

DORCHESTER COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parents as Teachers

**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	DORCHESTER County
Children Under Five	291,026	9419
Children In Poverty	24.4%	18%
3 rd Graders Below Standard in Reading	22.2%	DD2 14.2% DD4 20.6% Total 34.8%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.0%	10.7%

KIDS COUNT data provided by



- Since inception, Dorchester County First Steps has leveraged \$15% from sources outside state government. **That's \$.28 for every dollar received.**
- **427 hours of support and guidance** were provided to 27 families in our Parents As Teachers Program.
- **Childcare professionals received 54 hours** of technical assistance for early care best practices.
- Improved parenting practices through **9 Group Connections Parent Workshops.**
- **Total Children Served in FY17: 35**

DORCHESTER County First Steps

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Board Chair
 Ms. Rhonda Robinson
 rrobinson@dd4.k12.sc.us

Dorchester County First Steps
Crystal Y. Campbell
 Executive Director

It gives me great pleasure to share with you the successes supported by the Partnership Board, and Staff of Dorchester County First Steps. We are in our 17th year of carrying out the mission of **"Getting Children Ready for School"**, and I am honored to be able to lead this marvelous organization. An additional focus this year has been to be more involved in the community. So, the **"Do You Like Us Now?"** campaign is in full swing.

In FY17, Dorchester County First Steps has invested in many of the core areas of service. We contribute and support the work of Nurse Family Partnerships and in so doing have helped to strengthen the overall health and well-being of 27 children. We also support and implement two Parenting Programs-Parent-Child Home and Parents As Teachers. In the Parent Child Home Program, housed in both Dorchester 2 and Dorchester 4 Schools, we have provided 2424 hours of support and guidance to 49 families. The Parents As Teacher home visitation program provides quality instruction for 27 families led by Alicia Turner and Kristy Allan. We are also proud to announce that Alicia Turner is a state-wide PAT Trainer. We continue to strive to improve the quality of our child care centers by implementing the Quality Counts, continuous quality improvement rating system and we are happy to announce that 2 centers have increased their ratings and are ready to apply for ABC Quality due to the support of Ivory Mitchell, the QE Coordinator. The Literacy Kits, which are housed in both libraries in the County, have been circulated over 881 times. This means that families are using the kits with their children. All of these events were created with purpose; to help us attain our goal of "Getting Children Ready for School". **Do you like us now?**



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

County Programs

Family Strengthening
 Early Education
 Quality Child Care
 School Transition
 Healthy Start
 Early Intervention

State Programs

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, Dorchester County First focuses its investments in Family Strengthening, Early Education, Early Intervention, Healthy Start, School Transition and Quality Child Care

Nurse-Family Partnership

Helping vulnerable first-time mothers empowers them to achieve a better life for themselves and their children.

Program Description

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) helps transform the lives of vulnerable first-time mothers and their babies. Through ongoing home visits from registered nurses, low-income, first-time moms receive the care and support they need to have a healthy pregnancy, provide responsible and competent care for their children, and become more economically self-sufficient. From pregnancy until the child turns two years old, Nurse-Family Partnership’s Home Visiting Nurses form a much-needed, trusting relationship with first-time moms, instilling confidence and empowering them to achieve a better life for their children – and themselves.



In Dorchester County, Nurse-Family Partnership is implemented through the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

Dorchester First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our NFP families:

\$9,000.00... median household income
88%... of local moms initiate breastfeeding
25%... continue @ 6 months and 22% continue @ 12 months

NFP by the Numbers, 2016-17

Children Served	23
Number of Home Visits	262

Success Story

A client enrolled as a fifteen year old, finishing her freshman year in High School. She learned to advocate for herself and provide age-appropriate stimulation for her son’s development as well as loving care. She graduated from high school, a year early this June. She was on the honor roll and is now attending a four year college for her bachelor’s degree in nursing.

As told to me by Lindsay Odell, RN

This year, our NFP program:

- ✓ Supported 3 moms who graduated from high school.
- ✓ Cigarette smoking is down to 3.7% @ 36 weeks.

Thank you to our partners!

- Dorchester Fire and Rescue
- Medicaid
- Housing Authority
- Children’s Trust

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Early Identification and Referral

Identifying and referring children with possible developmental delays can help assure school readiness.

