

SALUDA COUNTY



Parenting Training
Positive Parenting Program

Family Literacy

Countdown to Kindergarten

**Child Care Quality
Enhancement**

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

Annual Report

2015-16



OUR VISION:

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



By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	XYZ County
Children Under Five	289,990	1,139
Children In Poverty	26.4%	34.8%
3 rd Graders Below Standard in Reading	21.1%	26.1%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.7%	33.0%

KIDS COUNT data provided by



- Since inception, Saluda County First Steps has leveraged \$1,484,821 from sources outside state government. **That's \$.49 for every dollar received.**
- **100 hours of adult education** were completed by 13 ESL families in our Family Literacy Program.
- **Childcare professionals received 24 hours** of high-quality, professional workshop training based on early care best practices.
- **Total Children Served in FY16: 186**

Saluda County First Steps

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Board Chair

Dr. David Mathis

Facebook: Saluda County First Steps

Saluda County First Steps

Deborah Padgett

Executive Director

Working with young children and families of young children can be challenging. But the rewards can be immeasurable. Through collaborating and partnering with other agencies and organizations, all of us can better meet the needs of our youngest citizens. Working together increases the probability of empowering families to meet the needs of their children, thereby helping them gain confidence and competence. Empowerment, confidence, and competence create a rewarding environment of success and achievement for everyone.

Saluda County First Steps has strived to create strong bonds and positive relationships with the school district, 4K programs, child care centers, DSS, adult education, and individuals throughout the community. Through these alliances, together, we create a strong force in helping our children become successful in school and life.



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

County Programs

Positive Parenting Program

Family Literacy

Childcare Quality Enhancement

Child Care Training

Childcare Scholarships

Countdown to Kindergarten

State Programs

BabyNet

First Steps 4K

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

With **measurable outcomes across each of its six school readiness strategy areas**, First Steps is getting results.



Healthy Start

We begin with a focus on providing a healthy start to life. This includes prenatal and post-partum services for both mother and baby. In 2007, First Steps collaborated with key philanthropic and agency partners to bring Nurse-Family Partnership to SC having a significant impact on reducing premature births and Medicaid costs.



Quality Childcare

Quality childcare starts with quality childcare providers. Our quality enhancement and training strategies lead to improved teacher-student interaction, which research shows has a significant impact on a child's development and success in school.



Family Strengthening

Our home visitation strategies, such as Parents as Teachers, Parent-Child Home and Early Steps to School Success, are helping parents understand their responsibilities to care for and be positive models for their children. As a result of First Steps' intervention and parenting support, 66% of clients initially assessed at "low" levels of parenting have achieved moderate or high levels of parenting skill.



Early Education

Private-public partnerships through First Steps 4K have led to significant cost efficiencies in the delivery of publicly funded 4K. One recent analysis suggests First Steps is achieving comparable results, without the need for costly capital construction, for 80 cents on the dollar.



Early Intervention

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



School Transition

Each of the corresponding blocks of services leads ultimately to the goal of transitioning children successfully to school. Programs like Countdown to Kindergarten and From Day One to Grade One are ultimately preparing children for school success.

Based on the needs of our community, Saluda County First focuses its investments in.... Quality Childcare, Family Strengthening, Early Education, and School Transition.

Family Literacy

Parents are their child’s first and best teachers.

Program Description

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

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

Our family literacy program:

- ✓ **Helps parents of young children increase their education levels**
- ✓ **Provides English language instruction for parents (delete if not the case)**
- ✓ **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**

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

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



Year-end celebration of Family Literacy program.

Family Literacy by the Numbers 2015-16

Adults Served	13
Children Served	16
Adult Education Hours Offered	400
Early Childhood Education Hours Offered	400
Parenting Education Hours Offered	30

This year, our Family Literacy program:

- ✓ 69% of participants increased BEST PLUS scores.
- ✓ Average gain of points in BEST PLUS scores - 54
- ✓ Average number of adult education hours completed – 100
- ✓ 7 students completed an Educational Functioning Level on BEST PLUS test.

Thank you to our partners!

- Saluda County School District Family Literacy
- Saluda Schools Child Development Center

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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 they 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	3
Number of TA Visits Provided	45
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	129

Congratulations to our QE participants for 2015-16!

Child Care Provider	Pre/Post Improvement
ABC Academy, infant room	From 5.14 to 4.89*
Saluda Primary, 4K room	From 4.85 to 6.05
Hollywood Elementary, 4K room	From 4.70 to 4.76
* new teacher in classroom for post-assessment	

This year, our Quality Enhancement program:

- ✓ Improved quality, on average, by .33 based on pre/post Environment Rating Scale assessments
- ✓ Provided 59.5 hours of technical assistance to child care providers
- ✓ Provided \$6500 in materials grants to participating child care providers
- ✓ Funded scholarships for 5 children within participating child care providers

Thank you to our partners!

