

BARNWELL COUNTY



**Early Steps to School  
Success (Save the Children)**

**Child Care Training**

**Child Care Scholarships**

**Countdown to Kindergarten**

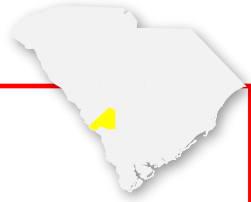


# Annual Report

2016-17

## OUR VISION:

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



## By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	BARNWELL County
Children Under Five	293,134	1,387
Children In Poverty	24.4%	38.2%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Graders "Does Not Meet" Standard in Reading	22.2%	Barnwell 19: 42.1% Barnwell 29: 29.6% Barnwell 45: 22.4%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.0%	21.5%

KIDS COUNT data provided by



- Since inception, Barnwell County First Steps has leveraged \$1,927,426.42 from sources outside of state government.
- **51 children provided with scholarship assistance** so their parents could work or attend school.
- **60 families received 1139 home visits** as part of the Early Steps to School Success Program.
- **Total Children Served in FY 17: 111**

### Barnwell County First Steps

11015 Ellenton Street. Barnwell, SC 29812

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**Board Chair**  
John Holston

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

[www.SCFirststeps.com/Barnwell](http://www.SCFirststeps.com/Barnwell)

**Doris Mitchell**  
Executive Director

Research suggests that the early years of a child's life is the best time to promote their education and growth. The child's mind develops in the early years, so it is critical that their brain becomes comfortable with learning. If not, chances are the child may experience learning difficulties, and may not enjoy the school experience. Hence, Barnwell County First Steps mission is to provide early childhood education programs designed to ensure that Barnwell County children arrive at first grade healthy and ready to succeed.

We understand that this responsibility is not one that can be taken lightly, nor can it be done alone. That is why we are so grateful to our partners (parents, school districts, child care centers, private donors like the Darnell Committee and Axis 1, the YMCA, and Head Start) who work diligently with us to provide programs and services that help children have a successful school experience. We believe that it truly does take a village.

Barnwell County First Steps provides programs designed to promote the holistic success of the child. We not only focus on the child's well-being, but the family well-being too. We provide scholarships for low-income, at-risk children whose parents work or attend school. Our child care centers provide the parents with a loving, safe, nurturing place to leave their children. Our home visitors visit the home, and help parents to understand that they are the best role model for their child. The services that are provided through First Steps are changing lives for the good, and are ensuring that our children arrive at First grade healthy and ready to succeed.

*There are only two lasting bequests we can hope to give our children. One is roots; the other, wings. - Hodding Carter*



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

### County Programs

- Early Steps
- Childcare Scholarships
- Child Care Training
- 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, Barnwell County First Steps focuses its investments on Family Strengthening, Quality Childcare and School Transition.**

# Child Care Scholarships

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

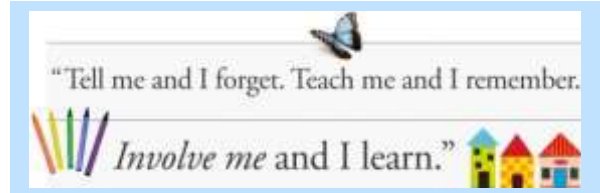
## Program Description

Research has shown that access to quality early child care is important to the emotional, psychological, and physical wellbeing of a child. Through programs like Early Steps to School Success, and First Steps Scholarship Programs, quality child care is becoming a reality for low income families. Many of our families work or attend school, and is in need of a safe, nurturing place to leave their child. First Steps work with local private donors like the Darnell Committee to provide access to quality child care programs.

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

- 100% ... live in poverty
- 25% ... transient or homeless
- 30% ... were teen parents
- 43% ... single parent households

In addition to regular monitoring of child care providers who receive First Steps funding for child care scholarships, First Steps conducts at least one developmental screening each year with scholarship children and connects families to needed services within the community.



Darnell Committee Scholarship participant

## Scholarships by the Numbers, 2016-17

Children Served	51
Providers Served	2

## This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Provided 51 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Identified and addressed 33 potential developmental delays among scholarship children
- ✓ Made 17 connections for families to services such as home visitation and transitioning to Head Start
- ✓ Supported 3 small businesses in Barnwell County by subsidizing child care tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care
- ✓ Provided 8 hours of training for scholarship parents in topics such as Flip It: Transforming Challenging Behavior.