Program Description

First Steps' Early Identification and Referral (EI&R) programs serve families with young children with suspected delays in development and coordinates public awareness for BabyNet services, acting as a local portal to connect families to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children

EI&R services include:

1. **Screenings** (developmental, vision, hearing) for children ages birth to 5 years with suspected delays in development
2. **Referrals**, based up the screening results, to appropriate community resources. This could include the local BabyNet System Point of Entry Office, the local school district, and/or support services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, and programs in libraries and other community resources.
3. **Parent information** including strategies to monitor growth and development.

Our EI&R program:

- ✓ Provides early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- ✓ Promotes services and activities that promote child development
- ✓ Increases children's school readiness and school success

Dorchester First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our EI&R families:

- 21% ... live in poverty
- 26% ... didn't graduate high school
- 7% ... were teen parents

"EI&R is a wonderful opportunity to serve all families in Dorchester County, coupled with a home visit to ensure that as many children as possible receive a developmental screening."

Alicia Turner, PAT Program Director



EI&R by the Numbers 2016-17

Children Served	40
Materials Distributed	96
Children Referred to BabyNet, Local School, or Other Services	Baby Net: 6 School: 2 Other: 24

This year, our Early Identification and Referral program:

- ✓ Screened 40 children using Ages and Stages Questionnaire
- ✓ Referred 32 number of families to community resources after screening indicated need

Thank you to our partners!

- SC Inclusion Collaborative
- Trident United Way
- Department of Social Services

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

Program Description

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is an evidence-based home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed. PAT services include:

1. **Personal Visits** at least twice monthly
2. **Monthly Group Connections** with other PAT families
3. **Screenings and Assessments** to identify developmental concerns
4. **Connections to Outside Resources** that families may need to succeed

Dorchester First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our PAT families:

77% ... live in poverty
 26% ... didn't graduate from high school
 7% ... were teen parents



Alicia Turner, PAT Program Director

Preparing children for success

"We really enjoy working with our Program Educator. You are awesome at what you do. The children and I are really learning a lot."

PAT Parent

PAT by the Numbers 2016-17

Families Served	27	
Children Served	35	
Total Home Visits	353	
Hours Spent Serving Families	431	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	2.90	3.60

This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged 13 home visits per family
- ✓ Identified and addressed 14 potential developmental delays, and made 14 connections for families to services such as Baby Net
- ✓ Improved parenting practices for example, parents reading to children more often.
- ✓ Improved literacy skills by distributing 476 books to participating families

Thank you to our partners!

Baby Net
 Department of Social Services

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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 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	8
Number of TA Visits Provided	109
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	714

Congratulations to our QE participants for 2016-17!

Child Care Provider	Pre/Post Improvement
Sunshine House-Four yr old	From 1.08 to 2.89
Good Shepherd-Four yr old room	From 3.57 to 4.03
In God's Care-Three yr old room	From 1.53 to 2.45
Loving & Learning-Four yr old	From 1.38 to 1.67

This year, our Quality Enhancement program:

- ✓ Based on evaluations of Child Care Providers we received 100% client satisfaction with coaching and mentoring
- ✓ Based on pre/post Environment Rating Scale assessments QE Providers working with DCFS have on average improved .73 points. We are changing our strategy but still working with the same providers.
- ✓ Provided 350 hours of technical assistance to child care providers
- ✓ Provided \$12,000.00 in materials grants to participating child care providers

Thank you to our partners!

- RBP Consulting
- Kelly Phifer
- SC Child Care Licensing
- ABC Quality
- Child Care Resource & Referral

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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.

"I enjoyed it [the training] and it was very informative and a great hands-on experience for me being a visual person."
E. W.- Training Participant

Child Care Training Sponsored by Dorchester First Steps, 2016-17	
Topic:	Sessions:
Curriculum	13 hours
Child Guidance	4 hours
Child Growth & Development	5 hours
Health & Safety	4 hours
Professional Development	1 hour
Program Administration	2 hour



All training sessions are conducted by Certified Trainers with the Center for Child Care Career Development

Training by the Numbers, 2016-17

Total Training Hours	49
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	591
Number of Training Sessions Offered	29

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 591 early childhood staff with high quality training
- ✓ 49 hours of certified training by Master Certified Trainers with the Center for Child Care Career Development
- ✓ 30 follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

Thank you to our partners!

