

# Annual Report

2019-2020



## THE NEED

IN NEWBERRY COUNTY:

**2,320**

children under age 5

**59.3%**

of young children live in poverty  
or low-income households

**67%**

of kindergartners are considered "not  
ready" for school



### THREE MOST COMMON RISK FACTORS:

1. Poverty
2. Low maternal Education
3. Single Parent Household

## OUR MISSION

To foster nurturing experiences so that children will be  
successful in 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

**2381**

number of children and adults served by  
Newberry 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

*“High-quality early learning and care provides the support children need to build a foundation for a healthy and productive future.” (First Five Years Fund)*

“It takes a village” – or in other words– “It takes community and partnership.” For twenty years Newberry County First Steps (NCFS) has provided early childhood programs and services and championed the vital roles that families, individuals, and organizations play in growing strong, resilient children. We have not done it alone. Alliances and community partners have been the hallmark of our work to bring high-quality



early learning opportunities, resources, and care to our communities. On behalf of NCFS, I thank our Partnership Board, staff, community and agency partners, local government, state government, SC First Steps, and our families, children, and community members. We cannot do this important work without you!

The world, as we know it today, is facing challenges unlike any we have seen in this generation. Together, as a community and partners, we will produce solutions, create new and enhanced programs and resources, and we will continue to provide comprehensive early childhood programs focusing on the whole child meeting their needs in the classroom as well as in the home. Join us for the next 20 years of championing children and families and take time to read to, listen to, and respond to children. Our children will not only be “ready” for Kindergarten, but “ready” for the world!

## **SARAH EARGLE**

Executive Director  
Newberry County First Steps

## **Celebrating 20 years of Service**



**Thank You Newberry County!**

# 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 Newberry County toward the following strategic goals:

- Provide access to local resources and services in order to strengthen families and promote the development of preschool children.
- Increase comprehensive services by mobilizing communities to enable children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.
- Promote high-quality preschool programs.

# PIVOTING FOR COVID-19

When the coronavirus pandemic forced South Carolina to shut down in March 2020, Newberry 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 Newberry 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 NEWBERRY COUNTY

### HEALTH

Through June 30, Newberry County had a total of **265** confirmed COVID-19 cases and **6** COVID-19 deaths.

### JOB LOSS

**127.5%**

increase in unemployment, 2019-2020

### CHILD CARE

**71.9%**

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

**71.9%**

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



Newberry County Child Care Centers struggled to remain open, often running at less than half capacity, during COVID-19. Centers know the importance of providing care for children so parents can continue to work, especially when there are already limited childcare options available.

*Newberry County First Steps provided materials grants to Newberry County Child Care Centers which included cleaning and PPP supplies, along with needed curriculum materials and books.*

\*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 IN NEWBERRY COUNTY 2019-2020

# 19

families served

# 325

total home visits

### 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.

*Newberry First Steps families participated in a Drop-by end of year celebration.*



Parents as Teachers.  
*Model Affiliate*



# 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

12

kindergarten teachers  
trained as home visitors

61

children served

359

total home and school  
visits



Thanks to the Birth to 5 Preschool Development Grant we were able to serve 15 more children during the summer of 2019!

*Summer 2019 Countdown teacher LaShonda Sweentenburg with one of her students.*





# CHILD CARE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT



*an evidence-based program*

Many private child care centers strive to provide high quality care but lack the resources often available to publicly-funded early childhood programs. Our Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) program aims to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children.

Our services include:



Rigorous quality assessments



On-site technical assistance at least twice monthly



Funding for equipment and materials



Training and workforce development



Coordination with community partners

Due to staffing and COVID-19 restrictions, Newberry County First Steps' Quality Enhancement program was put on hold during the 2019-2020 year. However, we continued to support our centers by connecting them to resources, responding to requested assistance, and providing materials mini-grants.

NCFS also took the opportunity to prepare and train for a new Quality Enhancement program called Quality Counts which will be implemented during the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Quality Counts will allow our technical assistants a broader scope of work with centers while still providing technical assistance to individual classrooms.

