



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Greenwood County First Steps:



70 children

were directly served in Greenwood County



238 parents & caregivers

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



263 educators

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

THE NEED PERSISTS IN GREENWOOD COUNTY

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

5,156

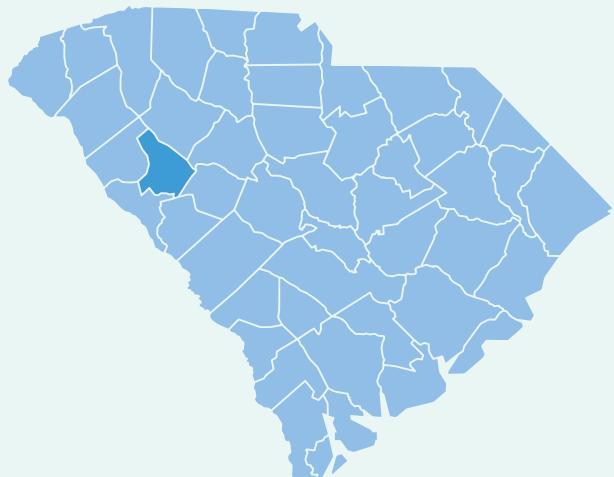
children birth to five

36%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

56%

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 other entities to help families and caregivers prepare our children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance, and expand high quality for early childhood services.



Santasha Highley
Executive Director

Greenwood County First Steps is deeply committed to using every dollar we receive to its fullest potential. Preparing children for kindergarten is a shared responsibility that calls for every agency in Greenwood County to not only recognize their role as stakeholders but to embrace it with passion, dedication, and commitment.

Over the past year, the quality of services provided through Greenwood County First Steps has grown tremendously, thanks to the addition of strong local and state partnerships. Many of our community organizations have been instrumental in reaching the most at-risk children and families in our community. Through these partnerships, we are able to provide families with comprehensive, wraparound support to ensure school success. Our services are designed to remove barriers, empower parents, and create brighter futures for our youngest learners to ensure every child in Greenwood County enters school prepared for success.

“

My journey in the PAT Program has not only equipped me with tools for parenting but has also opened doors to new opportunities for personal growth. I have embraced my role as a mother with newfound confidence!

Makayla P.



PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

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

39

children served

623

home visits

12

group meetings
and events

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.

8

children served

141

home visits

7

group meetings
and events

Family Café

Parent discussion groups that promote social connections with other parents, support in times of need, learning about parenting and child development, and emotional awareness.

23

children served

20

families served

16

group meetings
and events

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

1,104

children served

35

providers served

20.5

certified training hours

Child Care Scholarships

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

13

children served

10

families served

6

providers served

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

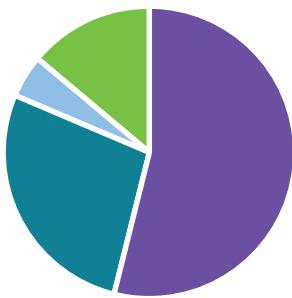


\$1 = \$1.55

Greenwood County First Steps leveraged \$202,601.25 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.55 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

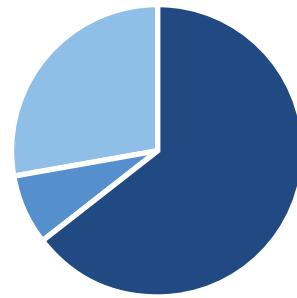
Total: \$553,027.36



- Parenting - \$298,174.01
- Early Care & Education - \$153,185.23
- Administrative - \$26,298.60
- Core Functions - \$75,369.52

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$872,857.52



- State Funding - \$370,256.27
- Private Funding - \$44,299.02
- In-kind Contributions - \$158,302.23

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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