



**Parents as Teachers**

**Parent Training**

**Countdown to Kindergarten**

**Child Care Training**

**Child Care Scholarships**

**Nurse Family Partnership**

**Baby Net**

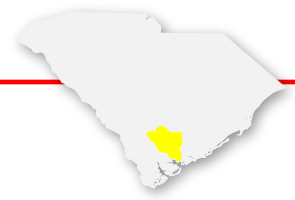
# Annual Report

2015-16




## OUR VISION:

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



## By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	Colleton County
Children Under Five	289,990	2,246
Children In Poverty	26.4%	35.1%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Graders Below Standard in Reading	21.1%	33.4%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.7%	22.0%

KIDS COUNT data provided by  Children's Trust OF SOUTH CAROLINA

- Since inception, Colleton County First Steps has leveraged \$1,719,052 from sources outside state government. **That's \$.55 for every dollar received.**
- Provided services to **13 families** in our county through the **Parents as Teachers Program.**
- **We provided 39.5 hours of certified Childcare professionals received 30 hours** of technical assistance for early care best practices.
- Improved parenting practices through **14 Group Connections Parent Workshops.**
- **4,742 Books Distributed** to children throughout the county.

### Colleton County First Steps

609 Colleton Loop  
 Walterboro, SC 29488  
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 Fax: (843) 542-9513

[cdickerson@scfirststeps.org](mailto:cdickerson@scfirststeps.org)

**Board Chair**  
 Juliette Green

The Colleton County First Steps Board and I believe our most significant achievements in the past fiscal year were implementing additional “home visitation” programs. These programs include: Nurse Family Partnership, Parents as Teachers, and Countdown to Kindergarten. These programs consisted of over 50% of our budget.

These family involvement programs implemented over the past 5-10 years, according to data from the Kids Count report for 2015, reflect an improvement in infant mortality rates and child deaths ages 1-14. We believe that these programs have helped to make this difference in Colleton County.

Also, we have seen an increase in DSS/ABC Quality scores for some of our child care providers during the past 5 years. This increase in scores we believe is directly related to quality child care provider training through funding received from outside sources. We are thankful for partners who provide funding for this important program.

Our programs require a successful collaboration with community partners. We ask all parents and partners to join us as we launch new programs and continue programs that have proven outcomes. Parents find our programs easy to participate in and appreciate the educational books and materials we supply to enhance their role as their child’s first teacher.

*Cindy L. Dickerson, MPA*

Executive Director, Colleton County First Steps



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

### County Programs

- Parents as Teachers
- Parent Training
- Countdown to Kindergarten
- Child Care Training
- Nurse Family Partnership

### State Programs

- BabyNet

# 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, Colleton County First focuses its investments in Family Strengthening and Child Care Training.**

# Nurse-Family Partnership

**Helping vulnerable first-time mothers 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 mothers 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 Colleton County, Nurse-Family Partnership is implemented through Department of Health and Environment Control.



Colleton First Steps serves families in greatest need. NFP families have the following needs:

- 90% ...families live below the poverty line
- 43% ...teen parents
- 22% ... do not graduate from high school

## During the FY 2016:

Families Served	33
Children Served	25
Number of Home Visits	339

“I don’t believe I could have made it through this time without the assistance of my Nurse Family Partnership nurse, Jennifer Williams. I went through many situations that were accomplished by her encouragement and support.” Jocelyn Grant, NFP Client (The above photo is Jocelyn with her son La’Brae and his father Gregory McNeil)

**This year, our NFP program**

- ✓ 60% are employed and 39% are currently in school working to obtain a high school diploma or GED
- ✓ 79% initiated breastfeeding, 22% continued at 7 months, and 16% continued at one year
- ✓ 98% have immunizations up to date at 18 months

## Thank you to our partners!

- SC Department of Health & Environmental Control
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield of South Carolina
- Duke Endowment Fund

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**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

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

- 67% ... live in poverty
- 34% ... exposed to domestic violence
- 34% ... referred to BabyNet



During our Group Connections, when our children were pretending, it led to some interesting conversations.

