

SALUDA COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Countdown to Kindergarten

Parent Training

Family Literacy

Child Care Training

Annual Report

2014-15



OUR VISION:

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

First Steps WORKS for the children of Saluda County.

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 Saluda County children under 5:
1,279

Number of Saluda County children living in poverty:
1,481

Babies born each year in Saluda County to a mother less than a high school diploma:
4 in 10

Our Programs

Countdown to Kindergarten

Child Care Training

Family Literacy

Parent Training

Our Results

- ✓ 45 childcare/early education teachers received high-quality, professional development training
- ✓ 27 families received Positive Parenting Program (PPP) training.
- ✓ 14 families with children under the age of 4 received Family Literacy services
- ✓ 24 families received Countdown to Kindergarten services.

Focus On Strategies That Truly Make A Difference

Deborah, Executive Director, Saluda County First Steps

Saluda County First Steps is more than just numbers and data. It is touching lives, meeting needs, helping families feel empowered and helping them develop a sense of efficacy. Families with limited opportunities for success are targeted to receive First Steps services. Some of these clients are the most creative, quick-witted people I have ever met. With a little intervention and support, I believe these families can achieve great potential and excel in positively contributing to society.

A government's greatest resource is its citizens – the benefits of providing families opportunities to help their children succeed in school and life are innumerable. First Steps strategies are essential in accomplishing this task. Through strategies such as Positive Parenting Program, Family Literacy, Countdown to Kindergarten, and Child Care Training, Saluda County First Steps is poised to help families achieve their goals.

As Larry Brendtro, dean of the Starr Global Learning Network, stated at the Children's Trust of South Carolina Prevention Conference 2015, "focus on strategies that truly make a difference." I firmly believe that First Steps is doing just that.

Deborah Padgett



Preparing for success in school and life.

Board Chair
 David Mathis
 Allyson Bartley

Executive Director
 Deborah Padgett

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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, Saluda County First focuses its investments in.... Family Strengthening, Quality Childcare, and School Transition.

Triple P

Parents play a critical role in their child’s development.

Program Description

The Triple P – Positive Parenting Program gives parents simple and practical strategies to help them confidently manage their children’s behavior, prevent problems developing and build strong, healthy relationships.

The program aims to prevent problems in the family school and community before they arise and to create family environments that encourage children to realize their potential. Parenting strategies focus on:

1. Understanding the causes of challenging behavior
2. Promoting positive development
3. Managing misbehavior
4. Implementing parenting routines

Saluda County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our 27 families:

85% ... completed the Positive Parenting Program



Studies show that dads play an important part in their children’s future happiness and achievement.

PPP by the Numbers 2014-15

Families Served	27
Children Served	34
Total Training Sessions Offered	4
Hours Spent Serving Families	48
Average gain, Parenting Tasks Checklist (pre-to-post):	18.53 points

This year, our Positive Parenting Program (PPP):

- ✓ Improved parenting practices by an average of 18.53 on the pre-to-post Parenting Tasks Checklist.
- ✓ 85% of participants completed the Positive Parenting Program.

Thank you to our partners!

Saluda County Department of Social Services
 Saluda County Adult Education

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Family Literacy

Parents are their child’s first and best teachers.

Program Description

Family literacy programs offer an integrated and family-friendly approach, helping both parents and children to improve their literacy skills. Family literacy services integrate all of the following:

1. Adult Education
2. Child Education
3. Parent Education
4. Interactive Parent/Child Activities

Our family literacy program:

- ✓ **Helps parents of young children increase their education levels**
- ✓ **Provides English language instruction for parents**
- ✓ **Teaches parents how to support their child’s literacy and overall development**
- ✓ **Provides quality early learning experiences for children 0-5 while their parents attend adult education**



Mom and children playing a matching game during interactive literacy time.

Saluda County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our family literacy program families:

- 100% ... live in poverty
- 100% ... didn’t graduate high school
- 90% ... enrolled in our program with less than an eighth grade education

Family Literacy by the Numbers 2014-15

Adults Served	14
Children Served	16
Adult Education Hours Offered	160
Early Childhood Education Hours Offered	160
Parenting Education Hours Offered	80
Number of adults that achieved their HS diploma or GED	0

This year, our Family Literacy program:

- ✓ 55% of students tested made an EFL gain.
- ✓ 100% of families participating in the Family Literacy adult education program received high-quality child care.
- ✓ Through the Family Literacy program, parents gained skills that better helped them support their child’s education and promote family literacy.

