



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Bamberg County First Steps:



44 children

were directly served in Bamberg County



77 parents & caregivers

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



47 educators

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

THE NEED PERSISTS IN BAMBERG COUNTY

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

706

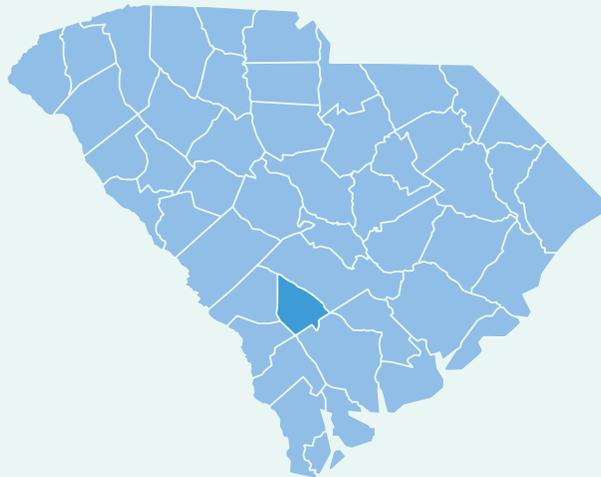
children birth to five

49%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

86%

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

To collaborate with community partners, 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.



Pauletta Plowden
Executive Director

Bamberg County First Steps a National Blue Ribbon, Parents as Teachers Affiliate, is very proud to serve as an "Early Childhood School Readiness Champion" for Bamberg County, S.C. Through working collaboratively with our community schools, daycare providers, local and state partners and our community's youngest learners and their families, our partnership has provided a strong and healthy start for getting our children ready for the first grade! To ensure high quality school readiness by age five, our babies require a positive, supportive and loving home and learning environment. Bamberg County First Steps provides a professional strategic comprehensive plan, to ensure that all children in our county are prepared and empowered for future success. As Executive Director, I am committed to excellence and am very thankful to our State and Local Leaders, our community partners, families and friends, for your loyal and valued support for over twenty-five years of early childhood investment!



Johnell Gaines
Board Chair

It's been my pleasure and a significant honor to serve as Board Chair for Bamberg County First Steps. Our board's commitment to the local children and families that we served, has been amazing! It is indeed an honor to work with the First Steps Board and Staff in providing excellent learning resources to our community's young children. Our Board is committed to ensuring that our local children are provided with the necessary tools to be ready for the first grade. Our Board works collaboratively with the school district, community partners and parents, in order to provide continuous support and resources for our families in Bamberg County. We are committed to each child achieving success in learning and leading them to their fullest potential in life!

PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

Offers research-based curricula that help families raise children to be healthy, safe, learning, and ready for school.

44

children served

12

group meetings
and events

620

home visits

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

222

children served

8

providers served

20

certified training
hours

Child Care Scholarships

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

14

children served

3

providers served

“

This program gives me strength, hope and love. My son enjoys learning new things and is becoming more confidence. Thank you Bamberg County First Steps!

Whitney & Jaivion Williams



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

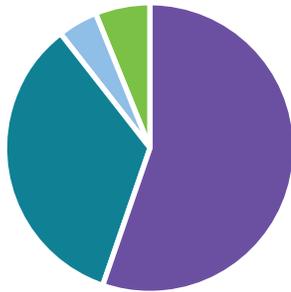


\$1 = \$1.57

Bamberg County First Steps leveraged \$183,785.91 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.57 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

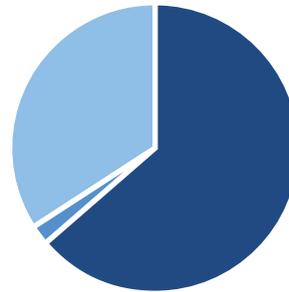
Total: \$475,221.93



- Parenting - \$262,730.57
- Early Care & Education - \$162,663.94
- Administrative - \$22,099.19
- Core Functions - \$27,727.63

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$505,646.17



- State Funding - \$321,860.26
- Private Funding - \$11,947.91
- In-kind Contributions - \$171,838

FUNDING SUPPORT

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding
State READY Funding*

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

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

Board of Directors

Johnell Gaines
Ernestine Barnwell
Jannette Stokes
Mabel Frazier
Lindsey Toomer
Imagen Kinard

Donor List

Bamberg Family Practice
Tri-County Community Foundation
Home Federal Savings & Loan
Dash Funeral Home
Cynthia Hurst
Phoenix Specialty
Greenville Technical College
Enterprise Bank
Brabham Oil Company
Wilson Law Firm
Aweena & Russell Hurst
City of Bamberg

Mary Jane School Of Dance
Evelyn Smith Smart
Molina Healthcare
Nu Tau Omega & Eta Nu Chapter of AKA
Attorney Evert Comer, Jr.
Lisa Thomas
Sharon Hammond
Pauletta Plowden
Barnwell County United Way
Bamberg County Office On Aging
Hickory Hill United Methodist Church.

CONTACT US

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