



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2021 – 2023



Message from the Executive Director

Fiscal Year 2020 was a highly successful and impactful year for Lee County First Steps (LCFS) even though we experienced unprecedented and new experiences as a result of COVID-19. LCFS as with other agencies, locally, state-wide, and nationally had to quickly adapt, adjust, and realign our operational delivery to children, families, and our local community to ensure that our agency would continue to be effective and relevant in our service area during this worldwide pandemic. Virtual reality was LCFS response to the pandemic for the delivery of all programs and services as we limited our office access, and diminished home visits and travel of our staff to only pandemic relief and assistance by providing high quality services via the virtual platform- ZOOM, Facebook Messenger, YouTube, Microsoft Messenger Conference Calls, Google Duo. In addition, the partnership has managed to sustain effective collaborations and partnerships to ensure that children, parents, and families received high quality, research-based programs and quality services. Although, LCFS receives limited funding from SC First Steps, the partnership board has innovatively and aggressively partnered with state, and national agencies to expand the scope and quality of funding and staff: home visiting programs, child care scholarships and center staff training and professional development to both early care professionals and parents, Kindergarten Readiness, Strengthening Families Program (6-11), and early literacy with the Vroom Curriculum. LCFS reinstated and launched a new local website:

<https://leefirststeps.wixsite.com/lcfs>

Recognizing the importance of ensuring that our young children would be counted in the 2020 Census, LCFS collaborated with the Lee County Interagency Council to implement the Complete Count Committee, and received several Get Out the Census Grants, which LCFS served as the fiscal agent. For such unprecedented times, and new challenges, LCFS has steady the course of the uncharted worldwide pandemic with hope and perseverance.



Elder Alexis D. Pipkins, Sr., Ed. S

Executive Director

Lee County First Steps



Mission

Collaborating with other entities Lee County First Steps helps South Carolina families and caregivers prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private resources to ensure that children arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.

Vision

Every child will thrive and reach his/her greatest potential...

Values

Children make progress

LCFS is committed to ensuring that all children make progress towards achieving their potential, developing positive social-emotional, and enter school ready to succeed.

Individualized services and supports

LCFS provides individualized services and supports to children and their families.

LCFS respects the individuality of each child and family unique and benefits from choices and flexibility.

Accessible services

LCFS communicates with the various distinct school attendance zone communities and make services available to all children in Lane County free of charge and as early as possible.

Community-based services

LCFS provides educational services which provide children to achieve the greatest level most successful.

LCFS utilizes existing community resources and serves children with typical peers in natural environments if feasible or possible.

Exemplary leadership

LCFS serves as leaders in the educational field and models effective collaboration and effective competency for implementing research based and promising practices programs.

LCFS is a progressive and innovative state-funded, non-profit which implements innovative programs, and activities for children and families

LCFS continuously seeks to encourage staff learning, growth, develop, and improvement.

Relationships

LCFS builds positive relationships with families by using a strengths-based approach that includes concrete support in times of need, knowing where to turn for help, building resiliency amongst families.

LCFS is committed to creating optimism and hope for families.

LCFS seeks to listen to collaborating partners, and acknowledge their ideas, wishes, plans, and value-add to the community.

Respect for diversity of families

LCFS treats all families with dignity, honor and respect.

LCFS is committed to and values diversity of cultures, languages, customs, religion, family type, social and economic status, education, and thought.

Responsible and accountable use of resources

LCFS is responsible and resourceful in how the agency effectively manages and coordinates fiscal, technical, material, and human resources.

Community collaboration

LCFS develops relationships with community partners who play an integral role within the local community.

LCFS works collaboratively with countless local, regional, state, and national partners in order to make Lee County, SC, the USA, and the world a better place for children and families to thrive, live, work, and grow.

Community resource

LCFS is a valuable resource to the local community by providing high-quality trainings, on-site support, materials and supplies locally and regionally for the children and families that are served.

LCFS provides opportunities for volunteers, and for the staff to volunteer.

Partners with parents

LCFS supports parents in their role as parent, and respects families as partners in all aspects of the process.

LCFS values working together with parents as a team and facilitating a community of learning from all stakeholders.

LCFS acknowledges that parents are their child's first and most influential "teachers"

LCFS acknowledges that parents are their child's life-long advocates for their child.

Overarching Measure of Success

ENSURE CHILDREN ARE READY FOR KINDERGARTEN

By 2025, the percentage of children who score at the highest level on KRA will increase from 39% to 47%.

