

Annual Report

2019-2020



THE NEED

IN CALHOUN COUNTY:

708

children under age 5

48.9%

of young children live in poverty
or low-income households

72%

of kindergartners are considered "not
ready" for school



THREE MOST COMMON RISK FACTORS:

1. Abuse and Neglect
2. High-risk children in Foster Care
3. Exposure to domestic violence within the home

OUR MISSION

Collaborating with other entities, Calhoun First Steps helps Calhoun 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.

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

1,842

number of children and adults served by
Calhoun County First Steps in 2019-2020

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.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Virginia Newman

Executive Director
Calhoun County First Steps

I love what I do! As Executive Director, I have had the privilege to meet and work with great leadership from the South Carolina First Steps office and the awesome First Steps Executive Directors across the state's forty-six counties. However, most rewarding is the thousands of Calhoun County parents and children we have served through our Parents as Teachers, Countdown to Kindergarten, and Imagination Library programs. My experiences over the past twenty-one years have proven that ALL parents want their child to be successful in school and that our babies/toddlers are eager to learn.

As in past years, I will continually keep the acronym QCAL (Quality-Collaboration-Accountability-Leadership) in the forefront as we continue to implement quality, evidence-based programs with unwavering support from our local government, private, and non-profit partners.

Virginia L. Newman



GETTING CHILDREN READY FOR SCHOOL

All children are ready to benefit from a quality kindergarten experience when they are five years old by September 1 of that school year. But kindergarten readiness—the critical stage at which children are prepared for learning and success—is more than a matter of age. For a strong start in school, children need positive relationships and supportive learning environments beginning at birth. At First Steps, we partner with families, caregivers, and communities to ensure that all children are prepared for success.

South Carolina's Profile of the Ready Kindergartner

Developed by SC First Steps and the SC Department of Education, the state's description of school readiness includes 60 developmental milestones across 5 categories:



**Approaches to learning
& inquiry**



Emotional & social development



**Physical development,
self-help & motor skills**



Mathematical thinking



Language & literacy development



OUR GOALS

In support of the Profile of the Ready Kindergartner, our approach is focused on advancing Calhoun County toward the following strategic goals:

- Expand access to comprehensive family strengthening and early literacy programs
- Increase community collaboration and participation in Calhoun First Steps programs and activities
- Expand and engage more dads in parenting and school transition programs
- Become more visible in the community

PIVOTING FOR COVID-19

When the coronavirus pandemic forced South Carolina to shut down in March 2020, Calhoun County First Steps quickly pivoted to provide much-needed support to young children, their families and child care providers.

Our work has never been more critical. While children are at low risk for the serious health effects of the virus, the crisis is having a profound impact on their wellbeing and development. For children of color and low-income communities, these impacts are expected to be even more damaging. That is why Calhoun County First Steps is enhancing our efforts to provide parents and caregivers with the services and resources they need to weather this storm.

IMPACT ON CALHOUN COUNTY

HEALTH

Through June 30, Calhoun County had a total of **146** confirmed COVID-19 cases and **4** COVID-19 deaths.

JOB LOSS

93.1%

increase in unemployment, 2019-2020

CHILD CARE

60%

children under 5 in Calhoun County lived in a child care desert* before COVID-19

100%

children under 5 in Calhoun County lived in a child care desert as of May 28, 2020



Three-year old, Hailey Keller is excited to receive her personal educational tablet and her first packet of Parents as Teachers curriculum materials to be use during virtual home visits and between visits. She also received books that will be read during the virtual PAT Group Connections held monthly.

*The Center for American Progress defines a child care desert as a ZIP code with at least 30 children under the age of 5 and either no child care centers or so few centers that there are more than three times as many children under age 5 as there are spaces in centers.



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 GOES VIRTUAL

Due to COVID-19, Parents as Teachers (PAT) National provided guidance for affiliates to deliver virtual services via interactive video conferencing and phone calls. South Carolina PAT affiliates rose to the occasion by engaging families in creative and meaningful ways while continuing to meet the Essential Requirements of implementing a quality PAT program during the pandemic.

PAT IN CALHOUN COUNTY 2019-2020

51

families served

1,197

total home visits

Calhoun County received a letter of congratulations from the PAT National Office commending that its 2019-2020 APR and Performance Measures Report data demonstrates fidelity to all of the Essential Requirement of the PAT model



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 2019-2020

230

children served

1,787

books distributed

Books are 100% free to children in Calhoun County because Calhoun County First Steps secures the funds to cover the cost of books and shipping fees. Thank you to our Imagination Library supporters: Dollywood Foundation, Tri- County Electric Trust, Calhoun County First Steps Board, and United Way of the Midlands.

Sponsor a child for just \$25 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 2019-2020

5

kindergarten teachers
trained as home visitors

49

children served

283

total home and school
visits



Anasia McDaniel enjoys the large floor puzzle received in her Countdown to Kindergarten toolkit backpack. Summer 2020, Anasia and her family received 5 home visits from Ms. Marla Fanning who is now her 5K teacher at St. Matthews K – 8.

COUNTDOWN to
KINDERGARTEN

SOUTH CAROLINA





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, Calhoun County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Calhoun 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 2019-2020

25

Community
partners
participated in our
Annual Breakfast

20

Adults joined our
Black History
Month Activities

“ Calhoun First Steps is an integral part of our students' first experiences with learning. They are a necessary community partner. ”

Treda Keith, Principal, Saint Matthews K-8



OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

State of South Carolina: \$179,829.81
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Federal: \$264.26

United Way of the Midlands: \$22,256.53

United Way Augusta: \$ 396.38

Central Carolina (Midlands Gives): \$736.61

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Calhoun County Council: \$22,741.61

JOIN US

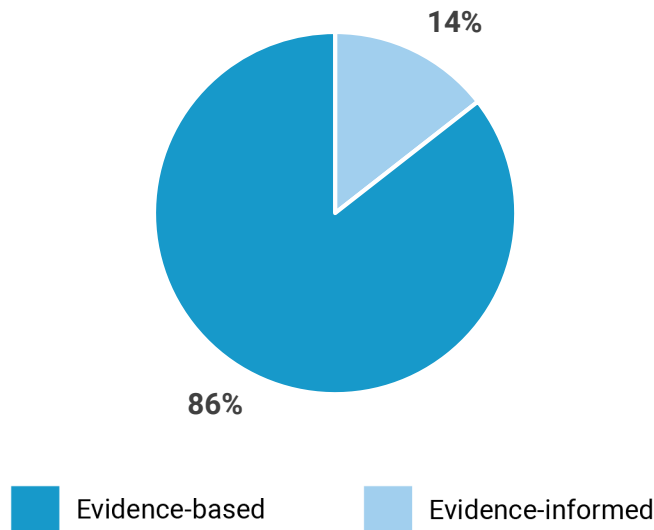
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at
calhouncountyfirststeps.org



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Calhoun County First Steps has leveraged **\$940,607** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.29** for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$133,330.19	\$ 0	\$6,053.40	\$14,533.61	\$153,917.20
Imagination Library	\$1,909.45	\$0	\$3,589.16	\$0	\$5,498.61
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$22,841.97	\$0	\$4,109.79	\$0	\$26,951.76
Program Support	\$21,263.65	\$264.26	\$1,497.20	\$5,700.00	\$28,725.11
Administrative Support	\$20,149.47	\$0	\$1,254.80	\$2,508.00	\$23,912.27
Total Expenses	\$199,494.73	\$264.26	\$16,504.35	\$22,741.61	239,004.95



LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Melissa Eisom

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STAFF

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CONTACT US

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