Center for Child Care Career Development
 Ripple Consulting, Jessica Flowers

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Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in Dorchester County cannot afford quality care for their children.

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.

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

- 1,786 ... live in poverty
- 1.87% ...victims of child abuse and neglect
- 5.24% ... were teen parents

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.

Families, with children of age, that apply for scholarships are encouraged to participate in DCFS's Parents As Teachers Home Visitation program. Recognizing that we have not been as successful with administering the vouchers as projected, Ivory Mitchell has taken on the task of securing and verifying prospective families for scholarships. Since July 2017, we have administered 8 vouchers. So, for FY 18, we are well on our way to meeting our goal. *Do you like us now?*

The goal of DCFS is to provide quality child care for every child needing the services.
Crystal Campbell, Executive Director



Dorchester First Steps reached out into all areas of the community to help parents with their child care needs.

Scholarships by the Numbers, 2016-17

Number Families Applied	23
Children Served	1

This year was our first time initiating the Scholarship program. Here were our goals:

- ✓ To provide 24 children who reside in Dorchester County with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ To identify and address potential developmental delays among scholarship children and provide the families with PAT opportunities
- ✓ To make connections for families to services such as Baby Net, Child Find, Beginnings, PCH and PAT
- ✓ To support ABC Quality Child Care facilities in Dorchester by subsidizing child care tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care

Thank you to our partners!

- Department of Social Services
- ABC Quality

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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:

Home Visitation. Teachers make six visits over the summer to the homes of 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	25
Families Served	25
Home/School Visits	150

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



Countdown to Kindergarten getting children ready for school

This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- ✓ 53% of the participating families felt they truly know and trust their child's teacher
- ✓ Increased the amount of time parents spent reading to children by 50%
- ✓ Provided the parents with activities and books to help their child succeed in Kindergarten

Thank you to our partners!

Dorchester District Two
 Dorchester District Four
 Kaplan Early Learning Company
 Head Start and Kindergarten Teachers

Like us on Facebook!
 Countdown to Kindergarten-South Carolina

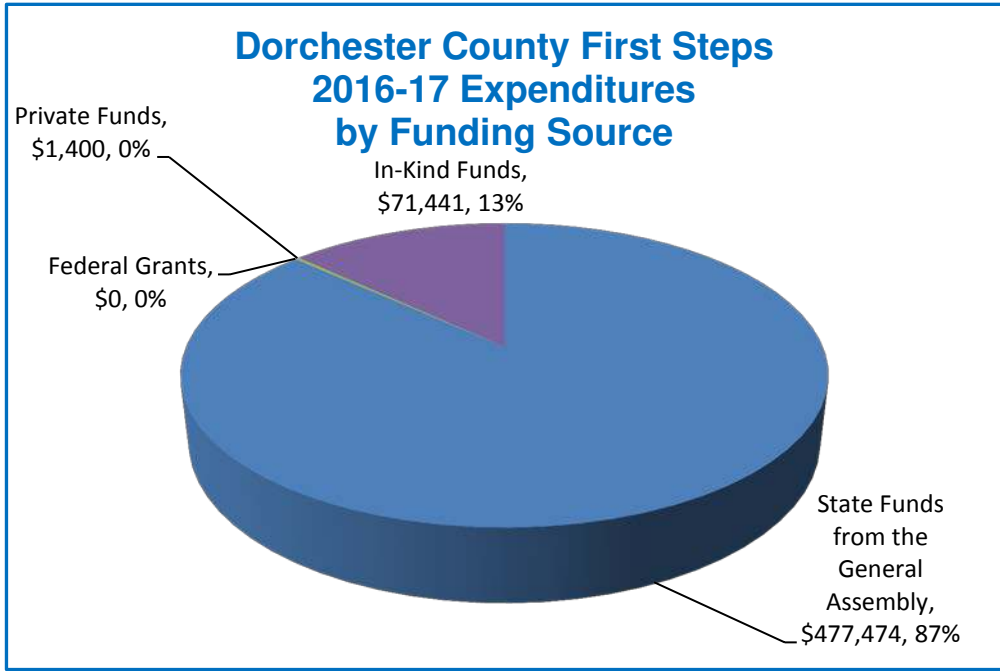


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Financial Impact



Total 2016-17 Expenditures: \$477,474.00

State Funds Leveraged in 2016-17*: 15%

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

2016-17 Expenditures by Strategy (Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017)