## Thank you to our partners!

- Darnell Initiative
- Bedford's Stay and Play
- Heavenly Angels
- Save the Children
- New Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church Child Care Center
- Barnwell County School Districts 19, 29, and 45
- United Way

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# Early Steps

**Children involved in high-quality preschool are more likely to have better academic outcomes.**

## Program Description

*Early Steps to School Success (ESSS)* provides parent education and support, home visiting and pre-literacy and language development services for families in rural, geographically isolated communities. ESSS is a model designed to be culturally relevant and provide early childhood education services to pregnant women and children from birth to age five, education services to parents, and ongoing staff training to community early childhood educators. It not only recognizes the essential role families have in preparing their children for school, but also reinforces parents' roles as advocates in raising awareness for community-wide efforts that support school readiness. It does this through community collaboration and by creating strong connections between parents and the schools their children will attend.

### Early Steps by the Numbers, 2016-17

Children Served	111
Families Served	109

### Program Goals:

The overall goals of *Early Steps to School Success (ESSS)* are:

- Children will enter school with the skills necessary for school success
- Parents will have the knowledge and skills to support their children's education
- Home/school connections will be strong
- Early childhood knowledge and skills in communities will be significantly increased



**This year, our Early Education program:**

✓ 54 families participated in workshops.

### Thank you to our partners!

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Save the Children           | Heavenly Angels                         |
| Barnwell School District 19 | New Jerusalem Baptist Missionary Church |
| Barnwell School District 29 | Bedford's Stay and Play                 |
| Barnwell School District 45 |   |

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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 6-week home visitation program that provides a select number of students who will be entering kindergarten the opportunity to spend time with their teacher during the summer. The program is designed:

- ✓ to establish and strengthen the relationships between the student, parent, and teacher
- ✓ to introduce students and parents to kindergarten standards
- ✓ to increase parent involvement in the early grades when children’s learning is foundational for life success; and
- ✓ to increase public awareness of the importance of school readiness

**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 and allowed to keep a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit.

**Learning Celebration.** At the end of the six weeks, students and parents are invited to a celebration that is held in the child’s kindergarten classroom.

**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	20
Families Served	20
Home/School Visits	116

*\*CTK program data is for June-August 2017, whereas CTK fiscal data includes expenditures from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.*

*"It is evident that throughout the summer the parents are welcoming and willing to help their children" Meredith Wilson, Teacher*

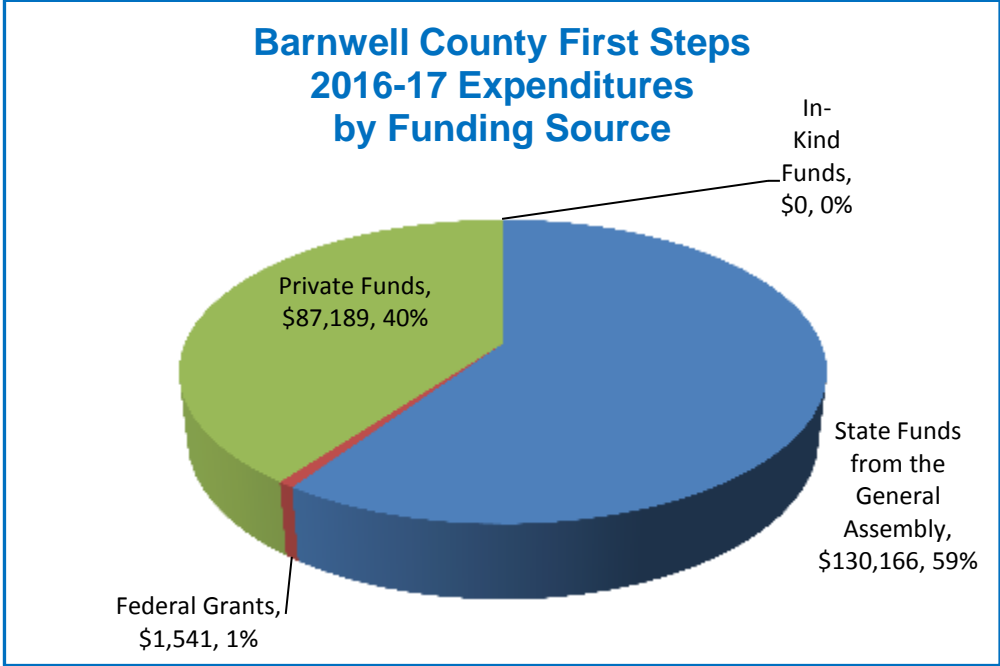
*"It promotes and encourages the building of imperative, trusting relationships" Cassie Bates, Teacher*

