



Parents as Teachers

Parent Child Home

**Child Care Quality
Enhancement**

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

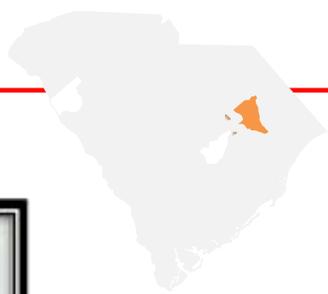
Annual Report

2015-2016



OUR VISION:

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



By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	Florence County
Children Under Five	289,990	8,885
Children In Poverty	26.4%	28.2%
3 rd Graders Below Standard in Reading	21.1%	24.8%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.7%	14.4%



KIDS COUNT data provided by

- Since inception, Florence County First Steps has leveraged \$2,190,832.20 from sources outside of state government. **That's \$.24 for every dollar received.**
- **1,128 hours of support and guidance** were provided to 45 families in our Parent Child Home Program.
- **Childcare professionals received 109 hours** of technical assistance for early care best practices.
- Improved parenting practices through **14 Group Connections Parent Workshops.**
- **Total Children Served through Scholarships: 48**

Florence County First Steps

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Florence, SC 29501

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Board Chairman

Rev. Darren McClam

darrenmclam@yahoo.com

www.florencefirststeps.org



Spencer R. Scott, MBA
Executive Director

Changing today for a better tomorrow...

Based on our mission of "Getting Children Ready for School" set forth by "First Steps", we are contributing to the well-being, development and education of the youngest learners in our community.

The needs of our community continue to be Facility Quality Enhancement (FQE), ABC Scholarship opportunities, Parenting Home Visitation Programs, and providing technical assistance at child development centers. During Fiscal Year 16 we continue to focus on achieving our goals of providing quality early childhood experiences to as many children as possible through local and state partnerships such as: evidence based Parent Child Home Programs through Florence County School Districts #1, #3, #4, and #5. The South Carolina Department of Social Services awarded 48 Child Care Scholarships to children of families who were identified with two or more of the First Steps' risk factors.

Florence County First Steps provided Child Care Training and grants to Facility Quality Enhancement providers and to the five neighboring counties: Darlington, Dillon, Marlboro, Marion, and Horry.

We will continue to take the necessary steps to transform the quality of early childhood through our initiatives. We aim to excite our youngest learners, parents (a child's first teachers), and child care providers as we move towards our mission of preparing young children for school.



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, Florence County First focuses its investments in: Quality Childcare, Family Strengthening, and Healthy Start.

Parent Child Home

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

Program Description

Parent Child Home is an evidence-based home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe, and ready to succeed. PCH services include:

1. **Personal Visits** at least six times monthly
2. Screenings and Assessments to identify concerns
3. Service to the most At-Risk Children and their families
4. Connections to Outside Resources that families may need to succeed.

Florence First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our PCH families:

100%	... Live in poverty
93%	... Eligible for SNAP assistance
13%	... Did not graduate from high school

PCH by the Numbers 2015-16

Families Served	45	
Children Served	45	
Total Home Visits	2369	
Hours Spent Serving Families	1128	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	KIPS - 1.03	ACIRI - A - .81 C - .85



Beth Hepworth and son, Randall Joye Jr.
 2016 PCHP graduation.

This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged home visits per month 6.53.
- ✓ Served 100% of families with at least one South Carolina First Steps approved Risk Factors.
- ✓ Improved parenting practices Developmental Screenings with KIPS and ACIRI Post Tests(as shown above).
- ✓ Increased the number of families served by 25% by adding an additional Parenting Program in FSD3.

Thank you to our partners!

