

LEE COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Early Steps to School  
Success (Save The Children)

Parents as Teachers

Countdown to Kindergarten

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

Strengthening Families  
Program

# Annual Report

2014-15



## OUR VISION:

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

First Steps WORKS for the children of Lee County.

# Annual Report

2014-15



## Who We Serve

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

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

Number of Lee County children under 5:

**1072**

Number of Lee County children under 5 living in poverty:

**30.1%**

Babies born each year in Lee County to a mother without a high school diploma:

**25.7%**

Children living in single-parent families:

**63.4%**

Birth Rate to Teen Mothers:

**60**

## Our Programs

Early Steps

Parents as Teachers

Countdown to Kindergarten

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

## Our Results

- ✓ 48 children served by parenting
- ✓ 16 children received child care scholarships
- 30 hours of child care training were provided
- ✓ 10 children in CTK

## Supporting and Encouraging One Family At A Time

(Elder) Alexis D. Pipkins, Sr., Executive Director

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

FY 215 proved to be a rewarding year for Lee County First Steps (LCFS) with the continuation of existing partnership opportunities. 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). Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is the summer transition program the partnership has implemented to provide transitional services for students who have been referred by local partners. LCFS provided support for 4K Assessment with the DIAL-3, and the PPVT-3. To enhance program quality, LCFS concluded the Parents as Teachers ILA Project. LCFS and for RLI-Lee County finalized 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. Lee County First Steps also continued receiving funding from a competitive grant process from the SC Children's Trust to implement the Strengthening Families Program (6-11) to implement 6 Cycles serving 50 families.

*Lee County First Steps leverages resources for children and families through public-private partnerships*

LCFS has continued its collaboration with SAVE THE CHILDREN, SC First Steps and Lee County School District to implement the Early Steps to School Success Program. This program is a family strengthening and home visitation program which provides support to families with children birth to age three, and implements the Raise a Reader Book Bag Exchange Program for children three to age five. Also, the partnership has collaborated with Lee County School District to implement the Strengthening Families Program for parent in the Lee County School District which provides 14 weekly sessions for where both parents and children attend and receive supportive information, and have the opportunity for Parent and Child Time (PACT), and a dinner.

The value add which LCFS continues to have for the local community is that we serve as a visible advocate for our children and parents. 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 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.



Growth and Development for each child and should be the in a positive and nurturing environment...

### Board Chair:

MR. ANDREW MOSES

### Executive Director:

(ELDER) ALEXIS D. PIPKINS, SR.

Physical: 310 Roland Street  
Mailing: PO Box 344  
Bishopville, SC 29010  
Phone: (803) 484-5110  
Fax: (803) 483-0142

# 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, Lee County First focuses its investments in Family Strengthening, School Transition, Quality Child Care, and Early Education**

# Early Steps To School Success



Save the Children®

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.

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

100% ... live in poverty

23% ... BabyNet participants

72%... Teen parent, or first child as teen

50%... Low maternal education



## ESSS by the Numbers, 2014-15

Children Served	23	
Number of Home Visits	375	
Total Hours of Home Visits	390	
Number of Group Meetings	17	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	2.74	3.13
0.39		

## ESSS Expansion on the way...

This year, ESSS Program learned that Save The Children will provide support to expand to Lower Lee Elementary School. This will mean that Early Steps will be 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 partners!**

Save The Children

Lee County School District

West Lee Elementary School

Lee County First Steps

310 Roland Street; Bishopville, SC  
29010

# Parents as Teachers



Parents as Teachers

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

100% ... live in poverty  
23% ... didn't graduate high school  
15% ... 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.

## PAT by the Numbers 2014-15

Families Served	26	
Children Served	26	
Total Home Visits	525	
Hours Spent Serving Families	547	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post): 0.49	2.67	3.16

## This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged 20 home visits per family
- ✓ 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: 616 books given, 603 books lent, 570 books read to children
- ✓ Made 24 connections for families to services such as referrals

## Thank you to our partners!

*Thank you to our partners!*

Lee County School District

Save The Children

Parents As Teachers (ILA)

Bishopville Lee Child Care Center

## Lee County First Steps

PO Box 344; Bishopville, SC 29010  
803-484-5110

# 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.

*"We enjoyed each session, and the training was excellent!" Mary Lee Arthur*

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

#### Topic:

Cradling Literacy  
Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect (PCAN)  
Program Administration  
Strengthening Families Conference



