



## FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Williamsburg County First Steps:



**508 children**

were directly served in Williamsburg County



**585 parents & caregivers**

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



**55 educators**

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

## THE NEED PERSISTS IN WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY

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

**1,729**

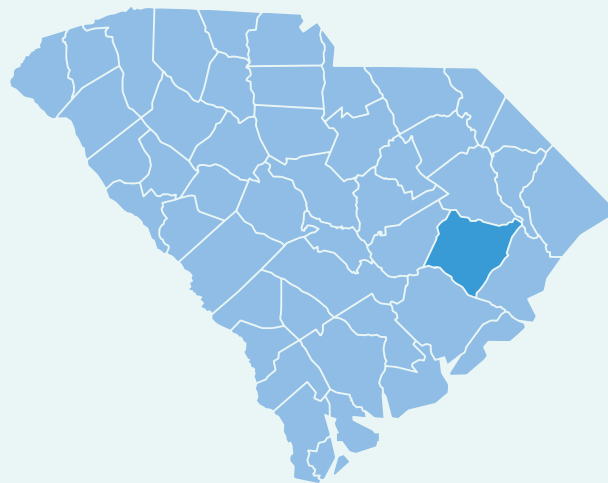
children birth to five

**54%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**62%**

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

“

Through Parents as Teachers, Jayce has thrived—socially, academically, and cognitively. As a parent, I feel seen, supported, heard, and given resources to guide his learning. We are truly grateful for the care and encouragement of WCFS.

**Savanah C.**



## Board of Directors

Verney Cumbee

Elizabeth McCray

Jennifer McKnight

Suanetta Tisdale

April Williams

## Donor List

Janice M. Gamble - \$150.00

Mount Olive Missionary Baptist Church - \$100.00

Union Baptist Church - \$250.00

Williamsburg County First Steps Board Members - \$160.00

Williamsburg County School District Employees - \$141.35

Greenville Technical College (Certified Training Incentive Grant) - \$2,500.00

Williamsburg County School District - \$53,804.00

South Carolina First Steps/AmeriCorps - \$39,795.99

SC Department of Social Services (Child Care Scholarships) - \$126,944.00

## CONTACT US

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



# OUR MISSION

Collaborating with other entities, Williamsburg County First Steps helps families and caregivers in our county prepare children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high-quality early childhood services.



Felicia Patrick  
Executive Director

As Executive Director, I am honored to share the successes of Williamsburg County First Steps (WCFS) and the partnerships that serve children and families across our county. I was humbled to receive the Youth Empowerment Award from the Williamsburg County NAACP, which I accepted on behalf of our families, Board, staff, volunteers, and partners. A child’s development—physical, intellectual, language, emotional, and social—is critical for school readiness. WCFS provides parents with resources and tools to be their child’s first and most important teacher. Through programs like Parents as Teachers, Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, Countdown to Kindergarten, 4K, and childcare training and support, we empower families, strengthen communities, and prepare children birth to five for school success. Research shows the first five years are vital for brain development. WCFS remains dedicated to quality, equity, and partnerships to ensure every child in Williamsburg County enters school ready.



April Williams  
Board Chair

The Williamsburg County First Steps Partnership Board believes in our vision, which is for every child in Williamsburg County to have the resources and support needed to be fully prepared for success in school. The positive impacts on children and families in our community can be seen through the numerous successes of our county-wide programs, and we are sincerely appreciative of the resources provided through our many collaborative partnerships with community and governmental agencies. As the Williamsburg County First Steps Partnership Board continues to work with other organizations to fulfill our mission of implementing programs and providing essential resources, we remain committed to delivering, enhancing, and expanding high-quality early childhood services. We also want to express our deepest thanks to the Williamsburg County School District for its ongoing support, dedication, and partnership, which have been vital in helping us reach more children and families.

# PROGRAMS

## PARENTING

### Parents as Teachers

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

90 children served  
1,971 home visits  
15 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.

30 children served  
612 home visits  
12 group meetings and events

### Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

Free, high-quality books mailed to the home of children from birth until age five.

360 children served  
2,962 books distributed

### 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.

27 children served  
16 group meetings and events

## EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

### Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

256 children served  
20 providers served  
20 certified training hours

### Child Care Scholarships

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

16 children served  
4 providers served

## SCHOOL TRANSITION

### Countdown to Kindergarten

Supports transitions into kindergarten by connecting incoming students, their families, and their teachers in a series of one-on-one sessions during the summer.

33 children served  
2 schools served  
242 home/school visits

### Countdown to 4K

Supports transitions into pre-kindergarten by connecting incoming students, their families, and their teachers in a series of one-on-one sessions during the summer.

29 children served  
3 schools served  
205 home/school visits

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

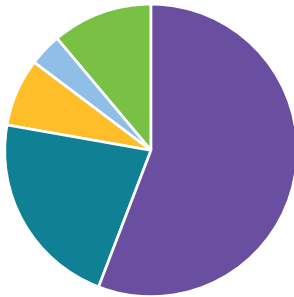


\$1 = \$1.48

Williamsburg County First Steps leveraged \$263,969.92 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.48 for every state dollar invested.

## EXPENDITURES

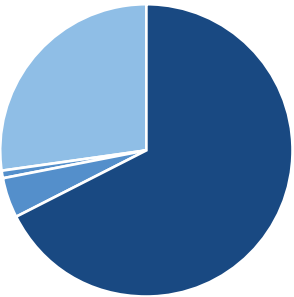
Total: \$836,194.32



- Parenting - \$468,693.86
- Early Care & Education - \$182,355.03
- School Transition - \$62,564.48
- Administrative - \$31,851.01
- Core Functions - \$90,999.94

## FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$812,363.02



- State Funding - \$548,393.10
- Federal Funding - \$36,458.31
- Private Funding - \$6,967.62
- In-kind Contributions - \$220,543.99

## 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