



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2021 – 2023





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.

Vision

Sumter County First Steps will collaborate with other entities to cultivate and develop, our children and families to **prepare children for school success** and life.

Values

The years of early childhood are a critical window of development during which much of human potential is shaped. Families are the single most important influence on the development of their young children.

The work of supporting families and caregivers is a collaborative effort between state and local stakeholders within the public, private and faith sectors.

School readiness is the result of a child's development in many areas, with each contributing to the child's success.

Services must be individualized and adaptable to meet the unique needs of children and families.

Message from the Executive Director



Julia A. Nelson, MPA
Executive Director
Sumter County First Steps

Sumter County First Steps Partnership (SCFS) concentrates on strategies, which will improve school readiness in our county. We realize the significance early educational intervention can make in a child's readiness for school and lifetime success. Our strategies are centered around the children, their families and enhancing the skills and quality of those caring for the children, childcare providers.

For the past couple of months, SCFS Board Members have met and given a great deal of thought in where we are as a partnership to include our strengths, opportunities, strategies and areas we can further focus on our mission, "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".

Our programs, which we implement are Parent As Teachers, Dolly Parton Imagination Library, Childcare Training and Scholarships/ABC Vouchers.

In order to have continued success, it's important to take an objective review of services and programs. While preparing our 2023 Comprehensive Plan, we have had the opportunity to review all services and programs. The recent self-assessments of each program have validated our belief that we're investing our time and financials in the appropriate programs for Sumter County. The self-assessments have also allowed us to review areas where we can improve in each program.

We have been fortunate to have community partners who have collaborated with us to complement and enhance the programs we're implementing. A few of these community partners include, Sumter School District, Head Start, Early Head Start, BabyNet, Child Find, CDEEP, DSS, First Steps 4K and local childcare providers. We are truly appreciative for each our peer early education providers.

On October 29, 2020, SCFS Board met collectively to review and approve 2023 Comprehensive Plan. This process has been beneficial to our board as we continue to be good stewards of the financial investment into the lives of our most vulnerable population and their future.

Overarching Measure of Success

1. INCREASE THE REACH OF FIRST STEPS SERVICES

By FY23, the percentage of children in need who are directly served by ABC County First Steps will increase from 17% to 22%.

2. MORE CHILDREN ARRIVE AT KINDERGARTEN READY FOR SUCCESS

By 2023, the percentage of children who score at the highest level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment will increase by 2% each year to 2% each year to 6%

3. REDUCE THE RACIAL/ETHNIC GAP IN KINDERGARTEN READINESS

By 2023, the gap in the percentage of children who score at the highest level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment between White Kindergarteners and Black/Hispanic Kindergarteners will reduce by 1% to 6%.

Objectives

- 1. PARENT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION.**
- 2. STRENGTHEN FAMILY LITERACY FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN SUMTER COUNTY.**
- 3. INCREASE CHILDCARE QUALITY.**

1. Parent and Community Education

STRATEGY 1.1

Parent As Teachers

SMART GOAL(S)

1. By the end of FY '23, we will increase the number of children enrolled in Parent As Teachers from 23 to 50.
2. By the end of FY '23, our clients' KIPS scores will increase from 78% to 90%.
3. By the end of FY'23, our clients' ACIRI scores will increase from 78% to 90%.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

- We will continue to partner with Sumter School District, Early Head Start, Head Start, Babynet, and First Steps 4K to recruit younger children to enroll in PAT.

STRATEGY 1.2

Community Education

SMART GOAL(S)

1. In fiscal years '21, '22, and '23, we will distribute a minimum of 250 Profile of the Ready Kindergartner brochures or other related material to the community each year.
2. We will convene a minimum of one annual meeting of other early education professionals involved in school readiness. (Date)

Parent and Community Education

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

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2. Strengthen Literacy

STRATEGY 2.1

Dolly Parton Imagination Library

SMART GOAL

1. By the end of **FY '23**, increase the number of children enrolled annually from 125 to 225.
2. **Children develop interest in books and motivation to read.**
3. **Children develop knowledge of the alphabet. How many books would you send that targets this particular area?**
4. **Children develop phonological awareness**

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

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3. Increase Child Care Quality

STRATEGY 3.1

Child Care Staff Training and Development

SMART GOAL(S)

1. Provide ongoing staff development to meet SC Endeavors training requirements. Annually, train at least 125 childcare workers and early education staff.
2. Access knowledge of childcare workers and early education staff by administering pre- and post-assessments after every Childcare Training offered by Sumter County First Steps.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATOR(S)

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STRATEGY 3.2

ABC Scholarships/Child Care Vouchers.

SMART GOAL(S)

3. Provide subsidies for quality childcare programs to eligible families and their children
4. Increase the number of childcare slots.
(We dates and target numbers for both.)

3. Increase Child Care Quality

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