



# 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 UNION COUNTY:

**1,589**

children under age 5

**56%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**69%**

of kindergartners are considered "not ready" for school

## OUR MISSION

To connect families to the resources they need for their children to be safe, healthy and ready for school.

## 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

**1,571**

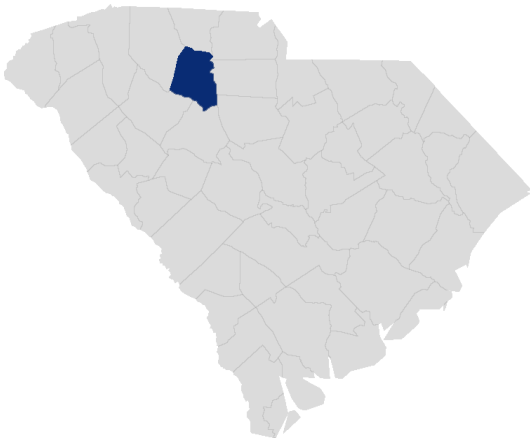
number of children and adults served by Union County First Steps in 2018-2019

## 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.

733 Main St., Buffalo, SC 29321 | 864-466-7647 | [scfirststeps.org/union](http://scfirststeps.org/union)

Data provided by:



## OUR STORY

Union County First Steps works closely with the Union County School District and the Union Library System to promote literacy and school readiness in Union County. Both the library and the school district are strong partners in support of our Parents as Teachers home visiting program. The school district is also a vital supporter of Countdown to Kindergarten.

Other local partners include United Way of the Piedmont and the City of Union. The United Way funds the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for Union County; and their Community Impact Program also provides funding for Parents as Teachers. The City of Union has been a financial partner in providing childcare training for local childcare workers.

## OUR GOALS

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

- Goal 1: Improve access to quality childcare
- Goal 2: Continue to build communication and collaboration with businesses, other agencies, and the community
- Goal 3: Improve access and delivery of service to Parents as Teachers participants

**The Union County Library System is grateful for the wonderful partnership between Union County First Steps and the Library. First Steps is a tremendous supporter of early childhood education, and many of the services the library provides for young children and their families are a result of this partnership.**

**Rieta Drinkwine, Director, Union County Library System**

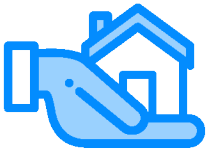


# PARENTS AS TEACHERS



*an evidence-based program*

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 IN THE NEWS

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 UNION COUNTY 2018-2019

**55**

families served

**968**

total home visits

### Quote from a PAT parent:

"The Parent Educator has helped me so much with my youngest child. She has provided us with so much information and helpful tips."



Parents as Teachers



## IMAGINATION LIBRARY



*an evidence-based program*

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

**1,123**      **10,984**

children served

books distributed

Books are 100% free to children in Union County because Union County First Steps secures the funds to cover the cost of books and shipping fees through the support of United Way of the Piedmont.

**Join us by sponsoring a child for just \$30 a year.**





# COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN



*an evidence-informed program*

Developed by South Carolina First Steps – and identified as a promising state practice by the National Governor’s Association in 2005 – Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a home visitation program pairing the families of rising kindergartners with their future teachers during the summer before school entry. Teachers complete six visits with each family, establishing strong connections during the summer that facilitate classroom learning throughout the year.

## CTK BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**3**

kindergarten teachers  
trained as home visitors

**13**

children served

**78**

total home and school  
visits





## 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:

**Staffing 101**  
**Temperaments**  
**Impact of Early Childhood Mental Health on Development**  
**Process Not Product**  
**S.E.E. How You Can Prevent Staff Turnover**  
**Reduce the Stress in Your Classroom**  
**Lock it to Learn**  
**Health and Safety 101**  
**Curriculum Activities for Children**

### TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**112**

total training attendance

**28**

child care teachers and  
directors served

**9**

number of training  
sessions offered

“ We benefit a lot from the classes; and not having the expense or having to travel are also great benefits! ”

**Local childcare center director**

# 4K

## 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 UNION COUNTY 2018-2019

# 59

children enrolled

# 3

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.







## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

---

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

\*Thanks to our partnership with the City of Union, 28  
local childcare workers were provided childcare  
certification classes at no cost to them.

\*Thanks to our partnership with United Way of the  
Piedmont, over 1,000 children in Union County had  
free books delivered to their mailbox each month!



KIDSFEST 2019 was a celebration of The Week of the Young Child; National Library Week; and Child Abuse Prevention month. Thanks to community partners, this event provided a wealth of information and resources for families in Union County. Approximately 200 people were in attendance!



## OUR SUPPORTERS

---

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

### FUNDING SUPPORT

**City of Union \$750**

**Union County Schools \$5,010 (Title I funds)**

**United Way of the Piedmont \$4,280**

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

**Union County School District**

**United Way of the Piedmont**

## JOIN US

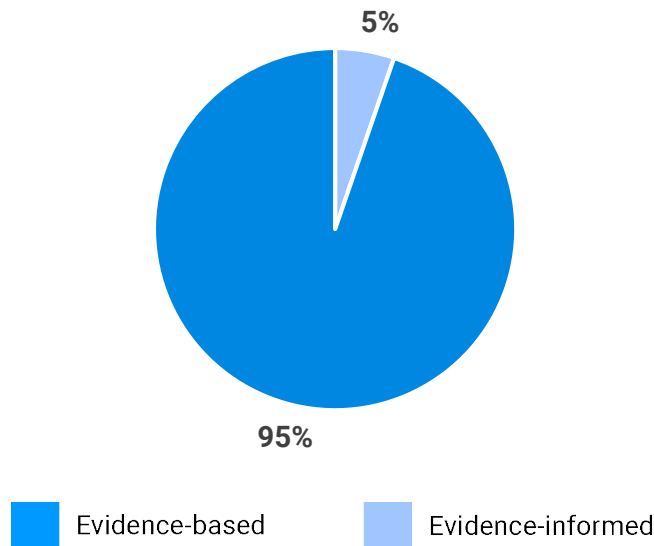
For more information on how you can join our efforts, contact us at 864-466-7647 or by email at [lwade@union.k12.sc.us](mailto:lwade@union.k12.sc.us)



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

#### Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



### ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Union County First Steps has leveraged **\$1,308,476** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.39** for every state dollar.

### SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$157,550	\$	\$3,234	\$32,063	\$192,847
Child Care Training	\$10,413	\$	\$637	\$2,513	\$13,563
Partnerships & Community Education	\$21,029	\$950	\$813	\$3,770	\$26,562
Imagination Library	\$1,310	\$	\$	\$28,403	\$29,713
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$9,441	\$4,063	\$	\$2,513	\$16,017
Administrative Support	\$10,994	\$	\$	\$3,770	\$14,764
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$210,737</b>	<b>\$5,013</b>	<b>\$4,684</b>	<b>\$73,032</b>	<b>\$293,466</b>



## LEADERSHIP

---

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Connie Springs, Chair	Azalee Glenn
Margie Boyd, Vice Chair	Amanda Newton
Margie Ruff, Secretary	Karl Pendergrass
Jan Carter	Robin Rodgers
Mickey Connolly	Page Rogers
Rieta Drinkwine	Jeff Stribble
Wyshell Garrett	Elizabeth Tisdale

### STAFF

Laura, Wade, Executive Director  
Rakeia Johnson, Parent Educator  
Tara Spencer, Parent Educator  
Joni Whisenant, Parent Educator

## CONTACT US

733 Main St., Buffalo, SC 29321 | 864-466-7647

