

LEE COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Early Steps to School
Success (Save The Children)

Parents as Teachers
(Kershaw)

Child Care Training Child

Care Scholarships

Strengthening Families
Program

Countdown to Kindergarten

Annual Report

2017-18



OUR VISION:

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

<http://scfirststeps.com/lee/>

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Executive Director Message

Lee County First Steps increases the quality of services for children 0-5 and their families

2017-2018 Fiscal Year has been a successful year for Lee County First Steps (LCFS). The partnership board has managed to sustain partnerships which made it possible to continue providing already established services. LCFS has continued to provide the following support with limited funding and staff: child care scholarships and center staff training and professional development to both early care professionals and parents. Also, Lee County continues to implement parenting programs (Parents As Teachers, and Early Steps to School Success). LCFS provided support for 4K Assessment with the DIAL-3, and the PPVT-3. LCFS and RLI-Lee County continues its work through the SC Healthy Initiative Grant from SC DHEC and SC Tobacco Collaboration to focus on the health and well-being of Lee County's children and their families.

LCFS continues to work hard to expand services throughout the community and across county lines, if necessary, to reach families and children who are in dire need of these services. LCFS received funds from SC Children's Trust to expand the Strengthening Families Program to serve families in the Pee Dee and Wateree Regions.

In FY 2018, we implemented the Early Steps to School Success, and Kindergarten Ambassador Program which uses the vroOm Curriculum.

The value adds which LCFS continues to have on the local community is that we continue to serve as a visible advocate for the children and parents in Lee County. Although local resources are limited, LCFS is still passionate about its commitment to help children and their families strengthening collaboration efforts with the Lee County School District, Head Start, private child care, and other collaborative partners in the local and regional community. LCFS has maintained its focus on addressing parenting, home visiting, quality child care with limited child care scholarships, child training, and school readiness.

Elder Alexis D. Pipkins, Sr., Ed. S.
Executive Director



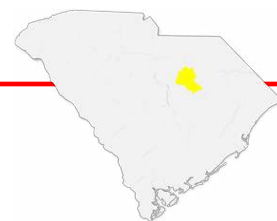
Back to school event for children and families in Lee County, fall 2017.

OUR MISSION:

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





Find Lee First Steps:





THE NEED

School readiness **depends on the capacity of caregivers** to provide children with consistent, nurturing, and responsive relationships in safe, stimulating learning environments, **continuously**, starting at birth. Unfortunately, these quality early childhood experiences happen for too few children in Lee County.

How are Lee County's children doing?	What early learning programs are available for children in our county? Last year:	Where can families access child care in our county?
889 are under age 5	8 attended Early Head Start as infants and toddlers	2 licensed child care centers
41% live in poverty	35 attended free preschool or Head Start as 3-year-olds	N/A licensed group/family homes
14% of babies born in 2016 were to moms without a HS diploma	65 4-year-olds attended free full-day public school 4K or Head Start	34% participate in the state's Quality Rating System (ABC Quality)
53% Children living in single family homes	12 0-5 year olds received early intervention or special ed.	3 providers are rated B or higher by ABC Quality
26.20% of last year's kindergartners demonstrated readiness	26 were served by 	76 families received assistance with affording child care last year
Kids Count data provided by: 	Data provided by: 	

THE GOALS

Our partnership's work, in collaboration with state and local partners, is focused on advancing Lee County towards these strategic goals in support of the **Profile of the Ready Kindergartner**, South Carolina's description of school readiness:

1. By 2020, increase diversity (age, race/ethnicity, gender, and geographic location) of the board to have 33% of the current county population reflected on the local partnership board.
2. Increase community outreach through more partnerships to include the annual meeting, state of the young child, health and community fair, more partnerships, Blue Print for Lee County Health, Child's Trust, Prevention Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Month, and Kindergarten Ambassador Program.
3. By 2020, increase board's funding goal by 100%.

THE IMPACT

In 2017-18, Lee County First Steps provided:

43 children and **43 adults** with **intensive support** to equip parents and caregivers with the confidence and competence to be a child's first and best teacher, and strengthen their family's health, economic, and overall well-being in Early Steps to School Success (ESSS).

