

CHESTERFIELD COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Blessings in a Backpack

Incredible Years

Imagination Library

Countdown to Kindergarten

Week of the Young Child
Celebrations

New in 2014-2015!

Blessings Resource Center

Annual Report

2014-15



OUR VISION:

Every Chesterfield County
child will arrive at
kindergarten
ready to learn and
succeed.

First Steps WORKS for the children of Chesterfield County.

In the Service of Children

Karen Martini Odom, Executive Director

Who We Serve

First Steps serves Chesterfield County's young children and their families, with the goal of ensuring each is prepared for school success.

Number of Chesterfield County children under 5:
2,673

Number of Chesterfield County children living in poverty:
37%

Babies born each year in Chesterfield County to a mother less than a high school diploma:
1 in 4

Our Programs

Imagination Library

Countdown to Kindergarten

Incredible Years Parenting

Blessings in a Backpack

Blessings Resource Center®

Our Results

- ✓ Incredible Years served 20 families and 52 children making marked improvement in parenting skills
- ✓ Backpack program shows high rates of student improvement in attendance, attentiveness and physical appearance,

For the past five years Chesterfield County First Steps (CCFS) has implemented a strategic plan to evolve the Partnership into a true portal for connecting at-risk young children and their families to available health, well-being, early education, financial, employment and other family assistance services.

Our vision is that through our work for children and our collaborations with our public schools, public assistance agencies, other nonprofit organizations, civic groups, the faith community and the business community; CCFS will empower a convergence of community building, family strengthening and early childhood services that will engender a new local focus on early childhood needs, resources and solutions.

This coalescence of community and capability will enable CCFS to identify, reach and directly serve more at-risk children and their families than ever before.

Progress

Literally hundreds of volunteers and donors have given literally hundreds of hours and thousands of private dollars to help bring CCFS to the threshold of realizing that ambitious vision developed over five years.

CCFS's Blessings Resource Center (BRC), a community partnership to strengthen families, is a collaboration with the faith and business communities and a multitude of individuals that has begun the convergence foreseen in our vision. BRC, which began operations in October, 2014, is the foundation of CCFS's portal to comprehensive early childhood services. BRC's positive impact is already acknowledged in the community and is enabling CCFS to identify, reach and directly serve more at-risk children and their families.

Chesterfield County First Steps is ascending toward its goals, uplifted by an engaged community that wants none of its children left behind.



This coalescence of community and capability will enable CCFS to identify, reach and directly serve more at-risk children and their families than ever before.

Board Chair
 Amelia Clontz

Executive Director
 Karen Martini Odom

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 Chesterfield, SC 29709

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<https://www.facebook.com/Chesterfield-County-First-Steps-156821710934/timeline/>

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 Intervention

According to recent federal evaluations, outcomes for clients participating in BabyNet early intervention programs are above national averages. BabyNet matches the special needs of infants and toddlers who have disabilities and/or developmental delays with customized, community-based 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 and From Day One to Grade One are ultimately preparing children for school success.

Based on the needs of our community, Chesterfield County First focuses its investments in: Family Strengthening, Health and School Transition.

Blessings in Backpack

Nutrition is fundamental to school readiness. Studies have repeatedly *confirmed that children participating in weekend nutrition programs show improvement in attendance, behavior, academic achievement and overall health.*

Program Description

Children are showing improvements.

Concentration

74% of teachers reported noticing most of the children had improved attention

Physical Appearance

63% reported that most of the children had shown some improvement in their physical appearance.

Attendance

95% have seen some improvement in attendance rates.

Attentiveness

79% of the teachers reported seeing that most of the children have shown improvement in attentiveness.



The Need of Families

18% use local food bank.
 39% depend on other family members to help with food.
 54% utilize the SNAP program,
 9% utilize Chesterfield First Steps Blessings Resource Center

Blessings in a Backpack by the Numbers, 2014-15

Children Served	65
Books /Toothbrushes Distributed	260

Here's a great quote from a client!

