

WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parent-Child Home Program

Imagination Library

Countdown to Kindergarten

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 Williamsburg 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 Williamsburg County children under 5:
1,740

Number of Williamsburg County children living in poverty:
3,544

Babies born each year in Williamsburg County to a mother less than a high school diploma:
12.8%

Our Programs

Parent –Child Home Program

Imagination Library

Countdown to Kindergarten

Child Care Training

Our Results

- ✓ 100% of families were satisfied with the Parent-Child Home Program
- ✓ Children served in the Countdown to Kindergarten Program received all 6 visits
- ✓ Distributed 5,327 books to children through the Imagination Library

First Steps Works for the Children, Parents and Taxpayers of Williamsburg County

Carletta Scott Isreal, Executive Director

Williamsburg County First Steps (WCFS) to School Readiness Partnership Board is thrilled to share the many successes and collaborative partnerships that have been established to serve children and their families more efficiently and effectively in Williamsburg County. The collaborative efforts can be seen through the implementation of various county programs to include Parent-Child Home, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Countdown to Kindergarten, and Child Care Training. Each one of these programs provides services to children and assist parents in getting their children ready for school. In addition, since 2001, WCFS has worked with various community partners to reduce first grade retention by 60% saving taxpayers \$1.2 million in Williamsburg County. With this cost savings, funds may be allocated to educational programs and services to children and families throughout the county.

The partnership will continue its collaborative efforts to sustain existing programs serving children and families for school success.

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

Williamsburg County First Steps has increased the quality of services available to children and families using research and data. Through the SC Budget and Control Board's Office of Research and Statistics, programs and results are tracked longitudinally. Independent reviews show that First Steps program work with 66% of parents showing significant improvement in skills after participation in a First Steps parent education program; child care providers participating in First Steps' quality enhancement efforts have significantly improved in all measured domains of quality; 100% of parents expressed satisfaction with the Countdown to Kindergarten summer transitional program; and 100% of the Countdown to Kindergarten teachers saw an increase in parental involvement from participating families during the school year.

Williamsburg County First Steps will continue its efforts in providing quality services to children and their families for all children to reach school health and ready to succeed.

Carletta Scott Isreal



The Parent-Child Home Program Christmas Gathering held on December 17, 2014. Parents and children created ornaments together.

Board Chair

Ophelia McClary Starks

Executive Director

Carletta Scott Isreal

Post Office Box 825

843-355-1031

cisreal@wcsd.k12.sc.us

http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us/pages/WCSD/Department/First_Steps

What We Do

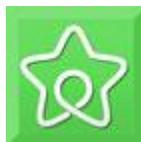
Each of the six color blocks of the First Steps logo represents a core area of service, outlining our comprehensive strategy to prepare children for long-term school success.

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

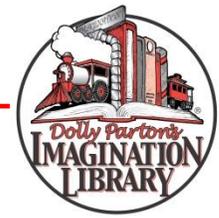
According to recent federal evaluations, outcomes for clients participating in BabyNet early intervention programs are above national averages. BabyNet matches the special needs of infants and toddlers who have disabilities and/or developmental delays with customized, community-based resources.



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, Williamsburg County First focuses its investments in Quality Childcare, Family Strengthening, Early Education, and School Transition.



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.**

Williamsburg 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 Williamsburg 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.



Williamsburg County First Steps has provided free age appropriate books to children for the past 10 years funded by the citizens and businesses from the county.

Imagination Library by the Numbers, 2014-15

Children Served	482
Books Given to Children 0-5	5,327



This year, our Imagination Library program:

- ✓ Provided one book per month to 482 children who were referred from the Parent-Child Home Program, School District and First Steps 4K Programs, Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), and parents
- ✓ Received donations from community members, board members, local government, Faith-Based Community, citizens, Williamsburg County School District, and local sororities in support of children’s literacy

Thank you to our partners!

- Williamsburg County School District
- Wells Fargo
- Farmer’s Telephone Cooperative
- Williamsburg County Retired Teachers’ Association

Williamsburg County First Steps
 Post Office Box 825, Kingstree, SC 29556
 843-355-1031
http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us/pages/WCSD/Department/First_Steps

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.

The trainings are conveniently located in the community.
K. Cooper, Center Director

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

<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Sessions:</u>
Get To Know Me: I'm A Young Child Series	One Session
First Aid & Infants/Child CPR	One Session
Blood-Borne Pathogens	Two Sessions
Where in the World?	One Session
Different Learners	One Session
A Director's Game Plan	One Session
It's More Than Just a Business	One Session
Implementation of Standards into Daily Instruction	Two Sessions



Child care providers received First Aid Kits after the completion of training in First Aid, CPR and Blood Borne Pathogens. Over 50 child care providers throughout Williamsburg and surrounding counties participated in the all-day training.

