

HORRY COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parents as Teachers

Nurse-Family Partnership

Facility Quality Enhancement

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

Annual Report

2014-15



OUR VISION:

Every South Carolina child
arrives at kindergarten
ready to learn.

First Steps WORKS for the children of Horry.



Annual Report 2014-15

Who We Serve

First Steps serves children pre-birth to 5 years old and their families who are at risk of not being ready for school.

<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>

Number of Horry County children under 5:
15,443

Number of Horry County children living in poverty:
3,883

Babies born each year in Horry County to a mother without a high school diploma:
1 in 5

Our Programs

- Parents as Teachers
- Nurse-Family Partnership
- Preschool Expansion
- Child Care Training
- Child Care Scholarships

Exciting changes on behalf of children and families

Name, Amy Breault

It is with great pleasure that I present the Horry County First Steps Annual Report for fiscal year 2014-2015. At the beginning of July 2014, HCFS moved into our new offices in Conway. What a great way to start off this fiscal year – new space, new energy, new legislation, and renewed focus on supporting our families and providers in Horry County. In June 2013, new partnership priorities were established by the South Carolina legislative body whose intent was to ensure families are able to connect to those services that would most benefit their families.

With our funding from the Office of First Steps and the help of community partners, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation of SC and the Bunnelle Foundation, during fiscal year 2014-2015 Horry County First Steps was able to serve a record number of children and families. As exciting as this is, there are still more children being added to programs' waiting lists daily.

Currently, Horry County First Steps operates with less than 8% administrative cost. As we move forward into the next fiscal year, we will continue to look for ways to streamline these costs, thus allowing us to bring as many children as possible into quality early care and educational programs which help Horry County children become strong and successful in learning and in life.

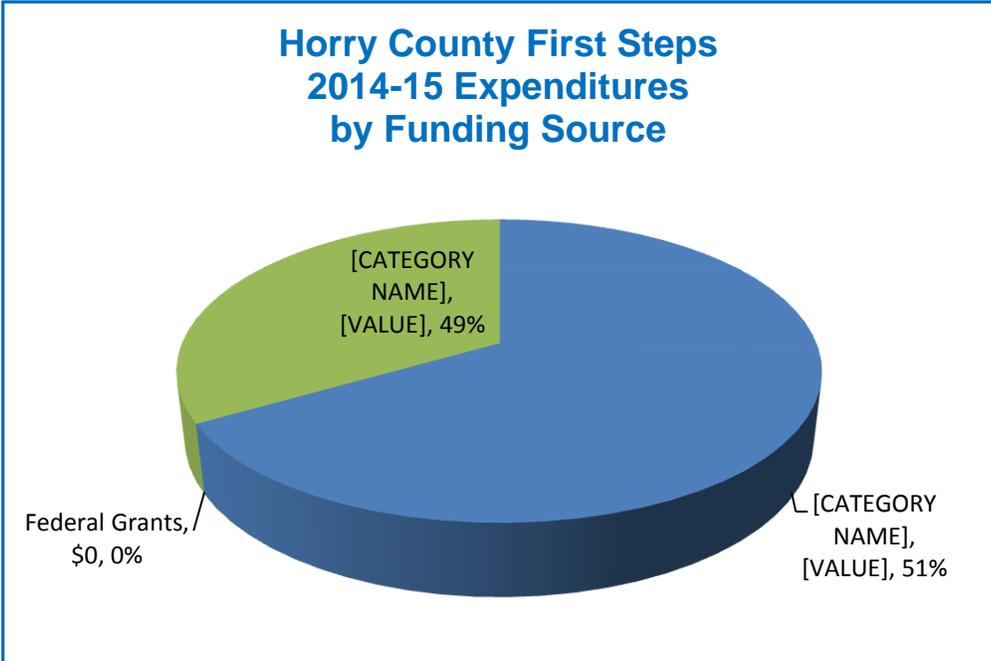
Horry County First Steps has continued to be a valuable resource to our partner First Steps agencies across the state, sharing our knowledge in technology, as well as serving as School Readiness and Family Strengthening program subject matter experts.

