



Annual Report

2020-2021



OUR MISSION

To ensure that all children in Spartanburg County start school ready to reach their highest potential. By leveraging resources, collaborating with community partners, and supporting families and early care providers, we hope to maximize our long-term impact.

OUR VALUES

Children and Families
Equity
Relationships
High-quality
Positive Impact

OUR APPROACH



High quality programs and services for children and families



Intensive training, resources and support for childcare providers



Strategic partnerships and community education



We rely on a community of partners, donors, and volunteers – **people like you** – who believe in a brighter future for children and families in our community.

OUR OVERARCHING MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- **Increase the reach of First Steps services**

By 2025, the number of children served by Spartanburg County First Steps will increase by 20%.

- **Increase the availability of high-quality early care and education opportunities offered by First Steps**

By 2025, the number of children under age 6 who benefit from Spartanburg County First Steps quality enhancement and training efforts will increase by 15%. By 2025, the number of dual language learners served by Spartanburg County First Steps will increase by 20%.

OUR OBJECTIVES

In support of the Profile of the Ready Kindergartner, our approach is focused on advancing Spartanburg First Steps strategic goals:

1. Children are healthy and safe.
2. Early care and education teachers are supported to increase education and skills.
3. Families are valued, engaged, and supported.



JOIN US



Gain valuable experience and give back to your community through service with First Steps AmeriCorps. Our AmeriCorps members **engage directly with families and communities**, helping to ensure that all children start school ready to reach their highest potential. Apply at scfirststeps.org/AmeriCorps.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



BARBARA MANOSKI

Executive Director
Spartanburg County First Steps

As we share our successes from this past year, we are reminded how fortunate we are to have the support of many local and state partners as well as our committed Spartanburg County First Steps Board of Directors. Year to year our goal remains the same – supporting Spartanburg’s youngest learners and their families and caregivers on their journey to finding success in school and in life. It means meeting our families and children where they are and being intentional to close new gaps that arise along the way. It means searching for funding and building partnerships that can provide needed supports, even when COVID places stumbling blocks in our way. It means supporting the workforce in early care and education programs so they can provide the best opportunity for learning for each child, every day. All of these pieces work together to help boost a child’s brain development and to build a strong, happy, and healthy child.

We are tremendously grateful for all of the funding, opportunities, and support we have received this past year to support our efforts. Success for all of our young children is success for us all. Together, we continue the journey to ensure all of Spartanburg County’s youngest children are thriving, and are supported to reach their highest potential.

Barbara Manoski



“What matters is that you remember we are stronger together, and taking a hand is just as important as offering one.”

Paul Boynton, Author of *Begin with Yes*

GETTING CHILDREN READY FOR SCHOOL

All children are ready to benefit from a quality kindergarten experience when they are five years old by September 1 of that school year. But kindergarten readiness—the critical stage at which children are prepared for learning and success—is more than a matter of age. For a strong start in school, children need positive relationships and supportive learning environments beginning at birth. At First Steps, we partner with families, caregivers, and communities to ensure that all children are prepared for success.

South Carolina's Profile of the Ready Kindergartner

Developed by SC First Steps and the SC Department of Education, the state's description of school readiness includes 60 developmental milestones across 5 categories:



Approaches to learning & inquiry



Emotional & social development



Physical development, self-help & motor skills



Mathematical thinking



Language & literacy development



OUR VISION

We envision a community that has the knowledge and will to support all children in reaching their full potential.





FOUR-YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN



an evidence-based program

South Carolina First Steps provides eligible children with free enrollment in full-day four-year-old kindergarten. In coordination with First Steps local partnerships and more than 230 private, community and faith-based preschool providers, First Steps 4K expands access to quality early education across the state.



ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for enrollment, a child must be:



4 years old on or before September 1



Eligible for Medicaid, SNAP or TANF, experiencing homelessness or transiency, or in foster care

FIRST STEPS 4K IN SPARTANBURG COUNTY 2020-2021

186
children enrolled

19
First Steps 4K providers

PREPARING FOR STATEWIDE EXPANSION

With First Steps 4K, families are in the driver's seat. They choose the program that best meets their needs. Families can enroll their child in any of the 244 private, nonprofit, or faith-based child care centers or schools participating in the program. The majority of First Steps 4K providers offer 8-hour day and year-round instruction, including summers, which is at no cost to parents.



NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP



an evidence-based program

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) helps transform the lives of first-time mothers and their babies. Through ongoing home visits from registered nurses, 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 Nurse Home Visitors form a much-needed, trusting relationship with their clients, instilling confidence and empowering them to achieve a better life for their children – and themselves.

BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

273

children served

6234

number of home
visits provided



I like having an NFP nurse to answer all my questions during this stressful time of pregnancy and trying to work and go to school.



ALEXIS HAYWOOD, PARENT





EARLY HEAD START



an evidence-based program

Early Head Start is an evidence-based program that promotes school readiness through implementation of the Parent, Family & Community Engagement (PFCE) framework, Curriculum Fidelity, T.S. GOLD Assessment, and an evidence-based parenting curriculum.



This year we were excited to offer our parents an educational opportunity through Ready Rosie. We have 241 parents participate and they watched a total of 1,484 parenting videos.

EARLY HEAD START BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

219

Early Head Start served 219 pregnant women and children, representing 160 families

132

EHS - Child Care Partnership served 132 children, representing 105 families

351

total children/pregnant women were served, representing 266 families

4%

based on the Community Assessment, 4% of eligible children were served

98%

average monthly enrollment for both EHS and EHS-CCP program



The program really cares about the kids and their well-being.



PARENT, EARLY HEAD START



EARLY HEAD START



an evidence-based program

Receipt of Medical & Dental Care:

EHS children: 94% had health insurance, 73% were up to date on well-baby check-ups

EHS-CCP children: 98% had health insurance, 80% were up to date on well-baby check-ups

Baby Net children served: EHS – 20 (17% of funded enrollment) and EHS-CCP: 8 (10% of funded enrollment)

Screenings conducted: 325 ASQ and ASQ-SE's were conducted

Alcohol and Drug Questionnaire: 265 families completed a questionnaire

EARLY HEAD START BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

24

socialization activities were held, 21 families participated

843

home visits were provided

94%

of children served, met or exceeded their developmental expectations

6

The EHS and EHS-CCP programs received the following grants: American Rescue Plan, COVID, COLA, annual EHS and EHS-CCP. Participated in the PDG study.

555

referrals to community resources were made for EHS families



Program Goals:

1. Strengthen a culture of timely data measurement
2. Hire, train and retain qualified Teachers and build employee capacity
3. Improve access to family literacy and educational support services for EHS families
4. Implement strategies to identify challenges/barriers that prevent families from accessing medical and dental services
5. Strengthen the collaboration of housing services and resources to increase access to safe and affordable housing for EHS families



CHILD CARE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT



an evidence-based program

Many private child care centers strive to provide high quality care but lack the resources often available to publicly-funded early childhood programs. Our Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) program aims to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children.

Our services include:



Rigorous quality assessments



On-site technical assistance at least twice monthly



Funding for equipment and materials



Training and workforce development



Coordination with community partners

QE BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

37

child care providers served

519

number of TA visits provided

2291

number of children 0-5 enrolled in provider classrooms



Before Quality Counts I felt like a spinning top. I was moving but going nowhere. I was almost at the point of burnout because I did not know what to do, nor did I have any idea who to ask for help. But since I have been a part of Quality Counts, not only has our center's quality improved, but I feel empowered to succeed as a director and center owner.



**MIA GENTRY, DIRECTOR/OWNER OF GROWING MINDS
LEARNING CENTER**



CHILD CARE TRAINING



an evidence-based program

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce. Our training programs are certified through SC Endeavors and include topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Our 2019-2020 trainings included:

ABC Nutrition & Physical Activity
Advocacy for Early Care & Education
Cultural Diversity
Brain Development
Conscious Discipline
Creative Curriculum
Early Language & Literacy
Early Math Skills
Early Science Exploration
Environment Rating Scales

Health & Safety
Importance of Relationships
Inquiry Based Learning
Pyramid Model
Responsive Caregiving
Schedule & Routines
Self Regulation
Social & Emotional Development
The Basics

TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

1553

total training attendance

489

child care teachers and
directors served

53

number of training
sessions offered



Training with Quality Counts allows our teachers hands on, interactive instruction. Quality Counts has been able to introduce our teachers to new ways of thinking when working with children in the classroom. The instructors for Quality Counts are always willing to answer any questions in and out of the training. Quality Counts allows the teachers to feel comfortable in a nonjudgmental environment when asking for help with issues in classrooms. They are also wonderful about providing extra resources to further our teachers education.



**AUDREY SELBY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
MISS TAMMY'S LITTLE LEARNING CENTER**



THE FRANKLIN SCHOOL



an evidence-based program

While Spartanburg County First Steps operates and administrates The Franklin School, seven community partners collaborate to govern and address the early learning gaps in the Northside of Spartanburg.



