

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2024 – 2026



# Acknowledgments

Cherokee County First Steps gathered information from local community partners, parents, and child care directors to determine county needs and resources. The information gathered was reviewed and priority concerns were determined to address in the Strategic Plan.

We would like to express our gratitude to all partners, board members, parents, and child care directors for their assistance and participation with this process.

The project described was supported through South Carolina First Steps by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative (PDG B-5), Grant Number 90TP0080-02-01 from the Office of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.

# Needs Assessment Process

## CONVENE

Held two community convenings with 21 participants and developed a vision for young children and their families

October 2022 – February 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 – February 2023

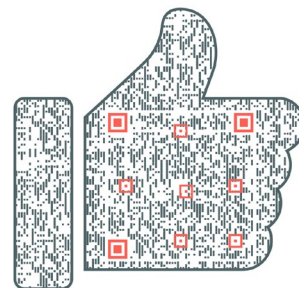
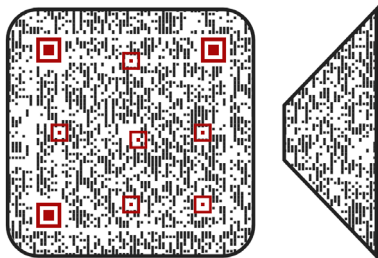
## UNDERSTAND

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

October 2022 – February 2023

Below is a QR Code that links a video created to provide information about programs with testimonials from past participants. A few of these individuals participated in the community convenings.

Below is a QR Code that links a testimonial from a participant from the Triple P program.



# Asset Map





# Priorities: Summary

## 1. Parent Training

Training is desired by families in several areas including work/life integration, basic family needs, and early education development. Strategies and information regarding early interventions for education, speech, behavior, and emotional challenges were discussed.

## 2. Quality Child Care and Child Care Deserts

Early childcare services lack availability in evenings and workforce development. Centers are understaffed and need help with staff training.

## 3. Supporting Families and Children

Children and families are in need of services, but they may not be aware of all resources available within the county. It has been suggested that pairing up with partners for outreach events would boost community awareness, allow access to a more diverse population, and provide families/children opportunities to interact in social settings that will teach them needed skills for success.

# Priority One: Parent Training

## **85.92 of births in Cherokee County had a maternal age of <20 years (per 1,000 live births).**

Information obtained from SC B-5 Early Childhood Needs Assessment Data originating from SCDHEC Vital Records via SC Community Assessment Network for 2020.

## **119 of the births in Cherokee County were born to mothers with less than a high school education.**

Information obtained from SC B-5 Early Childhood Needs Assessment Data originating from SCDHEC Vital Records via SC Community Assessment Network for 2020.

# Priority Two: Quality Child Care & Child Care Deserts

## **Only 25% of licensed child care facilities within Cherokee County have an ABC rating of B or higher.**

Provider location and ABC rating information obtained from SC B-5 Early Childhood Needs Assessment Data originating from the Department of Social Services through [scchildcare.org](https://www.scchildcare.org) on October 16, 2022.

## **62.5% of census tracts are considered child care deserts in Cherokee County with 68.6% of children under age 6 living within a child care desert.**

“A child care desert is any census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no child care providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots” (<https://www.childcaredeserts.org/>). Provider location obtained from [scchildcare.org](https://www.scchildcare.org) on October 16, 2022. Definition of a child care desert obtained from the Center for American Progress, Population under age 5 by census tract obtained from the American Community Survey 2016-2020 Five Year Estimates (Table B01001). US Census Bureau. Calculations done by Chelsea Richard of South Carolina First Steps (October 16, 2022).



# Priority Three: Supporting Families and Children

## **Only 32% of students enrolling in Kindergarten in Cherokee County demonstrated readiness to learn.**

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment information obtained from SC B-5 Early Childhood Needs Assessment Data originating from fall 2021 calculated from school district data from the SC Education Oversight Committee and from Cherokee County's SC School Report Card from [screportcards.com](https://screportcards.com).

## **47% of people in Cherokee County receiving SNAP benefits are children <18 years.**

SNAP information obtained from SC Department of Social Services through [reports.dss.sc.gov](https://reports.dss.sc.gov) from January 2023.

# Next Steps



### PLAN

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

March 2023 – April 2023



### APPLY

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

April 2023, April 2024, April 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