Training by the Numbers, 2014-15

Total Training Attendance	412
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	157
Number of Training Sessions Offered	12

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 157 early childhood staff attended high quality training
- ✓ 38 hours of certified training and 12 hours of registered training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 14 follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice
- ✓ Early childhood staff received curriculum materials and supplies to assist in putting training into practice

Thank you to our partners!

- South Carolina Center for Child Care and Career Development
- Williamsburg County School District
- Williamsburg Technical College
- South Carolina Resource and Referral

Williamsburg County First Steps
 Post Office Box 825, Kingstree, SC 29556
 843.355.1031
http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us/pages/WCSD/Department/First_Steps



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	21
Families Served	20
Home/School Visits	126

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



CTK gave my son a jump start to kindergarten!

The Singletary Family

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 academically, socially, behaviorally, and school attendance 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 by attending open house, school activities, joining school and parent groups, maintaining contact with the teacher, and volunteering in the classroom, school and field trips.

Thank you to our partners!

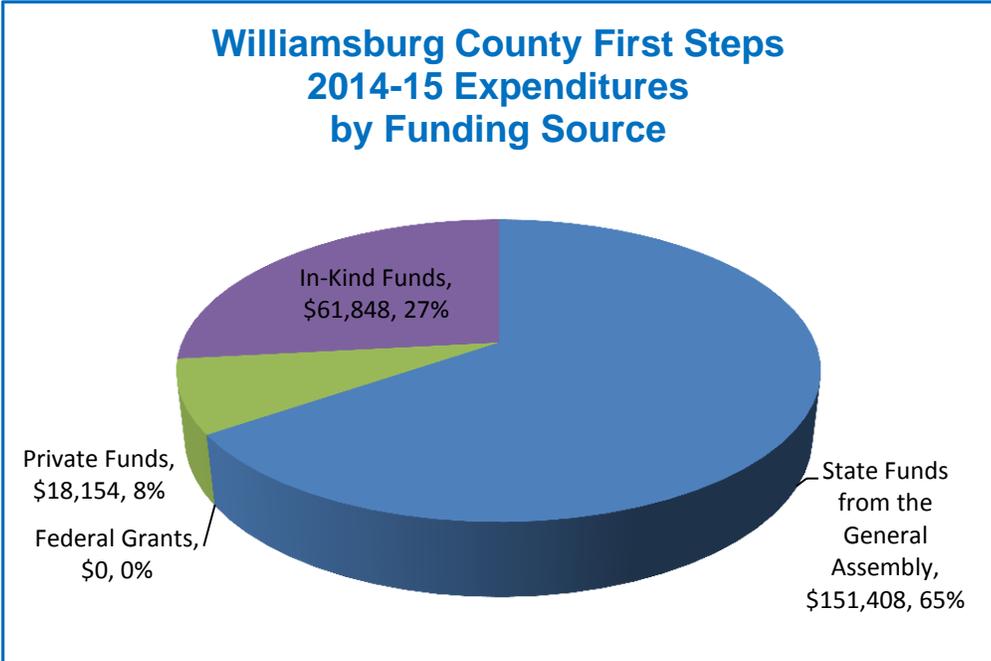
Williamsburg County School District

Williamsburg County First Steps

Post Office Box 825, Kingstree, SC 29556
 843-355-1031

http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us/pages/WCSD/Department/First_Steps

Financial Impact



Total 2014-15 Expenditures: \$231,410

State Funds Leveraged in 2014-15*: 53%

**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
Parent-Child Home Program	\$50,504	\$0	\$240	\$47,875	\$98,619	43%
Imagination Library	\$0	\$0	\$9,069	\$0	\$9,069	4%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$7,133	\$0	\$225	\$0	\$7,358	3%
Child Care Training	\$27,462	\$0	\$4,868	\$13,973	\$46,303	20%
Program Support	\$42,856	\$0	\$3,752	\$0	\$46,608	20%
Administrative Support	\$23,453	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$23,453	10%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$151,408	\$0	\$18,154	\$61,848	\$231,410	

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

Since inception, Williamsburg First Steps has leveraged \$6,666,555 from sources outside of state government. That's 43 cents for every state dollar.

Williamsburg County Celebrates National Week of the Young Child

Williamsburg County First Steps asked Williamsburg County to come together for children during the Week of the Young Child™ (April 12-18, 2015). As part of the national Week of the Young Child™ celebrated across the country, Williamsburg County honored young children and all those who made a difference in children's lives.

