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 childcare slots.

53% of children ages 3 and 4 are not enrolled in nursery school or preschool.

IN RICHLAND COUNTY:

24,036 children under age 5

47% of young children live in poverty or low-income households

63% of kindergartners are considered “not ready” for school

OUR MISSION
To help 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

3,573 number of children and adults served by Richland 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.

1800 St. Julian Place, Suite 406 Columbia SC 29204 | 803-256-7237 | richlandfirststeps.org
At Richland First Steps we are in the relationship business. From the smallest interactions between a child and their caregiver to large scale partnerships between community agencies, we strive to improve the quality of relationships to meet the needs of our youngest citizens.

One day, Pastor Scott W. Smoak of Virginia Wingard Memorial United Methodist Church was walking around an unused classroom area in the church building. He was trying to envision ways this space could be utilized once again to serve the community that surrounds the church.

At the same time, across town, the Richland First Steps management team was sitting down for its weekly meeting. The team was talking about how we could serve more families through a newly announced EHS expansion opportunity, especially in the St. Andrews community, an area of Richland County with limited First Steps programming. EHS Project Director Cari Moyer said that, in light of our success with locating EHS classrooms in existing church facilities, that it would be great to find a church in St. Andrews to partner with for expansion.

Here’s where the power of relationships came into play: Communications Specialist Sarah Conrad knew someone who pastored a church – Rev. Smoak at Virginia Wingard. Their daughters had been kindergarten classmates a decade before and the families had stayed friendly ever since. A quick email later, a couple of phone calls, and the ball was rolling – within a matter of weeks a partnership between Richland First Steps and Virginia Wingard UMC had been solidified. Our application for additional Early Head Start funding was approved and in late 2019, 54 new families will begin using our prenatal and classroom based EHS services.

Our partnership breathes new life into our church and provides an avenue of hope, love, and joy. Virginia Wingard UMC is committed to loving our neighbors and working together creating a future of hope for families in Richland County.

Rev. Scott W. Smoak, Pastor, Virginia Wingard UMC
EVERYDAY EXCELLENCE

As you read this annual report, you’ll find lots of facts and figures about the work we do at Richland First Steps. That’s the who, what, when, where, and why of our efforts to improve school readiness; but the how – that’s another part of the story worth telling. Our commitment to going beyond the rigorous standards of our evidence-based and evidence-supported programs is something special. Exceeding expectations in service of young children and their families is a daily occurrence, one that will yield rewards for generations to come.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM STANDARD</th>
<th>WHAT WE DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHILD CARE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT (ExCEL)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom visits from Technical Assistance Provider</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 hour visits twice a month</td>
<td>3 hour visits each week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporating school readiness goals into technical assistance plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No requirement</td>
<td>Monthly; presented as part of Step Up to School Readiness, an organization-wide focus on common goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EARLY HEAD START</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books provided to families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No requirement</td>
<td>One book each month to 96 families; Titles selected by Richland Library to meet needs determined by child assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Caregiver educational requirement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Development Associate (CDA) credential</td>
<td>Associates Degree; 70% of caregivers have Bachelor’s Degree or above in Early Childhood Education or related field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFANT TODDLER ENVIRONMENT RATING SCALE (ITERS) Score</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A score of 4.5 (out of a possible 7) is considered “good.”</td>
<td>EHS classrooms average above a 5, with one classroom scoring 6.41 (out of 7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PARENTS AS TEACHERS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home visits to families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 visits per month, 45 minutes each</td>
<td>weekly 60 minute visits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 hours annually</td>
<td>40+ hours annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

The outstanding work of our home visitors has been recognized by the National Parents as Teachers organization who have named Richland First Steps a Blue Ribbon affiliate.
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**

- 22 child care providers served
- 429 number of TA visits provided
- 1382 number of children 0-5 enrolled in provider classrooms

"What we give out comes around, and LOVE is all we have to give to our kids"

