

SALUDA COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parent Training

Family Literacy

Countdown to Kindergarten

Child Care Quality
Enhancement

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

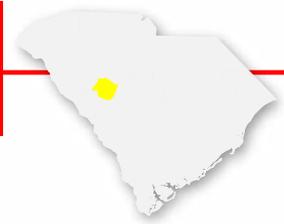
Annual Report

2016-17



OUR VISION:

Every South Carolina child
will arrive at kindergarten
ready to succeed.



By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	Saluda County
Children Under Five	291,026	1,254
Children In Poverty	24.4%	29.6%
3 rd Graders Scoring "Does Not Meet" Standard in Reading	22.2%	30.1%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.0%	35.1%

KIDS COUNT data provided by



- Since inception, Saluda County First Steps has leveraged \$1,604,733 from sources outside state government. **That's \$.49 for every dollar received.**
- **Childcare professionals received 65 hours** of technical assistance for early care best practices.
- Improved parenting practices through **13 Positive Parenting Group Workshops.**
- Provided **338 hours of adult education** through the Family Literacy Program.
- **Total Children Served in FY17: 130**

Saluda County First Steps

103 S Rudolph Street
 Saluda, SC 29138

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Board Chair
 Allyson Bartley

FaceBook: Saluda County First Steps

Saluda County First Steps
Deborah Padgett
 Executive Director

"A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting and when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important. "

- - - Abraham Lincoln

A very wise person reminded me that the quality of the early education program directly impacts high-school graduation rates. I strongly feel that the quality of early care and pre-school education programs directly impact the quality of the early education program in our schools. I am thankful to be part of an organization that truly focuses on the well-being, care and education of our youngest children.

A review of this report will demonstrate the wonderful things we are doing to enhance early care and pre-school education programs in Saluda County. With your help, we can do more. Through your donations and volunteer time, we can prepare our youngest children to carry on the good things we have started, and to improve the quality of life for those that come after them.



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

County Programs

- Parent Training
- Family Literacy
- Countdown to Kindergarten
- Child Care Quality Enhancement
- Child Care Training
- Child Care Scholarships

State Programs

- Early Head Start
- First Steps 4k



What We Do

Each of the six color blocks of the First Steps logo represents a core area of service, outlining our comprehensive strategy to prepare children for long-term school success.

With **measurable outcomes across each of its six school readiness strategy areas**, First Steps is getting results.



Healthy Start

We begin with a focus on providing a healthy start to life. This includes prenatal and post-partum services for both mother and baby. In 2007, First Steps collaborated with key philanthropic and agency partners to bring Nurse-Family Partnership to SC having a significant impact on reducing premature births and Medicaid costs.



Quality Childcare

Quality childcare starts with quality childcare providers. Our quality enhancement and training strategies lead to improved teacher-student interaction, which research shows has a significant impact on a child's development and success in school.



Family Strengthening

Our home visitation strategies, such as Parents as Teachers, Parent-Child Home and Early Steps to School Success, are helping parents understand their responsibilities to care for and be positive models for their children. As a result of First Steps' intervention and parenting support, 66% of clients initially assessed at "low" levels of parenting have achieved moderate or high levels of parenting skill.



Early Education

Private-public partnerships through First Steps 4K have led to significant cost efficiencies in the delivery of publicly funded 4K. One recent analysis suggests First Steps is achieving comparable results, without the need for costly capital construction, for 80 cents on the dollar. Early Head Start expands quality early learning and family support to infants and toddlers.



Early Intervention

Children's school readiness depends on their healthy growth and development. First Steps helps identify potential delays early through developmental screenings and referring children to BabyNet and other early intervention resources.



School Transition

Each of the corresponding blocks of services leads ultimately to the goal of transitioning children successfully to school. Programs like Countdown to Kindergarten are ultimately preparing children for school success.

Based on the needs of our community, Saluda County First Steps focuses its investments in.... FAMILY STRENGTHENING, QUALITY CHILDCARE, EARLY EDUCATION, and SCHOOL TRANSITION.

Parent Training

Parents play a critical role in their child’s development.

Program Description

Positive Parenting Program and *Make Parenting a Pleasure* are evidence-based, group-based parenting education and support programs for parents with children 0-8 years of age. Focus of the program is for parents to: learn practical stress management and communication skills; gain greater understanding of their child; learn effective parenting skills and positive approaches to discipline; and build a support network. Services include:

1. **Group Meetings** at least 4 times
2. **Sessions** last 2 – 2.5 hours with families
3. **Parent booklets** that contain class and home activities
4. **Connections to Outside Resources** that families may need to succeed



Music teaches your child language, motor, cognitive and social skills.