- ✓ **59 staff** working in **8** child care providers, Head Start centers and preschool classrooms with training, technical assistance, resources and support, helping **them better meet the needs of 436 children ages 0-5 in their care in Lee County School District, Bishopville-Lee Child Development Center, and Wateree Head Start.**
- ✓ financial assistance to help **21 children** 0-5 **attend quality child care** so their parents can work or attend school
- ✓ **6,430 books** to **spark the love of reading** for **530 children** in ESSS, Raising A Reader, child care, and community events
- ✓ a total of **605 children** and **233 adults** were impacted by Lee County First Steps programs, resources, activities and events.

School Readiness Outcomes

What is the KRA?

In 2017-18, kindergartners across the state were given for the first time South Carolina's newest assessment of school readiness: the **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment**, or KRA. The KRA provides a snapshot of students' abilities at the beginning of the school year, in four domains: Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Physical Development and Well-Being. Here are the results locally and for the state:

LEE COUNTY (131 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	39%	24%	37%
Language&Literacy	24%	46%	30%
Mathematics	29%	53%	18%
Physical Dev&WB	34%	22%	44%
OVERALL	31%	43%	27%

SOUTH CAROLINA (54,927 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	28%	27%	45%
Language&Literacy	23%	43%	34%
Mathematics	31%	38%	31%
Physical Dev&WB	28%	24%	48%
OVERALL	26%	38%	36%

- 1. Language and Literacy:** reading, writing, speaking, and listening
- 2. Mathematics:** counting, comparison, and sorting
- 3. Physical Well-Being & Motor Development:** dexterity, muscular coordination, and balance
- 4. Social Foundations:** following rules, asking for help, task persistence and other skills necessary to function within the kindergarten classroom

Demonstrating Readiness: student demonstrates foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.¹⁰

Approaching Readiness: student demonstrates some foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards

Emerging Readiness: student demonstrates limited foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards

What is Lee County First Steps doing to improve KRA results?

Although Lee County's results for the first year of KRA are low in the domains, Lee County First Steps will provide additional school 5K School Readiness Transition Readiness Kits for kindergartners and their parents. Lee County First Steps, as the local convener, will reconstitute the Lee County Early Childhood Advisory Group to discuss how the community can assist, and also seek to provide additional parent engagement groups by seeking a grant to re-implement and expand Parent Cafes.

Providing quality home visitation, early literacy support, and book bag exchange program.

Program Description

Early Steps to School Success (ESSS) is a language and pre-literacy development program operated by Save the Children, a leading international nonprofit helping children in need. ESSS is the birth-to-five component of a continuum of Save the Children programs which focus on literacy and language development, physical fitness and nutrition programs for children birth to age 12. ESSS provides early childhood education services to pregnant women and children birth to five years of age, education services to their parents, and ongoing staff training to the community early childhood educators involved with the program.

In Lee County, ESSS is implemented in collaboration with Lee County School District.

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



Lee County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our ESSS families:

41%	Live in poverty
76%	Single Parent
53%	Children in single families
50%	Births to teens (15-19)
13%	Low Birthweight
33%	Babies born with less than adequate Prenatal Care

ESSS by the Numbers 2017-18

Children Served	43
Number of Home Visits	1052
Total Hours of Home Visits	1046
Number of Group Meetings	53
Number of Families Served	43

This year, our Early Steps to School Success Program learned that Save The Children present in each of the Lee County School District elementary schools attendance zones, increasing the impact on children and families in the most rural pockets of Lee County.

Thank you to our ESSS partners!

Save The Children
Bishopville Primary School
West Lee Elementary School
Bishopville Lee Adult Education
Lee County School District
Lower Lee Elementary School
Lee County Adult Education
Kiddie Land Family Day Care

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Parents as Teachers meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an *evidence-based* program.



