



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025





FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Sumter County First Steps:



902 children

were directly served in Sumter County



867 parents & caregivers

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



263 educators

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

THE NEED PERSISTS IN SUMTER COUNTY

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

8,328

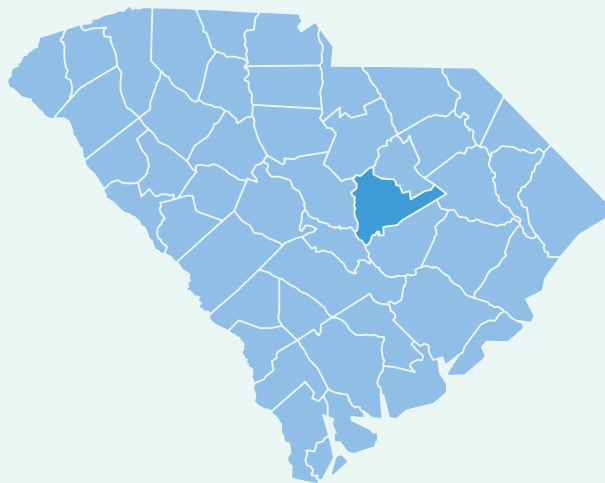
children birth to five

42%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

77%

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

Sumter County First Steps will cultivate, nurture and develop opportunities for children and families for success in school and life by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance and expand high quality early childhood services



Julia Nelson
Executive Director

SCFS makes every effort to provide quality strategies and programs and only implement evidence-based programs. Our programs empower families, children and childcare providers with the skills needed to ensure school readiness. It is our goal to help children reach long-term success through their adult life.

The success that we experienced is due to the commitment of our board, parents, school district, childcare providers, well trained staff and other community partners in early education to collaborate and share challenges and share limited resources for the greater good of our youngest population.

We look forward to the challenges and opportunities to ameliorate school readiness in Sumter County.

PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Parents as Teachers

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

96

children served

1,493

home visits

22

group meetings
and events

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.

9

children served

251

home visits

5

group meetings
and events

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

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

647

children served

5,843

books distributed

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

6,072

children served

120

providers served

24

certified training
hours

Child Care Scholarships

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

31

children served

2

providers served

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

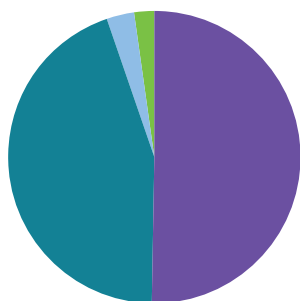


\$1 = \$1.51

Sumter County First Steps leveraged \$250,412.18 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$0.51 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

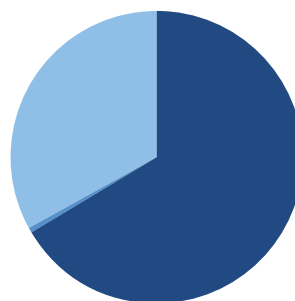
Total: \$692,832.56



- Parenting - \$349,844.34
- Early Care & Education - \$306,433.39
- Administrative - \$21,429.36
- Core Functions - \$15,125.47

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$745,962.12



- State Funding - \$495,549.94
- Private Funding - \$4,458.18
- In-kind Contributions - \$245,954

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

Board of Directors

Toni Brew
Billy Bennett
Michael Jonas
Angelia Ragin-Terry
Wanda Ramsey
Julia Triplett
Cynthia Ransom
Jennifer Miles

CONTACT US

scfirststeps.org/about-us/local-partnerships/sumter-county-first-steps
(803)464-1224 | sumterfirststeps@gmail.com