Parent Training by the Numbers 2016-17

Families Served	27
Children Served	27
Total Group Meetings	13
Hours Spent Serving Families	26

This year, our Parent Training program:

- ✓ Continued its strong collaboration with Saluda County Department of Social Services to provide parent education services.
- ✓ Tightly integrated parent education with the Family Literacy and Child Care Scholarship programs.
- ✓ Strengthened 27 families and children through parenting training and education.

Thank you to our partners!

Saluda County Department of Social Services
 ABC Academy
 Saluda County Adult Education

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 Phone: 864-445-0255
 Facebook: Saluda County First Steps

Family Literacy

Parents are their child's first and best teachers.

Program Description

Family literacy programs offer an integrated and family-friendly approach, helping both parents and children to improve their literacy skills. Family literacy services integrate all of the following:

1. Adult Education
2. Child Education
3. Parent Education
4. Interactive Parent/Child Activities

Our family literacy program:

- ✓ **Helps parents of young children increase their education levels**
- ✓ **Provides English language instruction for parents**
- ✓ **Teaches parents how to support their child's literacy and overall development**
- ✓ **Provides quality early learning experiences for children 0-5 while their parents attend adult education**

Saluda County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our family literacy program families:

- 100% ... live in poverty
- 100% ... didn't graduate high school
- 100% ... enrolled in our program with less than an eighth grade education



Reading aloud promotes language development and early literacy skills. Skills that are essential as children start school and learn to read.

Family Literacy by the Numbers 2016-17

Adults Served	6
Children Served	6
Adult Education Hours Offered	338
Early Childhood Education Hours Offered	2400
Parenting Education Hours Offered	30

This year, our Family Literacy program:

- ✓ 100% of participants made gains in their BESTPlus scores.
- ✓ Children of parents enrolled in the adult education program were enrolled in Saluda Schools Early Head Start.
- ✓ Families were connected to many resources through engaging presentations and fun activities: Cooking Matters (DHEC), dental care for adults and children (Molina Healthcare), Women Empowerment workshop (Re-Discover), healthy food shopping and eating (Saluda County Clemson Extension Service).

Thank you to our partners!

- Saluda County School District Adult Education
- Saluda Schools Early Head Start
- DHEC
- Clemson Extension Service
- Molina Health Care
- Re-Discover

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Child Care Quality Enhancement

In order to thrive, children need nurturing, responsive relationships and a supportive learning environment, both within and outside the home.

Program Description

The quality of care they received by young children is crucial to their healthy development and school readiness. Child care providers strive to provide high quality care, but may lack the resources that are commonly available to publicly-funded early childhood programs, such as educational materials, on-site professional development, and other support.

First Steps' Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) is intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children. Participating child care providers must serve a high percentage of at-risk children, and are selected through a competitive process that requires a strong level of commitment to the QE process.

Program Components

1. On-site Technical Assistance (TA) at least twice monthly
2. Equipment and materials funding
3. Integration with locally available training, provided by First Steps and other partners
4. Workforce Development
5. Coordination with community partners
6. Pre/post assessments of the classroom environment and teacher-child interaction, using nationally-recognized observational tools for infant/toddler and preschool settings (ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS)

QE by the Numbers, 2016-17

Child Care Providers Served	2
Number of TA Visits Provided	47
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	92

Congratulations to our QE participants for 2016-17!

Child Care Provider	Pre/Post Improvement
ABC Academy, 4K	From 3.94 to 5.24
ABC Academy, 2-yr-old	Pre: 4.54 (02/17) Post: scheduled for 9/17
ABC Academy, 3-yr-old room	Pre: 4.88 (03/17) Post: scheduled for 9/17

This year, our Quality Enhancement program:

- ✓ Improved quality, on average, by 0.79 based on pre/post Environment Rating Scale assessments
- ✓ Provided 65.75 hours of technical assistance to child care providers
- ✓ Provided \$2500 in classroom materials grants to ABC Academy
- ✓ Provided \$10,000 in funding to create a shaded area with a safety zone for the 4K playground at Saluda Primary.
- ✓ Provided \$5000 in funding to enhance the special education playground (wheelchair swing, Little Tikes basketball goals, awning for shade) at Saluda Primary. Community members provided labor and love to install and enhance the playground.
- ✓ Funded scholarships for 5 children within participating child care providers

Thank you to our partners!