Parents as Teachers in collaboration with Kershaw County First Steps



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

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

100% ... live in poverty
50% ... didn't graduate from high school
25% ... were teen parents

I'm a single mother with five children and not much income, so providing the resources my children, and I needed to help them begin reading before school was not looking too promising.



This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Identified and addressed potential developmental delays by referring to BabyNet or Child Find.
- ✓ Parenting practice on the KIPS is helping parents strengthen their nurturing and parenting skills.
- ✓ Improved literacy skills: books given, books lent, and books read to children.
- ✓ Made connections for families to services such as referrals.

Thank you to our PAT partners!

Lee County School District Save The Children
Parents As Teachers (ILA) Bishopville Lee Child Care Center
Kershaw County First Steps

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Parents as Teachers meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an **evidence-based** program.



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.

Training Sponsored by Lee First Steps, 2017-18

Topic:

Supporting and Understanding Positive Communication Skills Part 1&2
Strengthening Developmental Needs in Young Children Part 1 & 2
Establishing a Curriculum that Embraces Developmentally Appropriate Practices Part 1 & 2
Embedding the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct in Early Childhood
Program Planning and Evaluation in the Early Childhood Centers

Sessions:

One Session
One Session
One Session
One Session
One Session

"We enjoyed each session, and the training was excellent!"

Mary Lee Arthur



Training by the Numbers, 2017-18

Total Training Attendance	59
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	18
Number of Training Sessions Offered	9

This year, our Training program provided:

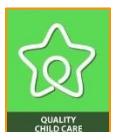
- ✓ 18 early childhood staff with high quality training, impacting 8 providers and 436 children
- ✓ 25 hours of certified training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 60 follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

Thank you to our Training partners!

Lee County School District	Save The Children
Early Steps/Parents As Teachers	Bishopville Primary School
Wateree Head Start- Bishopville Site	Kershaw County First Steps
Bishopville Lee Child Care Center	Lee County Adult Education
Child Care Resource and Referral	Kiddieland Family Day Caare

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Child Care Training and Professional Development meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an **evidence-based** program.



Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in Sumter 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.

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

- 100% ... live in poverty
- 90% ... living in a single family home
- 100% ... had two risk factors
- 62% ... had three or four risk factors
- 81% ... of families were in enrolled for at least nine months the program year

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.

Lee County integrates scholarships with Early Steps to School Success and Parents as Teachers which is provided by Kershaw County First Steps.

Child care training is conveniently located in the county and easily accessible to me and my staff.



Scholarships by the Numbers, 2017-18

Children Served	21
Providers Served	4

This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Provided 21 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Identified and addressed potential developmental delays among scholarship children
- ✓ Made connections for families to services such as BabyNet
- ✓ Provided training for scholarship parents in topics such as early literacy, growth and development, and guidance

Thank you to our Scholarship partners!

Darlington-Lee County Adult Education
Lee County School District
DSS ABC Child Care
Bishopville Lee Child Care Center
Kiddieland Family Day Care

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Our partnership's Child Care Scholarship strategy is considered **evidence-based** because it is connected to the following evidence-based programs:
Early Steps to School Success and
Parents As Teachers



Strengthening Families Program



Children involved in high-quality preschool are more likely to have better academic outcomes.

Program Description

The Strengthening Families Program (SFP) 6-11 is an evidence-based family skills training program designed to strengthen the skills of both parents and their children so that they will be better equipped to deal with life's challenging situations. The SFP provides 14 weekly sessions of family educational training for both parents and their children age 6-11 in addition to meals, prizes and program incentives.

Here is what our SFP Program provides:

- 14 weekly educational skills training sessions for both parents and their children age 6 – 11.
- Child care services for non-participating children.
- A delicious family meal during each training session.
- Transportation provided for families, if needed.
- Prizes and program incentives i.e., gift cards, gas cards, household items, etc.
- **Incentive for families who successfully complete and graduate from the program by attending 12 or more training sessions.**
- **Incentive for families for perfect attendance who attend all 14 sessions with Perfect attendance.**



Strengthening Families by the Numbers, 2017-18

Number of Group Meetings	84
Number of Incentives Given	1330
Number of Children 0-5 Served	68
Number of Family Members Served	124
Number of Families Served	95
Total Attendance	4,312

This year, our Early Education program:

Lee County First Steps provided SFP services in Lee County, Florence County, and Sumter County. Thee Sumter County expansion was readily accepted and implemented

Thank you to our Strengthening Families partners!