Thank you to our partners!

- U.S. Department of Education
- Saluda County School District Family Literacy
- Clemson Extension Service
- Saluda Primary School

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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.

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

Topic:	Sessions:
Blood-Borne Pathogens	One Session
Early Literacy in the Child Care Classroom	Nine Sessions
Conscious Discipline	Three Sessions
Physical Activity and Nutrition	One Session



Early educators are engaged and having fun during an early literacy workshop.

Training by the Numbers, 2014-15

Total Training Attendance	368
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	45
Number of Training Sessions Offered	24

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 45 early childhood staff with high quality training
- ✓ 49.5 hours of certified training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 15 follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

Thank you to our partners!

- Saluda County Council
- Saluda County School District Family Literacy
- Childcare Resource and Referral

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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	26
Families Served	24
Home/School Visits	144

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



The CTK program was a significant strategy that helped at-risk students succeed in kindergarten, and, as a result, set them up for even more growth in first grade.

Peggy Trivelas
 Principal, Saluda Primary School

This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

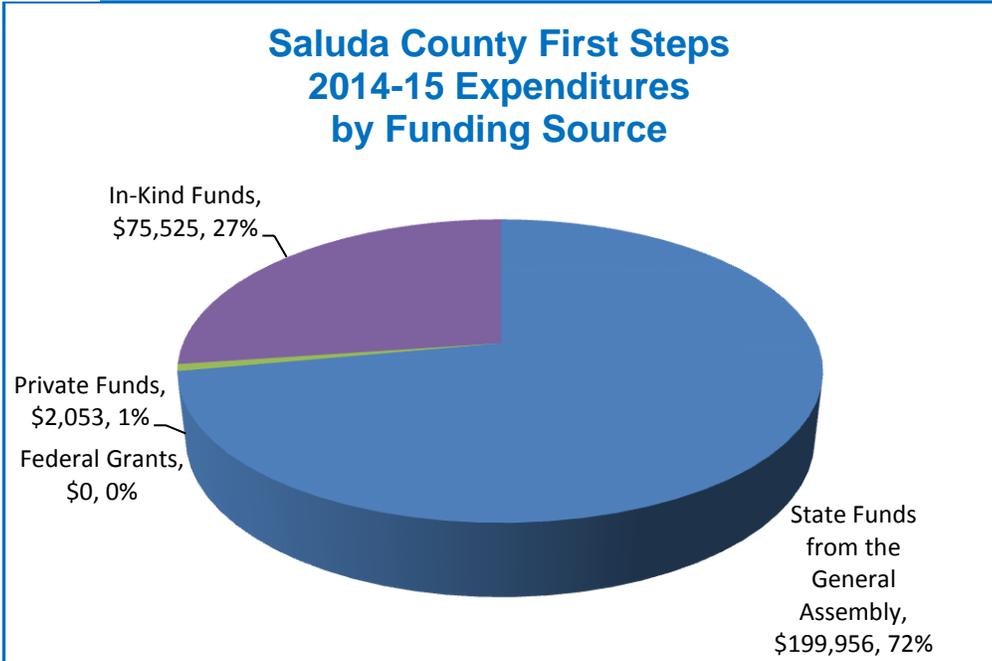
- ✓ 44% of children who received CTK services were reading at or above grade level by year-end.

Thank you to our partners!

- Saluda County School District
- Kaplan Early Learning Company
- EdVenture Children’s Museum
- WACH Fox 57

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Financial Impact



Total 2014-15 Expenditures: \$199,956

State Funds Leveraged in 2014-15*: 63%

**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
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$9,126	\$0	\$0	\$3,545	\$12,671	6%
Child Care Training	\$25,906	\$0	\$1,786	\$830	\$28,522	14%
Parent Training (PPP)	\$15,693	\$0	\$58	\$1,440	\$17,191	9%
Family Literacy	\$38,082	\$0	\$209	\$68,244	\$106,535	53%
Program Support	\$16,404	\$0	\$0	\$1,466	\$17,870	9%
Administrative Support	\$17,167	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17,167	9%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$122,378	\$0	\$2,053	\$75,525	\$199,956	

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

Since inception, Saluda County First Steps has leveraged \$1,394,762 from sources outside of state government. That's 49 cents for every state dollar.