These are exciting times at Horry County First Steps

Board Chair
Mr. Bradley Todd

Executive Director
Ms. Amy Breault
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Financial Impact



Total 2014-15 Expenditures: \$896,134

State Funds Leveraged in 2014-15*: 49%

**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
Parents as Teachers	\$157,360	\$0	\$1,091	\$0	\$158,451	18%
Nurse-Family Partnership	\$60,142	\$0	\$297,161	\$0	\$357,303	40%
Facility Quality Enhancement	\$114,049	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$114,049	13%
Child Care Training	\$20,856	\$0	\$253	\$0	\$21,109	2%
Child Care Scholarships	\$87,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$87,500	10%
Program Support	\$114,698	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$114,698	13%
Administrative Support	\$43,024	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$43,024	5%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$597,629	\$0	\$298,505	\$0	\$896,134	

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

Since inception, Horry County First Steps has leveraged \$4,030,591 from sources outside of state government. That's 50 cents for every state dollar!

Child Care Scholarships Work in Horry County

In order to participate in the Child Care Scholarship program a parent must be working or in school full-time or a combination of the two, as well as, possess two risk factors. The intent of the program is to assist parents become more self-sufficient while ensuring their children are receiving high quality care. HCFS works with both the family and the child care provider to ensure a team approach to meeting the needs of children and families.

Ms. Jones entered the Child Care Scholarship program while enrolled in the Nursing program at Horry Georgetown Technical College. Her daughter, Mary was a very outgoing preschooler who got along well with her friends at Grissett's Childcare Center. Mary excelled on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, showing no developmental concerns. She received an opportunity to grow and learn and was well on her way to be ready for Kindergarten.

Prior to finishing her eligibility, Ms. Jones finished the Nursing program. At the completion of the program, she was able to find employment that allowed her to become self-sufficient. Mary was able to enter school ready to learn. This family truly shows that Child Care Scholarships work for families in Horry County.

Quality Enhancement Works in Horry County

Child Development Centers are run on a shoe string budget making it difficult for classrooms to have a large quantity and variety of materials for the children to use on a daily basis. Even when there are enough materials, teachers benefit from support related to how to implement developmentally appropriate practices. This is exactly where Horry County First Steps comes in to help centers increase the quality of their services. Through the Facility Quality Enhancement program Child Development Centers gain access to developmentally appropriate materials and technical assistance in learning how to use the materials.

At the beginning of the fiscal year each participating facility is assessed using the Environmental Rating Scales (ERS). Goals are developed, materials are ordered, and teachers participate in on-site training related to areas needing improvement. As materials are received the technical assistant works with classroom teachers on placement, and use of the materials.

During the 2014-2015 FQE program one facility in particular made improvements in every classroom. At the start of the program year the classroom arrangement was not appropriate, there was a lack of materials, and the staff were having a difficult time managing the behavior of the children.

Throughout the year the teachers were consistently receptive to the ideas proposed by their technical assistant. They valued her knowledge and willingness to work alongside each of them. She focused on building relationships with the teachers and director, gaining their trust and respect.

At the end of the program year, each classroom had appropriate room arrangements, adequate materials, and happy children. This facility is well on its way to ensuring that the children enrolled will enter school healthy and ready to learn.

Thank you to our partners!

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$597,629
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of SC:
\$281,250

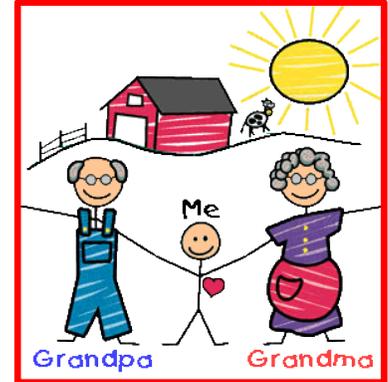
National Parent as Teachers: \$1,091

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

Family Strengthening Strategies Work in Horry County

The Smith family came into the PAT program via a referral from our local BabyNet office. The Parent Educator began working with the family just after Susie's 1st birthday in March, 2014. Mr. and Mrs. Smith were Susie's grandparents. They had been given custody of Susie when their daughter was unable to provide the care Susie needed. The Smith's wanted to ensure that they did everything for Susie so that she would grow up healthy and ready to learn.

