

ORANGEBURG COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Imagination Library

Countdown to Kindergarten

**Child Care Quality
Enhancement**

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

**Early Steps to School
Success**

Annual Report

2015 - 2016



OUR VISION:

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

By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	Orangeburg County
Children Under Five	289,990	5,441
Children In Poverty	26.4%	43.1%
3 rd Graders Below Standard in Reading	21.1%	38.3%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.7%	19.0%

KIDS COUNT data provided by



- **Since inception, Orangeburg County First Steps has leveraged \$258,390.54 from sources outside state government. That's \$.27 for every dollar received.**
- **766.1 hours of support and guidance were provided to 52 adults and 61 children in our Early Steps to School Success.**
- **Childcare professionals received 38 Hours of technical assistance for early care best practices.**
- **Improved parenting practices through 3 Group Connections Parent Workshops.**
- **Total Served in FY16: 104 Adults and 1017 Children**

Orangeburg County First Steps

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Orangeburg County First Steps LaMyra Sanders, Executive Director

It is an honor and a privilege to continue to serve the youngest citizens of Orangeburg County and their families. The role of Orangeburg County First Steps is to increase school readiness outcomes for children ages 0-5. We are very excited about the impact that we have had throughout the county during FY 15-16. We continue to provide quality enhancement services for five child development centers in the following cities: Cope, Eutawville, Orangeburg and Santee. Other services include home visitation, scholarship and training.

We are proud to announce one of the greatest accomplishments of FY 15-16; Wright Way Child Development Center of Eutawville has transitioned to the **Standard Transition Approach to Receiving Resources (STARR) Maintenance Program**. We salute LaShondia Wright for her remarkable progress! With the technical assistance provided by Orangeburg County First Steps, Wright Way's tremendous milestones include, but are not limited to: Initial Environment Rating Scale Score: 3.3

- Current Environmental Rating Scale Score: 5.83
- Center received USDA Child Care Food Program 2011
- Enrolled in the 4k Program with South Carolina First Steps
- Center of the Year by South Carolina First Steps 2015-16
- Opened a second location in Vance, South Carolina
- All teachers completed Early Child Development 101
- Five teachers received credentials with the Child Development Association
- Purchased two buses
- Recipient of Early Head Start Grant

We continue to prepare children for school by serving families through a very strong partnership with Orangeburg Consolidated School District 5 and Save The Children. Our Early Steps to School Success Program serves parents in their home environment by equipping them to be their children's first teacher. Parents continue to teach their children through other programs hosted by the agency such as Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK). Participants in CTK establish strong relationships with school faculty, are exposed to their kindergarten classroom and participate in activities that foster a healthy mentality for learning during the initial year of school.

Overall, Orangeburg County continues to be focused on every opportunity to assist families, schools and communities in increasing school readiness outcomes for our youngsters. The staff remains optimistic and motivated to complete the rewarding task of effecting change one family at the time.

County Programs

- Countdown To Kindergarten
- Childcare Training
- Early Steps to School Success
- Imagination Library
- Childcare Scholarship
- Quality Enhancement Program

State Programs

- BabyNet
- First Steps 4k

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, Orangeburg County First focuses its investments in Family Strengthening, Quality Enhancement 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.**

Orangeburg County 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 Orangeburg County 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.



Read for the Record in Orangeburg Consolidated District 4

Imagination Library by the Numbers, 2015-16

Children Served	174
Books Given to Children 0-5	1734

This year, our Imagination Library program:

- Provided one book per month to children who were referred from Early Steps to School Success, Quality Enhancement Program and Child Development Centers
- 47.1% of Early Steps to School Success Participants are connected to Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Received \$500.00 donations from community members and organizations in support of children's literacy



Thank you to our partners!