Children's Trust of SC
Lee County School District
Lee Central Middle School
Florence School District 4
Bethlehem Baptist Church
Pee Dee Region Boys and Girls Club- Lake City Site
Sumter School District

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Strengthening Families Program meets the South Carolina First Steps legislation's definition of an evidence-informed programs.



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.

*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2017

Children Served	30
Families Served	28
Home/School Visits	179

**CTK program data is for June-August 2017, whereas CTK fiscal data includes expenditures from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.*



"CTK helped my child learn more and understand that Kindergarten will be a new adventure of learning"

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.

This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- ✓ Increased the amount of time parents spent reading to children
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, CTK children performed as well as, or better than, their fellow students in social and emotional development, self help and monitor skills, and language and literacy development during the 2017-18 school year.
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, 100% of CTK parents were more involved than other parents in their child's education in the areas attending open house, school activities, or joining school/parent groups.

Thank you to our CTK partners!

Lee County School District
Kaplan Early Learning Company
Bishopville Primary School
Wateree Head Start- Bishopville Site

Like us on Facebook!
Countdown to Kindergarten-South Carolina

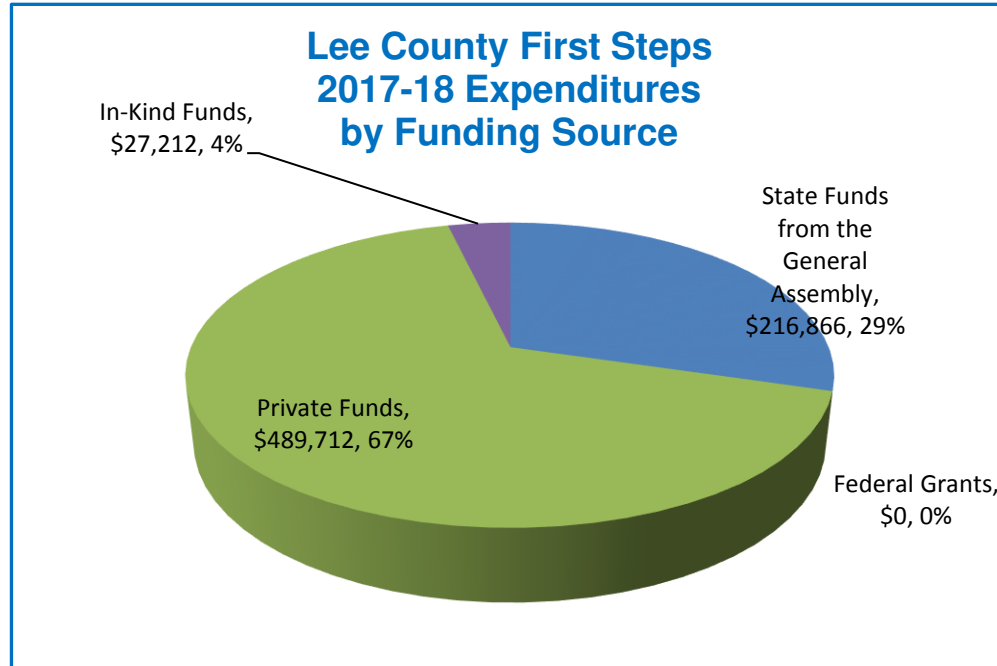


Evidence of Effectiveness:

Our partnership's Countdown to Kindergarten program meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an **evidence-informed** program.



