



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Barnwell County First Steps:



194 children

were directly served in Barnwell County



461 parents & caregivers

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



40 educators

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

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 BARNWELL COUNTY

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

1,506

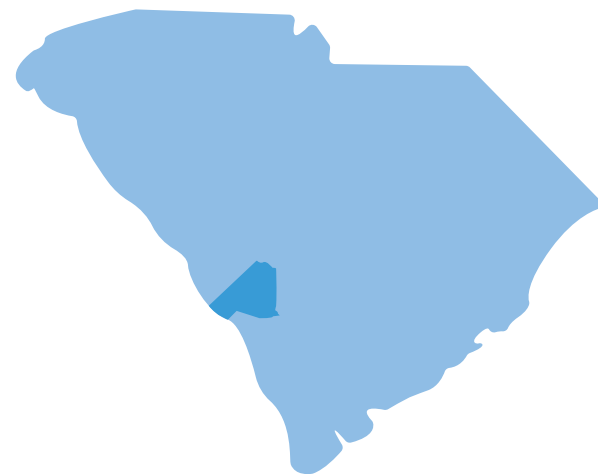
children under age 5

84.3%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

71%

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



Our Local Supporters

SC Department of Social Services,
Child Care Scholarships \$64,930
AmeriCorps \$17,505.18

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2022-2023
ANNUAL REPORT

CONTACT US

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OUR MISSION

To provide high-quality early education programs designed to meet the needs of the time that will ensure children in Barnwell County will arrive at first grade with the foundational knowledge and skills needed to succeed.



Tricia Gordon
Executive Director

Barnwell County First Steps provides a full spectrum of programs and services to support the families of young children across Barnwell County – to help provide the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health. We know that a strong foundation in early childhood helps children develop the skills they need to become well-functioning adults. We focus our work on the many collaborations and partnerships across the county to ensure that our families are supported and that all children start school ready to reach their highest potential.

During this program year, we had the opportunity to access federal ESSER funds and local champions like the James & Miriam Darnell Fund Committee to grow our Parents as Teachers home visiting program. This funding has allowed us to hire an additional parent educator, expanding the services to another dozen families. We also get immeasurable support from the AmeriCorps program which provides two members to our partnership to support our other home visiting program, HIPPY - Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters, and for family and community engagement. These AmeriCorps members provide services to us that benefit us in more than just a budgetary sense. They are key members of our partnership serving our families.

We also completed the work on our current Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan for 2024-26. This work will guide us for the next three program years. We identified the lack of licensed childcare providers as one of the biggest challenges that our families face currently in our county. We have begun the work, in partnership with the Barnwell Consolidated School District, to open a child development center in Williston in the fall of 2023.

Our greatest moments come at the end of events, or when a parent finishes a home visit and tells us that they didn't know what would happen when they started services with our partnership, "but wouldn't know what to do without us." That praise was given by a parent at the end of a Family Cafe session this past winter. We love to see our families thrive – to see their children begin kindergarten excited to continue learning.

We are always happy to talk to others in our communities that are interested in joining with us to provide the best foundation for our children as possible. Won't you join us?

Serving Barnwell County's children birth through age five.



PROGRAMS

PARENTING

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

49

children served

23

group meetings and events

611

home visits

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.

7

children served

7

group meetings and events

90

home visits

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.

15

children served

12

families served

13

group meetings and events

Library-Based Programs
Connect librarians with child care programs and preschool classrooms, providing books, storytelling, and staff training.

49

children served

3

families served

9

parent and caregiver workshops

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Quality Enhancement
Promotes quality in child care by providing early educators with one-on-one coaching and support.

51

children served

3

providers served

70

technical assistance hours

Training & Professional Development
Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

994

children served

23

providers served

25

certified training hours

Early Head Start
A federally funded program that provides family-centered services to infants and toddlers under age 3, pregnant women, and their families.

16

children served

16

families served

16

home visits

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

27

children served

27

families served

3

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.

22

children served

3

schools served

132

home 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.

9

children served

1

schools served

48

home visits

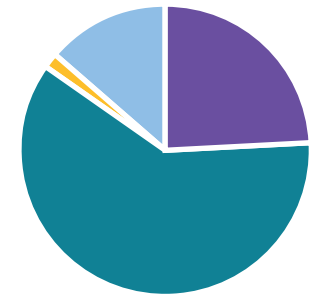
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

\$

\$1 = \$2.50
Barnwell County First Steps leveraged \$512,814.77 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$1.50 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

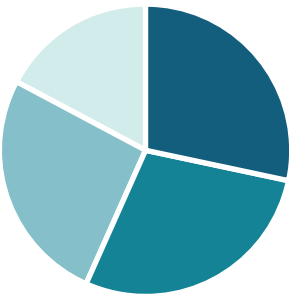
Total: \$838,577.65



- Parenting - \$203,204.15
- Early Care & Education - \$509,064.69
- School Transition - \$12,534.89
- Administrative - \$113,773.92

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$717,814.77



- State Funding - \$205,000
- Federal Funding - \$201,823.23
- Private Funding - \$188,344.36
- In-kind Contributions - \$122,647.18

FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

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

*Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Proviso 1.105
**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
****Federal AmeriCorps funds provided by the SC Service Commission were used to support the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program and/or community engagement initiatives.