- Dollywood Foundation
- Quality Enhancement Centers
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

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

Program Description

Early Steps to School Success is an evidence-based home visitation program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed. ESS services include:

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

Orangeburg County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our Early Steps to School Success families:

21.5% ... Low birthrate
31.3% ... Parental or caregiver depression
21.5% ... Were teen parents



ESS by the Numbers 2015 - 2016

Families Served	51	
Children Served	61	
Total Home Visits	749	
Hours Spent Serving Families	766.0	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	.09	.53



ESS Home Visitor participating in Read for the Record

This year, our Early Steps to School Success Program:

Averaged 2.02 home visits per family

Identified and addressed 4 potential developmental delays

Made 21 connections for families to services such as housing resources, DSS, Adult Education, Employment Resources and Early Education Programs

Thank you to our partners!

Orangeburg Consolidated School District Five
Save The Children



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 received by young children 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	5
Number of TA Visits Provided	124
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	174

Congratulations to our QE participants for 2015-16!

Child Care Provider	Pre/Post Improvement
Good Hope CDC	From 5.37 to 5.76
Kidz 1	From 5.04 to 5.53
Trinity United Methodist	From 5.68 to 5.77
Wright's Day Care	From 5.04 to 5.53
Wright Way CDC	From 5.57 to 5.83

This year, our Quality Enhancement program:

Improved quality, on average, by 10% based on pre/post Environment Rating Scale assessments.

Provided 242.5 hours of technical assistance to 5 child care providers.

Provided \$18,750.00 in materials grants to participating child care providers.

Funded scholarships for 14 children within participating child care providers.

Thank you to our partners!

- Quality Enhanced Child Development Centers
- Department of Social Services
- Kaplan Early Learning Company
- Discount School Supplies

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 Orangeburg County First Steps First Steps, 2015-16	
<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Sessions:</u>
Developmental Milestones	Modules 1-3
Using the Language Development	One Session
TEACH Program	One Sessions
Help Me	One Session
It's More Than Attendance	One Session
Strategies for Special Needs	One Session
Tasty Acres	One Session
Dinosaur Romp	One Session
Marketing Your Child Development Center	One Session
Managing Stress	One Session
Blood Borne Pathogen	One Session
Conscious Discipline	Modules 1-10
Out of the Shadows	One Session



Conscious Discipline with Susan Kirby

Training by the Numbers, 2015-16

Total Training Attendance	272
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	38
Number of Training Sessions Offered	13

This year, our Training program provided:

- 38 early childhood staff with high quality training
- 32 hours of certified training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- 10 follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

Thank you to our partners!

- First Baptist Church
- EdVerge Consulting Group
- Childcare Resource and Referral
- South Carolina State University
- Wilfer Educational Resources

Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in Orangeburg 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.

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

- 23% ... live in poverty
- 21% ... were teen parents
- 42% ... exposed to parental depression

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.

Eligible children receiving scholarships also participate in Early Steps to School Success.



Parents Night at St. Paul Housing Complex

Scholarships by the Numbers, 2015-16

Children Served	14
Providers Served	6

This year, our Scholarship program:

- Provided 14 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- Identified and addressed 1 potential developmental delays among scholarship children
- Supported 1 small business in Orangeburg County by subsidizing child care tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care
- Provided 6 hours of training for scholarship parents in topics such as Selecting Quality Care and Career Development

Thank you to our partners!

Department of Social Services
 County Line Catering

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.

*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2015

Children Served	29
Families Served	29
Home/School Visits	175

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



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 the media to help parents and caregivers get children ready for kindergarten.