- ABC Academy
- Saluda Primary School
- Hollywood Elementary School

Child Care Training

Those who care for young children need high-quality, accessible, and affordable professional development.

Program Description

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce.

First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Best practices in training include not only the training itself, but follow-up in the classroom.



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

Topic:	Sessions:
SC Infant/Toddler Field Guide	Module 5
STEM Play	1
Language and Literacy	4

Enjoying applying knowledge about implementing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) in the early education classroom.

Training by the Numbers, 2015-16

Total Training Attendance	99
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	20
Number of Training Sessions Offered	7

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 20 early childhood staff with high quality training
- ✓ 24 hours of certified training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 100% of participants in QE program submitted homework based on each training session provided to ensure integration of skills and knowledge in the classroom.

Thank you to our partners!

- ABC Academy
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Edgefield County First Steps
- Saluda County Schools Adult Education Program
- Saluda County Council

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Child Care Scholarships

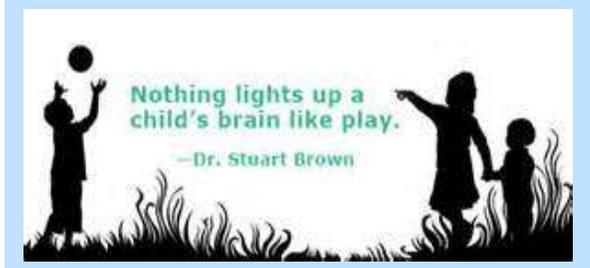
Too many families in Saluda County cannot afford quality care for their children.

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.

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

- 100% ... are eligible for free/reduced lunch
- 100% ... work or attend school to improve their child's chances of success
- 60% ... were single parents



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 parents must complete the Positive Parenting Program to receive a childcare scholarship.

Scholarships by the Numbers, 2015-16

Children Served	5
Providers Served	1

This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Provided 5 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Identified and addressed 3 potential developmental delays among scholarship children
- ✓ Provided 8 hours of training for scholarship parents in topics such as promoting positive behavior and managing challenging behavior.

Thank you to our partners!

- ABC Academy
- Saluda County Adult Education

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Countdown to Kindergarten



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

Program Description

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

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

*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2015

Children Served	25
Families Served	23
Home/School Visits	137

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



CTK Celebration - Summer 2015

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.

This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

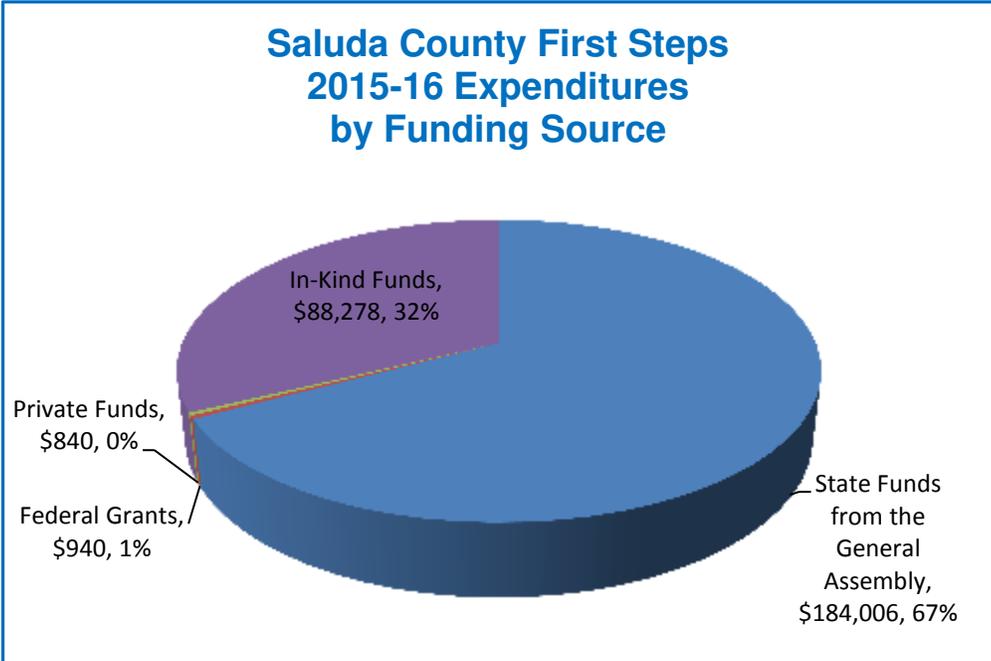
- ✓ 26% of students were assessed at reading on or above level.
- ✓ 87% of parents were involved in school meetings/ activities.

Thank you to our partners!