Financial Impact



Total 2017-18 Expenditures: \$733,791

State Funds Leveraged in 2017-18*: 238%

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

2017-18 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2017-18 Expenditures
Early Steps to School Success	\$49,245	\$0	\$104,741	\$13,193	\$167,179	23%
Strengthening Families Program (6-11)	\$6,794	\$0	\$246,049	\$0	\$252,843	34%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$5,185	\$0	\$0	\$719	\$5,904	1%
Child Care Training	\$29,431	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$29,431	4%
Child Care Scholarships	\$66,500	\$0	\$0	\$13,300	\$79,800	11%
Program Support	\$31,871	\$0	\$138,244	\$0	\$170,115	23%
Administrative Support	\$27,840	\$0	\$680	\$0	\$28,520	4%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$216,866	\$0	\$489,712	\$27,212	\$733,791	

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

Since inception, Lee County First Steps has leveraged \$4,449,177 from sources outside of state government. That's 79 cents for every state dollar.

Thank you supporters!

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

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$216,866
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Children's Trust of South Carolina: \$246,049

Save The Children (ESSS) \$167,179

Department of Social Services: \$13,300

In-Kind Support

Lee County School District

DSS Child Care Scholarships

Save The Children



Children are the present future...

How your support helps children in Lee County:

- ✓ \$197.00 provides a young child the opportunity to participate in Countdown To Kindergarten- school transition summer program!
- ✓ \$292.00 helps a low-income family afford quality child care for one month

HOW TO GIVE:

Lee County First Steps

PO Box 344

Bishopville, SC 29010

Save the Date!

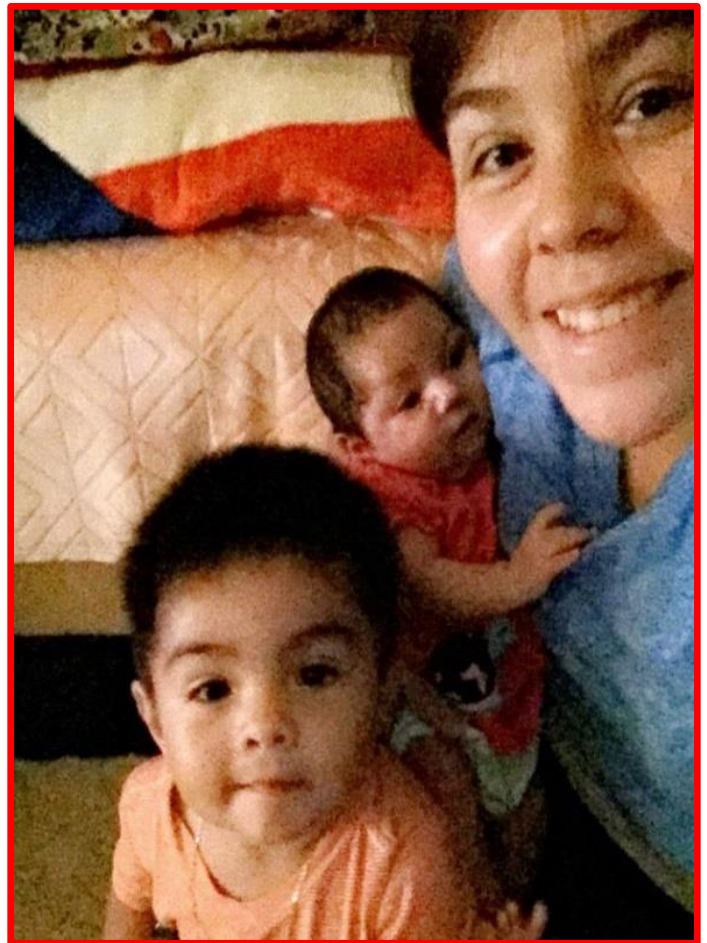
Midlands Gives 2019:

Tuesday, May 7, 2019! Midlands Gives brings the region together as one community, raising money and awareness for Midlands nonprofits during the 18-hour online giving challenge. During Midlands Gives, everyone has the opportunity to be a philanthropist as contributions of just \$20 or more.

