



# 2022-2023

## ANNUAL REPORT

# OUR MISSION

From Day 1 to Grade 1, Richland First Steps empowers our community to nurture children, so they are ready to thrive in school.



## Marcia Bacon

### Executive Director

It's been a great year at Richland First Steps! We're excited about the response from the community, our staff and clients in making our three-year Strategic Plan. We've got big dreams for the children of Richland County!

This year we worked hard to get our Early Head Start child care centers fully staffed so we could re-open our center on the Ridgewood Missionary Baptist site. We are happy to say it is now serving the 32 children it is meant to serve.

Now those parents can work or go to school knowing their children are well cared for in an enriching and loving environment.

We are excited that our Connected Families program is rolling well. This partnership with Richland DSS Family Preservation Services is funded by the Duke Foundation. Our staff are bringing parenting skills to families in crisis who need a mentor and solid support – just what our staff is ready to give!

We are so thankful for all of our partners and especially our Board of Directors!

---

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

First Steps helped my children and I tremendously. This is my second time joining the program; my daughter is now in 3rd grade, but her teacher said she could tell she was being worked with at home and was able to help other students in her class when she started school. My son is completely different. I needed RFS to help me learn parenting techniques with him. Overall, we just love the program.

Richland County First Steps parent







# FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Richland County First Steps:



**341 children**

were directly served in Richland County



**255 parents & caregivers**

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



**319 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 RICHLAND COUNTY

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

**27,505**

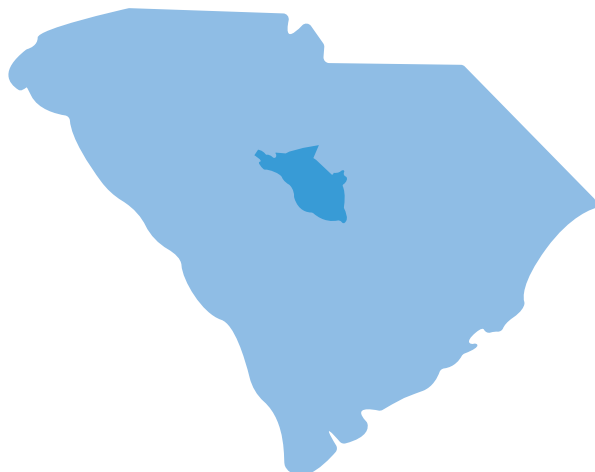
children under age 5

**44.5%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**57%**

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



# PROGRAMS

## 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

### Quality Enhancement

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

676

children served

18

providers served

900

technical assistance 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.

193

children served

144

families served

985

home visits

## HEALTH

### WIC

Serves to safeguard the health of low-income pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to age 5

98

children served

## PARENTING

### Parents as Teachers

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

43

children served

42

group meetings and events

714

home visits

### Connected Families

Prevents the unnecessary removal of young children from their homes by providing parents and caregivers with voluntary, coordinated services.

46

children served

42

group meetings and events

109

home visits

## SCHOOL TRANSITION

### 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.

16

children served

1

schools served

44

home visits

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

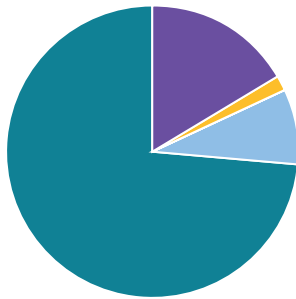


**\$1 = \$3.21**

Richland County First Steps leveraged \$2,914,404.60 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$2.21 for every state dollar invested.

## EXPENDITURES

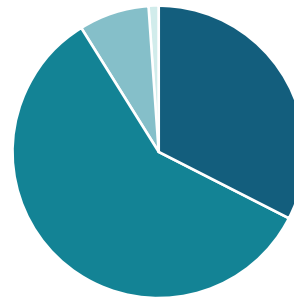
Total: \$3,504,645.61



Parenting	- \$421,282.64
Early Care & Education	- \$2,864,461.26
School Transition	- \$5,822.94
Health	- \$750.00
Administrative	- \$212,328.77

## FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$3,823,328.60



State Funding	- \$908,924.00
Federal Funding	- \$2,632,021.91
Private Funding	- \$277,871.79
In-kind Contributions	- \$4,510.90

## 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  
The Duke Endowment & Doris Duke Foundation

\*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



## Rachael Fulmer

### Board Chair

The wonderful staff and leadership team of Richland First Steps focused on making 2023 a rebuilding year! The doors of our programs are open, and we are at full capacity!

Through home-based and center-based programs, we help families create nurturing relationships and skills to address their child's development. Staff continue to help families and children overcome barriers by connecting families to our community partners for additional support services and well care.

RFS staff continues to provide technical assistance, onsite training, and supplies to childcare providers, focusing on areas of Richland County with the greatest needs.

The Board of Richland First Steps approved a rigorous Strategic Plan which focuses on quality programming and continued growth. Our board members are enthusiastically committed to helping staff achieve the goals set forth in our Strategic Plan for 2024 and beyond.

## Board of Directors

Mary Bailey	Cassandra Legette
Lauren Brennan	Rita Paul
Robin Cooper	Davida Price
Quinne Evans	Lee Patterson
Rachael Fulmer	Henrietta Robinson
Chevelle Gilyard	Barbara Scott
Amanda Glowacki	Scott Smoak
William Jeter	Chandra Stallworth
Kimberly Johnson	Terri Thompson
Christine LeBlanc	Sherry Whatley

## CONTACT US

1800 St. Julian Place, Suite 406, Columbia SC 29204 | 803-256-7237 | [richlandfirststeps.org](https://richlandfirststeps.org)