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2016-17 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$106,887	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$106,887	19%
Parent-Child Home	\$53,826	\$0	\$0	\$71,441	\$125,267	23%
Nurse Family Partnership	\$10,765	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,765	2%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$19,383	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19,383	4%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$88,904	\$0	\$464	\$0	\$89,368	16%
Child Care Training	\$18,616	\$0	\$170	\$0	\$18,786	3%
Child Care Scholarships	\$70,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,000	13%
Community Education	\$31,156	\$0	\$288	\$0	\$31,444	6%
Early Identification & Referral	\$15,447	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,447	3%
Program Support	\$25,859	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,859	5%
Administrative Support	\$36,631	\$0	\$478	\$0	\$37,109	7%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$477,474	\$0	\$1,400	\$71,441	\$550,315	

Since inception, Dorchester County First Steps has leveraged \$1,523,309 from sources outside of state government. That's 28 cents for every state dollar.

Thank you supporters!

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

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$477,474.00
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Center for Child Care Career Development:
\$2000.00

DCFS Board Members: 90%

In-Kind Support

Dorchester District 2 School District

Dorchester District 4 School District

Nefeteri Smalls, Healing Hurts

Lewis Porcher, Builders Of Our Heritage

Rojalyn Phillips, RBP Consulting

Pam Bradley, Kaplan



DCFS making a difference in the
lives of Dorchester County's
children.

How your support helps children in Dorchester County:

- ✓ \$15 provides a young child a book per month for one year!
- ✓ \$20 feeds dinner to low-income families attending a parenting workshop
- ✓ \$3,400 helps a low-income family afford quality child care for one month

Mail gifts to: 810 Travelers Blvd Suite D#1
Summerville, SC 29485

Save the Date!

DORCHESTER FIRST STEPS

ANNUAL MEETING

NOVEMBER 7, 2017

6:00-8:30 pm

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

DCFS Do You Like Us Now?

Sharing our resources with the community is one of DCFS's main goals. We have implemented strategies in order to aid children to be ready for school. The literacy kits are a major part of our success.

881
Literacy Kits
were circulated in
FY17

Dorchester County First Steps
participated in several outreach
events:

Zion Pilgrims Resources Day

Lowes Fire Prevention Event

Flowertown Festival

GRITS Festival

DCFS & Cracker Barrel Storywalk



Early Literacy Kits

Dorchester County First Steps identified early literacy as a need within the county. We have partnered with the Dorchester County Library System to create, maintain and distribute Early Literacy Kits (ELKS).

After a brief training, parents are encouraged to check out the ELKS from the library.

The Early Literacy Kits (ELKS) were implemented in 2014. In 2015, 231 kits circulated between both libraries. In 2016, 347 kits have been in homes and utilized by families. This fiscal year FY17, 881 kits have used by children and families. This means that more books are being read to children and more skills are being taught.

Dorchester County First Steps Board: Do You Like Us Now? DCFS Portal and Convener

The mission of the Dorchester County First Steps is to improve the early childhood development of Dorchester County children. We provide resources and leadership to assist families in preparing their children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed through community partnerships and collaboration.

Dorchester County Partnership Board prides itself in maintaining proper decorum during meetings. Members of the Board support the staff by attending and working on various outreach activities, encouraging staff and strategy development, and giving financially to support Board events.

Dorchester County First Steps Partnership Board, 2016-17

Name	Position	Board Category
Rhonda Robinson	Board Chair	School District Representative
Susan Gaston	Vice Board Chair	School District Representative
Elaine Bryant	Board Member	Parent of a Young Child
Betty Harrison	Board Member	Faith Community
Jennifer Smith	Board Member	District 2 Library Representative
Elizabeth Brown	Board Member	District 4 Library Representative
Ronda Simmons	Board Member	Child Care Provider
Rebecca Denny	Board Member	Head Start Mental Health
Elnora Brown	Board Member	School District 4 Nurse
Marie Scroggins	Board Member	Grandmother of a Young Child/Faith Based
Felicia Veasey	Board Member	DHEC Representative
Dr. Jacquelyn Hill	Board Member	Community Representative
Karen Johnson	Board Member	Business Community
Andrea Smith	Board Member	Early Childhood Professional
Kristin Common	Board Member	Child Care Provider

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>



[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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