



# FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Florence County First Steps:



**208 children**

were directly served in Florence County



**76 parents & caregivers**

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



**234 educators**

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



## Kippie Brown

Board Chair

The First Steps program mission has always been to help Florence County families and educators prepare children for educational success. As the sitting board chair, and head of my church, I have seen firsthand the progress and positive outcome; and have heard the community speak on how much the programs have helped their families.

Working with the Executive Director and his staff has been impactful. Our meetings are informative, and fact based, with focus on what can be done to better serve, ways to ensure monies are properly distributed, while focusing on ways to fundraise and bring more financial stability to the program.

Thanks to my fellow board members, FCFS staff, and families involved. We thank teachers, caregivers and coordinators that work tirelessly towards achieving the approach of FCFS – providing high quality programs and services for children and families. We remain a part of something great!

## 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 FLORENCE COUNTY

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

**9,955**

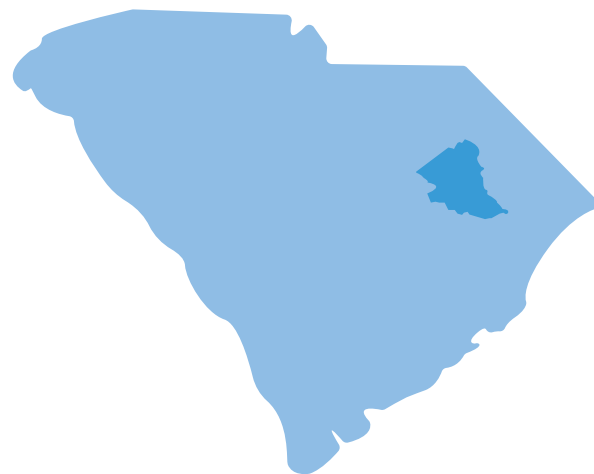
children under age 5

**48%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**62%**

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



## Our Local Supporters

South Carolina Department of Social Services \$231,660

AmeriCorps \$20,206.98

Kaplan \$8,307.16

Florence County School District 3 \$3,375

Greenville Technical College \$350

Edith Robinson

Gloria Bracey

Anastasia Spann

Jordan Waters

Lana Hopkins

Lura Marsh

Obree Friday-Widder

Sheridan Murray

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## CONTACT US

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# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## OUR MISSION

Help Florence 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.



### Spencer Scott

Executive Director

First Steps continues to be an integral part of the community. Our programs have shown significant growth, as we expanded Parent Child Plus, Raising A Reader, Countdown to Kindergarten & Countdown to 4K. We added the HIPPY program, enhanced the Technical Assistant and Quality Enhancement programs and training, as well as increased the number of scholarships awarded to parents, through the childcare scholarship program.

That program served 33 children and 16 providers, providing 33 developmental screenings. PC+, in collaboration with Florence School District Three, served 30 children and provided over 1498 total home visits. QE program served 9 providers, with 163 TA visits, and 466 children assisted. Served families and children in the RAR, CTK and CT4K program increased as well with 25, 19, and 26 being served respectively.

We continue our work towards one goal: preparing the youngest children within our communities for success.

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

"First Steps and Parent Child+ have given my child the opportunity to learn in a comfortable environment and connected us to our community. My advice? Get connected with First Steps, they gave me the push to start achieving personal goals.

Jocelyn Gregg  
Florence County First Steps parent



## PROGRAMS

### PARENTING

#### HIPPY

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home visiting program that supports parents in their role as a child's first and most important teacher.

13 children served    8 group meetings and events    384 home visits

#### ParentChild+

Home visitation for families with 2- and 3-year olds to promote early literacy skills.

30 children served    17 connected scholarships    1,498 home visits

#### Raising a Reader - Enhanced

Helps families develop, practice, and maintain home literacy habits.

25 children served    XX families served    XX books distributed

### EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

#### Quality Enhancement

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

466 children served    9 providers served    258 technical assistance hours

#### Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

1,292 children served    16 providers served    32 certified training hours

#### Child Care Scholarships

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

33 children served    XX families served    XX providers served

### 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.

21 children served    4 schools served    126 home 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.

26 children served    4 schools served    120 home visits

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

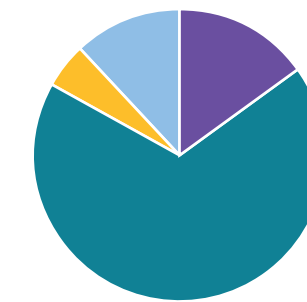


**\$1 = \$1.71**

Florence County First Steps leveraged \$32,221 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.71 for every state dollar invested.

### EXPENDITURES

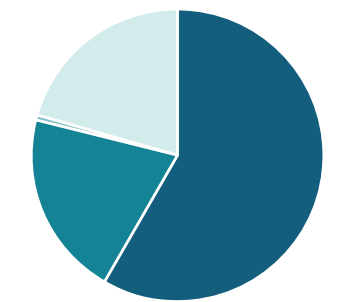
Total: \$691,740.06



- Parenting - \$104,706.22
- Early Care & Education - \$471,439.37
- School Transition - \$33,964.64
- Administrative - \$81,629.83

### FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$700,884.25



- State Funding - \$410,112
- Federal Funding - \$143,374.50
- Private Funding - \$4,944.09
- In-kind Contributions - \$142,453.656

### 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

\*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