"All young children need and deserve high-quality early learning experiences that will prepare them for life, and Williamsburg County has a great opportunity to do our part to help young children," said Carletta S. Isreal, Executive Director. "Week of the Young Child™ was a time for Williamsburg County to recognize that Early Years are Learning Years® for all young children."

During the week of April 12-18, 2015, Williamsburg County First Steps in collaboration with Williamsburg County School District, Department of Social Services, Williamsburg County Library, and Williamsburg Technical College hosted several events. The first day was Sunday, April 12th, Pass the Pan. Local churches were asked to collect a donation to sponsor children to receive the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library books. The second day was on Friday, April 17th, the Awards and Recognition Banquet and Opening Session of Mini Conference. The final day was on Saturday, April 18th, the Kids Jamboree, continuation of the Mini Conference, and Taste of the Pee Dee held at Williamsburg Technical College.



Ms. Crystal Campbell served as the speaker for the 2015 Week of the Young Child Banquet.

Thank you to our partners!

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$151,408
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Law Office of Ronnie Sabb: \$100

Barbara Parrott: \$80

Dotherine Williams: \$30

Doretha Cooper: \$100

Kingstree Senior High: \$130

Kenneth Gardner Elementary: \$130

Barbara Ann Lewis: \$25

Williamsburg County Development Corp.: \$250

Kingstree Rotary Club: \$100

Angela B. Fulton: \$40

Ophelia McClary Starks: \$60

Williamsburg County Ministerial Alliance: \$100

Funding Support

Jenkinson, Jarrett and Kellahan, P.A.: \$100

John Hall: \$23

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.: \$250

Farmer's Telephone Cooperative: \$1,750

Select Health of South Carolina: \$250

Doward Harvin: \$260

Kaplan Early Learning Company: \$250

Greenville Technical College: \$2,000

Centene Management Company, LLC: \$100

Williamsburg County Council: \$1,550

Greater St. John AME Church: \$50

In-Kind Support

Williamsburg County School District - \$85,000

Williamsburg Technical College - \$18,500

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

Community Impact

First Steps Impacts Providers in Williamsburg and Surrounding Counties

Child Care Training and Professional Development

Williamsburg County First Steps has provided child care training and professional development to more than 400 child care providers in Williamsburg and surrounding counties. The training is offered to enhance the quality of care child care providers extend to children ranging in ages from birth to five. Over the past year, providers received training in child growth and development, curriculum activities, child guidance, health and safety, professional development, program administration, and nutrition. First Steps has collaborated with the Center for Child Care and Career Development (CCCCD), South Carolina Resource and Referral (SCR&R), Department of Social Services Advocacy for Better Child Care (DSS ABC), and South Carolina First Step 4K Coordinator to provide these trainings. Also, at the conclusion of each training, providers receive free materials to use with children in their classrooms.



Parent-Child Home Program Field to Ripley's Aquarium

Parent-Child Home Program



Parents, children, home visitors and executive director traveled to the Ripley's Aquarium, Myrtle Beach, SC on Thursday, May 7, 2015 for the Annual Parent-Child Home Program field trip. The field trip provided the opportunity for Parent And Child Time (PACT) as parents and children explored sea creatures and exhibits at the aquarium.

Parent-Child Home Program participants and home visitors at the Ripley's Aquarium in Myrtle Beach, SC.

Funding Support

- Wilson Chapel First Baptist Church: \$50
- W.M. Anderson Primary: \$150
- Kingstree Middle School: \$40
- Hemingway High School: \$50
- Greeleyville Primary and Elem. School: \$100
- Hemingway Elementary School: \$70
- Ernestine Young: \$30
- Joseph Gallo: \$60
- Lisha Pasley: \$30
- Cora Ravenell: \$30

Funding Support

- Wells Fargo - \$1,000
- Cedar Swamp United Methodist Church: \$100
- Bethlehem AME Church: \$100
- Wells Fargo Foundation: \$1,000
- Silverteen Mitchum: \$30
- Williamsburg County Retired ED. Association: \$100
- Great Present AME Steward Board: \$50
- Marge Mahoney: \$30
- Singleton Chapel AME: \$100
- Deloris Williams: \$30

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

Community Impact



Parent-Child Home Program Made a Difference

Parent-Child Home Program

My name is Ms. Domonique Goode, the parent of three year old, Javier Goode. My son is currently enrolled in the Williamsburg County School District and Williamsburg County First Steps Parent-Child Home program. I can truly say that the program is a very unique program that has really helped my child in addition to Head Start. At the age of two, my son, Javier was enrolled in the program. I am a single parent that couldn't afford childcare and had to rely on the support of my elderly uncle to care for my child while working. As a parent, I was really afraid of my child not having any socialization skills, I also felt he needed to be in an educational environment.