- Saluda County Primary School – 4K
- ABC Academy
- Community Members

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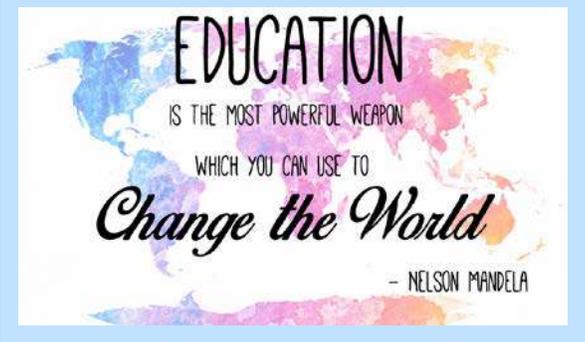
Child Care Training

Those who care for young children need high-quality, accessible, and affordable professional development.

Program Description

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce.

First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Best practices in training include not only the training itself, but follow-up in the classroom.



Child Care Training Sponsored by Saluda County First Steps, 2016-17	
<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Sessions:</u>
Intentional Teaching Series	5.5 hours
Program Administration	5 hours
Motor Skills	3.5 hours
SC Standards	3 hours



Robin Prothro, MS/OTRL, Pediatric Occupational Therapist presented a workshop on the importance of developing motor skills. Motor skills are a robust predictor of academic success.

Training by the Numbers, 2016-17

Total Training Attendance	61
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	35
Number of Training Sessions Offered	13

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 35 early childhood staff with high quality training
- ✓ 21.5 hours of certified training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 29 follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

Thank you to our partners!

- Saluda County Council
- Edgefield County First Steps
- Robin Prothro
- Susan Graham

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Child Care Scholarships

Quality child care can be expensive for many families.

Program Description

Access to quality child care is essential for children while away from their primary caregivers. Yet, of those families income-eligible for child care assistance in South Carolina, only a small fraction receive it due to lack of funds. In the absence of nurturing and consistently available family, friends or neighbors, parents are faced with few - or no - affordable care options.

Saluda County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our scholarship families:

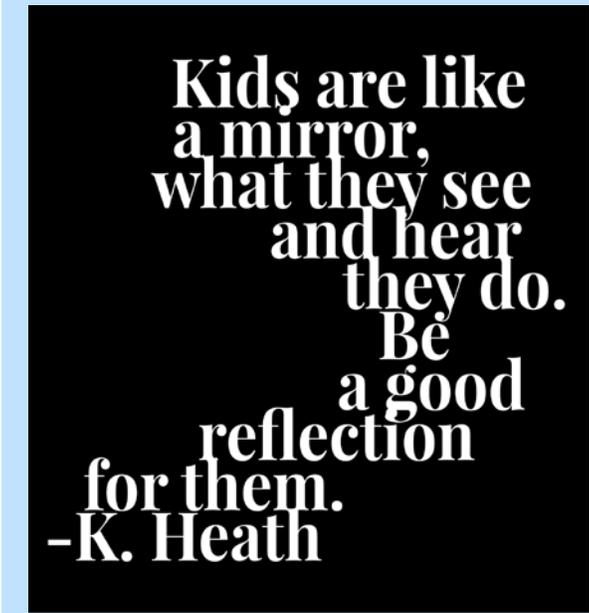
100% ... are eligible for free/reduced lunch

In addition to regular monitoring of child care providers that receive First Steps scholarships, First Steps conducts at least one developmental screening each year with scholarship children and connects families to needed services within the community.

Saluda County First Steps integrates the Child Care Scholarship Program with its Parent Training Program.



Reading aloud builds motivation, curiosity and memory. Sharing the joy of reading with a child is great way to encourage a love of reading for the child.



Scholarships by the Numbers, 2016-17

Children Served	5
Providers Served	1

This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Provided 5 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Provided 8 hours of training for scholarship parents in topics such as promoting positive behavior and managing misbehavior.

Thank you to our partners!

ABC Academy
 Parents

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Bringing parents and teachers together as partners sets the foundation for success in school.

