



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Lancaster County First Steps:



3,029 children

were directly served in Lancaster County



287 parents & caregivers

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



25 educators

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

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 LANCASTER COUNTY

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

6,220

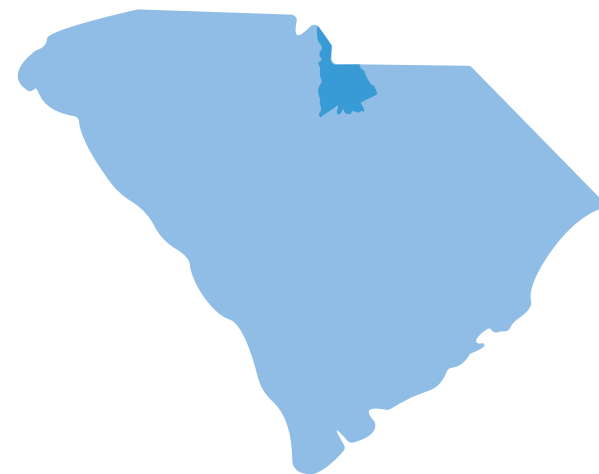
children under age 5

38.4%

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

65%

of kindergarteners are considered "not ready" for school



Paul McKenzie

Board Chair



The board, staff, and stakeholders in Lancaster County are proud of the continued efforts to improve school readiness and make a measurable improvement in the quality of life for children and families in our community. We believe in the value of partnership, data driven decision making, adherence to evidence-based programming, and openness to input from our constituents throughout Lancaster County.

Our board and agency have plans to expand and enhance the work described within the report throughout the next five years, with an effort to ensure that every child in our community tests ready for school, supported by strong parents and families, and served by a rich range of community resources.

Board of Directors

Paul McKenzie
Jennifer Wright
Anna Henson
April Williams
Steven Andrews
Jackie Harris
Carlton Rucker
Celeste Graham
Nathan Cooper
Reo King

Chamere Moore
Robyn Blackmon
Amanda Steele
Mitch Lucas
Crystal Adams
Ashley Melton
Linda Blackwell
Kimberly Funderburk
Felice Austin



2022-2023
ANNUAL REPORT

CONTACT US

3901 Lancaster Hwy, Lancaster SC 29270 | 803-286-8000 | scfirststeps.org/Lancaster

OUR MISSION

Collaborating with other entities, Lancaster County First Steps helps Lancaster 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.



Leslie Sinclair
Executive Director

Dear Friends,

From the panhandle to the county's southernmost tip, it is an extension of our mission to continually find new ways to broaden our presence in the community.

Opening the Clyburn Education Center in Kershaw, expanding our Parents as Teachers program, and having a record number of children participating in Countdown to Kindergarten ensures year 23 is one we will not soon forget!

Our team measures success not only through numbers but in smiles on students' faces upon entering their 4K classroom, a sense of pride felt when parents complete the Incredible Years program and apply their newfound knowledge at home, or in the stories shared about children who excitedly check the mailbox when it's time for their monthly Dolly Parton Imagination Library book to arrive.

Thank you to our governing board, community partners, parents, funders, staff, and volunteers for your continued support and dedication to Lancaster

Serving Lancaster County’s children birth through age five.

"Family is the most important thing in my life. I am grateful for the Nurturing Parenting classes through Saluda First Steps. I have learned positive ways to help my children. Thank you, Saluda County First Steps!"

Lancaster County First Steps parent



PROGRAMS

PARENTING

Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library

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

1,559

children served

15,064

books distributed

Incredible Years

12-week group support for parents for their child’s social and emotional development and behavior.

30

children served

30

group meetings and events

HEALTH

Early Identification & Referral

Providing developmental screenings and referrals to other services.

45

children served

45

families served

Weekend Backpacks

Provides preschool children with nutritious, kid-friendly meals on weekends and holidays when school meals are not available.

496

children served

13,293

meals distributed

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.

79

children served

55

families served

138

home visits

Child Care Scholarships

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

2

children served

2

families served

1

providers served

Training & Professional Development

Certified and registered training hours for the early childhood workforce.

63

children served

2

providers served

16

certified training hours

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.

136

children served

8

schools served

818

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.

48

children served

4

schools served

288

home visits

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

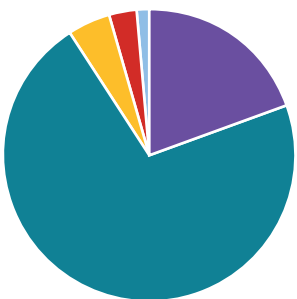


\$1 = \$12.99

Lancaster County First Steps leveraged \$2,402,434.02 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$11.99 for every state dollar invested.

EXPENDITURES

Total: \$2,723,852.3



- Parenting - \$534,224.21
- Early Care & Education - \$1,944,037.79
- School Transition - \$129,355.91
- Health - \$80,489.24
- Administrative - \$35,745.15

FUNDING SOURCES

Total: \$2,602,858.97



- State Funding - \$200,424.95
- Federal Funding - \$1,941,311.55
- Private Funding - \$150,451.85
- In-kind Contributions - \$310,670.62

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