



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2024-2025





# FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Newberry County First Steps:



## 1,800 children

were directly served in Newberry County



## 1,233 parents & caregivers

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



## 88 educators

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

## THE NEED PERSISTS IN NEWBERRY COUNTY

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

**2,242**

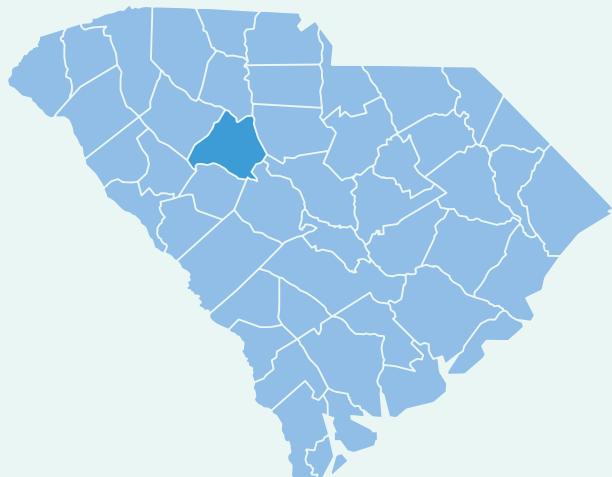
children birth to five

**44%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**67%**

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

Working in collaboration with parents, families, caregivers, educators, and our community, Newberry County First Steps provides opportunities and experiences so that all children enter school ready to reach their highest potential.



**Sarah Eargle**  
Executive Director

Community, relationships, and collaboration are at the heart of Newberry County First Steps (NCFS). Our priorities are clear: expand parenting education, strengthen communication about available resources, and build equitable relationships with parents, children, educators, and our community.

NCFS champions quality early learning, ensuring children enter school ready to thrive. We are committed to using public and private funds effectively and efficiently to meet family needs. I am grateful to our Board, staff, donors, community partners, SC First Steps, and—most importantly—the families we serve. Together, we will continue to grow, strengthen our impact, and build a future where every child has the opportunity to succeed. We cannot do this vital work without you.



**Abigail Fuller**  
Board Chair

As Chair of the Newberry County First Steps Board, I am honored to be part of an organization that makes such a lasting impact on our community. While literacy has improved greatly over the past century, the inability to read and write still exists and affects every part of a person's life. Newberry County First Steps works to break this cycle by serving our most vulnerable children, ensuring they grow into literate, thriving adults. Through programs, resources, and partnerships with schools, child care providers, organizations, and families, First Steps brings the gift of literacy and learning to children across our county. As both the County Library Director and a parent whose daughter participated in the program, I have seen firsthand how it fosters a love of reading and opens doors for the future. I am grateful to serve alongside our dedicated partners, board members, and families, and I look forward to the continued impact First Steps will make this year.

# PROGRAMS

## PARENTING

### Parents as Teachers

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

**18**

children served

**272**

home visits

**11**

group meetings  
and events

### Positive Parenting Program (TripleP)

A parenting and family support system designed to prevent – as well as treat – behavioral and emotional problems in children.

**32**

children served

**27**

families served

**20**

group meetings  
and events

### Library-Based Programs

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

**542**

children served

**20**

providers served

## HEALTH

### Reach Out and Read

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

**857**

children served

**991**

books distributed

## EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

### Quality Counts

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

**104**

children served

**2**

providers served

**124**

training hours  
provided

### Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

**133**

children served

**12**

providers served

**28**

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.

**76**

children served

**8**

schools served

**447**

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.

**35**

children served

**206**

home/school  
visits

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

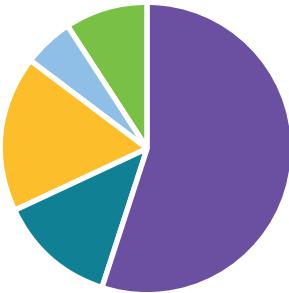


**\$1 = \$1.39**

Newberry County First Steps leveraged \$32,221 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$1.39 for every state dollar invested.

## EXPENDITURES

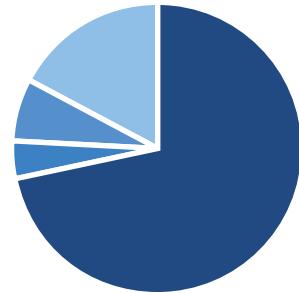
Total: \$413,433.82



- Parenting - \$227,502.26
- Early Care & Education - \$54,008.10
- School Transition - \$72,199.65
- Administrative - \$21,856
- Core Functions - \$37,867.81

## FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$402,074.85



- State Funding - \$289,137.12
- Federal Funding - \$16,850.65
- Private Funding - \$27,649.08
- In-kind Contributions - \$68,438

## 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

“

Since attending Triple P classes, I've seen big improvements with my 4-year-old. He has fewer tantrums, and learning and using Triple P methods has helped make mornings and getting ready for school much easier.

R'Darius W.



## Board of Directors

Edlin DelValle  
Rubi Flores Maldonado  
Deann McManus  
Carlton Kinard  
Antionette Alston  
Kelly Bannister  
Lynn Williams  
Bethany Counts  
Paige Graham  
Francisco Torres  
John Swift  
Elizabeth Rivera  
Linda Epps  
Abigail Fuller

## Donor List

School District of Newberry County  
Newberry County Library  
United Way of the Midlands  
SC Endeavors  
Thrivent Financial Action Teams  
Westview Behavioral  
Individual Donors and Community Members  
ADK Sorority  
Children's Trust of SC  
Board Members  
Newberry County First Steps Staff  
The Newberry Opera House  
Central Carolina Community Foundation  
SLW Charitable fund in honor of the  
teachers at Gallman

## CONTACT US

[newberryfirststeps.org](http://newberryfirststeps.org) | (803)321-1073 | [director@newberryfirststeps.org](mailto:director@newberryfirststeps.org)