Program Description

Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a summer home visitation model connecting rising kindergartners and their families with their future teachers. The program is designed:

- ✓ to forge strong and lasting home-school relationships,
- ✓ to acquaint children and families with the state and classroom expectations to increase the likelihood of school success,
- ✓ to increase parent involvement in the early grades (particularly in hard-to-reach communities), when children's learning is foundational for life success; and
- ✓ to increase public awareness of the importance of school readiness and provide ways for parents and communities to impact children's early school success.

Countdown to Kindergarten integrates all of the following:

One-on-One Services. Teachers make six visits over the summer to safe environments to provide one-on-one services to participating students and families. Children and families are introduced to actual materials used in kindergarten and are given a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit to keep.

Learning Celebration. The last visit is a "field trip" to the school where the child will attend class in the fall.

Public Awareness. Throughout the summer, First Steps releases tips to media to help parents and caregivers get children ready for kindergarten.

*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2016

Children Served	32
Families Served	32
Home/School Visits	173

**CTK program data is for June-August 2016, whereas CTK fiscal data includes expenditures from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.*



This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- ✓ 75% of Summer 2016 students finished their 5K year on grade-level. A very successful program!
- ✓ 100% of parents responded to CTK survey
- ✓ Increase of 41.5% of parents surveyed said they now have a good understanding of is expected of them and their child during kindergarten.
- ✓ Increase of 60% of parents surveyed said their child is very excited about beginning kindergarten after completing the CTK program.
- ✓ Increase of 80% of parents surveyed said they will make it a priority to participate in school programs/events.

Thank you to our partners!

Saluda Primary School
 Hollywood Elementary School
 Kaplan Early Learning Company

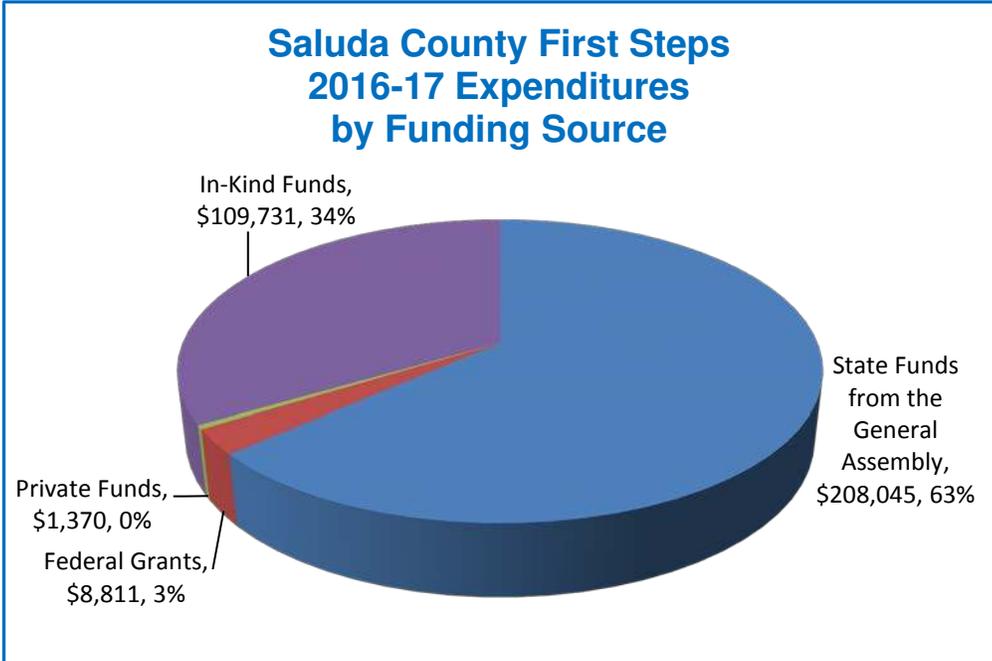
Like us on Facebook!
 Countdown to Kindergarten-South Carolina:



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Financial Impact



Total 2016-17 Expenditures: \$327,957

State Funds Leveraged in 2016-17*: 58%

*Percentage of state dollars matched by additional federal, private, and/or in-kind funds

2016-17 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2016-17 Expenditures
Parent Training	\$7,419	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,419	2%
Family Literacy	\$24,223	\$0	\$0	\$76,208	\$100,431	31%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$17,333	\$0	\$0	\$1,150	\$18,483	6%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$40,738	\$0	\$0	\$2,743	\$43,481	13%
Child Care Training	\$27,698	\$0	\$673	\$0	\$28,371	9%
Child Care Scholarships	\$20,330	\$0	\$0	\$250	\$20,580	6%
Head Start	\$26,552	\$8,811	\$0	\$29,077	\$64,440	20%
Program Support	\$22,763	\$0	\$696	\$304	\$23,763	7%
Administrative Support	\$20,988	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,988	6%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$208,044	\$8,811	\$1,369	\$109,732	\$327,956	

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017

Since inception, Saluda County First Steps has leveraged \$1,604,733 from sources outside of state government. That's 49 cents for every state dollar.