In my research to find educational programs and activities that could be used to better assist my son's education, I found this two and three year old program within my district, very rewarding. This special program provided educational toys and books. The home visitor goes out and teach the material and the parent reinforce the skills. I must say, as a single parent and being involved with many other extracurricular community activities, I enjoy taking 30 minutes out of my schedule and even at work sometimes as well as weekends to model the activities that my Parent-Child Home Visitor gives. Through the Parent-Child Home Program, my son, Javier really enjoys his toys and books, but most of all he enjoys learning.

Domonique J. Goode, Parent

\$90,065 in Federal and State Income Tax Returns to Citizens in Williamsburg and Surrounding Counties

Williamsburg County First Steps staff and board members assisted 69 clients in completing 146 federal and state income tax returns through the SC Thrive formerly known as the Benefits Bank of South Carolina web-based service. SC Thrives simplifies and centralizes the process to maximize the tax refunds a client can secure. Further, the information a client enters is stored securely, so an individual who wishes to file future tax returns simply needs to enter his or her username and password to initiate this new action.



SC Thrive is a free service. No consumer can be charged for using SC Thrive online service. In addition to tax services, clients can apply for the following benefits: Medicaid (including the Children's Health Insurance Program) (CHIP); Low Income Subsidy (LIS) (Rx Assistance); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly food stamps); Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); Voter Registration; Lifeline (assistance with home phones); Military and Veterans' Benefits; and Welvista (prescription assistance).

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

Board Members on the Move for Children

Williamsburg County First Steps Board Members are on the move advocating for children and garnering the support needed to assist families in getting their children ready for school. The board has continued to implement the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP), the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL), Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) Program and Child Care Training. The board has partnered with Williamsburg County School District (WCSD) to ensure children are engaging in literacy experiences prior to entering the K-12 school system through the PCHP. As well as sponsoring more than 60 children to receive books through the DPIL along with community partners. Building relationships and understanding the expectations of kindergarten has fostered the board’s energy to work diligently with WCSD to implement the CTK Program in schools where the district saw children with the most need before the first day of kindergarten. Evidence-based “best practices” in early childhood education is critical in children’s child growth and development for school readiness. The board understands the importance of providing certified training in the county to support and develop the skills of the most important early childhood professional, our child care providers. It is through this level of understanding and advocacy that WCFS Board Members are committed and dedicated to ensuring each and every child in Williamsburg County is ready for school.

Williamsburg County First Steps Partnership Board, 2014-15

Name	Position	Board Category
Jeanie Brown-Burrows	Non-Profit Organization	Category I
Genevieve F. Burgess	Early Childhood Education	Category I
Joe Castle, Jr.	Family Education, Training, and Support Provider	Category I
Doretha M. Cooper, Chaplin	Faith Community	Category I
Angela B. Fulton	Pre K/Primary Educator	Category I
Janice M. Gamble	Legislative Appointee	Category III
Jannice P. Gamble	Healthcare Provider	Category I
La-Dine’ W. Gamble, Parliamentarian	Legislative Appointee	Category III
Vastine S. Graham	Healthcare Provider	Category I
Wilmatrina Hamlet	Family Education, Training, and Support Provider	Category I
Ernest J. Jarrett, Vice Chair	Legislative Appointee	Category III
Janie McCrea	Business Community	Category I
Keisha L. McDonald	Early Childhood Education	Category I
Gwendolyn McFadden	Childcare/Early Childhood Development	Category I
Josa E. McIntosh	Parent of Pre-School Children	Category I
Cezar E. McKnight	Business Community	Category I
Kimberly Matthews, Treasurer	Legislative Mandated Member	Category II
Nathaniel Myers, Jr.	Legislative Appointee	Category III
Barbara A. Parrott, Secretary	Legislative Mandated Member	Category II
Aisha Singletary	Legislative Mandated Member	Category II
Latetia Stagers	Pre K/Primary Educator	Category I
Ophelia McClary Starks, Board Chair	Transportation	Category I
Wilhelmina Whitfield	Legislative Mandated Member	Category II
Eric T. Williams	Non-Profit Organization	Category I
Ernestine Young	Legislative Mandated Member	Category II



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 Williamsburg County:
LOCAL SPOE PHONE # - 843-839-5045

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