

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2021 – 2023



## Mission

Bamberg County First Steps in collaboration with community partners, will empower local families and caregivers to prepare young children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to ensure that every child arrives at school prepared to learn.

## Vision

Every child in will arrive at school healthy and ready to learn.

## Values

The years of early childhood are a critical window of development during which much of human potential is shaped.

Families are the single most important influence on the development of their young children.

The work of supporting families and caregivers is a collaborative effort between state and local stakeholders within the public, private and faith sectors.

School readiness is the result of a child's development in many areas, with each contributing to the child's success.

## Values

Services must be individualized and adaptable to meet the unique needs of children and families.

To achieve desired results, services must be high-quality and grounded in strong evidence. Our initiative will operate within a culture of accountability.

# Message from the Executive Director



**Pauletta Plowden, Executive Director  
Bamberg County First Steps**

*"Bamberg County First Steps is the needle that pulls the thread to help families realize the importance of quality early education. With every new step our children make, they become better students. Preparing our children and their families will help weave the fibers for their future. Bamberg County First Steps' legacy is preparing our children and their families to step confidently into the future knowing that they are loved, they are healthy and ready for the new normal".*

*It is with enthusiasm that Bamberg County Steps reassessed its mission and vision with our community partners, families and friends to adequately determine the direction that we must take in enhancing the lives of our children. Our commitment is to offer high quality strategic goals and objectives to ensure a brighter future for the economic growth of our small rural county.*

*"Bamberg County's children are our greatest and most valuable asset, investing in their lives is pivotal to the future of our county"!*

*Pauletta Plowden,*

*Executive Director*

*Bamberg County First Steps*

# Overarching Measure(s) of Success

## **BAMBERG COUNTY FIRST STEPS WILL INCREASE THE REACH OF FIRST STEPS SERVICES IN OUR COMMUNITY**

By 2023, the percentage of children in need who are directly served by Bamberg County First Steps will increase from 15% to 20%

## **BAMBERG COUNTY FIRST STEPS WILL INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN HIGH INTENSITY PROGRAMS FUNDED BY FIRST STEPS**

By 2023, the percentage of children directly served by First Steps enrolled in high intensity programs will increase from 69% to 75%.

## **BAMBERG COUNTY FIRST STEPS WILL INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY FIRST STEPS**

By 2023, the percentage of children under age 6 who benefit from First Steps quality enhancement and training efforts will increase from 83% to 90%.



# Objectives

**1. Bamberg County First Steps will increase the capacity of parents to be their child's first and most important teachers by expanding the Parents as Teachers evidence-based home visiting program.**

- Bamberg County First Steps, a National Blue Ribbon Parents as Teachers (PAT) Affiliate, will increase parental capacity by utilizing the Parents as Teachers (PAT) Curriculum, an evidence-based home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed.
- The Parents as Teachers (PAT) Program will integrate services utilizing the Life Skills Progression and other Needs Assessments to refer and link families to additional interventions.
- The Parents as Teachers (PAT) Program will integrate services with the DSS/ABC Childcare Scholarships Strategy for working families and those attending school fulltime.

# Objectives

**2. Bamberg County First Steps will improve and strengthen families by affording quality DSS/ABC Child Care Scholarships to working families and those attending school fulltime.**

- Bamberg County First Steps Childcare Scholarships are vouchers that affords working parents opportunities for quality daycare to promote the healthy development and school readiness of their children.
- Bamberg County First Steps Childcare Scholarships Strategy will integrate quality services with the Parents As Teachers Evidenced-Based (PAT) Model.
- Bamberg County First Steps Childcare Scholarships Strategy will collaborate with the Department of Social Services, our local school districts and local childcare providers to ensure quality services.

# Objectives

## **3. Bamberg County First Steps will connect families of preschool children to services designed to strengthen families and promote optimal child development**

- Bamberg County First Steps will serve as a local portal for connecting families of preschool children to community-based services in order to ensure the school readiness of our youngest learners. The partnership will work diligently with local and regional coalitions and committees that focus on the mission of children and families.
- Bamberg County First Steps will increase access, build capacity and strengthen interagency accountability and community collaboration.
- Bamberg County First Steps will develop community educational and outreach activities to raise awareness and engage the local community about the importance of First Steps and our contributions to our local families and our youngest learners.



