

Annual Report

2019-2020



THE NEED

IN COLLETON COUNTY:

2,119

children under age 5

69.6%

of young children live in poverty
or low-income households

62%

of kindergartners are considered "not
ready" for school



THREE MOST COMMON RISK FACTORS:

1. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Free School Lunches eligibility
2. Single Parent household and has need of other services
3. Exposure to parental/caregiver depression

OUR MISSION

To collaborate with other entities to help families and caregivers prepare our 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

4,330

number of children and adults served by
Colleton 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



Cindy S. Riley
Executive Director
Colleton County First Steps

Colleton County First Steps' staff and the entire partnership board work throughout our county with non-profits, faith-based organizations, businesses, and government organizations to implement programs for children pre-natal to 5 years old. As a small rural community, our families do not always have the resources available to them that larger metropolitan areas may offer, but our board and staff work diligently to streamline services with other agencies to meet the needs of all of our families.

Our Parents as Teachers program is a Nationally recognized Blue-Ribbon Affiliate. We passed a rigorous evaluation of our home visitation program to achieve this recognition. Our efforts with our families would not be possible without our community partners! The Colleton County School District, SC Department of Social Services, Walterboro Rotary Club, and local individuals make our work easier by their generous gifts and support!

Cindy S. Riley



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 Colleton County toward the following strategic goals:

- Goal 1 - CCFS will serve as the local portal connecting families of preschool children to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children.
- Goal 2 - CCFS staff and partnership board will document efforts to mobilize community early childhood agencies/organizations to enhance services to support high risk families and their children.
- Goal 3 - CCFS will work with community partners to enhance and secure additional resources for school readiness strategies.

PIVOTING FOR COVID-19

When the coronavirus pandemic forced South Carolina to shut down in March 2020, Colleton 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 Colleton 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 COLLETON COUNTY

HEALTH

Through June 30, Colleton County had a total of 339 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 26 COVID-19 deaths.

JOB LOSS

105.2%

increase in unemployment, 2019-2020

CHILD CARE

54.9%

children under 5 in Colleton County lived in a childcare desert* before COVID-19

68.8%

children under 5 in Colleton County lived in a childcare desert as of May 28, 2020



Our work with our families took a drastic turn in March of 2020. We had to move to a virtual platform which can be difficult for our families due to lack of technology and high-quality internet services.

Our families were true champions! They adjusted to our virtual service delivery and we continued to offer the services our families needed.

*The Center for American Progress defines a childcare desert as a ZIP code with at least 30 children under the age of 5 and either no childcare 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 COLLETON COUNTY 2019-2020

37

families served

612

total home visits

Our parent educators provided 1,124 books to our families to read with their children.



Parents as Teachers®



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

6

kindergarten teachers
trained as home visitors

35

children served

210

total home and school
visits

Countdown to Kindergarten is the perfect way to introduce children to school. They get excited and motivated for learning through meaningful and high-quality early math and literacy lessons.

Kristie Long, CTK Teacher





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:

Guiding Children's Behavior Towards Positive Outcomes

Motivating Yourself and Your Students – Part 1 & 2

Creating A Culture of Safety

Nutrition

Challenging Behaviors and More

Data & Record Keeping

A Year in Preschool

Imagine A Story – Part 1 & 2

Brain, Behavior, and Self Regulation

My Plate, My Body, My Kids

Active/Reflective Supervision

TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

66

total training attendance

63

child care teachers and
directors served

14

number of training
sessions offered





CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



an evidence-based program

For many families in Colleton County, the cost of quality childcare is out of reach. Our scholarship program makes payments to childcare providers for children from low-income families so their parents can return to school or work.

Colleton County First Steps offers scholarships to families enrolled in our Parents as Teachers program. Our families must be in good standing for three months before they can apply for a scholarship. The scholarships are handled through our partnership with SC Department of Social Services.

SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

28

number of children
served

7

number of providers
served

58

number of
developmental
screenings provided

100% the money paid to childcare providers goes back into our local economy to benefit the citizens of Colleton County.