Meet Kate



Kate, a successful first grade student whose family began receiving First Steps services when Kate was 3 years old.

Kate and her family began receiving First Steps services through the Parents as Teachers program when Kate was three years old. Kate is now excelling in first grade.

Sandy Butler, parent educator, states that the family received Parents as Teachers services for two years. During that time, the family was very engaged and involved with their children. The family always followed up on PAT requests/assignments and would demonstrate their mastery of the skill at the next meeting. She also stated that the family takes advantage of all opportunities available to enhance the quality of life for their children.

As evidence of this continual striving to create a positive environment for her children, Kate's mom has enrolled in the Family Literacy Program, and now has a 2 month old child enrolled in the Family Literacy Child Development Center.

Thank you to our partners!

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$138,000
(through South Carolina First Steps)

CCCCD: \$2,000

Private Donors: \$300

NFP CAB Grant: \$833

In-Kind Support

Saluda County School District

CCCCD

Kaplan

Scholastic

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

Fun + Learning = Family Literacy

Partner: Saluda County Adult Education



Parents and children enjoyed painting pumpkins during our October story time. Many of the pumpkins looked like works of art.

Each month story time was conducted for the parents and their children. Each family received a free book to build a home library. Activities were planned that related to the monthly story time.

The Family Literacy Program incorporates adult education (ESL), parent education, quality early education, and parent/child interaction. This past year, parents had numerous opportunities to connect with the community. The ESL class took a field trip to the library and all of the parents received library cards. Clemson Extension Service provided a series of nine healthy cooking classes to the students during second semester. During a child passenger safety presentation from Self Memorial in Greenwood, 2 car seats were raffled.



Parents and children created handprint flowers as the parent educator shared a book.



Jimmy Crawford, Family Literacy Director, and Sandy Butler, adult education instructor and parent educator, pose with members of the ESL class.

First Steps Partnership Board

In One Accord

The Saluda County First Steps Partnership Board has always worked well together – in one accord. The purpose of everyone on the board is do what is right and good and fair for the children in our care. It is amazing to watch as agencies encourage and look out for another to ensure that the needs of children being served by all agencies are met. Numerous times, the superintendent of our school district has strived to ensure that child care is involved. For example, when preparing for the summer Countdown to Kindergarten Program, the superintendent requests that private child care centers and Head Start be at the table and asked for their input and recommendations on children to be enrolled in the CTK program. It is this collaboration and respect for each other that makes Saluda County successful.

Saluda County First Steps Partnership Board, 2014-15

Name	Position	Board Category
David Mathis, Chair	Superintendent, Saluda County School District One	School District Representative
Allyson Bartley, Co- Chair	Senior Manager, Elliott Davis	Faith Community
Kim Chariker, Secretary	Director, ABC Academy	Childcare/early education
Larry Michaelc, Compliance Officer	Paramedic, Richland County	Health Care
Renee Hauser	Teacher, Saluda Primary School	Pre-kindergarten through primary educator
Denise Butler	Instructional Assistant, Saluda Primary School	Pre-kindergarten through primary educator
Jimmy Crawford	Director, Saluda County Adult Education	Family education
Freda Gantt	Teacher, ABC Academy	Childcare/early education
Kyna Wallace	Teacher, Saluda Schools CDC	Childcare/early education
Kathy Matthews	Retired – school nurse	Health Care
Tracey Caughman	School-based Counselor, Saluda Behavioral Health Systems	Non-profit organization
Darron Wilson	Retired	Faith Community
Sandra Padget	County Director, Saluda County Administration	Local government
Becky McDowell	Director, Saluda County DSS	DSS
Madora Stanfield	Adm Asst/Team Leader, Midlands Public Health Region	DHEC
Dray Wideman	Case Manager, Saluda Early Head Start	Early Head Start
Angela Cunningham	Children’s Library, Saluda County Library	County Library

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 Saluda County:
(864) 225-6465

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

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