- Florence School District Three
- Florence School District Four
- Florence School District Five

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:

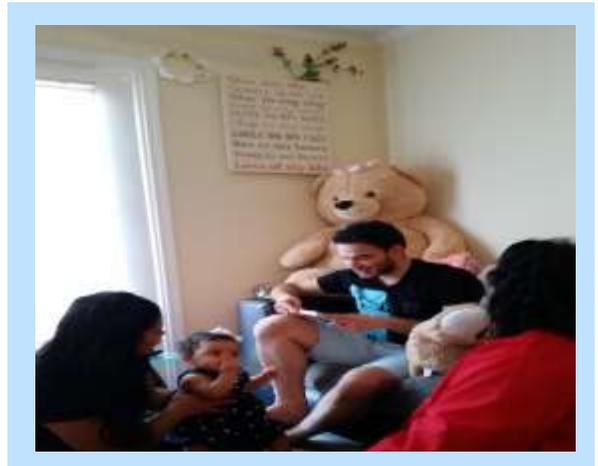
1. **Personal Visits** at least twice monthly
2. **Monthly Group Connections** with other PAT families
3. **Screenings and Assessments** to identify developmental concerns
4. **Connections to Outside Resources** that families may need to succeed

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

100% ... live in poverty

47% ... didn't graduate from high school

20% ... were teen parents



PAT by the Numbers 2015-16

Families Served	15	
Children Served	15	
Total Home Visits	270	
Hours Spent Serving Families	271	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	KIPS -03	ACIRI- A-.02 C-.11



This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged 17.93 home visits per family
- ✓ Identified and addressed 0 potential developmental delays
- ✓ Improved parenting practices Developmental Screenings with KIPS and ACIRI Post Test.
- ✓ Made 15 connections for families to services such as Adult Ed, BabyNet, Family Connections, etc.

Thank you to our partners!

Florence School District One

Florence County First Steps

415 South Coit Street Florence, SC 29501

843-629-0202

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Child Care Quality Enhancement

In order to thrive, children need nurturing, responsive relationships and a supportive learning environment, both within and outside the home.

Program Description

The quality of care young children receive is crucial to their healthy development and school readiness. Child care providers strive to provide high quality care, but may lack the resources that are commonly available to publicly-funded early childhood programs, such as educational materials, on-site professional development, and other support.

First Steps' Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) is intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children. Participating child care providers must serve a high percentage of at-risk children, and are selected through a competitive process that requires a strong level of commitment to the QE process.

Program Components

1. On-site Technical Assistance (TA) at least twice monthly
2. Equipment and materials funding
3. Integration with locally available training, provided by First Steps and other partners
4. Workforce Development
5. Coordination with community partners
6. Pre/post assessments of the classroom environment and teacher-child interaction, using nationally-recognized observational tools for infant/toddler and preschool settings (ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS)

QE by the Numbers, 2015-16

Child Care Providers Served	4
Number of TA Visits Provided	76
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	128

Congratulations to our QE participants for 2015-16!

Child Care Provider	Pre/Post Improvement
Precious Ones Learning Center	From 3.08 to 3.23 = +.15
Sunshine Daycare Center	From 3.39 to 4.26 = +.87
Kids First	From 3.05 to 3.84 = +.79
Creative Learning Center	From 3.83 to 4.18 = +.35

This year, our Quality Enhancement program:

- ✓ Improved quality, on average, by .54 based on pre/post Environment Rating Scale assessments.
- ✓ Provided 109 hours of technical assistance to child care providers
- ✓ Provided \$5,179.17 in materials grants to participating child care providers
- ✓ Funded scholarships for 6 children within participating child care providers

Thank you to our partners!

- Kids' First learning Center
- Sunshine Day Care Center
- Precious Ones Learning Center
- Creative Learning Center

Florence County First Steps

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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.

FCFS always provides my staff and I with excellent hand on training that we can carry back to our classrooms.

---Megan S.
 Maranatha Christian School

**Child Care Training Sponsored by
 Florence County First Steps, 2015-16**

<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Sessions:</u>
Inclusion	1 Session
Identifying Red Flags	1 Session
Fine and Gross Motor Development	1 Session
Science Exploration	1 Session



Child Care teachers participant in hands on science activities.

Training by the Numbers, 2015-16

Total Training Attendance	47
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	36
Number of Training Sessions Offered	4

- This year, our Training program provided:**
- ✓ 36 early childhood staff with high quality training
 - ✓ 9 hours of certified training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
 - ✓ 17 follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

Thank you to our partners!

Florence Darlington Technical College
 Drs. Bruce and Lee Foundation Library

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Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in Florence 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.

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

- 39 ... live in poverty
- 25 ... exposed to parental depression
- 13 ... exposed to substance abuse
- 10 ... exposure to domestic violence

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.

With FCFS scholarships we try to partner with families who are participating in Nurse Family Partnership and Parenting through the school district.