### Training by the Numbers, 2014-15

Total Training Attendance	91
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	38
Number of Training Sessions Offered	20

### This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 91 early childhood staff with high quality training
- ✓ 24 hours of certified training and 6 hours of registered training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 48 hours of TA follow-up with training participants to help put training into practice
- ✓ Full Conference, Strengthening Families: Building Healthier Families Conference

### Thank you to our partners!

Lee County School District  
Save The Children  
Parents As Teachers

#### Lee County First Steps

PO Box 344; Bishopville, SC 29010  
Phone: 803-484-5110

# Child Care Scholarships

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

100% ... live in poverty

100% ... had at least 1 risk factor

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 First Steps partners to integrate scholarships with other programs, such as Parents as Teachers, Early Steps to School Success, and Family Literacy with Lee County Adult Education.



“Child care scholarships help me complete my high school diploma requirements and graduate . “

### Scholarships by the Numbers, 2014-15

Children Served	16
Providers Served	2

### This year, our Scholarship program:

Provided 16 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school

- ✓ Identified and addressed no potential developmental delays among scholarship children
- ✓ Supported 2 small businesses in Lee County by subsidizing child care tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care
- ✓ Provided 182 hours of training for scholarship parents in topics such as Social and Emotional Development, School Readiness, Child Assessments, Growth and Development, Literacy, Strengthening Families

### Thank you to our partners!

Lee County Adult Education

Lee County School District

DSS ABC Child Care

Bishopville Lee Child Care Center and Jane Family Day Care

Lee County First Steps

PO Box 344; Bishopville, SC 29010  
803-484-5110

# Countdown to Kindergarten



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.

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.

## \*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2014

Children Served	10
Families Served	10
Home/School Visits	60

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



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

## 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 LIST AREAS FROM THE CTK TEACHER SURVEY during the 2014-15 school year.
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, 100% of CTK parents were more involved than other parents in their child's education in the areas of LIST AREAS FROM THE CTK TEACHER SURVEY.

## Thank you to our partners!

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

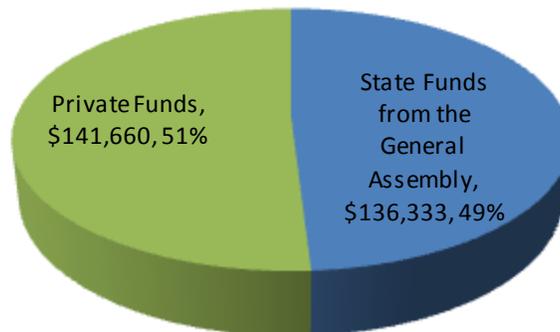
## Lee County First Steps

PO Box 344; Bishopville, SC 29010  
Phone: 803-484-5110

# Financial Impact

## Lee County First Steps 2014-15 Expenditures

### by Funding Source



**Total 2014-15 Expenditures: \$277,993.00**

**State Funds Leveraged in 2014-15\*: 104%**

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

# Community Impact

## 2014-15 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2014-15 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$24,788	\$0	\$2,031	\$0	\$26,819	10%
Early Steps To School Success	\$12,471	\$0	\$3,166	\$0	\$15,637	6%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$2,151	\$0	\$630	\$0	\$2,780	1%
Child Care Training	\$20,801	\$0	\$3,515	\$0	\$24,316	9%
Child Care Scholarships	\$24,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$24,500	9%
Community Education Program	\$9,583	\$0	\$125,986	\$0	\$135,569	49%
Program Support	\$19,106	\$0	\$5,658	\$0	\$24,765	9%
Administrative Support	\$22,933	\$0	\$675	\$0	\$23,608	8%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$136,333</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$141,660</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$277,993</b>	

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

## Parent Speaks Loud:

My name is Shanequa Durant. I have a four year old son and a one year old daughter. We are currently enrolled in the Lee County First Steps Early Steps Program. I met the Parent Educator, Gloria Burris when I started working at the First Steps Office through the DSS Work Experience Program. The First Steps Program is very helpful for me and my children. It helps me to understand my kids better. Since I have been in the program, I have taken the Work Keys at the Lee County Adult Education School. I have received a lot of parent information on how to help my children grow healthy from Mrs. Gloria. My kids just love to read and for us to have story time together. I have learned that reading and communicating are very important for a child's development and skills. I'm still in the First Steps Program, and I appreciate and enjoy the parent meetings, and I am benefiting a lot from it!

