



# FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Dillon County First Steps:



**380 children**

were directly served in Dillon County



**248 parents & caregivers**

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



**90 educators**

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

## 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

## THE NEED PERSISTS IN DILLON COUNTY

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

**2,202**

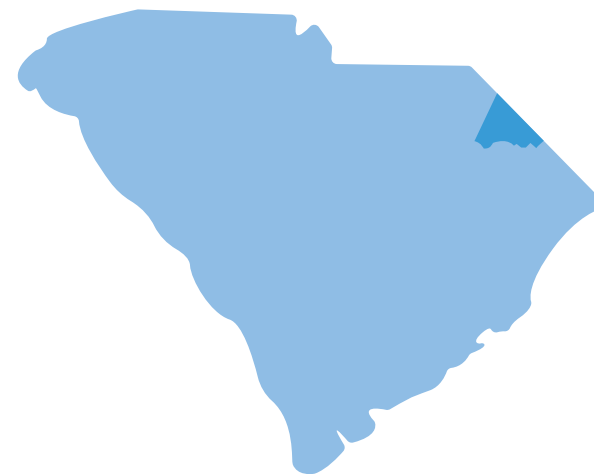
children under age 5

**71.2%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**74%**

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



## Our Local Supporters

Niagara Bottling \$5,000  
 Sisters of Charity Foundation \$5,000  
 South Carolina Ports Authority \$2,500  
 SC Endeavors \$2,500  
 Wlliot Realty Charitable Community Fund \$1,000  
 Kids LTD \$1,000  
 Mike Reaves Livestock  
 Rev. Dr. W. Franklin Blue  
 Dillon County Finance  
 Dillon-Marion County Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta  
 First Citizens Bank  
 Wright Therapy Group  
 Prestige Funeral Home  
 Braddy Insurance  
 Bartell Funeral Home  
 Councilman Kenny Cook, Jr.  
 Dillon Internal Medicine  
 First Baptist Church - Dillon  
 Home and Industrial Mechanical Supplies, Inc.  
 McLeod Health - Dillon  
 A.R.S. Marketing  
 Family Sports Center  
 Dillon Branch NO.5513 NAACP  
 Kelly's Qwik Print  
 Beauty By Liz  
 Chief Judge James E. Lockemy  
 Dawnyelle Livingston  
 Bridget Abraham  
 United Fund of Dillon County  
 DCFS Board Members and Staff  
 The Village Educational Services, LLC  
 Fitness by Cory, LLC

## Board of Directors

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## CONTACT US

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# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## OUR MISSION

Every child in Dillon County is important and should experience a loving, stimulating, healthy, and safe environment ensured by a supportive family and community.



### Shirleen Lewis

Executive Director

The work we do is critical, and it takes the support of so many people to make a difference in the lives of the children and families we serve. Gifts of every size add up to collectively add to the success of Dillon County First Steps (DCFS). You are an essential piece of that plan.

DCFS is well positioned and will continue to build upon its great legacy, working alongside our board members, stellar staff, and community partners, and pursuing our major goals. We are even more excited that we were able to extend the services we provide in this fiscal year through our Nurturing Parenting Program. We are off to an amazing start of working more directly with families in our weekly Nurturing Parenting Groups and Nurturing Father's Programs and are amazed at how we are seeing families bond and apply the weekly lessons to their lives.

We will continue to aim to build our capacity and work with our partners to meet the needs of this county. Thank you all for your dedication to this organization.



### Kenneth Smith

Board Chair

We are living through an unprecedented moment in time, but what gives me hope is our equally unprecedented commitment to responding to the needs of Dillon County. While the needs and the incredible potential of our county's residents have never been greater, every day we see the impact of our donors' generosity and investments. The lasting impactful change we want to see will take time, but the Dillon County First Steps Partnership Board and Staff are dedicated to working to see that change here in our county. To all our donors, nonprofit partners, sponsors and others who have let us share in their generosity, and on behalf of our dedicated and talented Board, I offer my sincere gratitude. Thank you for inspiring us and for joining us in building and impacting the lives of children and their families daily.

## PROGRAMS

### PARENTING

#### Nurturing Parenting - Home

Designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglecting parenting and child-rearing practices.

66 children served, 57 families served, 1,052 home visits

#### Nurturing Parenting - Group

Designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglecting parenting and child-rearing practices.

88 children served, 54 families served, 98 home visits

#### Raising a Reader

Helps families develop, practice, and maintain home literacy habits.

68 children served, 564 books distributed

### EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

#### Quality Enhancement

Promotes quality in child care by providing early educators with one-on-one coaching and support.

76 children served, 4 providers served, 112 technical assistance hours

#### Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

579 children served, 22 providers served, 24 certified training hours

Serving Dillon County's children birth through age five.



"I have been in Nurturing Parenting Home Visitation Program for 2 years and it is beneficial to my entire family. My baby has a Parent Educator who visits our home, works with him to make sure that he is on target developmentally, and me to be a better parent. My husband has participated in the Father's Program and I in the NP Groups. DCFS has given us so many resources to strengthen our family dynamics."

Lavetta Johnson  
Dillon County First Steps parent

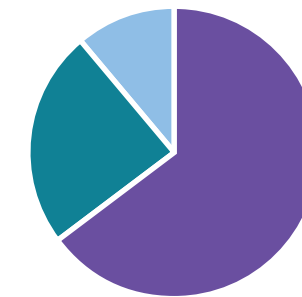
## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

\$1 = \$2.35

Dillon County First Steps leveraged \$269,436 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$1.35 for every state dollar invested.

### EXPENDITURES

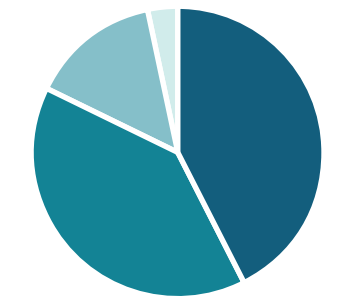
Total: \$462,930.63



- Parenting - \$300,186.43
- Early Care & Education - \$112,081.8
- Administrative - \$50,662.4

### FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$469,436



- State Funding - \$200,000
- Federal Funding - \$186,475.69
- Private Funding - \$68,125.31
- In-kind Contributions - \$14,835

### FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding  
State READY Funding\*  
Federal Preschool Development Grant Funding\*\*  
Federal ESSER Funding\*\*\*  
State Income Tax Check-off and Private Donations to SC First Steps

\*Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Proviso 1.105

\*\*Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0080-01-00 from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, awarded to the South Carolina Department of Social Services, Division of Early Care and Education

\*\*\*American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, awarded to the South Carolina Department of Education