FCFS does its best to ensure their voucher recipients are taken care of and the process is stress free.
 N. Martin



Daycare providers and children attend FCFS Annual meeting.

Scholarships by the Numbers, 2015-16

Children Served	48
Providers Served	15

This year, our Scholarship program:

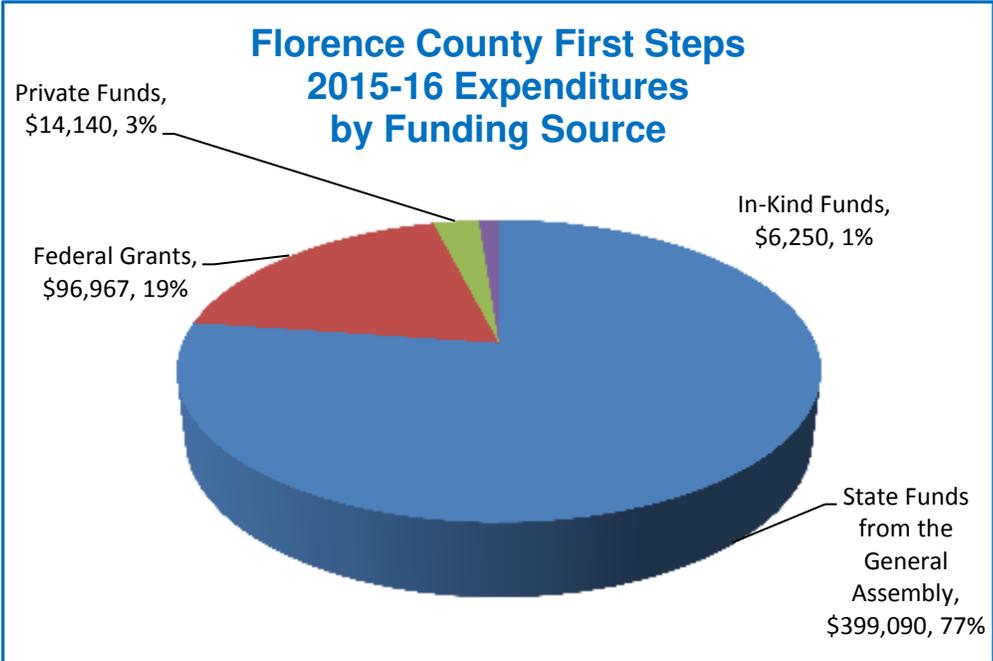
- ✓ Provided 48 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Identified and addressed 14 potential developmental delays among scholarship children
- ✓ Made 13 connections for families to services such as PCH, PAT, Parent Pay Program.
- ✓ Supported 15 small businesses in Florence County by subsidizing child care tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care
- ✓ Provided 1.5 hours of training for scholarship parents in area of what to look for in child care facilities.

Thank you to our partners!

- SC BabyNet
- SC Department of Social Services
- Florence County Child Care Facilities

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Financial Impact



Total 2015-16 Expenditures: \$516,447

State Funds Leveraged in 2015-16*: 29.41%

*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	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	4%
Parents Child Home	\$58,261	\$0	\$0	\$6,250	\$64,511	12%
Nurse Family Partnership	\$0	\$0	\$726	\$0	\$726	0%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$43,314	\$96,967	\$8,231	\$0	\$148,513	29%
Child Care Training	\$28,605	\$0	\$377	\$0	\$0	0%
Child Care Scholarships	\$136,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Program Support	\$70,563	\$0	\$3,056	\$0	\$73,619	14%
Administrative Support	\$41,847	\$0	\$1,749	\$0	\$43,596	8%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$399,090	\$96,967	\$14,140	\$6,250	\$516,447	

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

Since inception, Florence County First Steps has leveraged \$2,190,832.20 from sources outside of state government. That's \$.24 cents for every state dollar.

Paving the Way for Parents

Child Care Scholarships

My daughter, Zimaria B. and son Carter C, attend Echols Family Daycare.

I am blessed to know they attend a safe learning environment with the help of Florence County First Steps scholarship program. If it was not for the scholarship program, I would not be able to work and provide for my family. I appreciate everything FCFS has done as well as Mrs. Echols. Thank you, FCFS and Echols Family Daycare for everything!