~ Love Silvi, child care teacher
High quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce. Our training topics are certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and include topics in the areas of health and safety, curriculum, growth and development, child guidance, and program administration. Our trainings can be done on-site at a center, at our annual conference, or in our Monday night training series at our office. A small sample of the trainings we offered in 2018-19 includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
<th>Health and Safety</th>
<th>Child Guidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bringing Science into the Classroom</td>
<td>Safe Sleep for Baby</td>
<td>Conscious Discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Implement SC Early Learning Standards in Your Lesson</td>
<td>Emergency Preparation in Child Care</td>
<td>Biting Sure Is a Pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If These Walls Could Talk: Using Displays</td>
<td>4 Steps to Keep Kids Healthy</td>
<td>Conscious Discipline Book Study: Assertiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>563</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total training attendance</td>
<td>child care teachers and directors served</td>
<td>number of training sessions offered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I learned that the child goes off your vibe-the teacher sets the vibe.

*Training participant*

8K
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 RICHLAND COUNTY*
2018-2019

390 children enrolled

31 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.

* 4K offered locally through public-private partnership via SC First Steps and is not administered through Richland First Steps
Our Early Head Start program, funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS), was funded in December 2009 with money through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. This grant allowed for service to 96 families in the primary zip codes of 29203 and 29204. Over time, the zip code area has expanded to all zip codes in Richland County, north of Blossom Street. These families are served in two different program options – center-based and home-based. Classrooms are located on the campuses of Ridgewood Missionary Baptist Church and Reformation Lutheran Church. This program leverages $1,513,044 in operations, training and match dollars to provide services to families.

Early Head Start produces a standalone annual report that is presented to US DHHS after the program year concludes each August. If you would like to view a copy of the 2017-18 Early Head Start Annual Report, please visit https://issuu.com/richlandfirststeps

**EARLY HEAD START BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019**

- 119 children served
- 1,152 books given to families
- 52 volunteers
- 2,737 home visit hours completed
EARLY HEAD START FAMILIES BY THE NUMBERS
2018-2019

100%
percentage of enrolled children with health insurance by year end

98%
percentage of enrolled children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care

13%
children with an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) to address developmental delays –
Federal requirement is for 10%

11
families identified as homeless (McKinney-Vento definition)

84%
families who received information and connection to a family service.

Services most used:
• health and health education;
• emergency/ crisis intervention such as meeting immediate needs for food, clothing and shelter;
• English as a second language training

Teachers in Early Head Start classrooms understand the importance of play in early childhood development and provide many opportunities for exploration and fun.
PUBLIC AWARENESS

STEP UP TO SCHOOL READINESS is an agency-wide initiative sponsored through a South Carolina First Steps Innovation Grant to increase awareness of the SC Early Learning Standards and to give parents and caregivers easy ways they can help their children achieve these standards by the time they reach school.

Each month, a new school readiness goal based on one of the Early Learning Standards was incorporated into lesson and work plans for Early Head Start classroom caregivers, home visitation Family Support Advocates, and child care Technical Assistance Providers. Parents and teachers received materials they could use to help reinforce the goal with their children. Sometimes these materials were new, like high-quality books, but often the materials were made out of recycled objects that can easily be found in most homes. Using recycled materials helps to underscore one of our key beliefs: it doesn’t take a lot of money or expensive learning toys to help your child succeed. Curiosity, inventiveness, and connection are more valuable than a mountain of electronic “learning toys.”

STEP UP TO SCHOOL READINESS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12</th>
<th>238</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly school readiness goals shared through all Richland First Steps programs and social media accounts</td>
<td>Number of children affected by the initiative within our agency</td>
<td>Classroom caregivers incorporating school readiness goals into their lesson plans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Addressing the needs of young children is a shared endeavor. In addition to providing services to families and support for child care providers, Richland County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Richland 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**

155
Number of mother/child dyads recruited for the USC LAUNCH study

3
Number of counties recruited – Richland, Lexington and Newberry
OUR SUPPORTERS

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

**FUNDING SUPPORT**

Individual Donors
- Midlands Gives
- Board [Book] Drive

South Carolina First Steps
- Base Funding
- Innovation Grant- Step Up to School Readiness

University of South Carolina Arnold School of Public Health
- LAUNCH- Linking Activity, Nutrition and Child Health

