

External Evaluation Summary

Parents as Teachers

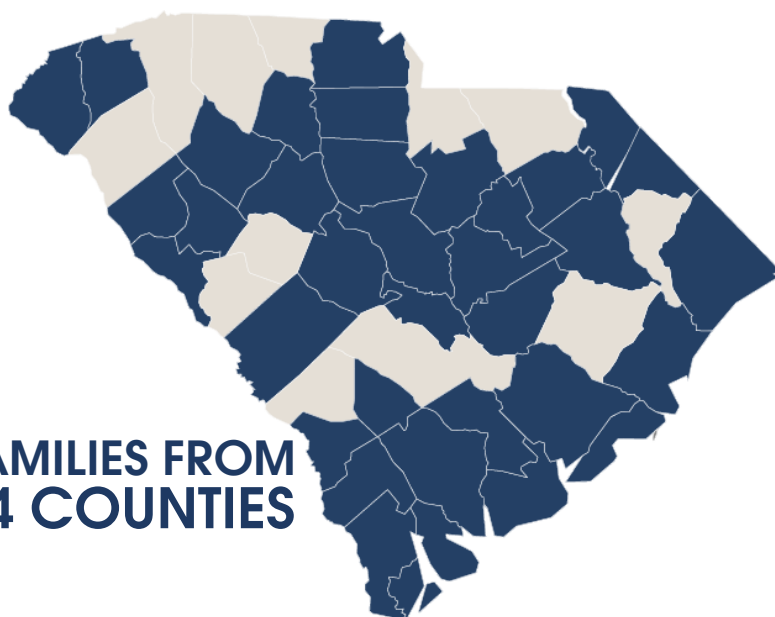
South Carolina First Steps

Since 1999, South Carolina First Steps (SCFS) has worked to support school readiness of young children across the state. As the state office for the Parents as Teachers (PAT) program, PAT is SCFS's most commonly offered and highest funded parenting program. To evaluate program effectiveness, SCFS commissioned an external evaluation of the Parents as Teachers program, focusing on the period of July 2016 to June 2019.

2,150

**FAMILIES SERVED
FROM 2016 TO 2019**

The average family was enrolled for 1.7 years total. Children averaged 1.25 years old at enrollment.



Over three years, South Carolina families received a total of:

- **61,969** home visits from parent educators
- **68,954** hours of home visit time
- **1,000** group parent education sessions
- **6,131** child development screenings
- **12,633** referrals to other resources
- **704** childcare scholarships

OUT OF 21 RISK FACTORS FOR EARLY SCHOOL FAILURE, THE AVERAGE FAMILY ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM EXPERIENCED **3 OR MORE**.

81.3%

MADE <\$15,000 PER YEAR

64.9%

WERE SINGLE-PARENT FAMILIES

Program Outcomes

To understand how the PAT program may benefit families, the evaluation team looked at outcomes for both parents and children. Important questions for future research include whether benefits may be even stronger over time and how child, family, and program factors relate to key outcomes.

Average parenting quality and interactive reading scores increased from the first assessment to the final assessment.



Interactive reading scores were as much as 30% higher at the final assessment.



Parenting quality assessment scores were 9% higher at the final assessment.

Program participation was significantly related to school and well-child visit attendance rates.



PAT program students were present for a significantly higher percentage of school days than their like peers. On average, PAT students missed less than 6% of school days.



Children of PAT families who were enrolled in Medicaid attended the recommended number of well-child visits at a significantly higher rate than their like peers. On average, PAT children met approximately half the recommended visits, while non-PAT children met only one-third.



There was no evidence that participating in the PAT program impacted scores on a kindergarten readiness measure or number of child maltreatment reports.