## Children and Teachers Learning







# 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:

- T.E.A.C.H.
- Learning Through Play with Steam Park (LEGO)
- Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
- Leading With Love
- Calling All Directors
- Why Children Bite
- Making Trash Your Treasure
- Blood Borne Pathogens
- Starting the Year off Right
- Moments of Inclusion
- Physical Activity How and Why
- Healthy Habits Start Early
- LEGO Preschool Training
- Integrating Music into the Curriculum with Intentionality
- Using the FISH Method to Lead
- Special Needs Children in Childcare

## TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

# 300

total training attendance

# 74

child care teachers and directors served

# 17

number of training sessions offered



**Attending a training session where the speaker is passionate about their topic and relating it to how I can use it in my class is important! I am amazed at how practical our trainers make each topic and how engaged we are!**

***Child Care center staff member***

# 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 Newberry COUNTY 2019-2020

26

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.





## LIBRARY BASED PROGRAM



*an evidence-informed program*

“Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read.”

Marilyn Jaeger Adams

Newberry First Steps Library-Based Program is designed to provide literacy activities for 3 and 4 year olds enrolled in preschool programs in Newberry County. Each class receives twice a month visits by the Outreach Librarian. Children receive a book each month to add to their own personal library and books are given to each classroom library. Reading, rhyming, singing, and talking influence literacy and language development, the foundations for all other learning.

### LIBRARY BASED PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

**20**

Providers/Schools served

**554**

Children Served

**4676**

Books Distributed



Newberry First Steps partners with the Newberry County Library to provide this program. Books are 100% free to the children in Newberry County.

Pictured are Mrs. Edith Bedenbaugh with the children at one of the schools she serves. The children’s artwork is based on the book they received- [Go Away Big Green Monster](#).



## REACH OUT AND READ PROGRAM



an evidence-based program

“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents” Emilie Buchwald

The Reach out and Read program is implemented through a local pediatrician’s office. Staff integrates reading into pediatric practices, advising families about the importance of reading with their children, and sharing books that help serve as a catalyst for healthy childhood development. During well visits of children birth to 5, the trained staff talks with parents about the benefits of reading aloud with their young children. Parents receive the tools and information they need to make reading aloud a daily routine. Children introduced to reading early on tend to read earlier and excel in school compared to children who are not exposed to language and books at a young age (American Academy of Pediatrics).

### REACH OUT AND READ PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

984

Children Served

984

Books Distributed



Newberry First Steps partners with Pediatrics of Newberry through the Reach out and Read program. The Doctor’s “prescribe” books to their families giving a book to each child ages 0-5 at well visits and offering tips and encouraging reading.



## PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Newberry County First Steps Partnership Community Education and Outreach Plan includes: distributing education materials to reflect our partnership's mission and to inform the public of available resources; participate in and/or co-sponsor community events that reach our target audience; use social media effectively to communicate, inform and activate; network, coordinate, educate, convene parents, local community educational agencies, early childhood professionals, local leaders and the private sector about the importance of early childhood education and school readiness.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

**2138**

Materials/Books  
distributed

**20**

Projects/events  
held

**864**

total event/project  
participation



500 hundred "Let's Get Ready" Bags were assembled and distributed to county elementary schools. The bags were originally intended for children registering for pre-k and kindergarten. Because of COVID19 shut downs, schools were given the flexibility to distribute bags to whom the materials would benefit most.



### Family Game Nights and Census Fair Activities





## 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, Newberry County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Newberry 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

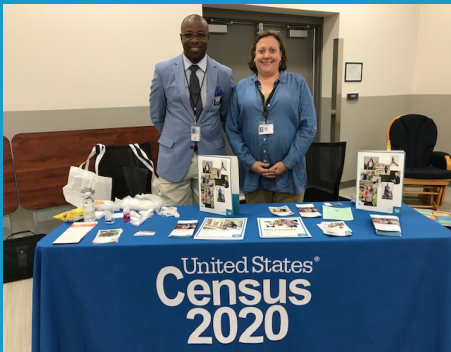
### CHAMPION

of the importance of school readiness to our children's future

## OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

# 15

Community/Partner meetings



Newberry County First Steps participated in the local Census Committee and in several events held throughout the county and online. NCFS distributed over 500 WE COUNT children's books.