## Thank you to our partners!

- Barnwell School District 19
- Barnwell School District 29
- Barnwell School District 45

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# Financial Impact



**Total 2016-17 Expenditures: \$218,895**

**State Funds Leveraged in 2016-17\*: 68%**

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

**2016-17 Expenditures by Strategy**

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2016-17 Expenditures
Community Education	\$0	\$1,541	\$0	\$0	\$1,541	1%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$10,352	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,352	5%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Child Care Training	\$11,747	\$0	\$1,481	\$0	\$13,228	6%
Child Care Scholarships	\$44,627	\$0	\$85,708	\$0	\$130,335	60%
Early Steps	\$19,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$19,000	9%
Program Support	\$26,289	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$26,289	12%
Administrative Support	\$18,151	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,151	8%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$130,165</b>	<b>\$1,541</b>	<b>\$87,189</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$218,895</b>	

*Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017*

**Since inception, Barnwell County First Steps has leveraged \$1,928,068 from sources outside of state government.**

## Community Back to School Bash

Barnwell County Project Care

On August 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Barnwell County First Steps partnered with local partners to host a community-wide back to school supply bash! We envisioned every child having the best possible learning opportunity, and that opportunity can begin with them having the tools that they will need to succeed in the classroom. Oftentimes many of the families that we serve are on stretched budgets, so the Back to School Bash provided comfort to the parents in knowing that their child would return to school with the classroom supplies needed for this school year. Barnwell County First Steps donated 350 journals, 200 books, 40 boxes of crayons, 20 boxes of pencils, and 4 book bags that were stocked with various school supplies.



## The Week of the Young Child

During the week of April 24th, Barnwell First Steps County First Steps celebrated “The Week of the Young Child”! Local First Steps Board members spent the day at the daycare centers, and participated in several of their planned activities. The children had the opportunity to get to know the board members as they read and acted out stories, sang songs and danced, and participated in preparing and serving healthy snacks. The children were very excited to have the board members be a part of their celebration, and the staff was very appreciative of the time they spent with them. A great time was enjoyed by all.

## Thank you to our partners!

### Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$128,042.11  
*(through South Carolina First Steps)*  
 Darnell Committee \$87,188.82

### In-Kind Support

Well Care	Axis 1 Center
Save the Children	YMCA
Aiken Center	DHEC
Delta Alpha Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho, Inc.	

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





# First Steps Partnership Board

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

**Mission:** Our mission is to provide early childhood education programs designed to ensure that Barnwell County children arrive at first grade healthy and ready to succeed.

## Barnwell County First Steps Partnership Board, 2016-17

Name	Position	Board Category
John Holston, Chair 2016	Pastor - Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church	Local Government
Debbie Fickling, Vice Chair	Barnwell County Administrator	Local Government
Kathy Fox	Office Manager	Non-Profit
Lisa Johnson	MOX Facility-SRS	Business Community
Becky Huggins	Insurance Consultant	Business Community
Ethel Williams	Director, Department of Social Services	DSS
Sheila Silon	DHEC	DHEC
Tricia Gordon	Barnwell Library Manager	Library
Kimberly Richardson	Teacher	Williston School District
Teresa Brown	Principal	Blackville-Hilda School District
Kay Gooding	Asst. Principal	Barnwell School District
Catherine Mack	Foster Parent	Senate Appointment
Montenius Collins	Savannah River Site	Faith Community
Angela Abstance	Abstance Law Firm	Business Community



# 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 in Barnwell County:

Contact: Michelle Woodall 803-533-5446

Contact: Dorothy Hollis 803-533-7390

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