I know my children will be ready for school.

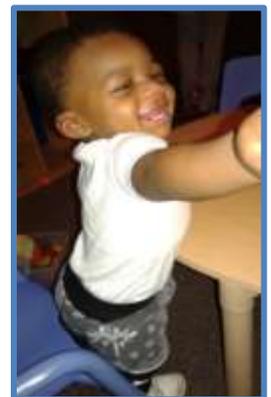
--Ruby S.



Almost a year ago, I received the greatest blessing a mother could ask for, my child Carter B. was approved for a 52 week scholarship voucher on behalf of Florence County First Steps. This voucher has been so beneficial to not only Cater, but to me as well. I am able to work full time to provide for my family and have full-time daycare.

My mind is at ease while at work to know he's in a safe learning environment. Carter has advanced so much since he has been attending childcare. Thank you FCFS for all that you do to make the lives of single mothers a little easier and worry-free.

--Niteya M.



Thank you to our partners!

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

2016 South Carolina Read In

25th Anniversary Celebration

This year FCFS along with hundreds of other educational institutions (childcare providers, elementary schools, middle schools, and even high schools) attended this year's 25th Anniversary Celebration of the South Carolina Read-In. This Celebration focuses on the importance of reading and encourages children young and old to do so.

South Carolina Community Gathered to encourage READING!

More than 2000 children and adults of all ages were in attendance. This year's event started with a parade in the heart of downtown Columbia and ended up on the steps and the lawn of the South Carolina State House. This year's theme was appropriately titled, *The Magic of Books* and a number of well known, local characters were in attendance, from the Clemson Tiger to Lady Louise along with her manager, Karen Petit. It was a memorable experience with an educational time had by all.



Thousands of young readers gather on the steps of the SC State House...



The Clemson Tiger posing with a young reader, Christina Harrison

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$399,090
(Through South Carolina First Steps)

SC Department of Social Service \$107,535

In-Kind Support

Florence School District #1

Florence School District #3

Florence School District #4

Florence School District #5

Thank you to our partners!

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First Steps Partnership Board

Florence County First Steps Partnership Board Members, 2015-2016

Name	Position	Board Category
Darren McClam, Chairman	Pastor	Faith Based Community
Debbie Quesada, Treasurer	Florence County Library	Florence County Library
Linda Heron, Secretary	Child Care Director-Zion Canaan CDC	Member of Early Childhood Ed.
Shurrie Timmons	Child Care Director/Teacher-Creative Learning Preschool	Pre-K thru Primary Teacher
Ivey Staley, Past Chairman	FSD #1 Teacher	School District FSD #1
Margaret Echols	Echols Family Daycare-Owner	Child Care Provider
JoDeen McAllister	Mon-Dae Morning Childcare	Child Care Provider
Kristen Miller	NFP-Director	Health Care Provider
Nicole Echols	Community Outreach Director	Non-Profit Organization
Valencia Brand	Educator	Business Community
Phoebe Clark	Attorney	Business Community
Sharon Williams	Parenting Coordinator	School District FSD #3
Mary Brayboy	Principal, FSD #4	School District FSD #4
Ernest Frierson	Pastor	Senate Appointment
Brenda Hannah	Parenting Coordinator	School District FSD #5

Florence County First Steps 2015-2016 Local Legislature

SC Senate Delegation	SC House Delegation	US Congressional Delegation
Kevin I. Johnson, District 36	Terry Alexander, District 59	Senator Lindsey Graham
Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr. , District 31	Wallace H. "Jay" Jordan, District 63	Senator Timothy E. Scott
Ronnie A. Sabb, District 30	Roger K. Kirby, District 61	Congressman Tom Rice
Kent M. Williams, District 62	Phillip D. Lowe, District 60	
	Robert Q. Williams, District 62	

Florence County First Steps 2015-2016 Staff

Spencer R. Scott, Executive Director

Lana Hopkins, Early Childhood Coordinator

Reeshemah Harrison, Early Childhood Consultant

Thank you to all of our local legislatures and board members for a great 2015-2016...

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



BabyNet in Florence County:
843-669-8689

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



Interested parents can contact any participating 4K providers to complete an application. To view a list of participating First Steps 4K providers, visit:

<http://scfirststeps.org/4k>