

# Annual Report

## 2019-2020



## THE NEED

### IN HAMPTON COUNTY:

**1099**

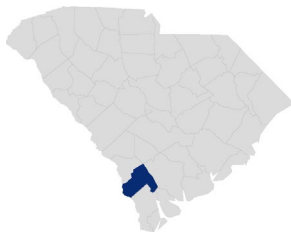
children under age 5

**70.6%**

of young children live in poverty  
or low-income households

**56%**

of kindergartners are considered "not  
ready" for school



### THREE MOST COMMON RISK FACTORS:

1. Single parent families needing additional services
2. SNAP or free school lunch eligibility
3. Teenage custodial parents

## OUR MISSION

To collaborate with other entities, Hampton County First Steps helps South Carolina 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

**310**

number of children and adults served by  
Hampton 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

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**Dwana Doctor**  
Executive Director  
Hampton County First Steps

*@CreativeBlessings*

On behalf of Hampton County First Steps, we are delighted to present the 2019-2020 Annual Report highlighting our programs and successes. Our theme for this FY20 was “Get LIT! Shining the Light on Literacy”. The past year has truly been one of challenges and transformations, however, we continue to serve our children and families by providing high-quality service. Our collaborative activities with local libraries, school districts and distributing over 700 books this year, despite the pandemic of COVID-19, are just a few of our accomplishments. We would like to graciously thank our awesome community, stakeholders and partners for helping us continue our valuable work of getting children ready for school success!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dwana Doctor".

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

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**VALAREE SMITH**

Chair

Hampton County First Steps Board of Trustees

On behalf of the Hampton County First Steps Board of Trustees, we would like to extend greetings and many thanks to all our community members, stakeholders, volunteers and partners. Our primary goal at Hampton County First Steps is to ensure all of Hampton County's children are ready for school success in all areas of development. In addition to COVID-19 and devastating damage due to an F3 tornado, our small county has been hit with a lot however we continue to endure.....TOGETHER! We are extremely proud of the work being done by our staff and will continue to support them in every way possible. May God bless you all.

# 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.



## OUR GOALS

### 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**

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

- To increase public awareness and financial/in-kind support of the programs and services of HCFS in the local community
- To increase the reach of programs and services of HCFS in order to serve more children and families in the community
- To improve coordination with other state and community level entities in delivering services to families, referrals, fundraising and recruiting for programs

# PIVOTING FOR COVID-19

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When the coronavirus pandemic forced South Carolina to shut down in March 2020, Hampton County First Steps quickly pivoted to provide much-needed support to young children, their families and childcare 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 Hampton 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 HAMPTON COUNTY

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### HEALTH

Through June 30, 2020 Hampton County had a total of **72** confirmed COVID-19 cases and **3** COVID-19 deaths.

### JOB LOSS



**90.4%**

increase in unemployment, 2019-2020

### CHILD CARE

**9.6%**

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

**100%**

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

“

”

Going into a mandatory two-week quarantine, we had no idea it would last this long. We went from personal to virtual and wearing masks that have become accessories. While we miss doing our face-to-face visits, we know that Hampton County First Steps has made safety a priority.

N. Pinckney, Parent

\*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 HAMPTON COUNTY 2019-2020

17

families served

370

total home visits

HCFS had 171 families in attendance at group meetings both in-person and virtual. Parents loved the interactive and informative virtual visits despite being quarantined by COVID-19.



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

28

children served

28

books distributed

Books are 100% free to children in Hampton County because Hampton 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

2

kindergarten teachers  
trained as home visitors

14

children served

84

total home and school  
visits



Countdown to Kindergarten mom, Edna Busby and her daughter Enay, engaging in a reading activity during a CTK visit at the Hampton County Library.

COUNTDOWN to  
KINDERGARTEN

SOUTH CAROLINA





## 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:

### **Effective Strategies to Transform Teaching & Learning**

**Responsive Strategies to Support ECE Programs**

**Promoting Healthy Eating Habits in Young Children**

**Creating a Climate of Health & Wellness**

### **Supporting Young Children's Developmental Needs**

**Physical Development of the Toddler**

**The Characteristics of Play & Creativity in an Early Childhood Classroom**

**The Creative Teacher in an ECE Classroom**

## TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

**165**

total training attendance

**47**

child care teachers and  
directors served

**10**

number of training  
sessions offered

Hampton County First Steps has made it possible for our staff to attend quality, fun and interactive trainings that we need each year. We are not always able to travel to bigger conferences before COVID-19. We truly appreciate them for finding a way (virtually) for childcare centers to stay safe and still get the required training hours needed.

