is a system of parent training programs designed for parents of children ages birth to 12 years. The main goals are increasing the knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents and reducing the prevalence of mental health, emotional, and behavioral problems in children and adolescents. Level 4 Triple P (intensive) is the acceptable version of the model for the purposes of offering evidence-based parent education.

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**TRIPLE P PARENTING BY THE NUMBERS**

**2018-2019**

- **20** families served
- **30** training sessions

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"I didn’t realize until now that parents are also at different stages of development—not just their children!"

TRIPLE P PARENT

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"Instead of Lamaze classes, they need to be sending all ‘new-to-be’ parents to your Triple P parenting classes."

CHILD CARE DIRECTOR
After 18 ½ years, I am finally going to retire. In all these years, I know I received some good information from all the speakers and was able to apply it to my home day care.

Pat Rhudy, Tots & Toddlers
Access to quality childcare is essential for children while away from their primary caregiver. Yet, of those families eligible for childcare assistance in Oconee county, only a fraction receive it. For many families, the cost of quality childcare is out of reach. Our scholarship program makes payments to ABC Quality “B” or higher childcare providers to care for children so their parents can return to school or work. At least 1 developmental screening is provided each year, and families are connected to needed services within the community. In addition, parents must attend one, 5-class session of Triple P Positive Parenting program.

SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

30 number of children served
5 number of providers served
32 number of developmental screenings provided

Thank you for all your help. My family appreciates your help and I really enjoyed the classes.

CHILDCARE SCHOLARSHIP PARENT
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 OCONEE COUNTY 2018-2019**

- 21 children enrolled
- 2 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.
Oconee County First Steps has many faces and partners in Community Education. We collaborate with both public and private 4K facilities providing bookbags for each child; we work with numerous organizations on collecting winter items (blankets/socks) for distribution with our Warm A Child program; and through Palmetto Basics we increase awareness of early learning opportunities for young children.

### 4K Bookbag Program by the Numbers 2018-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Events Held</th>
<th>Facilities Reached</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1730 bookbags and toothbrushes distributed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Warm A Child for the Winter by the Numbers 2018-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Events Held</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>714 blankets and socks distributed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Palmetto Basics Kickoff by the Numbers 2018-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Events Held</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6200 educational materials distributed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“"My child was so thrilled to receive her bookbag when she started 4K this fall. She coveted that bookbag all year." "

4K Parent
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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

17,566
Materials distributed

United Way of Oconee County Certificate of Appreciation presented to Oconee Co. First Steps in Recognition of 2018 Outstanding Community Partner Award.
Through partnerships and collaborations, as well as financial support from grants and contributions, Oconee County First Steps leverages state dollars to enhance and expand services to children and families.

**FUNDING SUPPORT**
Anonymous $100

**IN-KIND SUPPORT**
Kathe Davis
Barbara Dyar
Suzanne Evans
Tina Kirby
Kendra Vincent
Tony Vincent
Tounga Williams
Janis Young
Karen Durham
Dept. of Social Services
Dept. of Health and Environmental Control
St. Mark’s United Methodist Church
Heath’s Haven
The Parenting Place
Ralph’s Trophy Shop
South Carolina Child Care Resource and Referral Network
Borg Warner
Foothills Early Learning Center
Pennsylvania Children’s Center
Oconee County Public Library

**JOIN US**
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at oconeefirststeps.org
**Financial Highlights**

**Our Investment in Quality**
Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type

<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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Families America</td>
<td>$62,091</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$11,925</td>
<td>$74,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Scholarships</td>
<td>$84,699</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$806</td>
<td>$85,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Training</td>
<td>$27,003</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$4,502</td>
<td>$31,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triple P Positive Parenting</td>
<td>$14,656</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$8,102</td>
<td>$22,758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership &amp; Community Education</td>
<td>$25,872</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$280</td>
<td>$8,056</td>
<td>$34,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>$28,033</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$497</td>
<td>$5,155</td>
<td>$33,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$242,354</strong></td>
<td><strong>$0</strong></td>
<td><strong>$777</strong></td>
<td><strong>$38,546</strong></td>
<td><strong>$281,677</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Estimation of Cost Savings**

Since inception, Oconee County First Steps has leveraged $3,710,402.32 from sources outside of state government.

That’s $0.94 for every state dollar.

**Summary of Expenditures by Strategy**
LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kendra Vincent, Board Chair, Recreation Therapist
Misty Lee, Board Vice Chair, DHEC designee
Kathleen Davis, Board Secretary, Legislative Appointee
Annette Burney, Legislative Appointee
Katie Conlin, Retired Early Childhood Educator
Barbara Dyar, Local Government
Ann Douglas, SDOC Designee
Suzanne Evans, Retired Child Care Director
Stephanie Gentry, DSS Designee
Tina Kirby, Local Government
Shanon Lusk, SDOC Designee
Summer Mast, Non-Profit Organization
Molly Tannery, Legislative Appointee
Reg Tatum, Business
Kayla Hamilton, Library Designee
Tony Vincent, Faith
Alex Whitaker, Health
Tounga Williams, Head Start Designee
Janis Young, Child Care Center Director

STAFF

Monica Alles White, MS, RD, LD, Executive Director
Angela Ray, Program Specialist
Kindel Thomas, Social Media Consultant

CONTACT US

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13
CHILD CARE TRAINING

PALMETTO BASICS KICKOFF

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

WARM A CHILD

4K BOOKBAG PROGRAM