"It has helped a lot with snacks cause it's hard to have to make breakfast, lunch and dinner and still have food for snacks for the kids."
 –From the parent survey

Thank you to our partners!

- First Presbyterian Church
- First Baptist Church
- The Presbytery of Charlotte
- Wolf Pond Baptist Church
- Providence Baptist Church
- High Point Baptist Church
- Walmart Distribution Center
- Tyson Foods of Monroe, N.C.

Our 5 Faithful Pageland Faith Partner Volunteers:

High Point Baptist Youth	87.5 Hours
First Presbyterian	81 Hours
Providence Baptist	38 Hours
Wolf Pond Baptist	73 Hours
First Baptist	34.5 Hours
TOTAL HOURS	314

Contact us for a more comprehensive report:

843.623.5904

kmartini@chesterfieldfirststeps.org

A Community Partnership to Strengthen Families

Blessings Resource Center® (BRC)

BRC is a community partnership to strengthen families. In concert with our partners in the business and faith communities, BRC provides families in need with emergency food and access to a broad array of assistance services and information.

Serving our neighbors in need:

While only 4% (8 of 201) of families reported receiving Section 8 or subsidized housing, 18% (37 of 201) reported residing in home of friend or relative.

90% of families reported having less than 100% of the Federal Poverty Level Income.

(For a family size of 4, that is \$2,020 per month or \$24,250 per year.)

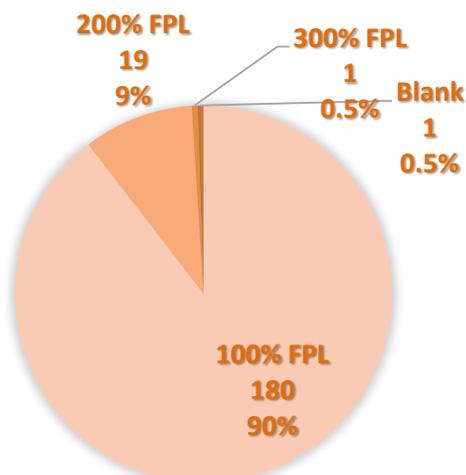
99% of families reported having less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level Income.

(For a family size of 4, that is \$4,042 a month or \$48,500 per year.)



BRC Numbers 2014-15

Households Served	201
Total # Served	513
Children 0-5	56
Books Distributed	102
Number of Referrals Made	47
	569 visits
Food Pantry Usage	13,016 lbs. of food distributed



FAMILIES BY POVERTY LEVEL

Additional characteristics of families are available in our external evaluation report.

Thank you to our volunteers, donors & partners!

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Parents play an irreplaceable role in their child's development.

Program Description

The Incredible Years program is an evidence-based curriculum that is designed to promote positive parenting strategies and to assist parents in managing children's behavioral challenges. The program includes:

1. Group Sessions once weekly in Pageland and Cheraw;
2. Content of this 12-14 week curriculum includes play, positive reinforcement, limit-setting, nonphysical discipline alternatives, problem solving, effective communication skills, and supporting children's education;
3. The group therapy process focuses on empowering parents, dealing with resistance, and supporting and advocating for parents. This program is used by professionals (such as therapists and parent educators) who are working with parents or caregivers of young children.

The Value of the Program can be found in the words of the people who experience them...

This program really opened my eyes to a better style of parenting. Focusing more on the positive than the negatives. I can be more calm and take things one step and one behavior at a time. This has been a wonderful experience and I encourage everyone to take this course.



Above: some of our 2014-2015 Incredible Years families with child care volunteer Myra Coffey.

Incredible Years by the Numbers 2014-15

Families Served	20	
Children Served	52	
Total Group Sessions	64	
Hours Spent Serving Families	186	
The Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory was utilized to measure changes in child behavior. A decrease in T scores indicates improvement.	Pre -IY 57.8%	Post 47.1%

This year, in our Incredible Years program:

- ✓ 100% of parents showed improvement in multiple dimensions of positive parenting practices at the program's completion.
- ✓ 100% of children showed improvement in multiple areas of behaviors on the Eyberg Child Behavior Inventory.