**V. Murdaugh, Asst. Director Brian's Playhouse CDC**



## CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



*an evidence-informed program*

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

Hampton County First Steps integrates scholarships with our Parents as Teachers program. Hampton County First Steps offers scholarships to families enrolled in our PAT program, as well as income-eligible children whose parent attends school or works at least 20 hours per week.

### SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

18

number of children  
served

4

number of providers  
served

18

number of  
developmental  
screenings provided

**100% the money paid to childcare providers goes back  
into our local economy to benefit the citizens of  
Hampton 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 HAMPTON COUNTY 2019-2020

# 13

children enrolled

# 2

First Steps 4K providers

### PIVOTING FOR COVID-19

When schools closed due to COVID-19, First Steps 4K classroom 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.





## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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

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## OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

24

Vendors participated  
in Kid's Health &  
Safety Fair

17

Families served  
partnering with  
Toys for Tots

“ Being able to work alongside Hampton County First Steps has provided a wealth of resources for the children and families in Hampton County. The partnership of educating and offering connections to all impacted is what makes our relationship a solid foundation for our community. ”

**Kelli Boniecki, TCL, Early Care and Education Director**



## OUR SUPPORTERS

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

### FUNDING SUPPORT

South Carolina First Steps - \$200,000

Greenville Technical College - \$2,000

Usborne Books - \$1,000

Eat Smart Move More SC - \$300

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

CODE 92

Events R 'Us

South Carolina Department of Social Services

Wade Hampton High School

Pearl's Professional Alterations

PMPED Law Firm

Sheena Williams

Clemson Extension

Hampton School District One & Two

Hampton County Guardian

Hampton United Methodist Church

Hampton County Library

Molina Healthcare

## JOIN US

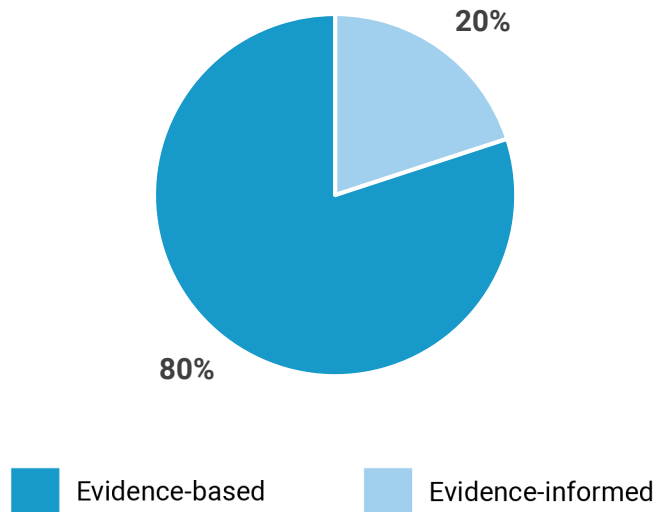
For more information on partnership opportunities and programs, visit our website at  
**[hamptoncountyfirststeps.org](http://hamptoncountyfirststeps.org)**



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

#### Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



### ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Hampton County First Steps has leveraged **\$859,049** from sources outside of state government. That's **\$0.22** for every state dollar.

### SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$75208	\$	\$375	\$4349	\$79933
Child Care Scholarships	\$59343	\$0	\$0	\$15058	\$74401
Child Care Training	\$21660	\$	\$2000	\$1015	\$24675
Imagination Library	\$3496	\$0	\$0	\$642	\$4513
Core Functions	\$19514	\$1432	\$0	\$1010	\$21956
Early Identification & Referrals	\$353	\$	\$	\$	\$353
Administrative Support	\$18640	\$	\$219	\$5743	\$24603
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$198214</b>	<b>\$1432</b>	<b>\$2594</b>	<b>\$27817</b>	<b>\$230434</b>



## LEADERSHIP

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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LaQuitta Bowers, Secretary  
Bettye Bostick  
Chrissy Cook  
Jeremy Dunbar  
Trina Drayton

Sharon Forester  
Tiffine Forester  
Allana Hollingsworth  
Jessie Mock  
Martin Wright  
Lillian Wright

### STAFF

Dwana Doctor, Executive Director

Victoria Powell, Parent Educator

Starr Dunbar, Program Educator

## CONTACT US

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