Thank you supporters!

Through partnerships and collaborations, as well as financial support from grants and contributions, Saluda First Steps leverages state dollars to enhance and expand services to children and families.

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$200,000
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Center for Child Care Career Development: \$2,000

Senator Floyd Nicholson: \$660



Students from ABC Academy had an amazing adventure on their trip to the Riverbanks Zoo.

In-Kind Support

Saluda County School District

Kaplan Early Learning Company

Discount School Supply

Scholastic

Saluda County Administration

ABC Academy

McDonald's

Celebration Church

Office Depot

How your support helps children in Saluda County:

- ✓ Senator Floyd Nicholson contributed \$660 to help fund a field trip to Riverbanks Zoo. This trip would not have been possible without his assistance.
- ✓ CCCCD awarded a \$2,000 grant which was used to purchase services of high-quality presenters and materials to enhance professional training opportunities for our child care centers.
- ✓ A donation of \$100 would help to purchase a toolkit kit full of supplies and books for a child in the Countdown to Kindergarten program.
- ✓ A donation of \$200 would help cover the cost of one child to participate in the Countdown to Kindergarten Program.

HOW TO GIVE: To make a donation, please make check out to Saluda County First Steps. Mail to:

Saluda County First Steps
Attn: Deborah Padgett
103 S Rudolph Street
Saluda, SC 29138

Save the Date!

December 8, 2017 – 2017 Chairmen's Summit on Early Childhood. Will be held at Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center.

April 2018 – Week of the Young Child celebration.

Support Saluda County First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer!

Working Together to Enhance the Special Education Playground

Quality Enhancement – Saluda Primary Schools

Saluda County First Steps collaborated with Saluda Primary School to enhance the Special Education playground. Items purchased through a grant from Saluda County First Steps included: Little Tikes basketball goals, awnings for shade, swings and a wheelchair swing. The concrete, fence, and mulch were donated by anonymous donors. Business and community members worked together to spread the mulch, dig the holes to set the equipment, pour concrete, install the fence and equipment, clean the playground area, and anything else that needed to be done to prepare the playground for the upcoming school year. These volunteers even worked in the rain to ensure this playground was finished by the start of the school year. This was truly a community effort. The faces of these children show their appreciation and enjoyment of their playground.



Community members working together for the good of our children.

Seeing the smiles on the kids' faces make it all worth it. No amount of money, hours, or sweat drops could add up to the joy we feel seeing the kids enjoy the playground!

Anonymous Community Member

Look at that smile!
Truly, a picture is worth
1,000 words.



Swinging is essential for developing a child's ability to adapt to incoming sensations. It can also be therapeutic for children who suffer from learning, developmental, or behavioral difficulties.



Getting children ready for school.

The Goals of First Steps

- (1) provide parents with access to the support they might seek and want** to strengthen their families and to promote the optimal development of their preschool children;
- (2) increase comprehensive services** so children have reduced risk for major physical, developmental, and learning problems;
- (3) promote high-quality preschool programs** that provide a healthy environment that will promote normal growth and development;
- (4) provide services** so all children receive the protection, nutrition, and health care needed to thrive in the early years of life so they arrive at school ready to succeed; and
- (5) mobilize communities** to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.

-- Section 59-152-30



Interested parents with Medicaid-eligible children who live in eligible school districts can contact any participating provider to complete an application for free, full-day 4K. To view a list of participating First Steps 4K providers, visit:

<http://scfirststeps.org/4k>



EARLY HEAD START – CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP

Low income families with children 0-36 months, and families with infants or toddlers with special needs, are invited to apply for this year-round, comprehensive program. Available in the following counties: Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Berkeley, Dillon, Georgetown, Laurens, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, Saluda and York, and coming soon to Fairfield and McCormick counties. To apply, visit:

<http://scfirststeps.org/ehs/>



[I CAN] is First Steps' public awareness campaign for school readiness, in support of the state's Profile of the Ready Kindergartener. Includes resources for parents, providers and communities to learn what they can do to support school readiness.

Visit: ican.sc

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