



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Beaufort County First Steps:



1,385 children

were directly served in Beaufort County



1,470 parents & caregivers

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



1,080 educators

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

THE NEED PERSISTS IN BEAUFORT COUNTY

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

10,546

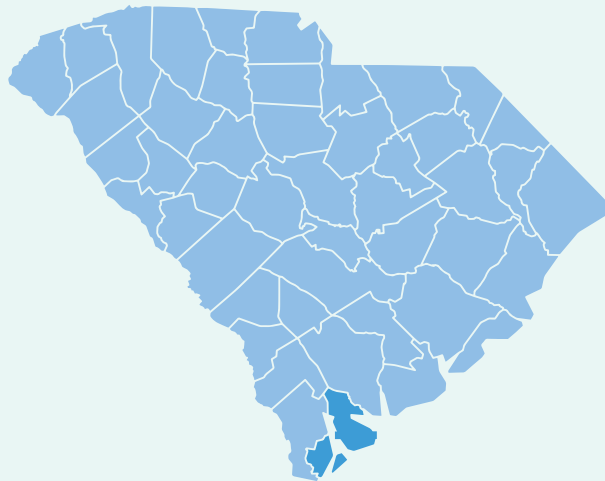
children birth to five

46%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

66%

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

OUR MISSION

To help families and caregivers in Beaufort County prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high-quality early childhood services.



Betty Washington
Executive Director

It is my honor to present the 2024-2025 Annual Report for Beaufort County First Steps (BCFS).

Beaufort County First Steps leveraged public and private investments, to provide high-quality early care and education, family support, and health services to young children, ensuring they are healthy and ready for kindergarten.

In collaboration with partners from across the county, BCFS delivers services tailored to the needs of the families and providers in our community.

I invite you to read more about the impact we've made by implementing programs that continue to support children during the most critically important period of human development, birth-to-five.

The commitment of our staff, board, families and community partners has contributed to our success.

Thank you, I appreciate all that you do.



Rev. Kelly Zytynski
Board Chair

For 26 years, Beaufort County First Steps (BCFS) has faithfully served the children and families of Beaufort County, working to ensure every child enters school ready to succeed. On behalf of the Board of Directors, we extend our sincere appreciation to the dedicated BCFS team, led by Betty Washington, for their unwavering passion and commitment. Their collaborative efforts with partner agencies continue to make a meaningful impact in our community.

We are especially grateful to our local partners—your support makes our work possible and strengthens our ability to reach shared goals. As we look ahead, we do so with optimism and excitement for the opportunities this year holds.

PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

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

11

children served

12

group meetings
and events

124

home visits

Supporting Care Providers Through Visits

Site visits for home child care providers to encourage developmentally appropriate practices.

12

children served

2

providers served

30

provider visits

HEALTH

Reach Out and Read

Free, high-quality books provided by a child's pediatric provider during doctor's visits.

714

children served

1,428

book distributed

Early Identification & Referral

Providing developmental screenings and referrals to other services.

149

children served

680

materials distributed

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

5,548

children served

346

providers served

22

certified training
hours

Quality Enhancement

Intensive support to child care centers and preschool classrooms to improve quality.

363

children served

8

providers served

385

training hours
provided

“

First Steps provided me with the skills needed to ensure my children hit their developmental milestones. I would highly recommend them to any parent.

Diana Brown



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

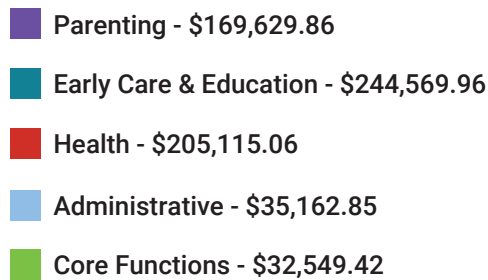
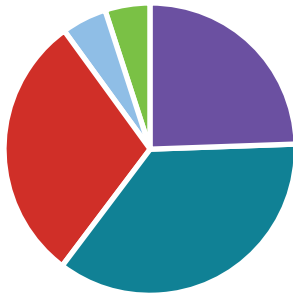


\$1 = \$1.09

Beaufort County First Steps leveraged \$57,338.04 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.09 for every state dollar invested.

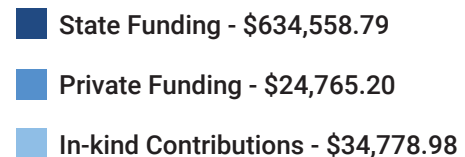
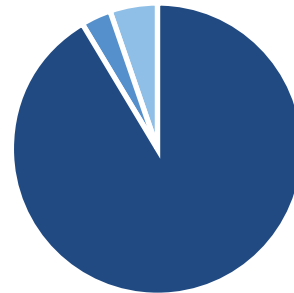
EXPENDITURES

Total: \$687,027.15



FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$691,896.83



FUNDING SUPPORT

State Education Improvement Act (EIA) Funding

State READY Funding*

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

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

Board of Directors

Luz Colmenares	Alisa Johnson
Lakicia Pusha-Greene	Rebecca Stempel
Olandor Lewis	Amanda Dickman
Melanie Hooper	Anita Lynn Singleton
Mildred Glover	Kelly Zytynski
Tamekia Greene-Judge	LaChiana Hamilton Michele Plenzler

Donor List

4-Imprint
Baptist Church of Beaufort
Beaufort County Library
Beaufort County School
Beaufort Jasper Hampton Comp. Health Services
Bluffton County Library
Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start/Early Head Start
Beaufort Yacht and Sailing Club
Born to Read
Chelsea Medical Center
Child Abuse Prevention Association
CPM Federal Credit Union (Quin'nett Williams)
Happy Art Studio
Kaplan Early Learning Company
Lakeshore Learning
Larry Scheper, Beaufort County Parks & Recreation
Palmetto Building
SC ABC Child Care
SC Endeavors/Technical College Greenville
SC Department of Public Health
SC First Steps
SC Resource and Referral
Sparklight formerly known as Hargray
Staples
Wayfair

CONTACT US

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