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

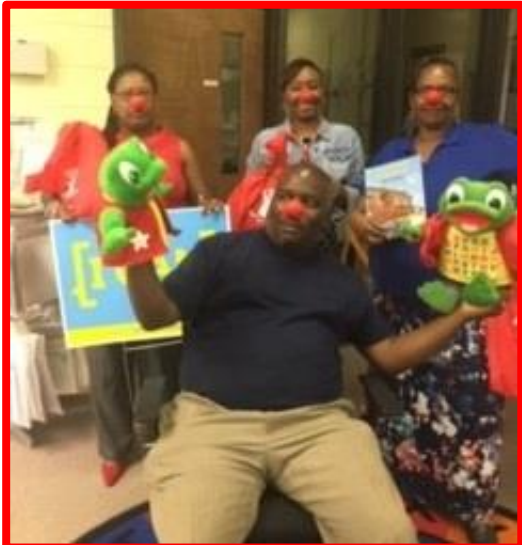
Success Story

Save The Children (Early Steps To School Success) provides families with parenting skill, and early literacy skills...



Support Lee First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer.

Community Impact



Support Lee First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer.

First Steps Partnership Board

Lee County First Steps Board

1. Board Member	Place of Employment	Board Category
2. Andrew Moses, Chair Vice-Chair until November 2017	Lee County School District	Legislative Appointee
3. (Rev.) Archie Temoney, Board Chair until November 2017- resigned from board	New Zion AME Church	Faith Community
4. Beauty Murphy	Lee County School District	Early Childhood Education
5. Belinda Butler	Select Health	Business Community
6. Bertha Scott	Lee County School District retired	Family Ed. Training & Support Provider
7. Betty D. Addison	Retired, Lee County School District	Non-profit Organization
8. Danielle Boyd, Secretary	Wateree Head Start – Bishopville Site	Head Start
9. David “Keel” Addison	Addison Barber Shop	Parent of Preschool Children
10. Diana C. Williams, Assist. Secretary	Retired, Lee County School District	Early Childhood Education
11. Eloise W. Witherspoon (deceased August 3, 2018)	Lee County Adult Education(retired)	Family Ed. Training & Support Provider
12. Jacqueline Josey	Lee County Council	Lee County Council
13. Jeanette Isaac	Lee County School District	Preschool through Primary Education
14. Jerlene Atkinson	Kiddie Land Daycare Center	Early Childhood Education
15. Beverly Jackson, DSS representative for Andrea Favor	Lee County School District	Lee County DSS
16. Julia Young	Colonial Neurology	HealthCare Provide
17. Kateisha Simmons	Parent of Preschool	Lee County School District
18. LaToya Hopkins	Wateree Head Start	Parent of Preschool Children
19. Lillie M. Patterson	Bishopville Lee Child Development Center	Childcare & Early Childhood Dev. Ed. Provider
20. M. DeLoris LeGrant	Retired, Sumter County School District	Early Childhood Education
21. Mary Lee Arthur	Lee County School District	Lee County School District
22. Maverick Wilson	Wateree Correctional Inst./ Retired	Legislative Appointee
23. Patricia Toney	Retired, Lee County School District	Faith Community
24. Regina Nesmith	DHEC	DHEC
25. Sandra Holmes	Lee County School District	Health Care Provider
26. Sandy Jenkins	Wateree Regional Trans. Authority	Transportation
27. Sheila Moses, Treasurer	Fresenius	Health Care Provider

What is First Steps?

At the state level and in every county, First Steps leverages state funding with other public and private resources to help South Carolina's children enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. First Steps programs and services support families as their child's first and most important teacher and are customized to meet the unique needs of local communities, grounded in strong evidence, fueled by stakeholder collaboration, and accountable for results.

First Steps Goals

- (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.

First Steps Building Blocks of Quality Early Childhood Programs and Services



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

From Greenville to Charleston, Abbeville to York, First Steps local partnerships serve as ...

Local portals connecting preschool children and families to services

Conveners of community stakeholders to address the needs of young children and their families

Champions of the importance of school readiness to our children's future.



for South Carolina First Steps and to learn about First Steps 4K programs in your area:

scfirststeps.org

For Lee County First Steps:

<http://scfirststeps.com/lee/>



[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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