



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2024-2025





# FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Georgetown County First Steps:



**618 children**

were directly served in Georgetown County



**740 parents & caregivers**

received services and support to be their child's first and most important teacher



**246 educators**

participated in First Steps training and professional development, benefitting 500+ children

## THE NEED PERSISTS IN GEORGETOWN COUNTY

First Steps works but we need to expand our reach to ensure that all children are ready.

**3,055**

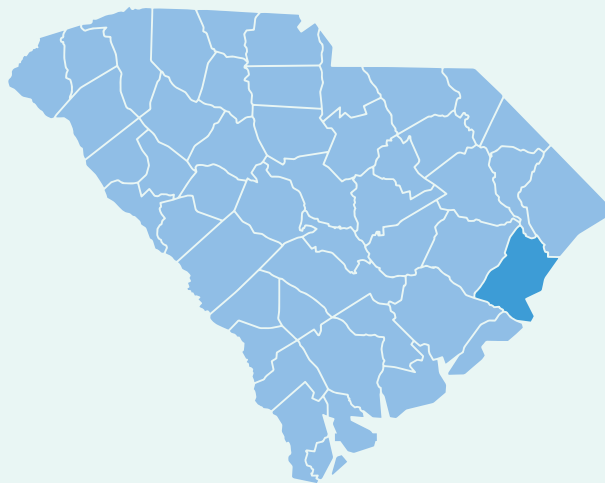
children birth to five

**44%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**55%**

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



## PROVEN RESULTS

A 2019 study found that children who received First Steps local partnership services were:



**74% more likely**

to score at the highest level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment



**34% less likely**

to be chronically absent in kindergarten

# OUR MISSION

Georgetown County First Steps takes a holistic approach to provide every child with the best possible start for school success and life; providing programs and support to help physical, emotional, and intellectual growth. We promote healthy development in children birth to five, regardless of their background or circumstance.



**Dr. Ayesha Smith-Salim**  
Executive Director

Dear Georgetown County Community,

As we reflect on this past year, I am deeply grateful for the families, partners, educators, and community members who make Georgetown County First Steps strong. Together, we are laying the foundation for every child to enter school ready to succeed.

With your support, we have expanded access to early learning, strengthened partnerships, and equipped families with the tools to be their child's first and most important teacher. From our 3K classrooms to family engagement programs, our shared commitment to children's well-being continues to guide our work.

This progress would not be possible without your trust and collaboration. As we look ahead, we remain dedicated to expanding access, equity, and excellence in early childhood education.

On behalf of our Board and staff, thank you for walking with us. Together, we are shaping brighter futures for the children of Georgetown County.



**Tiffany Ladson-Jenkins**  
Board Chair

Dear Friends and Partners,

It has been an honor to serve as Chair of the Georgetown County First Steps Board of Directors this year. Together with our dedicated staff, community partners, and families, we have worked to expand opportunities for our youngest learners and ensure they have the strong start they deserve.

The impact of our programs is a reflection of what can be accomplished when a community unites around children and families. On behalf of the Board, I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who has supported this mission with time, resources, and commitment.

We look forward to continuing this important work and building on the progress we have made together. Thank you for joining us in preparing Georgetown County's children for success in school and in life.

# PROGRAMS

## PARENTING

### HIPPY

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home visiting program that supports parents in their role as a child's first and most important teacher.

35

children served

677

home visits

30

group meetings  
and events

### ParentChild+

Home visitation for families with 2- and 3-year olds to promote early literacy skills.

42

children served

1,376

home visits

## EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

### Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

4

children served

13

providers served

3

certified training  
hours

### Early Education Program Support

Providing families with early care and education by supporting center-based child care programs.

41

children served

6

group meetings  
and events

### Child Care Scholarships

Eligible children receive tuition-free enrollment at quality child care centers.

45

children served

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

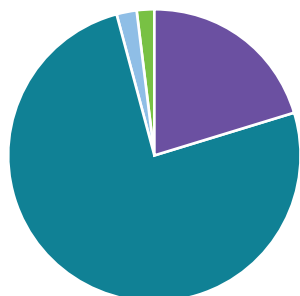


**\$1 = \$1.98**

Georgetown County First Steps leveraged \$355,117.79 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.98 for every state dollar invested.

## EXPENDITURES

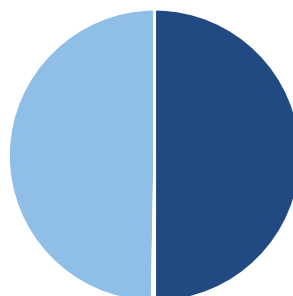
Total: \$699,617.03



|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| Parenting              | - \$142,367.24 |
| Early Care & Education | - \$529,006.55 |
| Administrative         | - \$15,665.55  |
| Core Functions         | - \$12,577.69  |

## FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$717,630.87



|                       |                |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| State Funding         | - \$362,513.08 |
| Private Funding       | - \$1,949.55   |
| In-kind Contributions | - \$357,030    |

## FUNDING SUPPORT

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding

State READY Funding\*

Federal AmeriCorps Service Site

State Income Tax Check-off and Private Donations to SC First Steps

\*Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Proviso 1.84

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Georgetown County First Steps has truly made a difference for our family. The support, resources, and care we've received have helped us feel confident as our child begins their learning journey. Knowing that our community is invested is important.

**Georgetown County First Steps Parent**



## Board of Directors

Donald Gilliard  
Yolanda Bradford  
Shanna Scott  
Joseph Enoch  
Tracey Antley  
Tiffany Jenkins  
Shannon Hazel  
Sandra Cruz  
Desmond Phillips  
Quentin Lance  
Diane Owens  
Ernest Flagler-Mitchell  
Tawanna Grant  
Sheila Sullivan

## Donor List

Georgetown County School District  
The Period Project  
Abundance Healthcare  
Small Minds of Tomorrow

## CONTACT US

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