



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Hampton County First Steps:



680 children

were directly served in Hampton County



697 parents & caregivers

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



29 educators

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

THE NEED PERSISTS IN HAMPTON COUNTY

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

1,160

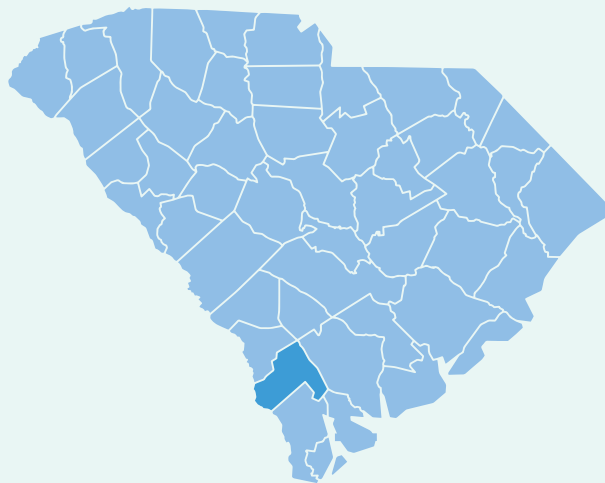
children birth to five

64%

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

Fuel and inspire children emotionally, socially and physical in order to achieve their personal best in school through collaboration with parents, caregivers and communities.



Dwana Doctor
Executive Director

It is with great pride and gratitude that I share the Hampton County First Steps Annual Report with you. This year has been one of growth, resilience, and renewed commitment to ensuring that every child in Hampton County enters school healthy, safe, and ready to succeed. Our work is made possible because of the strong partnerships we share with families, early childhood educators, community leaders, and supporters like you. Together, we have provided high-quality training opportunities for childcare providers, supported families with resources and guidance, and expanded programs that nurture early learning and strengthen school readiness. We know that when we invest in our youngest children, we are investing in the future of our community. Each parent we empower, each provider we train, and each child we support creates a ripple effect that extends far beyond today. Looking ahead, Hampton County First Steps remains committed to collaboration, innovation, and advocacy.



Jeremy Dunbar
Board Chair

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am honored to reflect on the achievements of Hampton County First Steps over the past year. Our mission is clear: to ensure that every child in Hampton County enters school prepared for success. This year, I am proud to say, we took meaningful steps toward that goal. The work of First Steps is not possible without the dedication of our staff, the commitment of our partners, and the trust of families who allow us to walk alongside them on their journey. Together, we have strengthened early learning opportunities, supported parents as their child's first and most important teacher, and invested in the professional growth of childcare providers across our county. As a board, we remain committed to strong governance, accountability, and strategic leadership. We recognize that every decision we make impacts the lives of children and families, and we take that responsibility with the utmost seriousness.

PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

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

22

children served

420

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.

368

children served

3,457

books distributed

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

252

children served

29

providers served

21.5

certified training
hours

Child Care Scholarships

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

12

children served

4

providers served

HEALTH

Reach Out and Read

Free, high-quality books provided by a child's pediatric provider during doctor's visits.

228

children served

133

books distributed

“

We have a GREAT support system with Hampton County First Steps! The PAT program ensures my toddler is on track with his milestones. We are so grateful for Ms. Victoria's hard work and passion. It has made a big difference in our child's development!

Hampton County First Steps Parent



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

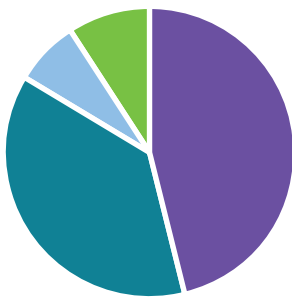


\$1 = \$1.54

Hampton County First Steps leveraged \$124,939.25 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.54 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

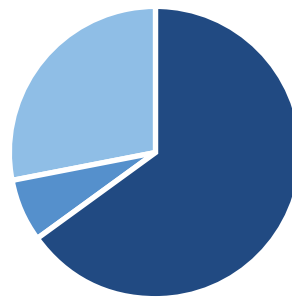
Total: \$347,933.61



- Parenting - \$161,002.59
- Early Care & Education - \$130,001.20
- Administrative - \$25,880.74
- Core Functions - \$31,049.08

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$358,092.07



- State Funding - \$233,152.82
- Private Funding - \$25,076.20
- In-kind Contributions - \$99,863.05

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

Jeremy Dunbar
Laquitta Bowers
Tiffine Forester
Sharon Forester

Donor List

Hampton County Sheriff's Office
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Parker Law Group
Barnes Law
Lee Furniture
Lodge #466
Palmetto State Bank
Khalid Lodge Temple #285
STAND (Striving Towards a New Domain)
Hurricanes Restaurant
Pearl Heyward
Barnes Law Firm -
Kim's Best Beauty
Food Lion
Jay Washington
I Am NOW Organization

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