Students participating in Countdown to Kindergarten

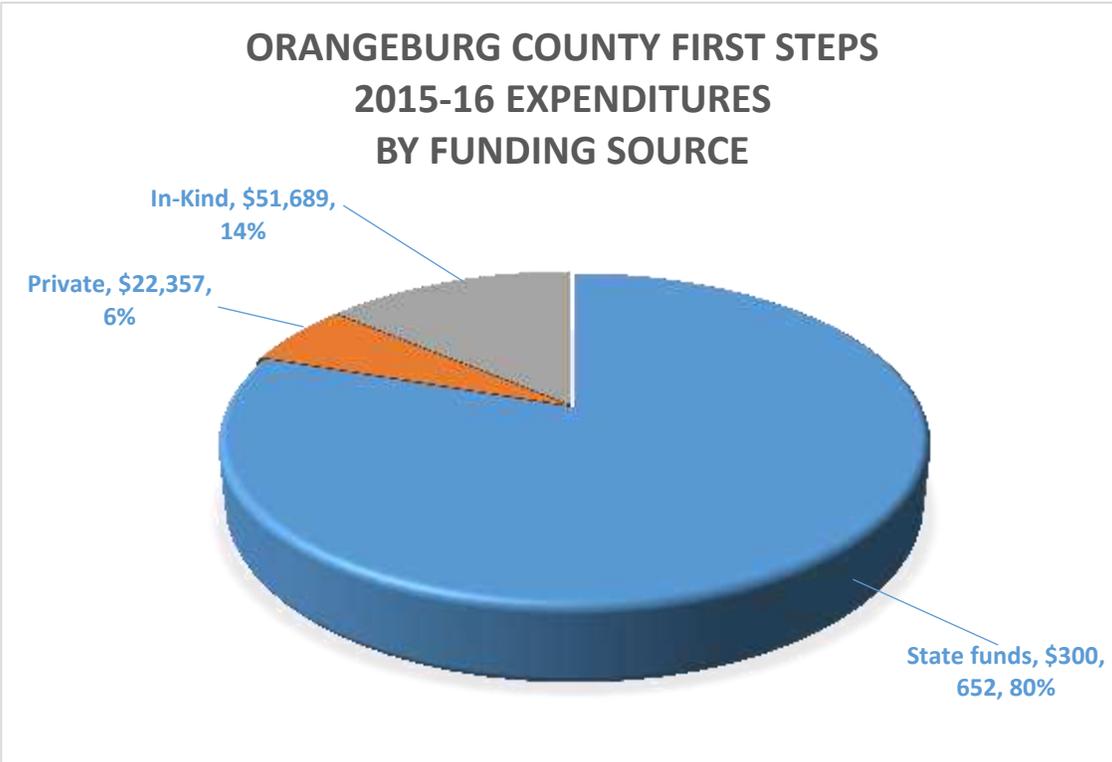
This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- 23% of children indicated a decrease of anxiety about entering school
- 72% of parents whose children participated in CTK have a greater knowledge of kindergarten expectations at their child’s school
- 63% of parents whose children participated in CTK will actively support their child’s classroom as a volunteer

Thank you to our partners!

Orangeburg Consolidated School Districts 3, 4 and 5
 United Way of the Midlands
 Citizens of Orangeburg County

Financial Impact



Total

2015-16

Expenditures: \$374,670.71

State Funds Leveraged in 2015-16*: 25%

**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
Early Steps to School Success	\$31,637	\$0	\$0	\$16,134	\$47,772	13%
Imagination Library	\$1,315	\$0	\$1,315	\$0	\$2,630	1%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$1,461	\$0	\$10,098	\$1,684	\$13,243	4%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$87,682	\$0	\$3,591	\$9,084	\$100,357	27%
Child Care Training	\$42,856	\$0	\$0	\$1,200	\$44,056	12%
Child Care Scholarships	\$41,760	\$0	\$240	\$7,000	\$49,000	13%
Other Program	\$6,031	\$0	\$723	\$250	\$7,004	2%
Program Support	\$60,695	\$0	\$5,337	\$0	\$66,033	18%
Administrative Support	\$27,187	\$0	\$1,052	\$16,336	\$44,575	12%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$300,625	\$0	\$22,357	\$51,689	\$374,670	

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

Since inception, Orangeburg County First Steps has leveraged \$258,390.54 from sources outside of state government. That's 27 cents for every state dollar.