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. In coordination with First Steps local partnerships and more than 230 private, community and faith-based preschool providers, First Steps 4K expands access to quality early education across the state.



ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for enrollment, a child must be:



4 years old on or before September 1



Eligible for Medicaid, SNAP or TANF, experiencing homelessness or transiency, or in foster care

FIRST STEPS 4K IN COLLETON COUNTY 2019-2020

8

children enrolled

1

First Steps 4K providers

PIVOTING FOR COVID-19

When schools closed due to COVID-19, First Steps 4K classrooms converted to distance-learning, with teachers creatively supporting their young learners through video chat, take-home materials, and hands-on projects that caregivers could facilitate at home.





PUBLIC AWARENESS



an evidence-informed program

One of our outreach projects in the community is our Christmas Fill the Stocking Program. This program has evolved into a community project with the help of individuals, civic organizations, and businesses. As a small rural community, our families do not always have the resources available to them that larger metropolitan areas may offer, but our board and staff work diligently to streamline services with other agencies to meet the needs of our children and their families. Through partnerships, volunteers, and collaborations, as well as financial support from grants and contributions, Colleton County First Steps continues to look at the needs of the families in our community.

CHRISTMAS FILL THE STOCKING PROJECT BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

238

Families Served

467

Children Sponsored





COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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

7,007

Books distributed
in our community





OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

South Carolina State Office of First Steps - \$200,000

Coastal Community Foundation - \$10,000

Vroom Grant - \$2,500

Walterboro Rotary Club - \$3,000

SC DSS Certified Training Grant - \$2,000

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Colleton County School District - \$18,856

SC Department of Social Services - \$14,000

JOIN US

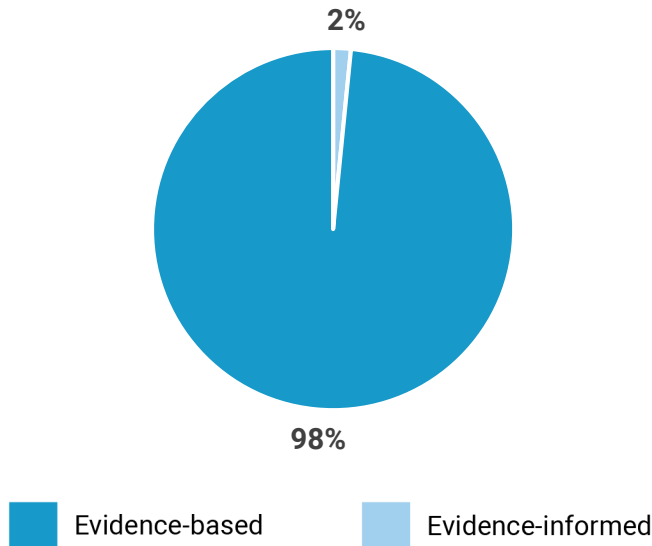
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at colletonfirststeps.com.



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Colleton County First Steps has leveraged **\$1,950,158.56** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.50** for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$133,554.99	\$0	\$7,203.18	\$6,537	\$147,295.17
Child Care Training	\$10,019.90	\$0	\$4,524.95	\$2,905	\$17,449.85
Scholarships	\$38,998.97	\$0	\$0	\$16,907	\$55,905.97
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$2,926.48	\$7,933	\$0	\$0	\$10,859.48
Core Functions	\$10,037.17	\$870	\$4,571.21	\$3,602	\$19,080.38
Raising A Reader	\$2,099	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,099
Administrative Support	\$14,527.93	\$0	\$685.32	\$2,905	\$18,118.25
Total Expenses	\$212,164.44	\$8,803	\$16,984.66	\$32,856	\$270,808.10



LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Latoya Lynah, Chair
Debbie Skoland, Vice-Chair
Ebony Edwards, Secretary
Susan Dodd
Juliette Green
Tangela Green
Julie Hiott

Robin Horton
Martha Johnson
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Redelma Saxby
Jessica Williams
Janice Young

STAFF

Cindy S. Riley, Executive Director
Edith Bright Washington, Parent Educator
Susan Martin, Parent Educator
Lesley Utsey, Parent Educator

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