# 1. Parents will be their child's first and most important teacher.



## STRATEGY 1.1

### Parents as Teachers

#### SMART GOAL(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will increase the numbers of families enrolled and served in the parenting program by 30%.
- Bamberg County First Steps will ensure that 100% of families served have two or more risk factors.
- Bamberg County First Steps will increase assessment outcomes by 20% for the KIPS/ACIRI assessment tools.
- Bamberg County First Steps will ensure 100% bi-monthly home visitations and family group connections.

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will partner with local school districts, local childcare providers, the Department of Social Services, and the Department of Health and Human Services in its recruitment efforts of families with children ages prenatal through age three.

## STRATEGY 1.2

### Childcare Scholarships

#### SMART GOAL(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will increase the number of childcare scholarships to working families by 20% each year.

## 1. Parents will be their child's first and most important teacher.



2. Bamberg County First Steps will ensure 100% of families receiving childcare scholarships will be enrolled in the Parents As Teachers Program and receive high quality wrap around services.

3. Bamberg County First Steps will ensure that 100% of PAT enrolled children will participate in high quality daycare programs.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will partner with the Department of Social Services, and local childcare providers to ensure quality program services.

## 2. Quality Daycare will promote healthy school readiness development.



### STRATEGY 2.1

#### DSS/ABC Childcare Scholarships

#### SMART GOAL(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will ensure that 100% of children enrolled will receive comprehensive wrap around parenting services.
- Bamberg County First Steps will ensure that 90% of families enrolled in parenting will qualify for a Childcare Scholarship to enhance school readiness skills.

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will partner with local school districts, local childcare providers, the Department of Social Services, and the Department of Health and Human Services in its recruitment efforts of families with children ages prenatal through age three.

### STRATEGY 2.2

#### Professional Childcare Training and Development

#### SMART GOAL(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will increase the number of teachers enrolled in Professional Childcare Training and Development coursework by 25% by 2023.
- Bamberg County First Steps will ensure that 100% of First Steps funded earlycare programs receive a minimum of fifteen professional development training hours each year.

## 2. Quality Daycare will promote healthy school readiness development.



### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will partner with South Carolina Endeavors, DSS and local childcare providers.

### 3. Bamberg County First Steps will serve as a community convener.



#### STRATEGY 3.1

#### Community Education

#### SMART GOAL(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will serve as a local portal to support the needs of all preschool aged children during program years 2021-2023.
- In lieu of the COVID-19 pandemic the partnership will provide a minimum of three community engagement and collaborative driven events each year to increase awareness of our school readiness initiatives. Those events will include: Financial Literacy Workshops, Community Baby Showers, Community Yard Sales, Lunch and Learn Seminars and Food Distributions.
- Bamberg County First Steps will utilize monthly activities and/or events to support the Community Education and Outreach Plan to focus on goals to raise awareness, knowledge, participation and support for early childhood programs and First Steps services.
- To support this objective, Bamberg County First Steps will host: (6) First Steps Board Meetings, Bi-Annual State/Local Convener Meetings, Bi-Annual Childcare Directors Network Meetings and Bi-Annual DSS Advisory Board Meetings.

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will partner with local childcare providers, Bamberg County Library, Family Solutions of the Low Country, Headstart, DSS and DHEC.

### 3. Bamberg County First Steps will serve as a community convener.



#### STRATEGY 3.2

##### Parents as Teachers

#### SMART GOAL(S)

- Each year Bamberg County First Steps will increase community awareness by affording the following: Monthly Family Group Connections, PAT Advisory Committee Meetings, The Annual Back to School Supplies Bash, The “MOMMYCISE” Health and Wellness Initiative, and The Santa’s Little Helpers Toys, Food & Clothing Initiative.

#### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Bamberg County First Steps will partner will local childcare providers, Family Solutions of the Low Country, Headstart, DSS and DHEC.