



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Spartanburg County First Steps:



5,050 children

were directly served in Spartanburg County



958 parents & caregivers

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



571 educators

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



Carolyn Gibson

Board Chair

As a past employee, board member, and current chair of Spartanburg County First Steps, each year I continue to be impressed by their accomplishments. As partnerships with local organizations and our schools grow, they continuously strive to meet First Steps' goal of Getting Children Ready for School. Our collaborations with local organizations are more important than ever before.

As Spartanburg County First Steps continues to move forward, the leadership team remains dedicated to providing quality programs for our youngest learners. Barbara Manoski will be retiring after beginning her journey with First Steps in 2004. Barbara leaves in place a strong framework for Spartanburg County First Steps' growth; expanded programs for young children and their families, and strong community partnerships.

Thank you to the board, local partners, staff, and leadership team whose work is dedicated to preparing our young children for success in school and life.

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 SPARTANBURG COUNTY

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

23,170

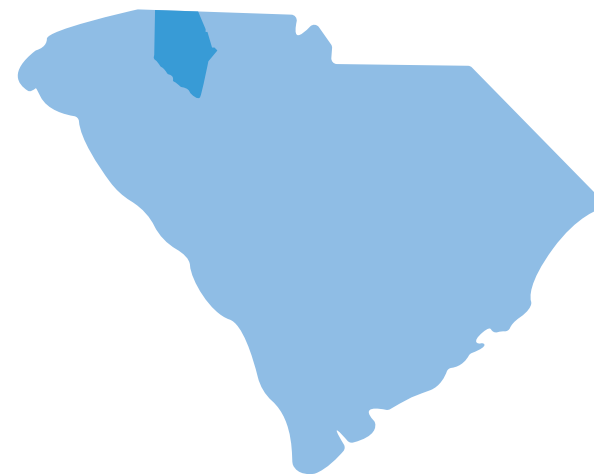
children under age 5

41%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

66%

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



Our Local Supporters

Snyder Transportation \$2,000

Network for Good

United Way

Just Giving

Board of Directors

Krishenda Alexander	April Miller
Walker Barnes	Sydetra Payton
Jean Brewington	Terry Pruitt
Casey Dover	Cindy Snead
Loreta Dlygjeri	Anna Strom
Carolyn Gibson	Ida Thompson
Kimberly Gist	Deana Watson
Sharon Holmes	Holli West
Leverne McBeth	Jodi Wright

CONTACT US

900 S. Pine St., Spartanburg, SC 29302 | 864-327-4900 | 1steps.org



2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR MISSION

To ensure that all children in Spartanburg County start school ready to reach their highest potential. By leveraging resources, collaborating with community partners, and supporting families and early care providers, we hope to maximize our long-term impact.



Barbara Manoski
Executive Director

More than thirty years of my life have been spent serving young children and their families in Spartanburg County. During my career, I have worn many hats: 4K teacher, center director, board member, coach, trainer, adjunct professor, program director, and executive director of Spartanburg County First Steps. Since 2004, First Steps has been my work home, and I will miss it deeply when I retire in the spring of 2024. It has been my honor to work alongside an amazing leadership team, a committed staff, our dedicated board, and so many state and community partners. Our shared belief that the best world is a world where all young children have what they need to be successful in life is worth striving for. Thank you for including me in this impactful work.

Thank you, also, to Spartanburg County First Steps former Executive Director, Carolyn Brooks, for seeing something in me I couldn't see in myself when she named me the lead of the team that would eventually create and implement Quality Counts. As the founding director of Quality Counts, I never dreamed that 10 years later it would be named an evidenced-based strategy by SC First Steps, be implemented in other counties in SC, and win the 2020 Riley Institute WhatWorksSC award! I will always be grateful for the opportunity to have worked on Quality Counts from the very beginning and will continually be proud of its impact as it reaches further every year.

As I prepare to step down as Executive Director, I know Spartanburg County First Steps and our partners will continue to impact Spartanburg positively, despite the many challenges facing the world of early care and education. For the fifth consecutive year, First Steps partnered with The Children's Museum of the Upstate – Spartanburg for family engagement opportunities designed to reach our Early Head Start children and for the annual Countdown to Kindergarten Street Fair, which served more than 300 children this year. Quality Counts was chosen as a program partner in Spartanburg Academic Movement's Movement 2030 project, whose goal is to increase school readiness. The Franklin School was supported by a partnership with Hub City Farmer's Market to increase nutrition awareness and provide hands-on gardening experiences for 72 children. The Upstate Family Resource Center partnered with SCFS to grow their PASOS program in Spartanburg County. And last, but not least, all seven of our school districts partnered with us to provide almost 400 children with a summer learning experience in our Countdown to Kindergarten program. This good work is proof that we work best when we work together.

Thanks to you all, the young children of Spartanburg County will continue to be considered and championed. Their future is our future, and it is full of promise.

Serving Spartanburg County's children birth through age five.

"The First Steps program has been my "village". I'm grateful for the support, encouragement, and the services the program offers. I will never forget how First Steps helped me achieve my goals and helped my family.

Spartanburg County First Steps parent



PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Nurse-Family Partnership

Home visitation for first time mothers, from pregnancy until the child turns two.

127 children served 166 families served 720 home visits

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Early Head Start

A federally funded program that provides family-centered services to infants and toddlers under age 3, pregnant women, and their families.

302 children served 240 families served 2,043 home visits

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.

200 children served 1,184 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.

101 children served 600 home visits

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

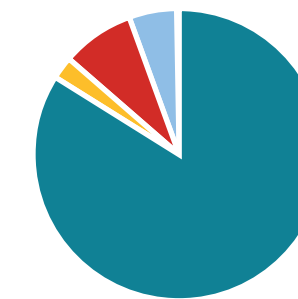


\$1 = \$6.73

Spartanburg County First Steps leveraged \$4,180,965.68 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$5.73 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

Total: \$6,166,389.47



- Early Care & Education - \$5,176,505.95
- Transitions - \$156,396.02
- Health - \$495,634.63
- Administrative - \$337,852.87

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$4,910,881.68



- State Funding - \$729,916
- Federal Funding - \$3,585,477.45
- Private Funding - \$595,488.23

FUNDING SUPPORT BY SOUTH CAROLINA FIRST STEPS

- State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding
- State READY Funding*
- Federal Preschool Development Grant Funding**
- Federal ESSER Funding***

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

**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