## PAT by the Numbers 2015-16

Families Served	13
Children Served	19
Total Home Visits	150
Hours Spent Serving Families	173

## This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged over 2 home visits per family (Parents as Teachers model implementation requires us to visit each family at least 2 visits per month).
- ✓ Of the 13 families served during the 2015-2016 fiscal year, 46% of the families met 9 months of continuous service.
- ✓ The ACIRI Assessment Summary shows that 17% of clients being served met the requirements.
- ✓ Our Parents as Teachers program distributed 156 books to children and families in our program. Many of our families have created a special place in their homes for storing books and encouraging reading.

## Thank you to our partners!

Colleton County School District Family Literacy  
 Colleton County Memorial Library  
 Zaxby's

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# Parent Training

**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:

- ✓ Provides parents of young children with information to increase their education levels
- ✓ Provides information about who to contact for documented delay programs for their children
- ✓ 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

Colleton County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Colleton County data reflects the following:

- 39.3% ...children under 5 live in poverty
- 22% ... birth mothers have less than a high school diploma
- 49.8% ... Children living in single parent families



As an incentive to have parents send us their contact information, we pick a winner each quarter to receive a basket full of educational materials. The above picture is Alexandra Hodges with her new son, Kears Winter born June 14, 2016. Alexandra has two other sons, Chance Winter – 3 years old and Durell Winter – 2 years old. We are planning to add this family to our Parents as Teachers Program.

**This year, our Family Literacy program:**

- ✓ Provided bags with educational materials to over 300 new mothers who gave birth in the Colleton County Hospital this past year.
- ✓ Provided materials to increase literacy with a focus on teaching parents on how to read to their children and how to increase their children's vocabulary.
- ✓ Attempted to increase the new mothers education enrollment at the Colleton County Adult Learning Center/Colleton County School District.
- ✓ Provided Bringing Baby Home a book written by an Early Education Educator that covers many items that may occur during the first year of a child's life.

### *Thank you to our partners!*

- |                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Colleton Medical Center          | Family Dollar   |
| Colleton County Memorial Library | Baby Net        |
| Colleton County Adult Education  | First books.org |
| Family Connections               |                 |

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# Early Education With Books

**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.**

Colleton County First Steps provides free, age-appropriate books to children age birth to 5 years throughout the county.

Our partnership with our library provides collaboration between the agencies that both promote reading and literacy to children in Colleton County.

We have collaborated with the library to supply books to the bookmobile that supports rural parts of the county.



This mom and 2 year old won the Summer Reading Program at the library, having read the most books during the 2 month period.

## Early Education by the numbers, 2015-16

Children Served	3,876
Books Given to Children 0-5	4,742

## This year, our partnership provided books to many organizations throughout the county:

- ✓ Distributed 4,742 books throughout the county implementing our programs and other partnerships.
- ✓ Books were distributed to Colleton County Memorial Library to be distributed to children in rural areas of the county on the bookmobile.
- ✓ Provided books to be distributed through the Department of Social Services to clients and foster children.
- ✓ Provided books to local churches for children attending Bible Schools, Sunday School, and Back to School programs.
- ✓ Provided books to the child care providers throughout the county to distribute to the families they serve.
- ✓ Distributed books to 235 children served in our Christmas Project, serving children in needy families.

## Thank you to our partners!

- Colleton Memorial Library
- FirstBooks.org
- Colleton County child Care Providers
- Local Churches

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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.

***Colleton County First Steps Training***  
 It is always a good time when we attend one of Colleton County First Steps trainings. Along with receiving quality training, there is fun, good food, and door prizes!!  
 Lynn Reynolds, Child Care Provider



Neal Arrington, EMT for Goose Creek, SC always makes First Aid, CPR, and Blood Borne Pathogens Interesting and fun.

