



## FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Clarendon County First Steps:



**236 children**

were directly served in Clarendon County



**743 parents & caregivers**

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



**56 educators**

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



### Darla Lee

Board Chair

Thank you for your continued support of Clarendon County First Steps and our efforts to promote school readiness in Clarendon County! Ours is a partnership that seeks to impact in a positive way our children, our most important and vulnerable citizens. To the families with whom we work, thank you for allowing us to assist you and your preschool children. You and your children are the reason we do this important work!

To our colleagues, thank you for your referrals, for inviting us to be a part of the work you do, for connecting with the families we serve and providing them with much-needed resources, and for other essential contributions. Your help has been and continues to be crucial to our work to realize a Clarendon County in which all our preschool children arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. Thank you!

### 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 CLARENDON COUNTY

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

**1,709**

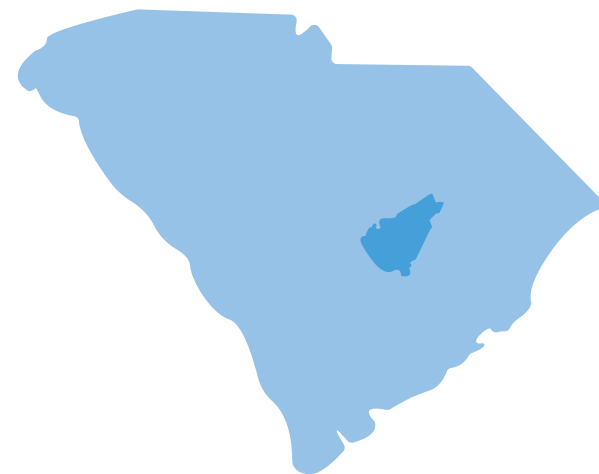
children under age 5

**56.6%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**67%**

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



### Board of Directors

- Monica Bass
- Brittany Beeker
- Mary Cooper
- Kathleen Gibson
- Amanda Graham
- Betty Harrington
- Michael Jonas
- Darla Lee
- Jason Montgomery
- Wanda Nelson
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### CONTACT US

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# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

# OUR MISSION

To partner with organizations within and outside of Clarendon County to leverage and maximize resources to provide quality, research-based programs and services that will prepare Clarendon County's children for success in school and in life.



## Sharon Williams Executive Director

Research consistently tells us the following:

- High-quality early childhood education has the potential to reduce children's timidity and improves their attentiveness.
- Childcare quality has a long-term effect on children's cognitive and socioemotional development through kindergarten and beyond.
- High-quality early learning programs can close the achievement gap.
- Early learning and care have the potential to increase high school graduation rates.
- Early language skills, the foundation for reading ability and school readiness, are acquired and built during the first five years of life. Children who are exposed to reading during the first years of life are much more likely to learn to read on schedule.
- Children who enter kindergarten behind their peers academically are more likely to stay or fall behind.

Clarendon County First Steps' Partnership Board relies on the facts to determine the programs and services we offer Clarendon County's preschool children and their families.

## Serving Clarendon County's children birth through age five.



"Thank you so much for having such a great program! Maddix and Mila love to read and enjoy getting new books each month."

Sonya Seitz  
Clarendon County First Steps parent

# PROGRAMS

## PARENTING

### Parents as Teachers

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

64 children served    752 group meetings and events    19 home visits

### Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

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

159 children served    3,066 books distributed

## EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

### Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

580 children served    19 providers served    21 certified training hours

## 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.

13 children served    1 schools served    77 home visits

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

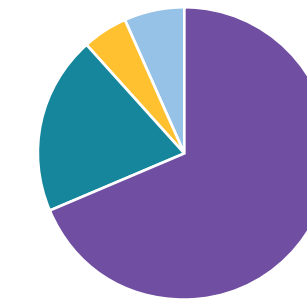


**\$1 = \$2.62**

Clarendon County First Steps leveraged \$323,484.87 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$1.62 for every state dollar invested.

## EXPENDITURES

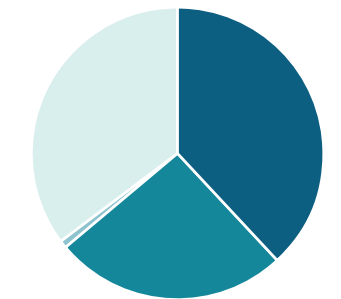
Total: \$477,596.4



- Parenting - \$328,702.01
- Early Care & Education - \$93,695.75
- School Transition - \$24,483.09
- Administrative - \$30,715.55

## FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$523,484.87



- State Funding - \$200,000
- Federal Funding - \$134,618.2
- Private Funding - \$4,936.67
- In-kind Contributions - \$183,930

## FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

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

\*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