

Annual Report

2019-2020

CLARENDON COUNTY



THE NEED

IN CLARENDON COUNTY:

1,665

children under age 5

57.9%

of young children live in poverty
or low-income households

65%

of kindergartners are considered "not
ready" for school



THREE MOST COMMON RISK FACTORS:

1. TANF Eligibility (50% of Federal Poverty or below)
2. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or Free School Lunches eligibility
3. Single parent household in need of other services

OUR MISSION

To partner with organizations within and outside of Clarendon County to leverage and maximize resources to provide quality, research-based programs and services that will prepare Clarendon County's preschool children for success in school and in life.

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

802

number of children and adults served by
Clarendon 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



Sharon P. Williams
Executive Director
Clarendon County First Steps

"For these are all our children, we will all profit by or pay for what they become."

~James Baldwin

It is an honor to present to you this report, which captures the work the Clarendon County First Steps Partnership Board and our partners have done to promote school readiness in Clarendon County during the 2019-2020 program year. The programs and services we have chosen to implement are supported by research on "what works" in getting children ready for school.

Research consistently tells us the following:

- High-quality early childhood education has the potential to reduce attendees' timidity and improves attentiveness;
- Child care quality has a long-term effect on children's cognitive and socioemotional development through kindergarten and beyond;
- High-quality early learning programs can close the achievement gap;
- Early learning and care has the potential to increase high school graduation rates.;
- Early language skills, the foundation for reading ability and school readiness, are acquired and built during the first five years of life. Children who are exposed to reading during the first years of life are much more likely to learn to read on schedule; and
- Children who enter kindergarten behind their peers academically are more likely to stay or fall behind.

Taking into account the research available on school readiness, the Clarendon County First Steps Partnership Board has consistently worked and will continue to work in collaboration with our partners to ensure that we implement programs and services that will help us in our efforts to prepare our children for school. The information contained herein is the product of our collective efforts during the 2019-2020 program year.

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 Clarendon County toward the following strategic goals:

- Goal 1: To help Clarendon County's citizens understand what school readiness;
- Goal 2: To partner with others within the community to promote school readiness;
- Goal 3: To equip parents and early care and education providers with the knowledge and tools they need in order to successfully prepare Clarendon County's preschool children for school.

PIVOTING FOR COVID-19

When the coronavirus pandemic forced South Carolina to shut down in March 2020, Clarendon 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 Clarendon County First Steps is committed to enhancing our efforts to provide parents and caregivers with the services and resources they need to weather this storm.

IMPACT ON CLARENDON COUNTY

HEALTH

Through June 30, Clarendon County had a total of **422** confirmed COVID-19 cases and **46** COVID-19 deaths.

JOB LOSS

109%

Change in Employment

CHILD CARE

42.1%

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

82.8%

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



McLeod Health Clarendon, in partnership with DHEC, offered a free COVID-19 Testing Clinic.

Other partners in the COVID-19 Testing Clinic included Hope Health, Clarendon School District 1, Clarendon County Administration, Emergency Management and Sheriff's Department, Mayor of Summerton – Mac Bagnal, Mayor of Manning – Julia Nelson, SC Army National Guard, SC Air National Guard and SC Department of Transportation.

*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 Clarendon COUNTY 2019-2020

41

families served

687

total home visits

Clarendon County First Steps consistently reaches those families that can most benefit from services offered through PAT.



Parents as Teachers®

Parents As Teachers in Action

These parents are working with their children to complete craft projects. This is just one of the many examples of how our Parent Educators work to help parents in their role as their child's first and best teacher.





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

161 **1,448**

children served

books distributed

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

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

43

children served

252

total home and school
visits



“Is Henry ready for kindergarten? When the first day of school arrives, Henry is raring to go. But first, he has to get dressed, eat breakfast, and pack his brand new supplies. On the walk to school, Henry and his mother talk about all the fun things Henry will do in Kindergarten. He’ll paint, learn his ABCs, sing songs, and listen to the teacher read a story. It all sounds great-until they get there. But Henry soon discovers that the only thing he’s not ready for is how much fun he is going to have.”

~Nancy Carlson, Author & Illustrator





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 SC Endeavors and include topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Our 2019-2020 trainings included:

Training Topics

- ✓ First Aid & CPR for Infants & Toddlers
- ✓ Hitting, Biting & Ol' Yeller: Teaching the Aggressive Child
- ✓ Leaders Make the Difference
- ✓ Mandated Reporter: Do you know what to do?
- ✓ Promoting Positive Peer Play for All Children
- ✓ What do I do with Antonio?
- ✓ When Times Are A Troubling: Use the Professional Code of Conduct

TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

26

total training attendance

26

child care teachers and
directors served

7

number of training
sessions offered



Thank you Dr. McCants for giving me great strategies for working with “lil’ Antonio”. I look forward to putting them to good use.

~Gwendolyn





OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

State of South Carolina through SC First Steps: \$200,000.00

Amy Land: \$50.00

SC Center for Child Care Career Development: \$2,000.00

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Clarendon School Districts One, Two & Three: \$74,314

Palmetto Goodwill: \$9,063.00

JOIN US

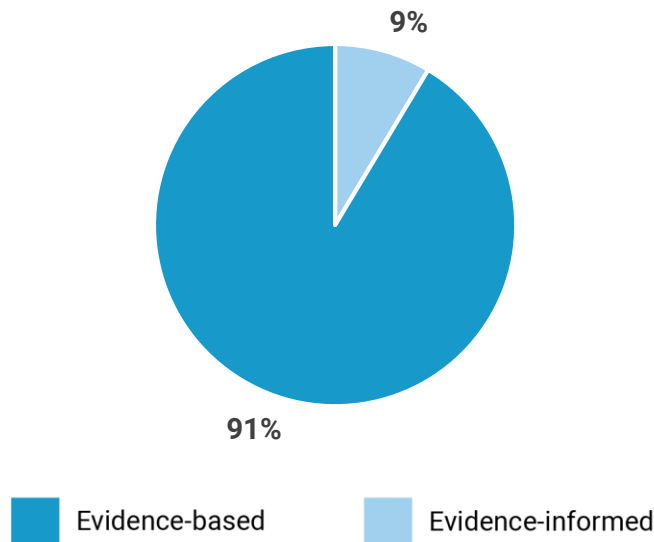
Together, we can make a difference in the life of our children! For more information on partnership opportunities, contact us at clarendonfs@ftc-i.net.



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Clarendon County First Steps has leveraged **\$1,524,500.00** 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	\$127,809.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$71,789.00	\$199,598.00
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library	\$969.00	\$0.00	\$1,773.00	\$0.00	\$2,742.00
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$20,826.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$20,826.00
Child Care Training & Professional Development	\$18,215.00	\$0.00	\$1,830.00	\$306.00	\$20,351.00
Partnerships & Community Education	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Core Functions	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$231.00	\$9,063.00	\$34,294.00
Administrative Support	\$18,515.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,515.00
Total Expenses	\$211,334.00	\$0.00	\$3,834.00	\$81,158.00	\$296,326.00



LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patricia Lee, Chairperson
Dr. Myra Pearson, Vice-Chairperson
Mary Cooper, Secretary

Tamara Alston-Hunter
Melissa Cooper
Kathleen Gibson
Amanda Graham
Priscilla Green
Michael Jonas
Jason Montgomery
Rev. Wanda Nelson
Faye Ragin
Tonia Smith

STAFF

Sharon P. Williams, Executive Director

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