### Child Care Training Sponsored by Colleton County First Steps, 2015-16

Topic:	Sessions:
Curriculum	One Sessions (5 hours)
Growth and Development	Seven Sessions (16 hours)
Health & Safety	Two Sessions (5.00 hrs.)
Blood-Borne Pathogens	One Session (1.50 hrs)
Nutrition	One Session (2.00 hrs.)
Program Administration	Four Sessions (10.00 hrs)

### Training by the Numbers, 2015-16

Total Training Attendance	212
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	161
Number of Training Sessions Offered	16

### This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 161 early childhood staff with high quality training.
- ✓ 39.5 hours of certified training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 134 follow up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

### Thank you to our partners!

- The Beaufort Fund – Coastal Community Foundation
- Child Care Center for Career Development
- Child Care Resource & Referral
- Coastal Electric Cooperative

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# Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in Colleton 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.

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

- 67% ... live in poverty
- 34% ... exposed to domestic violence
- 34% ... were referred to BabyNet
- 56% ... had developmental delays

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.

All of our scholarships are provided to families that participate in the Parents as Teachers program.

**"The assistance that I receive from Colleton County First Steps for child care helps my family to provide other essential items needed for my children."**  
 - Akiba Bowers, Parent of a Child Receiving a Scholarship



These children receive scholarships and their family participates in the Parents as Teachers program.

### Scholarships by the Numbers, 2015-16

Children Served	9
Providers Served	4

### This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Provided 9 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Identified and addressed 7 potential developmental delays among scholarship children (ASQ Report)
- ✓ Made 36 connections for families to services such as: dental, hearing, vision, food, shelter.
- ✓ Supported 4 child care providers in Colleton County by subsidizing child care tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care.
- ✓ Provided 18 hours of training for scholarship parents in topics such as music, fire protection, and healthy eating habits.

### Thank you to our partners!

South Carolina Department of Social Services

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**Bringing parents and teachers together as partners sets the foundation for success in school.**

## Program Description

Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a summer home visitation model connecting rising kindergartners and their families with their future teachers. The program is designed:

- ✓ to forge strong and lasting home-school relationships,
- ✓ to acquaint children and families with the state and classroom expectations to increase the likelihood of school success,
- ✓ to increase parent involvement in the early grades (particularly in hard-to-reach communities), when children's learning is foundational for life success; and
- ✓ to increase public awareness of the importance of school readiness and provide ways for parents and communities to impact children's early school success.

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 2015

Children Served	42
Families Served	41
Home/School Visits	247

*\*CTK program data is for June-August 2015, whereas CTK fiscal data includes expenditures from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.*



*My Child is ready to start kindergarten and really likes her teacher!!*

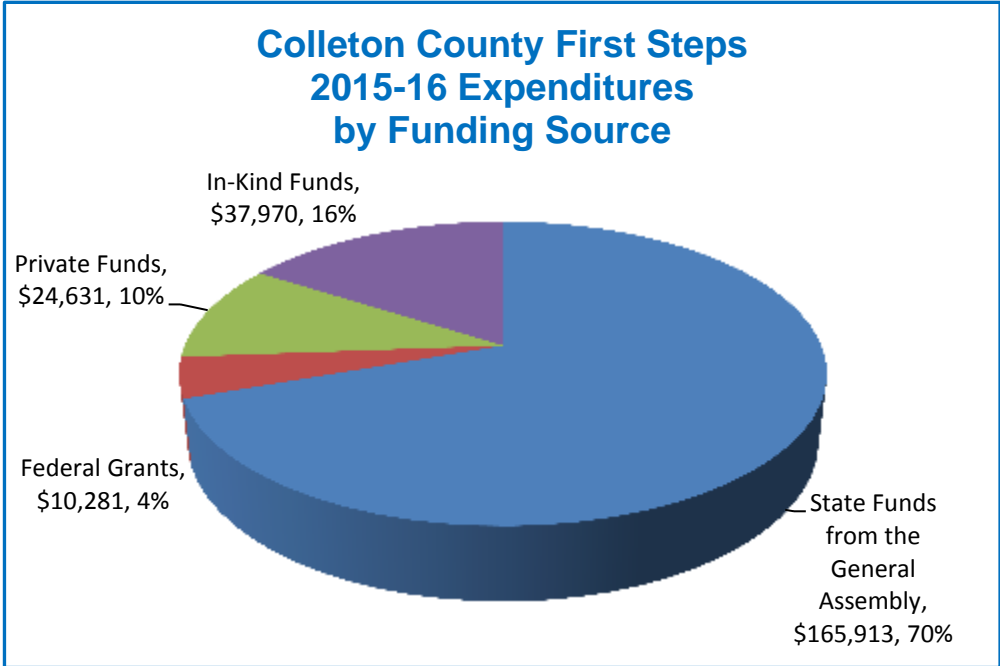
**This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program had parents complete a pre/post survey. The surveys reflected the following:**