Thank you to our partners!

- Cheraw Primary School
- Petersburg Primary School
- Cheraw and Pageland Head Start

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Children's reading scores improve dramatically when parents are involved in helping them learn to read.

Program Description

According to the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, the peak period for brain development related to language is around **nine months of age. One of the easiest and most effective ways to build this capacity in young children's brains is to read to them.**

Chesterfield First Steps is the local sponsor of Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which provides free, age-appropriate books to children age birth to 5 years. Operated by the Dollywood Foundation, Imagination Library is currently in more than 1,600 communities internationally and mails books to about 700,000 children each month.

Children who register with Chesterfield First Steps receive one book per month by mail through the month of their fifth birthday. Each book is carefully selected by a committee of educational specialists.



Children who are read to succeed.

Imagination Library by the Numbers, 2014-15

Children Served	16
Books Given to Children 0-5	192

This year, our Imagination Library program:

- ✓ Provided one book per month to 16 children who were referred ~~identified~~ through our parenting program

Sponsor a child today for just \$30!

Thank you to our partners!

- Dollywood Foundation
- The Malloy Foundation
- Mary B. Redfearn
- Rotary of Cheraw
- Omicron Chapter/Delta Kappa Gamma

Contact us for a more comprehensive report:
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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.

*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2014

Children Served	5
Families Served	5
Home/School Visits	30

**CTK program data is for June-August 2014, whereas CTK fiscal data includes expenditures from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.*

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.



According to Nancy Plyler, CTK teacher, “There are many more students that could benefit from this program in our area.”

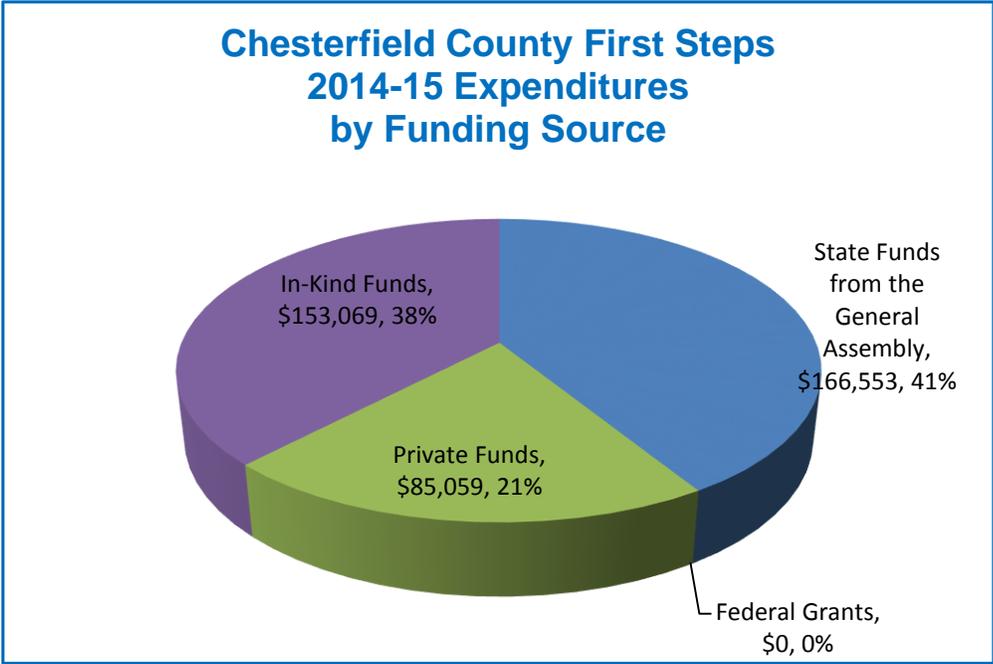
This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- ✓ Increased the amount of time parents spent reading to children by 100%
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, 100% of CTK children performed as well as, or better than, their fellow students in attendance, behavior, and social interaction.
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, CTK parents were more involved than other parents in their child's education in the areas of reading and talking to and working with their child.

Thank you to our partners!