REDUCE THE RACIAL/ETHNIC GAP IN KINDERGARTEN READINESS

By 2025, the gap in the percentage of children who score at the highest level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment between White Kindergartners and Black/Hispanic Kindergartners will reduce by 1% each year to 15%.

Objectives

1. Parents will be engaged in their child (ren) educational activities.
2. To ensure children arrive at school ready to learn.
3. Ensuring children arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.

Parents will be engaged in their child (ren) educational activities.

STRATEGY 1.1

PARENTS TO TEACHERS

Provide families with personal visits from a parent educator at least twice monthly.

SMART GOAL(S)

- Increase the number of families enrolled in the Parents As Teachers Program by 2% each year thru 2023.
- In FY 21, FY 22, and FY 23, LCFS will participate in quarterly recruitment activities at PTA/ Open House, annual back to school events at feeder elementary schools and childcare facilities.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partners will include the DHEC-WIC program, Lee County Public and the Lee County Department of Social Services. Churches and civic organizations will also be a part of the recruiting process.

Parents will be engaged in their child (ren) educational activities.

STRATEGY 1.2

Conduct monthly group connections with other PAT families to share information and connections to outside resources that families may need to succeed.

SMART GOAL(S)

- Conduct at least 12 monthly group sessions with PAT families to share information and resources.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partners will include DHEC, Department of Social Services, Mental Health, Vroom partners, and other local resource

STRATEGY 1.3

PARENTS AS TEACHERS

SMART GOAL(S)

- Each year, LCFS will provide PAT families with personal visits from a parent educator at least twice monthly.

Parents will be engaged in their child (ren) educational activities.

- Conduct monthly group connections with other PAT families to share information and connections to outside resources that families may need to succeed.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partners will include the DHEC-WIC program, Lee County Public and the Lee County Department of Social Services. Churches and civic organizations will also be a part of the recruiting process.

STRATEGY 1.4

Promote brain building exercises for birth to 5 children through everyday interaction

SMART GOAL (S)

- Increase the number of families served by the Vroom Program by 10% by the end of FY23.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partners will include DHEC, Department of Social Services, Mental Health, Vroom partners, and other local resource

Parents will be engaged in their child (ren) educational activities.

STRATEGY 1.5

Ensure that children receive on-time screenings and assessments to identify developmental concerns.

SMART GOAL(S)

- By the end of FY21, LCFS will increase the proportion of our clients getting an on time well-child visit by 15%.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partners will include the DHEC, pediatricians, Child Find and Baby Net.

STRATEGY 1.6

Identify issues and make referrals to outside resources to address needs of children and their families

SMART GOAL(S)

- Publish and share a Community Resource Directory with families to make sure they are aware of resources available to them by the end of FY21.

Parents will be engaged in their child (ren) educational activities.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partners will include all of Lee County First Steps partners and resources.

To ensure children arrive at school ready to learn.

STRATEGY 2.1

COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN

Implement the Countdown to Kindergarten home visitation program pairing the families of rising kindergartens with their future teachers during the summer before school entry.

SMART GOAL(S)

- Train at least 3 teachers each year beginning with FY 21 to conduct home visits with rising kindergarteners.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partner will include Lee County Public School kindergarten teachers.

STRATEGY 2.2

SMART GOAL(S)

- By FY 23, LCFS will increase the number of children participating in the Countdown to Kindergarten Program by 30%.

To ensure children arrive at school ready to learn.

- By FY 21, LCFS will recruit and enroll 10 rising kindergarten students.
- LCFS will recruit children from parenting programs, teacher referral from Bishopville/Lee Child Development Center and Wateree Head Start – Bishopville Site.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partners will include Head Start, 4K Centers and other childcare programs where families have children who will be rising kindergarteners.

STRATEGY 2.3

SMART GOAL(S)

- Ensure that each student enrolled in the CTK program receive six (6) home visits during the summer before school starts in FY 21.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partner will include Lee County Public School kindergarten teachers.

Ensuring children arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.

STRATEGY 3.1

SMART GOAL(S)

- Ensure that each student enrolled receive services to detect any development delays or health issues. LCFS will provide early childhood education services to pregnant women and children birth to 5 years.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

- Community partner will include Child Find, Baby Net and pediatricians

STRATEGY 3.2

SMART GOAL(S)

- By FY 23, LCFS will increase the number of families in the Early Steps to School Success 10%.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR

- Lee County Public Schools