US Department of Agriculture
- Child and Adult Care Food Program

US Department of Health and Human Services
- Early Head Start

**IN-KIND SUPPORT**

Ridgewood Baptist Church
- Board and Policy Council Members
  - Fortis University
  - ECPI
  - Kaplan Early Learning

Midlands Technical College
- Richland School District 1
  - Ridgewood Missionary Baptist
  - St. Michaels and All Angels Church

Susanna Watson

**JOIN US**

For more information on opportunities to help Richland First steps, visit our website at [www.richlandfirststeps.org](http://www.richlandfirststeps.org)
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY
Expenditures by Program Type

ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS
Since 2000, Richland County First Steps has leveraged $17,844,946 from sources outside of state government. That’s $1.05 for every state dollar.

Since 2010, when we received our first Early Head Start grant, we have leveraged $1.90 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 Funding</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents as Teachers</td>
<td>$214,445.34</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,318.53</td>
<td>$1,764.00</td>
<td>$217,527.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Quality Enhancement</td>
<td>$187,755.15</td>
<td>$40,980.43</td>
<td>$2,030.85</td>
<td>$2,352.00</td>
<td>$233,118.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Care Training</td>
<td>$46,839.18</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,172.09</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$48,011.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Family Partnership</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$252.98</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$252.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Head Start</td>
<td>$184,776.06</td>
<td>$1,183,456.78</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$37,594.57</td>
<td>$1,405,827.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships &amp; Community Education</td>
<td>$44,332.31</td>
<td>$3000.00</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$47,332.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>$49,032.08</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,255.55</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$51,463.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>$727,180.12</td>
<td>$1,227,437.21</td>
<td>$6030.00</td>
<td>$42,886.57</td>
<td>$2,003,533.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100%
A Board that plays and learns together can do anything! Richland First Steps board members and leadership staff gathered for a showing of the film Resilience, a documentary about the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), sponsored by Richland Library, Children’s Trust, and Resilient Richland.
LEADERSHIP

STAFF

Jill Aderholdt  
Family Support Advocate

Chevelle Artis  
Center Director

Marcia Bacon  
CEO

Robin Capers  
Technical Assistance Provider

Lydia Carnesale  
Education Coordinator

Jennifer Carter  
Classroom Caregiver

Dominique Clark  
Classroom Caregiver

Sarah Conrad  
Communications Specialist

Anett Espinosa  
Family Support Advocate

Imaikop Etim  
Classroom Caregiver

Renee Eubanks  
Program Support

Megan Fryar  
Classroom Caregiver

Brenda Gaskin  
Education Accountability

Gail Harrell  
Center Director

Nicole Harris  
Classroom Caregiver

Tonya Harvin-Pack  
Intake Coordinator

Shannon Helton  
Family Support Advocate

Trista Henderson  
Classroom Caregiver

Arianna Holoman  
Classroom Caregiver

Kelly Jones  
Family Support Advocate

Laran Jones-Gary  
Family Support Supervisor

Danaya Kennedy  
Custodian/Dishwasher

Lautofa Maloa  
Classroom Caregiver

Lakema Maybank  
Classroom Caregiver

Charshina McMillian  
Director of Early Care and Education

Cari Moyer  
Early Head Start Director

Catherine Nolan  
Technical Assistance Provider

Cheryl Osborne  
Family Support Advocate

Nomaneka Parker  
Classroom Caregiver

Shanika Pinkney  
Classroom Caregiver

Crystal Rice  
Training Coordinator

Yanira Rivera Navarro  
Family Support Advocate

LaQuanisha Robinson  
Classroom Caregiver

Oona Romero  
Family Support Advocate

Bettye Sanders  
Classroom Caregiver

Beth Singletary  
Director of Administration and Accountability

Nikiyah Spearman  
Family Support Advocate

Barbara Stephenson  
Family Support Advocate

Amber Tanner  
Classroom Caregiver

Sammantha Truesdale  
Health Coordinator

Theressa Wilson  
Classroom Caregiver

Joanna Zaleski  
Technical Assistance Provider

CONTACT US

1800 St. Julian Place, Suite 406, Columbia, SC 29204 | 803-256-7237 | richlandfirststeps.org