



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Chester County First Steps:



186 children

were directly served in Chester County



268 parents & caregivers

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



763 educators

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

THE NEED PERSISTS IN CHESTER COUNTY

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

2,128

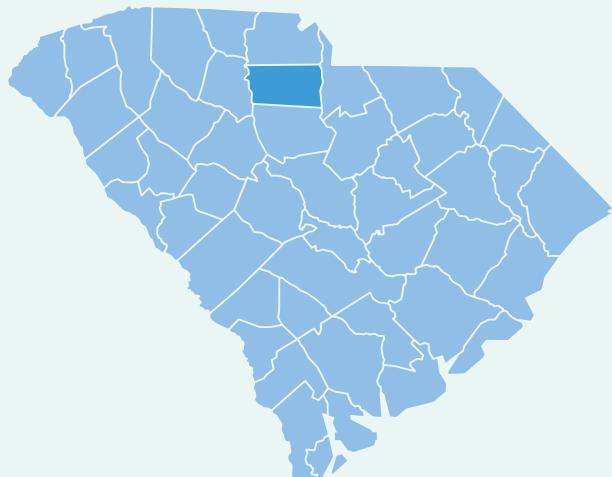
children birth to five

61%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

74%

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 community partners to ensure that all children start school ready to reach their highest potential with engaged support from their parents, caregivers, and communities.



David W. Lisk, Sr.
Executive Director

We strive to help our youngest children prepare for success and their parents to nurture and support their children in their learning journey. This is where Chester County First Steps can partner with our families in impactful ways, through our parenting programs, our helping Childcare Centers teach children the learning skills they will need or partnering with the community to reach even more families of preschool children.

I was involved with our family's childcare business before I joined First Steps, and I remember my wife telling the parents that "Play is their child's work". This sense of "play" can be a strong motivator for children and fill their childhood with fun and awesome opportunities to learn and experience new things. There are a number of changes taking place in our world, and our children need our collective guidance to reach their full potential.

I hope you will join us in our efforts to allow our children the "joy of play" as they dream big!



Dr. Tammy Graham
Board Chair

As the Board Chair, I am honored to serve alongside a dedicated team committed to ensuring that every child in Chester has the opportunity to thrive. Our mission—to support families and strengthen communities - is more urgent than ever.

This year, we've deepened our partnerships, expanded our reach, and sharpened our focus on equity and impact. From home visiting programs to early literacy initiatives, First Steps continues to be a catalyst for change, helping children enter school healthy, nurtured, and ready to succeed.

I want to thank our many partners for their tireless work, and for their unwavering support. Together, we are building a stronger foundation for SC's future—one child, one family, one step at a time.

We remain steadfast in our belief that early investment yields lifelong returns. And as we look ahead, we invite you to walk with us—to advocate, to invest, and to lead—so that every child, has a real chance to flourish.

PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

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

16

children served

12

group meetings
and events

369

home visits

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Quality Enhancement

Intensive support to child care centers and preschool classrooms to improve quality.

368

children served

7

providers served

357

technical assistance
hours provided

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.

8

children served

1

schools served

45

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.

11

children served

1

schools served

63

home/school
visits

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

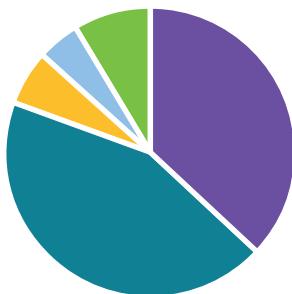


\$1 = \$1.34

Chester County First Steps leveraged \$76,238.98 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.34 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

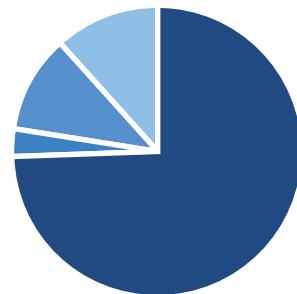
Total: \$287,287.83



- Parenting - \$106,237.47
- Early Care & Education - \$125,440.82
- School Transition - \$17,840.12
- Administrative - \$13,112.13
- Core Functions - \$24,657.29
- (Unlabeled small slice)

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$300,890.19



- State Funding - \$224,651.21
- Federal Funding - \$8,765
- Private Funding - \$33,073.98
- In-kind Contributions - \$34,400
- (Unlabeled small slice)

FUNDING SUPPORT

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding

State READY Funding*

State Income Tax Check-off and Private Donations to SC First Steps

*Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Proviso 1.84

Board of Directors

Sandra Johnson

Sherri Stringfellow

Sandra Davie

Tammy Graham

Brandon Jacobs

Laurel Sharp

Gail Keenon

Felicia McCaskill

William Rice

Oresa Roddey

Lottie Crosby

Patrice Davis

Cynthia Roddey

Donor List

Springs Close Foundation - \$27,500

First Choice of SC Select Health - \$2499

Chester Natural Gas - \$500

CONTACT US

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