Chesterfield County School District
 Kaplan Early Learning Company
 EdVenture Children's Museum
 WACH Fox 57

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 more comprehensive report:
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Total 2014-15 Expenditures: \$404,680

State Funds Leveraged in 2014-15*: 143%

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

2014-15 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2014-15 Expenditures
Incredible Years	\$74,060	\$0	\$3,900	\$61,171	\$139,132	34%
Imagination Library	\$0	\$0	\$283	\$0	\$283	0%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$0	\$0	\$148	\$1,697	\$1,844	0%
Blessings Resource Center	\$0	\$0	\$53,404	\$76,230	\$129,634	32%
Blessings in a BackPack	\$14,357	\$0	\$18,597	\$13,132	\$46,085	11%
Program Support	\$48,718	\$0	\$7,894	\$840	\$57,451	14%
Administrative Support	\$29,418	\$0	\$834	\$0	\$30,252	7%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$166,553	\$0	\$85,058	\$153,069	\$404,680	

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

Since inception, Chesterfield County First Steps has leveraged \$4,984,135 from sources outside of state government. That's 69.38 cents for every state dollar.

Community Impact

Opening Young Minds to Science

The Chesterfield County First Steps Week of the Young Child Opening Minds to Science events provided opportunities for engagement and exchange between young children and local professionals in a celebratory learning environment.



Thank you to our partners!

Businesses, agencies, organizations and board members provide fun interactive exhibits for children.

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

Blessings Abound in Chesterfield County

Blessings in a BackPack



Three years ago, Chesterfield County First Steps, Petersburg Primary School and five churches began the Blessings in a BackPack weekend nutrition program for the 4K students and the school. The program is funded primarily by the church congregations. Each week during the school year volunteers from the five churches pack the bags for the children. More than 70 volunteers each year give their time in the service of children.

Blessings in a BackPack has been evaluated yearly since its inception by an independent evaluator. The evaluations clearly demonstrate that the program is effective. Parents and teachers of the children in the program praise its benefits and results.



Blessings Resource Center

In October of 2014, CCFS opened Blessings Resource Center (BRC) in collaboration with five founding partners from the business and faith communities and a multitude of individual donors and volunteers. BRC provides emergency food for needy families, access to available family assistance services, access to First Steps' family strengthening and school readiness programs, and health/nutrition information and referrals.

Volunteers came forth from the very beginning, helping refurbish the former parsonage a founding faith partner has dedicated to the use of Blessings Resource Center at no cost. Volunteers scraped paint from walls, sanded floors, painted walls, refinished floors, washed windows, vacuumed, mopped, built ramps, hung doors, installed refrigerators and now staff the facility. Representatives of our founding partners – all community leaders - form the BRC Advisory Board. The BRC food pantry is volunteer-driven, donor funded and stocked through individual food donations and food drives. Well over 100 individuals have already donated and volunteered to help BRC assist families struggling with poverty and hunger.

In its first eight months of operation, BRC served more than 200 families, 196 children and 56 children 0-5. During that same time period, the BRC food pantry distributed 13,016 pounds of food to needy families and senior citizens. BRC also offered practical cooking classes and budgeting classes.

Both Blessings in a BackPack and Blessing Resource Center are funded with private resources. We are just getting started.



First Steps Partnership Board

Let There Always Be More for the Children

CCFS's Board of Directors Goes Epic for Week of the Young Child

CCFS's Children's Celebrations during Week of the Young Child have been a favorite of the CCFS Board for several years now – the gathering of several hundred young children, the children's Walk, the balloon release, the touch-a-truck trail and, wait for it, wait for it... those wondrous, unforgettable smiles on the faces of the assembled young throng.

But this Board wanted more for the children. So, in January, when planning begins for April's Week of the Young Child national observance at CCFS, the Board decided that a huge science display would enliven the children's celebrations even more. They directed the events committee to plan a scientific thrill show for Chesterfield County's young children. And they did.