Shanequa Durant



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

## Thank you to our partners!

### Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$152,660.00  
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Children's Trust of South Carolina: \$125,986.00

Center for Child Care Career Development: \$2000.00

Lee County School District

DHEC

Save The Children

Midland Gives Program: \$597.51

Parents As Teachers: IAL Project

### In-Kind Support

Lee County School District

Lee Central Middle School

Lee County Adult Education

Save the Children: Early Steps to School Success

DSS ABC Child Care

Representative Grady Brown

**Since inception, Lee County First Steps has leveraged \$2,306,275.33 from sources outside of state government. That's \$00.57 cents for every state dollar.**

# Community Impact

## Community Partnerships:

Lee County First Steps works tirelessly to provide services for our children and families. This also includes ensure that the 2014 Holiday and Christmas Season was a special time for children. Lee County First Steps coordinated a local community effort to coordinate the Angel Tree Giving Program for Lee County Families who needed help during the holiday season. This was a huge success! Also, Lee County First Steps in collaboration with Wateree Head Start- Bishopville Site continued the coordination of ensuring that Lee County families received toys for Christmas from the Toys for Tot sponsored by the Marine Corp Toys for Tots Foundation. Over 300 children in Lee County received toys



because of the collaborative efforts.



Week of The Young Child Reading and Art Exhibit at the Le County Arts Council was a collaboration with Lee County School District, Lee County Arts Council, Lee County Library, Bishopville Lee Child Care Center, and Wateree Head Start- Bishopville Site.



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

## 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 in Lee County:

Phone: 803-484-5110

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

# First Steps Partnership Board

## Lee County First Steps Partnership Board, 2014-15

Board Member	Position	Board Category
1. Andrew Moses, Chair	Lee County School District	Legislative Appointee
2. (Rev.) Archie Temoney,	New Zion AME Church	Faith Community
3. Belinda Butler	Select Health	Business Community
4. Bertha Scott	Lee County School District	Family Ed, Training & Support Provider
5. Betty D. Addison	Retired, Lee County School District	Non-profit Organization
6. Beauty Murphy	Lee County School District	Early Childhood Education
7. Danielle Boyd	Wateree Head Start – Bishopville Site	Head Start
8. David “Keel” Addison	Addison Barber Shop	Parent of Preschool Children
9. M. DeLoris LeGrant	Sumter County School District	Early Childhood Education
10. Diana Williams, Secretary	Retired, Lee County School District	Early Childhood Education
11. Eloise W. Witherspoon	Lee County Adult Education	Family Ed, Training & Support Provider
12. Hannah Hickman	Retired, Wateree Head Start	Legislative Appointee
13. James Caldwell	Wateree Head Start	Transportation
14. Jeanette Isaac	Lee County School District	Preschool through Primary Education
15. Jerlene Atkinson	Kiddy Land Daycare Center	Early Childhood Education
16. Jonita Pearson	Lee County School District	Parent of Preschool Children
17. Andrea Favor	Lee County DSS	Lee County DSS
18. Julia Tice	Lee County DSS	Lee County DSS
19. Regina Nesmith	DHEC	DHEC
20. Allison Drayton	DHEC	DHEC
21. LaToya Hopkins	Wateree Head Start	Parent of Preschool Children
22. Lillie Patterson	Bishopville Lee Child Development Center	Childcare & Early Childhood Dev. Ed. Provider
23. Mary Lee Arthur	Lee County School District	Lee County School District

24. Maverick Wilson	Wateree Correctional Inst.	Legislative Appointee
25. Patricia Toney	Retired, Lee County School District	Faith Community
26. Sandy Jenkins	Wateree Regional Trans. Authority	Transportation
27. Sandra Holmes	Lee County School District	Health Care Provider
28. Sheila Moses, Asst. Secretary	Lee County School District	Health Care Provider
29. Taylor Smith	Pee Dee Math Science & Tech. Academy	Childcare & Early Childhood Dev. Ed. Provider
30. Victoria McCray	Bishopville Lee Child Dev. Center	Legislative Appointee
31. Julia Young	Colonial Neurology	HealthCare Provide

## First Steps Partnership Board

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