## OUR SUPPORTERS

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

### FUNDING SUPPORT

**State of South Carolina: \$200,000  
(through South Carolina First Steps)**

**SC Endeavors Training Grant: \$2000**

**Midlands Gives: \$1,515**

**Komatzu: \$1000**

**United Way of SC Census Grant: \$1500**

**Start With a Book \$1000  
(SC First Steps and United Way of SC)**

**Pack The Park: \$1500**

### Other Donations:

**Private: \$670**

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

School District of Newberry County

Newberry County Library

SCECA District IV

Newberry County Adult Education

## JOIN US

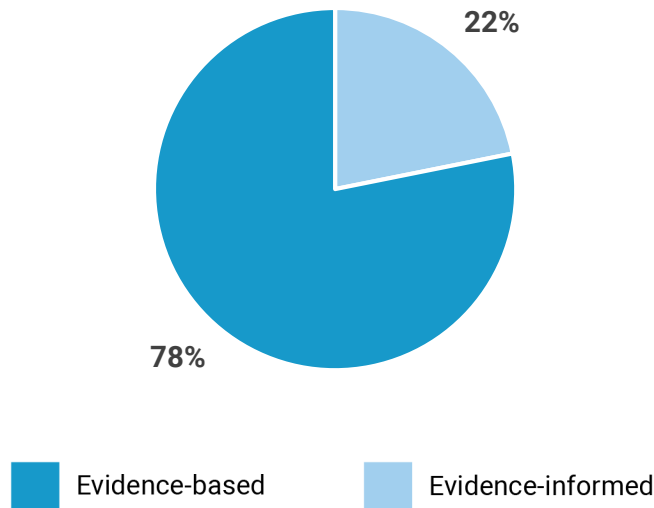
For more information on our programs and partnership opportunities, email [director@newberryfirststeps.org](mailto:director@newberryfirststeps.org), Call 803-321-1073 or visit our website at [www.newberryfirststeps.com](http://www.newberryfirststeps.com)



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



### ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Newberry County First Steps has leveraged **\$1,333,563.82** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.36** for every state dollar.

### SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$78,156	\$0	\$67	\$17,555	\$95,778
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$13,640	\$0	\$348	\$1,289	\$15,277
Child Care Training	\$13,566	\$0	\$8,216	\$1,956	\$23,738
Library Based Program	\$18,365	\$0	\$0	\$23,133	\$41,498
Reach Out and Read	\$8,870	\$0	\$0	\$219	\$9,089
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$13,571	\$3,672	\$207	\$9,024	\$26,474
Partnerships & Community Education	\$18,390	\$1,445	\$8,033	\$906	\$28,774
Administrative Support	\$17,944	\$0	\$361	\$1,222	\$19,527
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$182,502</b>	<b>\$5,117</b>	<b>\$17,232</b>	<b>\$55,304</b>	<b>\$260,155</b>





## LEADERSHIP

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*"Our support of children's families, their community, and early childhood educators is essential. We strive to prepare all children for success in school and life."*

Clyde E. Hill, Newberry County First Steps Board Chair

Clyde E. Hill, Chair  
Roberta Kinard, Vice Chair  
Francis Wright, Secretary  
Crystal Hayward, Treasurer  
Allison Bowers  
Kenneth McBride  
KyShawn Dewalt  
Beth Brooks  
Lamont Glasgow  
Laurie Donahou  
Stacy Farr  
Rita Crumpt-Saddler

Rev. Johnny Mack Brown  
Mamie Shippy  
Martha Suber  
Patricia Turner  
Wanda Woodruff  
Sam Ziady  
Deann McManus  
Elizabeth Rivera  
Lynn Williams  
Adrian Cartledge  
Sheridan Murry

### STAFF

Sarah Eargle Executive Director

Regina Eargle Program Coordinator

Edith Bedenbaugh Program Assistant-Library Program

## CONTACT US

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