



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of McCormick County First Steps:



216 children

were directly served in McCormick County



150 parents & caregivers

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



114 educators

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

THE NEED PERSISTS IN MCCORMICK COUNTY

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

251

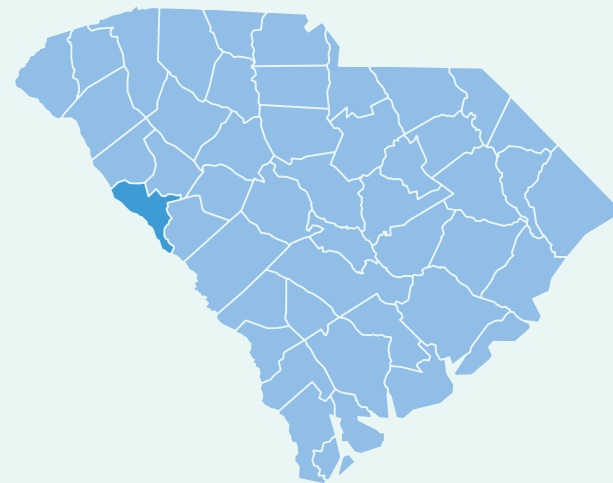
children birth to five

51%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

50%

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

“

If I didn't run into First Steps, I would be exhausted trying to figure out how am I going to get affordable daycare services for my son and maintain a job. First Steps relieved alot of stress.

McCormick First Steps Parent

Donor List

Good Shepherd Men's Club

Christopher Pope

Charles Jennings

Ruth Detrick

Sharon Kumle

Lutheran Church by the Lake

Earl Anderson

Greg & Ann Martin

Robert Harla

Mary Cartledge

New Hope Baptist Church

Lee Builders

Cedar Springs Baptist Church

Lutheran Church Women's Club

Fate Jennings

Robert & Kevin Divita

Larry & Marcia Tarbet

Friends of the Library

Margaret Kite

McCormick County School District

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority

Claude & Barbara Cartledge

Sandra Burton

McCormick Lion's Club

Hardy Foundation

SC Department of Social Services

SC First Steps AmeriCorps

SC First Steps

McCormick First Steps Board &

Staff



ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



CONTACT US

mccormickfirststeps.org | (864)852-3762 | firststepsmc@wctel.net

OUR MISSION

We exist to fully support the success of all children and their families in McCormick County.



NaToya Cartledge
Executive Director

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude for all that we have accomplished together. This year has been a testament to the unwavering commitment of our community, staff, volunteers, and partners.

We take pride in the quantitative data provided in this report, but beyond the numbers, it’s the stories that inspire us—the single mother who received a childcare scholarship which lessened her financial burden, the high school intern who discovered a passion for teaching through our AmeriCorps program, or the child who learned how to swim by receiving a swimming lessons scholarship. These moments remind us why we do what we do.

None of this would be possible without you. Your belief in our mission fuels our progress and empowers us to dream bigger. On behalf of our entire team, thank you for standing with us.



Nathan McCasline
Board Chair

It gives me great pleasure to serve as the Board Chair of the McCormick County First Steps; it is both an honor and a pleasure serving and nurturing the children and citizens of McCormick County. I often use the phrase “We Are One” to emphasize our commitment to working in unity to continue our efforts to improve school readiness and make a measurable improvement in the quality of life for children and families in our community. Our mission relies on the involvement and support of our community partners.

We exist to fully support the success of all children and their families in McCormick County, and we will continue to expand our reach to ensure that all children are ready.

Thanks to my fellow Board Members, Executive Director, Staff, and families involved. We thank teachers, caregivers and coordinators that work tirelessly towards providing high quality programs and services for the children and families. We Are One!

PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Nurturing Parenting

Designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglecting parenting and child-rearing practices.

34 children served 342 home visits 25 group meetings and events

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

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

105 children served 997 books distributed

Library-Based Programs

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

42 children served 2 providers served

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Early Education Program Support

Providing families with early care and education by supporting center-based child care programs.

24 children served 23 families served

Child Care Scholarships

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

18 children served 2 providers served

Board of Directors

- Daniel Lott
- Mary Stackhouse
- Deboah Gunter
- Nathan McCasline
- Brenda Moore
- Ann Snyder
- Jackie Novack
- Earthy Gaskin
- Salisa McTeer
- Donna England

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.

10 children served 1 schools served 60 home/school visits

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

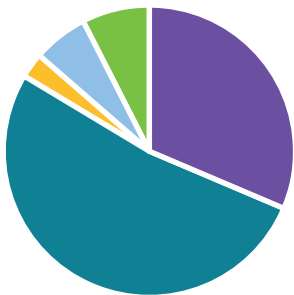


\$1 = \$1.59

McCormick County First Steps leveraged \$188,252.91 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.59 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

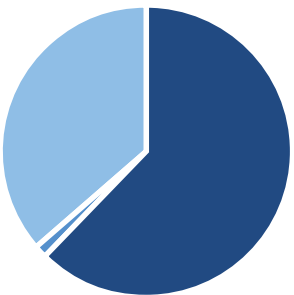
Total: \$525,172.71



- Parenting - \$165,500.26
- Early Care & Education - \$274,079.63
- School Transition - \$15,561.74
- Administrative - \$30,884.27
- Core Functions - \$39,146.81

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$508,011.43



- State Funding - \$319,758.52
- Private Funding - \$6,562.50
- In-kind Contributions - \$186,377.22

FUNDING SUPPORT

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding
State READY Funding*

Federal AmeriCorps Service Site

State Income Tax Check-off and Private Donations to SC First Steps

*Resources for Early Acceleration and Development in Youth (READY) Proviso 1.84