We were excited to celebrate with families as over 40 4K students graduated from our program this year. With three 4K classrooms supported by District 7 and one by First Steps 4K, these children headed to Kindergarten ready to succeed!

THE FRANKLIN SCHOOL BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

117

children served

65%

Of enrolled children
come from economically
challenged homes



The Franklin School is an amazing place where they treat my baby like he is their own. As full-time working parents it is comforting to know that his needs are being met. As an early learning center I know his developmental milestones are being met and he will be prepared when the time comes to transition to 5K.



CATHY VOELKER, THE FRANKLIN SCHOOL



PUBLIC AWARENESS

Our Family Engagement initiatives engage families of young children to ensure everyone has the knowledge needed to help children be successful and ready for Kindergarten. Community partners play a key role in promoting developmental screening and The Palmetto Basics.



Everyday interactions between children, their parents, and other caregivers provide abundant opportunities to give children from every background a more equal start in life. The Basics are five evidence-based parenting and caregiving principles that encompass much of what experts find is important for children from birth to age three.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE 2020-2021

951

children screened
using ASQ3

1080

families served
through Basics



The Basics was designed to help parents understand how important the first 3 years of life are in terms of brain growth and development. Parents are their child's most important teacher. Better educating our children is so critical to our future.



CHRISTINA LOWE, BASICS CHAMPION



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Addressing the needs of young children is a shared endeavor. In addition to providing services to families and support for child care providers, Spartanburg County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in ABC County begin school ready to succeed. We serve as a:

LOCAL PORTAL

connecting preschool children and
their families to services

CONVENER

of community stakeholders to develop an effective
and comprehensive early childhood system

CHAMPION

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

OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

64

Community partners

49

More than 49 million
dollars leveraged
outside of government
sources since inception



Spartanburg County First Steps is a tremendous resource for the community and a wonderful partner for The Children's Museum of the Upstate. As we share common goals of engaging and preparing our community's youngest learners for successful school years, the expertise and insights First Steps have shared with us are invaluable. We have enjoyed parental programming collaborations like Basics Days and educational events like Countdown To Kindergarten designed to reach Spartanburg's youngest learners and their families. We are so grateful for First Steps and the many ways they support TCMU and our community.



LAUREN LUNECKAS, CEO OF THE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM



OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

Children's Trust of SC, \$297,360
(Nurse Family Partnership)

Contec, \$40,116
(Family Engagement and The Basics)

Early Head Start Federal Grants, \$2,395,042

Mary Black Foundation, \$127,840
(Quality Counts)

Northside Development Group, \$759,775
(The Franklin School)

Preschool Development Grant, \$5,000

South Carolina First Steps, \$709,840
(Partnership Grant)

Spartanburg Academic Movement, \$250,000
(Equitable COVID Recovery)

United Way of the Piedmont, \$17,550
(Nurse Family Partnership)

JOIN US

For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at
spartanburgfirststeps.org



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IN-KIND SUPPORT

Hope Center for Children

Inman First Baptist

Lakeshore Early Learning

Limestone University

Piedmont Community Action

Mary Black Foundation

SC Department of Social Services

Spartanburg County First Steps Board

Spartanburg Interfaith Hospitality Network

Spartanburg School Districts 1,2,3,4,5, 6 & 7

Spartanburg School District 7, Early Learning Center

The Children's Museum of the Upstate, Spartanburg

United Way of the Piedmont

USC, Columbia

USC Upstate

Winthrop University

JOIN US

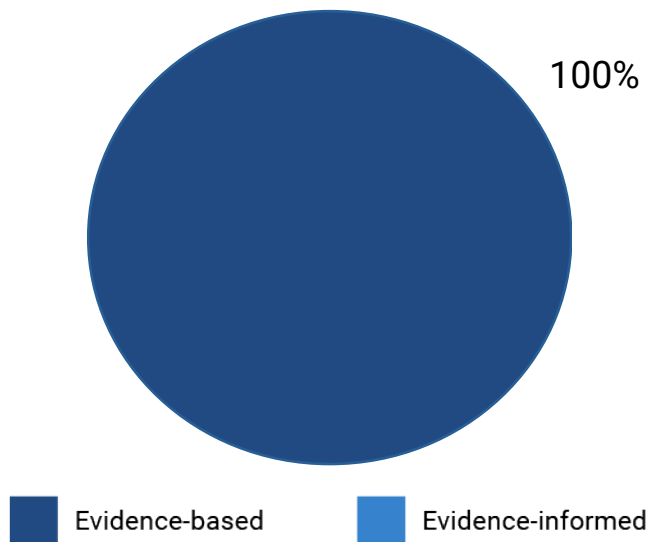
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FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Spartanburg County First Steps has leveraged **\$49,794,771.12** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$3.06** for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Administration	\$86,026		\$1218		\$87,244
Child Care Partnership		\$1,238,431		\$328,996	\$1,567,427
Core Functions	\$62,542		\$71,650		\$134,192
Early Head Start	\$92,029	\$1,722,897	2140	\$415,477	\$2,232,543
The Franklin School		\$2,808	\$857,177		\$859,985
Nurse Family Partnership		\$336,804	\$20,372		\$357,176
Quality Counts	\$484,277	\$4,000	\$192,519		\$680,796
Total Expenses	\$724,873	\$3,304,941	\$1,145,076	\$744,473	\$5,919,363.00



LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Krishenda Alexander	Dr. Susan Little
Jill Brady	Sarah Love, Chair
Olga Campos	Leverne McBeth
Payton Davis	April Miller
Casey Dover	Dr. Terry Pruitt
Loreta Dylgjeri	Anna Strom, Treasurer
Carolyn Gibson, Vice-Chair	Deana Watson
Kimberly Gist	Jodi Wright
Ava Hughes, Secretary	

First Steps Leadership Team

Shawna Bynum, The Franklin School Director	Jennie Lamm, Operations Support Specialist
Tammy Compton, Quality Counts Director	Barbara Manoski, Executive Director
Jeri Ross Hayes, Early Head Start Director	Anna Marchuk, Fiscal Administrator
Pamela Jones, Director of Operations	Kaitlin Watts, Family Engagement Coordinator

Quality Counts

Courtney Cancer, Technical Assistance Provider	Cathleen Cullen, TA Provider/Rater
Maddison Cash, Support Specialist	Teresa Phillip, Technical Assistance Provider
Tammy Compton, Quality Counts Director	



LEADERSHIP

Early Head Start Administration

Alisa Britt, ECE Program Specialist

Natasha Doster, Program Support Specialist

Jeri Ross-Hayes, Early Head Start Director

Jodie Martin, Family Services Program Specialist

Karen Parham
ERSEA & Transition Program Specialist

Desiree' Rivers
Behavioral Health Case Manager

Rosalyn Splawn
Health/Nutrition Program Specialist

Laresa Tate, Center Quality Specialist

Early Head Start Staff

Diana Gomez-Lopez, Family Service Specialist

Tamara Manning, Family Service Specialist

Vanessa McNally, Family Service Specialist

Wonza Mercer, Family Service Specialist

Nikki Moton, Family Service Specialist

Ana Rodriquez, Family Service Specialist

Eugenia Young, Family Service Specialist

Early Head Start Center Staff

Tanya Blanco, Classroom Teacher

Geraldine Broadus, Classroom Teacher

Kayla Edge, Center Director

Danielle Foster, Classroom Teacher

Jasmine Fowler, Classroom Teacher

Mia Gentry, Center Director

Joye Guyton, Center Director

Debra Hughes, Director

Markesha Jackson, Center Director

Erica Jefferson, Assistant Teacher

Dorothy Lassiter, Classroom Teacher

Linda Mease, Kitchen Operator

Abina Robinson, Center Director

Kesha Williams, Center Director



LEADERSHIP

The Franklin School Administration

Shawna Bynum, Director

Jaleesa Drummond, Assistant Director

Mitch Hines, District 7 4K Director

Temithy Singfield, Head Start Director

Virginia Evans, Administrative Assistant

The Franklin School Teachers & Staff

Rebecca Adams, Kitchen Operator

Martha Alvarez, Teacher

Kioni Anderson, Teacher

Miriam Benjamin, D7 4K Teacher

Gerene Dawkins, D7 4K Teacher

Janice Degraffinreid, Head Start Teacher

Lisa Frazier, D7 4K Teacher

Darlene Gaffney, Teacher

Dana Holland, D7 4K Teacher

Henry Jackson, Custodian

Shirley Jeter, D7 4K Teacher

LaChanta Kennedy, Teacher

Eugene Lyles, Custodian

Paula Marlin, Teacher

Markeisha Morgan, Teacher

Luz Rivera, Head Start Teacher

Fallon Thomason, Teacher

Jelah Tunstull, Custodian

Salena Williams, Teacher

Tiesha Wood, Head Start Teacher

CONTACT US

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