- ✓ Parents expressed an interest in extending the amount of time they spent reading to their child
- ✓ Parents responded to plans to attend teacher conferences and open house at the school
- ✓ Parents showed more interest in joining the PTA

## Thank you to our partners!

Colleton County School District  
 Bakker Family Fund – Coastal Community Fund  
 Kaplan Early Learning Company  
 Colleton County Memorial Library  
 Palmetto Electric Cooperative

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**Total 2015-16 Expenditures: \$238,794**

**State Funds Leveraged in 2015-16\*: 44%**

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

### 2015-16 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2015-16 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$33,827	\$0	\$2,878	\$3,856	\$40,561	17%
Parent Training	\$7,000	\$0	\$1,500	\$0	\$8,500	4%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$4,519	\$10,281	\$2,194	\$0	\$16,994	7%
Child Care Training	\$8,294	\$0	\$14,437	\$5,656	\$28,387	12%
Child Care Scholarships	\$10,500	\$0	\$0	\$3,500	\$14,000	6%
Nurse Family Partnership	\$38,300	\$0	\$0	\$18,313	\$56,613	24%
Program Support	\$45,515	\$0	\$3,483	\$5,358	\$54,356	23%
Administrative Support	\$17,958	\$0	\$139	\$1,286	\$19,383	8%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$165,913</b>	<b>\$10,281</b>	<b>\$24,631</b>	<b>\$37,969</b>	<b>\$238,794</b>	

*Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016*

**Since inception, Colleton County First Steps has leveraged \$1,719,052 from sources outside of state government. That's .55 cents for every state dollar.**

# Thank You to Our Donors

## How your support helps children in Colleton County:

- ❖ Volunteer to help a family have a good Christmas by adopting a needy family during the holiday season.
- ❖ Make a donation to allow a needy child to have age appropriate books in their home.
- ❖ Make a donation of a box of diapers to help with our diaper drive and promotion through parent training.



This past year, Colleton County First Steps was chosen by Glasspro owner, Paul J. Heinauer to participate in the 3 Degree Guarantee along with News 2. We received \$2,100. Pictured to the right below are Rob Fowler, Paul Heinauer, Cindy Dickerson, Executive Director, and Juliette Green, Board Chair.



Colleton County DSS has setup a “mini library” in their front lobby for children to visit while waiting with their caregiver. First Steps in Colleton County supplies the books for free to the Department of Social services. The children are encouraged to take a book home with them. (Pictured above are Audrey Brown, DSS Director; Susan Dodd, Human Service Coordinator I; Becky Hitchens, TANF/ABAWD Case Manager and a visiting family)

## Thank you to our partners!

How to give: If you would like to make a donation to Colleton County First Steps, your donation will be tax deductible. Colleton County First Steps is an IRS designated 501(c)3 organization. Please make your check payable to Colleton County First Steps, 609 Colleton Loop, Walterboro, SC 29488.