Opening Young Minds to Science

Nineteen community scientists (not real scientists), including members of the CCFS Board, from a variety of local businesses, public agencies and nonprofit organizations demonstrated a variety of scientific phenomena to the children. This day of scientific wonder was made possible by community partners who generously took the time and made the effort to provide a fun and educational sound, sight and mystery show for the children. It was a blast.

Chesterfield County First Steps Partnership Board, 2014-15

Name	Position	Board Category
Ms. Amelia Clontz, Chair	Community Activist	Philanthropic Community
Mr. Ryan Cagle, Vice Chair	Manager Walmart	Business Community
Dr. Joel Dale, Secretary	Pastor First Baptist Church	Faith Community
Dr. Ernest Winburn, Treasurer	Retired Pastor and Author	Faith Community
Ms. Treacy Bozard	Occupational Therapist –CC Schools	Parent
Ms. Karen Brock	Chamber of Commerce/Career Specialist	Business Community
Ms. Myrtis Burr	Interim County Library System Director	Library System Designee
Mr. Marek Calhoun	CareSouth Carolina Community Development	Health Provider
Ms. Mary Chapman	Paralegal	DSS Designee
Dr. Harrison Goodwin	Superintendent -CCSD	CCSD Designee
Ms. Sherry Hancock	Exec. Assistant CHESCO	Nonprofit
Ms. Pearline Hutto	Retired Educator	Local Government
Ms. Edwina Moody	Agency Nurse Manager-DHEC	DHEC Designee
Mr. Rusty Platts		Family Education
Ms. Mary Redfearn	Retired Early Childhood Educator	Pre-K Educator
Ms. Carrie Turner	Director of Chesterfield-Marlboro Head Start	Head Start Director
Ms. Robbin Usher	Special Ed Teacher	Primary Educator



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 can contact any participating 4K providers to complete an application. To view a list of participating First Steps 4K providers, visit:

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



BabyNet

South Carolina's Early Intervention System

BabyNet in Chesterfield County:

843-634-6676

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

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

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE MANY BLESSINGS OF OUR

2014 -2015 DONORS

FOOD DONORS:

High Point Baptist Church
First Presbyterian Church
First Baptist Church
Wolf Pond Baptist Church
Pine Grove Baptist Church
Union Hill Baptist Church
CC Baptist Missions Outreach
Rocky Creek Presbyterian
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Tyson Foods of Monroe
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Essential Automation Solutions
Brock Enterprises
Blackwell's Trucks
Rylan's Restaurant
T&L Foods
KAM Electric
Douglas Machine Shop
Cedar Lane Supply
Pageland Dentistry PA
Pageland Family Pharmacy
High Point Baptist Church
Providence Baptist Church
Wolf Pond Baptist Church
Dudley Baptist Church
Pageland United Methodist
Union Hill Baptist Church
Zion United Methodist Church
Fork Creek United Methodist
Men's Prayer Breakfast
CC Baptist ASSN Men's Ministry
CC Baptist ASSN Missions Outreach
Doris Miller
Steward and Dawn Johnson
James and Nancy Hewitt
Tony Nolan
Adam Foard
Mr. & Mrs. Shane Hancock
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Plyler
Mary Redfearn
Lynn Williams
William & Mildred Courtney
HJ Winburn
Michael Cook
Vanessa Tyson
Mr. & Mrs. Randel Caldwell
Ebony Queens Chapter
Rotary of Cheraw
CareSouth Carolina
Omicron Chapter -
Delta Kappa Gamma
The Malloy Foundation

Our Volunteers, Our Heroes

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Gay Leaird
Amy Cato
Judy Funderburk
Calvin Hancock
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Lexie Smith
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Ann Gaddy
Mark Evans
Linda Stack
Robin Jenkins
Judy Jordan
Roger Wall
Martha Watson
Michelle Rivers
Michael Nicholson
Juanita Lewis
Jonathan Rivers
Susan Rorie



Volunteering is an act of love, an act of mercy, an act of grace. The simple act of volunteering is indeed a wondrous thing



The Chesterfield County Baptist Missions Outreach BRC heroes answered every construction call to make our facility more accessible & to bring to code.

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