Upon starting with the Parents as Teachers program an Ages and Stages Questionnaire was completed showing developmental delays in 3 out of 5 domains. The Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional screening also showed the potential delay in that domain as well. Susie was evaluated by BabyNet but did not qualify for services.



Knowing that Susie tested positive for drugs at birth, and she was exposed to a parent with an intellectual disability it is important for her Grandparents to know how to support her growth and development. The Parent Educator meets with the family twice a month to help them determine activities that will best help Susie to meet future milestones.

Although the family has been in the program a little over 5 months they are starting to see a difference in Susie and themselves. Mr. and Mrs. Smith are becoming more confident in their abilities to work with Susie. They are learning about her growth and development from a new perspective, as Grandparents. Susie is beginning to meet expected milestones for her age and is not exhibiting any residual effects of being exposed to drugs.

As the family continues within the Parent as Teachers program their Parent Educator will complete periodic screenings and make referrals as needed. Mr. and Mrs. Smith will continue to receive the support they need to help Susie be healthy and ready for school.

Working one-on-one with high risk families is a testament that family strengthening programs work in Horry County.

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

Program Description

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) model is an evidence-based early childhood home visiting framework for families with children prenatal through kindergarten entry that builds strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to learn. PAT services include:

1. **Personal Visits** minimum twice monthly in the client's home
2. **Group Connections** with other PAT families at least monthly
3. **Screenings and Assessments** to identify issues early
4. **Resource and Referral Network** connecting families to needed resources

Our PAT program:

- ✓ Increases parent knowledge of child development and improves parenting practices
- ✓ Provides early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- ✓ Prevents child abuse and neglect
- ✓ Increases children's school readiness and school success

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

- 82% ... live in poverty
- 31% ... didn't graduate high school
- 29% ... had been diagnosed with depression

PAT by the Numbers 2014-15

Families Served	48
Children Served	66
Total Home Visits	579
Hours Spent Serving Families	609



This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged 2 home visits per family
- ✓ Identified and addressed 35 potential developmental delays
- ✓ 30 goals were made by clients in areas related to child development, domestic violence safety, employment, and parenting behavior/relationship with children.
- ✓ Five connections for families were made to services such as BabyNet, 4K, and, High Quality Childcare

Thank you to our partners!

PAT National Center
A Father's Place
SC Mentors

Horry County First Steps

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Quality Enhancement

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

Program Description

For infants, toddlers and preschoolers, the quality of care they receive is crucial to their healthy development and eventual readiness for school. Child care providers strive to provide that type of quality care, but often 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' Facility Quality Enhancement (FQE) is intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children. Participating child care providers must serve a significant percentage of at-risk children, and are selected through a competitive process that requires a strong level of commitment to the FQE process.

Program Components

1. On-site Technical Assistance (TA) at least twice monthly
2. Pre/post observations of the classrooms utilizing the Environmental Rating Scales
3. Grant funding to purchase materials and supplies

"Our center has gone from being ok to being pretty darn good. There is always room for improvement and we are still working hard every day on bettering ourselves to benefit the children in our center."

FQE center director

Facility Quality Enhancement by the Numbers, 2014-15

Child Care Providers Served	10
Number of TA Visits Provided	194
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	694

This year, our Facility Quality Enhancement program:

- ✓ Increased quality of services, based on pre/post classroom observations
- ✓ Provided 519 hours of technical assistance to child care providers
- ✓ Provided a maximum of \$5,000 per facility for the purchase of high quality materials, supplies, and books

Thank you to our partners!

SC CDEPP
 Participating Child Development Facilities

Horry County First Steps
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Child Care Training

Those who care for young children need high-quality, accessible, affordable professional development.