### Funding Support

- State of South Carolina: \$165,913  
(through South Carolina First Steps)
- Beaufort Fund: \$12,000
- Bakker Family Fund: \$5,000
- Child Care Center for Career Development
- Colleton County School District: \$7,872
- Palmetto Rural Telephone: \$300
- Glass Pro: \$2,100
- Zaxby's: \$1,005

### In-Kind Support

- Colleton County School District
- Colleton County Memorial Library
- Coastal Electric Cooperative
- SC Dept. Of Health & Environmental Control
- SC Department of Social Services

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

## Christmas Fill the Stocking Project

Because the United Way in Colleton County was no longer active in Colleton County, Colleton County First Steps was asked to handle the Christmas Fill the Stocking Project for 2016 Christmas Season. Our hope was that it would become a community effort and that is exactly what happened. We were amazed at the way the community stepped up and helped us to serve 104 families and 235 children. Many civic organizations and individuals adopted families and contributed to the project and we raised \$2,281.58 to help fund the project. **Thank you to our Donors!!!**



1st Federal Bank of South Carolina  
 A&D Auto-Dane Roessler  
 AgSouth Farm Credit  
 Belk Department Store  
 Johnnie Benson  
 Bethel United Methodist Church  
 Mrs. David E. Burress Jr  
 Edward H. & Elizabeth K. Cochran  
 Michael Cochran  
 Colleton County Baptist Association of Churches  
 Colleton County Department of Social Services  
 Colleton High School Student Council  
 Colleton Preparatory Academy  
 The Colletonian  
 Dayco Products, LLC  
 David B. & Susan D. Dodd  
 Harriette B. Dodd  
 George Durst  
 Edward Jones/Jim Nolte  
 Theresa Farmer  
 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Thomas Gotbeter  
 W. Walter Haynes, M.D.  
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 Chimere Platt  
 The Press & Standard  
 Real Housewives of Walterboro Book Club  
 Rehoboth United Methodist Church  
 Renee Stanley  
 Rohodheh Methodist Church  
 St. Peters AME Church  
 Jan Smoak  
 Barbara Soto  
 Student Government Association/USC Salkehatchie  
 Audrey K. & Patrick A. Tobin  
 Walterboro Chamber of Commerce  
 Walterboro Civitan Club  
 Walterboro Lions Club  
 Walterboro Post Office  
 Willing Workers Sunday School Class



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

## Books Distributed by Board Members Through-out the County

The entire Board works with non-profits, faith-based organizations, businesses, and government organizations to distribute books throughout the county. Books have been provided to all these organizations by our board members. We are currently working with the Department of Social Services to create a reading room for children to enjoy while they wait for appointments. We are currently working with doctor's offices to provide books in their waiting rooms. We work with the hospital beyond the baby bags to new parents and also supply them with books to children visiting the hospital and the pediatric unit. All Board members have pulled together to make this a successful project throughout the county.

## Hands of Christ – Back to School Project

Several of our Board Members attend Presbyterian Churches in Colleton County - Susan Dodd, Janice Young, and Juliette Green. All three of these individuals participate in the above back to school project, Hands of Christ. This program provides school supplies to children in the county, clothing, and bibles. We also provided books this year which were very much appreciated to help the children while they were waiting to be served. We appreciate our Board Members and their service to the community.

## Colleton County First Steps Partnership Board, 2015-16

Name	Position	Board Category
Juliette Green, Chair	Aimwell Presbyterian Church member	Faith Based
LaToya Lynah, Vice Chair	Early Beginnings/Early Intervention Services, Colleton County Department of Special Needs	Colleton County Department of Special Needs Representative
Susan Dodd, Treasurer	Case Supervisor, Colleton County DSS	Department of Social Services Rep.
Lorie Caldwell, Secretary	5K Teacher at Bells Elementary, Colleton Co. School District	Teacher of children
Carl Coffin	Director, Colleton County Memorial Library	Library Representative
Dawn Davis	Walterboro Church of Christ member	Faith Based
Barbara Kulisek	Principal at Black Street Early Education Center	School District
Brenda Hughes	DHEC	DHEC Representative
Alisha Fender	Nurse	Colleton Medical Center
Deborah Skoland	Early Childcare Provider/Volunteer	Early Childcare Volunteer
Jessica F. Williams	Colleton County School District	Early Childhood Director
Janice M. Young	Interventionist/Primary Educator	Early Childhood Provider
Senekita Farmer	Interim Director	Head Start
Louise Ford	Family Coordinator	Head Start

## 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 Colleton County:  
843-782-3405

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