

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024 – 2026



## Mission

**To assist children, birth to six, and their families by supporting collaborative efforts that ensure all children are prepared to succeed in school.**

## Vision

**Every South Carolina child will be prepared to succeed in school.**

## 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.**

# Message from the Executive Director



**David W. Lisk, Sr.**  
Executive Director  
York County First Steps

In recent years we have focused on expanding our programs to meet more of the needs of our families. Our efforts have borne much fruit with program additions to provide Parents as Teachers for our Hispanic Community, partnering with DSS to reunite families, and our Countdown to Kindergarten Program. We feel that the major element to drive this growth has been collaborations and partnerships. Support originating from the SC Legislature including annual allocations and incentive grants as well as local, regional, and federal grants have enabled our reaching more children in our community. This Strategic Plan is designed to take our next steps in addressing the early childhood needs of our community's children. They are our collective future and the investments we make now will continue to bear fruit for years to come. I welcome you to join our efforts, please contact me at [dlisk@rhmail.org](mailto:dlisk@rhmail.org) with any questions or suggestions.

*David W. Lisk, Sr.*

# Strategic Plan Process

## CONVENE

Held community convenings to develop a vision for young children and their families

October 2022 – January 2023



## UNDERSTAND

Reviewed local data and map assets to understand the state of young children, their families, and the early childhood system

October 2022 – March 2023



## PRIORITIZE

Organized the insight gathered from the convenings and data to prioritize the concerns, needs, and gaps the partnership wants to address and formalized Needs Assessment

January 2023 – March 2023



## PLAN

Wrote the partnership's three-year Strategic Plan using the Needs Assessment

March 2023 – May 2023



## APPLY

Utilize the Strategic Plan to inform the partnership's Annual Formula Funding Grant Application

May 2023, May 2024, May 2025



## IMPLEMENT

Execute the programs and services outlined in the Strategic Plan

July 2023 – June 2026



## MONITOR

Track the partnership's progress on implementing programs to fidelity and on achieving the Strategic Plan

July 2023 – June 2026



# Priority Needs: Summary

Through a series of community convenings, a needs assessment and asset mapping process, the following needs were prioritized for York County. See our full needs assessment here: <link>.

## **1. Increase Funding for Childcare Costs**

- Current Partnerships with the Rock Hill Housing Authority, the United Way, and York Tech can offer a template for engaging other State and Community funders to increase funding.
- Current market conditions within the childcare industry have owners trying to balance securing and retaining adequate staffing to offer full enrollment.
- Parents struggling to pay for quality childcare have limited options in some areas of York County between access and pricing.
- Affordable and quality childcare are essential to allow parents to fully participate in the State's economic market.

## **2. Increase Availability of Quality Childcare in York and Clover**

- The York and Clover SD's are interested in visiting the Franklin School in Spartanburg to learn more about the model used to bring community funding together to provide a quality childcare center sustained by blended funding and representative of a diverse community..
- There are outside partners interested in converting a site in York to a multi-generational site to include a childcare center.

## **3. Secure Sustainable Funding for Nurse-Family Partnership**

- This program is a foundational intervention for our programs and sustainable funding is required to maintain long-term viability.
- This will require blended funding streams and securing a base of public funding will allow for more stability.

# Objectives

## **1. Increase the access and funding for childcare vouchers to meet the needs of at-risk families.**

- Childcare costs are a chronic barrier for families to make strides toward being self-sufficient.
- Families continue to struggle to access and maintain existing vouchers to assist with their childcare costs.
- There are several pilot efforts in York County working to provide additional funding to families taking concrete steps toward self-sufficiency.
- More funding and streamlined access are needed to increase effectiveness.

## **2. Increase the availability of Quality Childcare Options in the Western portion of York County**

- Major areas in the York and Clover School Districts are classified as Childcare Deserts.
- There are several potential opportunities to collaborate and support community organizations to increase childcare options in this area.

## **3. Secure Sustainable Funding for our Nurse-Family Partnership Program**

- Projected Medicaid funding, which was to be a major element of sustainability, has been delayed for a variety of reasons.
- A blended and diverse funding stream is needed for long term stability.

# Objective One: Increase the access and funding for childcare vouchers to meet the needs of at-risk families.

## STRATEGY 1.1

Leverage current collaborations to sustain and increase funding

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY 24, adapt guidelines for the programs to adequately match family needs to quality childcare programs.
2. By the end of FY 26 childcare funding has increased by at least 25% over current levels.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Rock Hill Housing Authority, United Way of York County, and York Technical College

## STRATEGY 1.2

Use the current pilot models to engage more community partners to fund additional childcare vouchers.

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY 25, identify and engage with at least 2 community partners interested in financially supporting childcare vouchers either for their employees or for a broader client base.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- City and County Government organizations, Local Businesses, and as yet to be identified partners.

# Objective Two: Increase the availability of Quality Childcare Options in the Western portion of York County

## STRATEGY 2.1

Explore potential options for private, public, public/private collaborations that would increase the number of quality childcare providers in York and Clover

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY 24, facilitate visits to Spartanburg to visit the Franklin Preschool by York and Clover School District Leaders and interested community leaders.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- York SD #1 and Clover SD #2, Community Leaders in York and Clover

## STRATEGY 2.2

Support the redevelopment of the York Place Site near downtown York to include a quality childcare center.

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY 26, a plan has been developed to include a phased approach to including a quality childcare center.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- York SD #1, Still Hopes/SC Episcopal Church, Community Leaders



# Objective Two: Increase the availability of Quality Childcare Options in the Western portion of York County

## STRATEGY 2.3

Bring in First Steps, First Steps 4K, and SC DSS/ABC Resources to help guide planning and implementation of providing childcare services at York Place and York Technical College

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY 24, facilitate meetings with the State Office 4K support for both the York Place Project and at York Technical College as they transition their current childcare center.
2. By end of FY 25, facilitate planning meetings with York Place and State DSS/ABC support resources.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Still Hope/SC Episcopal Church, York Place Board, and State Office of FS

# Objective Three: Secure Sustainable Funding for our Nurse-Family Partnership Program

## STRATEGY 3.1

Seek Medicaid funding for NFP Program support

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY 24, work with NFP National Service Office and other potential funders to develop a path to determine potential sustained funding streams.
2. By the end of FY 24, have York's NFP Program included in under the SC Medicaid Waiver under the Home Visitation Interventions.

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- NFP National Service Office, Children's Trust, SC Legislature, other potential funders

## STRATEGY 3.2

Secure a long-range and diverse funding stream to sustain the current program and allow for eventual expansion when needed.

### SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY 24, stabilize current funding for our current program capacity.
2. By the end of FY 26, develop a multi-stream of funding for full support of our NFP Program

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- Regional Foundations, including Sisters of Charity, Arras, Children's Trust, SC First Steps, and other potential funders<sub>10</sub>

## Overarching Measure(s) of Success

### 1. INCREASE THE REACH OF FIRST STEPS SERVICES

By 2025, the percentage of children in need who are directly served by First Steps will increase from 17% to 20%.

### 3. INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY FIRST STEPS

By 2025, the percentage of children under age 6 who benefit from First Steps quality enhancement and training efforts will increase from 12% to 15%.

### 4. MORE CHILDREN ARRIVE AT KINDERGARTEN READY FOR SUCCESS

By 2025, the percentage of children who score at the highest level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment will increase by 2% each year to 47%.