Program Description

Efforts to improve the quality of child care must include providing affordable, high quality training 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, but also follow-up with supported practice in the classroom.

"I loved all the ideas for outside time. My center does not have enough outside activities so I'm looking forward to incorporating some"

Training Participant

Child Care Training Sponsored by Horry County First Steps, 2014-15

<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Hours:</u>
Growth and Development	2.5
Health and Safety	6
Curriculum	4.5

Training by the Numbers, 2014-15

Total Training Attendance	83
Total Training Hours per participants	13
Number of Training Sessions Offered	6

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 83 early childhood staff with high quality training
- ✓ 13 hours of registered training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ Intensive technical assistance including follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

Thank you to our partners!

SC CCCD office
 Participating Facility Quality Enhancement facilities

Horry County First Steps

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Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in Horry 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.

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

- 100% ... live in poverty
- XX% ... didn't graduate from high school
- XX% ... were teen parents
- XX% ... had developmental delays

Without the support provided by the child care scholarship program families would not be able to enroll in our facility. Thank you so much for supporting those in need.

Child Care Director

Scholarships by the Numbers, 2014-15

Children Served	32
Providers Served	13

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.

This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Identified and addressed 10 potential developmental delays among scholarship children
- ✓ Provided 32 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Supported 13 small businesses in Horry County by subsidizing child care tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care

Thank you to our partners!

- SC Voucher Program
- Participating Level B and BB Child Care providers

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Helping vulnerable first-time moms 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 moms 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 Nurse Home Visitors form a much-needed, trusting relationship with the first-time moms, instilling confidence and empowering them to achieve a better life for their children – and themselves.

In Horry County, Nurse-Family Partnership is implemented through SC DHEC Pee Dee Region.



NFP by the Numbers, 2014-15

Children Served	154
Number of Home Visits	1,376



This year, our NFP program:

- ✓ Only 3 babies were born prematurely
- ✓ 57% of new moms initiated breastfeeding upon delivery
- ✓ 100% of children were up to date on immunizations at 12 months

Thank you to our partners!

Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of SC
Bunnelle Foundation
SC DHEC Pee Dee Region
Members of the NFP Community Advisory Board

Horry County First Steps

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Community Leadership in Early Childhood

Name	Employer	Board Category
Bradley Todd, Chair	Horry County Schools	<i>Non-Profit Organization that Provides Services to Families & Children</i>
Sue Ellen Wilson, Vice Chair	Chapin Library	<i>Family Education, Training and Support Provider</i>
Dale Helms	Carolina Forest Child Development and Learning Center	<i>Childcare and Early Childhood Development/Education Provider</i>
Wendy Gillespie	BabyNet	<i>Health Provider</i>
Shayla Livingston	Low Country Food Bank	<i>Non-Profit Organization that Provides Services to Families & Children</i>
Shannon Jordan	Lamar Advertising	<i>Business Community</i>
Maggie Hennigan	Horry Georgetown Technical College	<i>Business Community</i>
Heather Dionisio	Waccamaw Bowling	<i>Parent of a Preschooler</i>
Rosa Knox	Retired from Waccamaw Head Start	<i>Person from Early Childhood Education</i>
Jeanna Allen	Horry County Schools	<i>Person from Early Childhood Education</i>
Beth Tindall	Horry County Schools	<i>Persons from Early Childhood Education</i>
Sherry Johnson	Department of Social Services	<i>Appointed by the County Department of Social Services</i>
Sadhana Tolani	DHEC – Pee Dee Region	<i>Appointed by the County Department of Health and Environmental Control</i>
Susan Jones	Family Literacy – Horry County Schools	<i>Appointed by the School District in the County</i>

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

Getting children ready for school.

What is First Steps?

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.

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 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.

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.

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.

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.

Based on the needs of our community, Horry County First focuses its investments in Family Strengthening, Quality Childcare, and Healthy Start.



BabyNet in Horry County:
 LOCAL SPOE PHONE #843-839-5045
<http://scfirststeps.org/babynet/>



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>

- (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.