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 SUMTER COUNTY:

7,238 children under age 5

29.5% of young children live in poverty or low-income households

74% of kindergartners are considered “not ready” for school

OUR MISSION
Sumter County First Steps will cultivate, nurture and develop opportunities for children and families for success in school and life 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
6,645 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.

220 Hasel Street, Sumter, SC 29150 | 803.464.1224 | scfirststeps.org/sumter
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As South Carolina First Steps celebrates its 20th Anniversary, Sumter County First Steps reflects on the positive impact we continue to have with school readiness in our community.

Every effort is made to provide quality strategies and programs to empower families, children and childcare providers with the skills needed to ensure school readiness. It is our goal to help children reach their fullest potential while preparing them with the foundation for long-term success through their adult life.

Our success is due to the commitment of our board, parents, school district, childcare providers, staff and other community partners in early education to collaborate and share limited resources for the greater good of our youngest population.

We look forward to the challenges and opportunities to continue to ameliorate school readiness in Sumter County.

Julia A. Nelson, MPA
Executive Director

OUR GOALS

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

- Provide a high comprehensive parenting program (PAT) to strengthen families and access to local resources
- Coordinate and partner with local organizations to serve as a portal for expansion early intervention programs to increase school readiness
- Improve quality professional development opportunities in order to increase the number of qualified staff for child care centers
- Improve the child care environment of child care centers enrolled in our QE strategy
- Provide and expand opportunities for children to have access to affordable high-quality child care with scholarships
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.

**PAT IN SUMTER COUNTY 2018-2019**

- **56** Children Served
- **978** Home Visits

Briefly describe other evidence of program effectiveness and/or client satisfaction here.
As the local affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, we provide free, high-quality books to children from birth until age five, no matter their family's income.

Children enrolled in our Imagination Library program receive one book per month by mail. Each title is selected by a panel of early childhood literacy experts, who are responsible for choosing books that meet the age-specific developmental needs of young children.

**IMAGINATION LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS**

**2018-2019**

440 children served

3418 books distributed

Books are 100% free to children in Sumter County because Sumter County First Steps secures the funds to cover the cost of books and shipping fees.

Join us by sponsoring a child for just $25 a year.
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

1 child care providers served

114 number of TA visits provided

39 number of children 0-5 enrolled in provider classrooms

Sumter County First Steps has equipped me with an opportunity to improve Vanessa’s Palace by providing technical assistance, training, guidance and support. My center is now safer and my staff is now equipped with the needed skills to teach and take care of our children”.

Vanessa Simmons, Director of Vanessa’s Palace
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**

**Fundamental Causes of Positive and Negative Behavior**
**Maintaining A High Quality Learning Environments**
**How Teachers Enrich Language and Concept Development**
**Preschool to Primary: Understanding Child Development**
**Creating An Environment for Health and Safety Practices (Blood Borne)**
**Promoting Culturally Appropriate Positive Guidance for Children**

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**TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS**

**2018-2019**

519

519

5

**total training attendance**

child care teachers and directors served

number of training sessions offered
For many families in Sumter 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 so their parents can return to school or work.

Due to limited funding, priority is given to parents and children enrolled in our Parent As Teachers Program. Those enrolled are eligible to apply for Child Care Scholarships/ABC Vouchers. Families also have to meet an income eligibility and work or school/training program to receive a voucher.

**SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS**

**2018-2019**

63 number of children served

47 Families served

I’m a single parent and the mother of two beautiful daughters. I have enjoyed being a part of the Sumter County First Steps (SCFS) Parents As Teachers Program. While participating in the program, I received my Masters Degree. This was only possible due to a First Steps Childcare Scholarship/Voucher for my youngest child and their assistance in my oldest child attending school within Sumter County. The partnerships SCFS has established allowed me to navigate established systems; that alone I could not have navigated. I will forever be grateful for the Sumter County First Steps and their partnerships.

Alexa Blair, Parent ~ Sumter First Steps PAT Program
Through partnerships and collaborations, as well as financial support from the State Funding, Sumter County First Steps leverages state dollars to enhance and expand services to children and families.

**FUNDING SUPPORT**

State of South Carolina First Steps $372.765

Private Donations $450.00

**IN-KIND SUPPORT**

Sumter School District

South Carolina DSS

Dr. Earlene Walker Kelly

**JOIN US**

For additional information, please contact us at sumterfirststeps@gmail.com or 220 Hasel Street • Sumter, South Carolina | 803.464.1224
### EXHIBIT 1:

**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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents as Teachers</td>
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<td>Scholarships/ABC Vouchers</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$77,250.00</strong></td>
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Since inception, Sumter County First Steps has leveraged $2,083,564.00 from sources outside of state government. That’s $0.29 for every state dollar.
LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Artrell Brown, Board Chair
Walter Newman, Vice-Chair
Toni Brew, Treasurer
Reverend Billy Bennett
Dr. Karen Bradford
Austin Floyd
Harrison Brown

Dianne Jeter
Michael Jonas
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Michelle Davis Parker
Wanda Ramsey
Julia Triplett

STAFF

Julia A. Nelson, MPA
Executive Director

CONTACT US

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Sumter County First Steps Photo Gallery