Community Impact



Wright Way Child Development Center

With the help of Orangeburg County First Steps, the dream of becoming an accredited facility is now in reach of becoming a reality. Through our Partnership with First Steps we are able to provide improved quality of care, developmentally appropriate pre-school classes and so much more.

Trinity United Methodist Childcare Learning Center

Thank you for your tremendous support throughout the year. Without the diligence of Orangeburg County First Steps we would not have been able to purchase educational materials and provide professional development for centers and personnel.



Wright's Day Care Center

Orangeburg County First Steps helps us with providing our students with a good start. We believe with continued support from them, we will continue to show growth and all children will be prepared to enter school.

Kidz 1 Child Development Center

Orangeburg County First Steps is greatly appreciated for all of the wonderful things they do for Kidz 1. We are grateful that through the scholarship program, we are able to provide education and care for those who are economically challenged.

Good Hope Child Development Center

First Steps is really making a difference in our childcare program and our community by giving us the leadership that we need. Their efforts have increased our vision and enrollment.

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

First Steps Partnership Board

Partnering With Others for a Better Future

**Message from the Board Chair
 Matthew Henderson**

Orangeburg County Board of Directors takes great pride in supporting Orangeburg County First Steps. This Board of Directors actively participates in serving the children of the county by assisting in various activities such as literacy days, annual fundraisers and Community Day 2015-16. It is a continuous goal to strive for excellence through education and service, therefore in collaboration with South Carolina Association for Nonprofit Organizations, the board of Directors received quality board development that shared information on how to fulfill our duties as members of the board. Moreover, our efforts are furthered as we actively fundraise so that children can receive quality care through scholarships, purchasing of books and materials so that all children regardless of socio-economic status can receive early exposure to the academic environment. We wholeheartedly intend to continue to serve the children of Orangeburg County with passion and excellence.



Orangeburg County First Steps Partnership Board, 2015-16

Name	Board Category	Position
Davis, Kimberlei	Family Education, Training and Support Provider	ABC Columbia Reporter
Ditolla, Amy	County Library	Holly Hill Branch Managing Librarian
Glover, Deloris	Early Childhood Education	Retired Educator
Matthew, Henderson	Senate Appointee	SC Department of Transportation
Howard, Bertie	Head Start	OCAB Administrative Manager
James, Tonya	Orangeburg County DSS Appointee	Human Services Specialist
Jamison, Jacequeline	Orangeburg Consolidated District 5 Appointee	Executive Director of Academics
Quarles, Audrey McCrary	Family Education, Training and Support Provider	SCSU Assistant Professor of Health Sciences
Seabrook, Harold	Business Community	H.S. Environmental Services
Tate, Camesha	Orangeburg County Office of DHEC	Clinical Coordinator
Wells, Tonya	Orangeburg Consolidated District 4 Appointee	Pre-K Teacher
Williams, Antron	Senate Appointee	USDA Soil Conservationist
Williams, Luvenia	Non-Profit Organization	Manager, Orangeburg County Council on Aging
Williams, Reginald	Early Childhood Education	SCSU Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education
Wright, Judy	House of Representative Appointee	CASA Family Systems

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 Orangeburg County:
LOCAL SPOE PHONE # - 803-533-5446

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

Thank you donors!

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$298,541
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Orangeburg County Council:
\$600.00

Unite Way of the Midlands
\$5,000.00

Eastern Orangeburg City Ministerial
Alliance \$150.00

In-Kind Support

Orangeburg Consolidated School District 5

Kaplan Early Learning Company

Wilfer Educational Resources

New Perspectives Media



CTK students and parents participating in a tour of the school.

How your support helps children in Orangeburg County:

\$326.40 per child participating in Countdown to Kindergarten

\$30.00 per child participating in Dolly Parton Imagination Library

HOW TO GIVE

Mail Donations to: PO Box 451
Orangeburg, South Carolina 29116

Save the Date!

Read For The Record: October 27, 2016

Read Across America Day: March 2, 2017

Annual Fundraising Event: April 22, 2016

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