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

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Financial Impact



Total 2015-16 Expenditures: \$274,064

State Funds Leveraged in 2015-16*: 49%

*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
Positive Parenting Program	\$15,228	\$0	\$0	\$1,400	\$16,628	6%
Family Literacy	\$43,635	\$0	\$258	\$80,643	\$124,536	45%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$15,719	\$0	\$300	\$2,240	\$18,259	7%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$22,516	\$940	\$0	\$1,952	\$25,408	9%
Child Care Training	\$37,995	\$0	\$282	\$1,996	\$40,273	15%
Child Care Scholarships	\$9,850	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9,850	4%
Other Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Program Support	\$18,565	\$0	\$0	\$47	\$18,612	7%
Administrative Support	\$20,498	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,498	7%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$184,006	\$940	\$840	\$88,278	\$274,064	

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

Since inception, Saluda County First Steps has leveraged \$1,484,821 from sources outside of state government. That's 49 cents for every state dollar.

Saluda Schools Early Head Start Program

Saluda County Schools

The Saluda Schools Early Head Start Center officially opened August 24, 2016, with a full enrollment of 16 children. The center is open year-round and is conveniently located between Saluda Primary School and the Adult Education complex. The facility was recently newly renovated, and is fully furnished with new equipment, furniture, supplies, and toys. The fenced-in playground area was also enlarged and is awaiting arrival of new outdoor equipment and toys.

Meet the Staff

Saluda Schools Early Head Start is staffed with high-quality, professional staff. The director has a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and has attained an early childhood credential. Of the five childcare professionals, two have received Associate Degrees in Early Childhood Education, and three received their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential in July 2016. One of the CDA recipients has also attained an early childhood credential and is continuing her formal education. All staff members completed a 26-hour healthy and safety course this past summer. To ensure providing optimum services to all families, one staff member is bi-lingual.



Thank you to our partners!

Funding Support

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

CCCCD: \$2,000

In-Kind Support

Saluda County School District

Scholastic

Kaplan

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

Saluda Schools Early Head Start Program (continued)

Family Involvement

Saluda Schools Early Head Start builds better parent and community partnerships. The program collaborates with Saluda County First Steps and the adult education program. Parents are encouraged to participate in monthly parent meetings, a parent council, and to volunteer in the classrooms.



Socializing in an important school-readiness skill to learn.



Story time – children and staff singing “Old McDonald Had a Farm.”

To a child, play is learning

Many opportunities are provided to have fun while learning. The children receive an appropriate balance of free and structured time throughout the day. They participate in language and literacy activities, outside play, nap/rest time, and receive a nutritious breakfast, lunch and snack. Children also practice independent, self-help skills such as, toothbrushing, handwashing, and potty training.

For more information on the Saluda Schools Early Head Program, contact Kim Chariker, Director at 864-554-4910, or Donna Thompson, Family Advocate, at 864-389-0339.



First Steps Partnership Board

Effective, Timely, and Efficient

The Saluda County First Steps Partnership Board has always worked well together – in one accord. The purpose of everyone on the board is do what is right and good and fair for the children in our care. It is amazing to watch as agencies encourage and look out for each other to ensure that the needs of children being served by all agencies are met. In a recent Board Survey, one member commented, “Saluda First Steps board operates effectively, timely and efficiently. The Board assures that all policies are followed and money is spent wisely.” One-hundred percent of the survey participants rated the overall functioning of the board as “excellent.”

Saluda County First Steps Partnership Board, 2015-16

Name	Position	Board Category
Dr. David Mathis, Chair	Superintendent, Saluda County Schools	School District Representative
Allyson Bartley, Vice Chair	CPA, Manager, Elliott Davis	Faith
Kim Chariker	Director, Saluda Schools Early Head Start	Childcare
Larry Michalec	Paramedic, Richland County	Healthcare
Renee Hauser	Special Needs, Saluda Primary School	Pre-K educator
Jimmy Crawford	Director, Adult Education, Saluda County Schools	Family Education
Freda Gantt	Teacher, ABC Academy	Childcare
Tracey Caughman	Mental Health Counselor, Saluda Behavioral Health	Nonprofit
Sandra Padgett	Director, County Council Administration	Business
Denise Butler	Instructional Assistant, Saluda Primary School	PreK-Primary Educator
Darron Wilson	Retired	Faith
Becky McDowell	Director, Saluda County DSS	DSS
Angela Cunningham	Children’s Librarian, Saluda County Library	Library
Madora Stanfield	Adm Asst/Team Leader, Midlands Public Health Region	DHEC

The Goals of First Steps

- (1) provide parents with access to the support they might seek and want** to strengthen their families and to promote the optimal development of their preschool children;
- (2) increase comprehensive services** so children have reduced risk for major physical, developmental, and learning problems;
- (3) promote high-quality preschool programs** that provide a healthy environment that will promote normal growth and development;
- (4) provide services** so all children receive the protection, nutrition, and health care needed to thrive in the early years of life so they arrive at school ready to succeed; and
- (5) mobilize communities** to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.

-- Section 59-152-30



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

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



BabyNet

South Carolina's Early Intervention System

BabyNet in Saluda County:
864-225-6465

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