



2023-2024

ANNUAL REPORT



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Calhoun County First Steps:



285 children

were directly served in Calhoun County



283 parents & caregivers

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

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 CALHOUN COUNTY

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

668

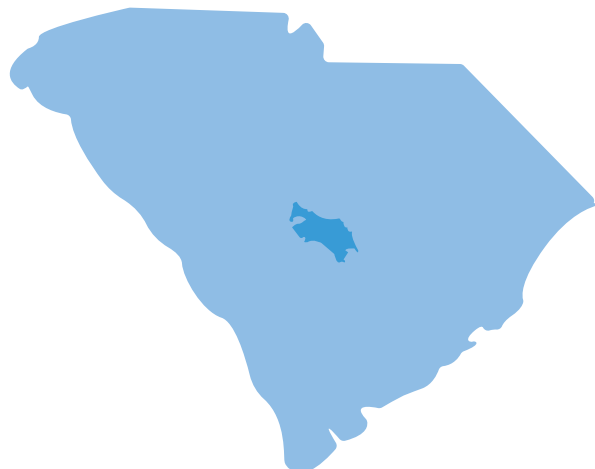
children under 6

60%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

56%

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



OUR MISSION

Collaborating with other entities, Calhoun First Steps helps Calhoun County families and caregivers prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high-quality early childhood services.



JaVonna Lewis

Executive Director

Greetings,

Calhoun County First Steps is dedicated to ensuring that every child in Calhoun County is prepared for school. During the fiscal year 2023-2024, Calhoun County First Steps worked with new community partners and hosted two successful community events. Our Parents as Teachers Roll and Read community event attracted over 200 children from local school district elementary schools (PreK through Kindergarten), involved twelve community partners, and distributed 300 books.

When I took on the role of executive director, one of my objectives was to organize two community events, and I am pleased to have achieved that goal. I would like to express my gratitude to our board, staff, families, community partners, and funders for your continuous support of Calhoun County First Steps. FY24 has been a productive year.

Serving Calhoun County's children birth through age five.

"The Calhoun County First Steps program has been incredibly valuable to my family. It has helped me discover new ways to engage with my son and provided a sense of community from being around other parents striving to raise productive children."

The Robinson Family
Parents as Teachers Program



PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

Home visitation and group support for families, before birth and through age five.

37

families served

523

total home visits

12

total group sessions

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Free, high-quality books mailed to the home of children from birth until age five.

228

children served

2,469

books distributed

SCHOOL TRANSITION

Countdown to Kindergarten

Home visitation and group support for families, before birth and through age five.

20

children served

1

schools served

113

home visits

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

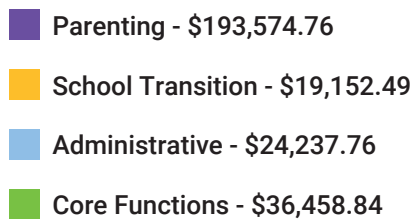
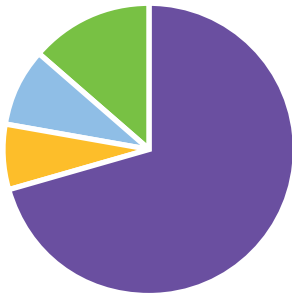


\$1 = \$1.42

Calhoun County First Steps leveraged \$95,876.37 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.42 for every state dollar invested.

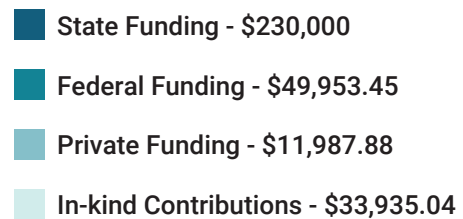
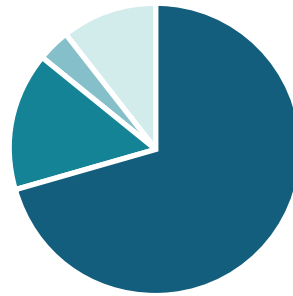
EXPENDITURES

Total: \$273,423.85



FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$325,876.37



FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

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

*Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Proviso 1.105

**American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, awarded to the South Carolina Department of Education
Federal AmeriCorps funding awarded to SC First Steps from the SC Service Commission at the United Way Association of SC

Note: Revenue amounts may show a difference between allocations and revenue based on penalties imposed by the SC First Steps Board of Trustees for non-compliance with organizational policies. The figures provided are based on unaudited financial statements and, as such, are subject to change.

Gary Jones

Board Chair



As the Board Chair for Calhoun County First Steps, I am honored to note the significant impact of our efforts in supporting parents and children aged from birth to 5. Our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to provide crucial resources and expand early childhood education programs, ensuring every child has access to high-quality learning opportunities. Looking ahead, we remain committed to creating an inclusive and nurturing environment for all families and advocating for policies that prioritize early childhood development in our community. Together, we can shape a brighter future where every child has the chance to flourish.

Our Local Supporters

Tri- County Electric
Calhoun County School District
Calhoun County Council
Bethlehem United Methodist Church
Virginia L. Newman
Orangeburg Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
Piggly Wiggly
United Way of the Midlands

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