

KERSHAW COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parents as Teachers

Countdown to Kindergarten

Child Care Quality  
Enhancement

Early Identification and  
Referral

# Annual Report

2016-17



**OUR VISION:**

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



## By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	Kershaw County
Children Under Five	293,134	3,763
Children In Poverty	24.4%	23.3%
3rd Graders "Does Not Meet" Standard in Reading	22.2%	21.1%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.0%	15.4%

KIDS COUNT data provided by



- Since inception Kershaw County First Steps has leveraged **\$1,520,717** from sources outside state government.
- **437 hours of support and guidance** were provided to 31 families in our Parents As Teachers Program.
- **Childcare professionals received 127.50 hours** of technical assistance for early care best practices.
- Improved parenting practices through **11 Group Connections Parent Workshops**.
- **Total Children Served in FY17: 516**

**Kershaw County First Steps**

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**Board Chair**  
 Stephen Wilson

[www.kershawfirststeps.org](http://www.kershawfirststeps.org)

Kershaw County First Steps  
**Kimberley Jordan**  
 Executive Director

As Kershaw County First Steps (KCFS) grows and matures, this report shares information about the results from the cadre of services and system improvements being supported with state and private funding.

Kershaw County First Steps is founded on the premise that government and communities can work together so that 'every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful'.

**County Programs**

- Parents as Teachers
- Child Care Quality Counts
- Early Identification and Referral
- Countdown to Kindergarten

**State Programs**

- First Steps 4k



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

# 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 Head Start expands quality early learning and family support to infants and toddlers.



**Early Intervention**

Children’s school readiness depends on their healthy growth and development. First Steps helps identify potential delays early through developmental screenings and referring children to BabyNet and other early intervention 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 are ultimately preparing children for school success.

**Based on the needs of our community, Kershaw County First focuses its investments in.... FAMILY STRENGTHENING, EARLY INTERVENTION, SCHOOL TRANSITION, AND QUALITY CHILD CARE**

# Early Identification and Referral

Identifying and referring children with possible developmental delays can help assure school readiness.

## Program Description

First Steps' Early Identification and Referral (EI&R) programs serve families with young children with suspected delays in development and coordinates public awareness for BabyNet services, acting as a local portal to connect families to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children

### EI&R services include:

1. **Screenings** (developmental, vision, hearing) for children ages birth to 5 years with suspected delays in development
2. **Referrals**, based up the screening results, to appropriate community resources. This could include the local BabyNet System Point of Entry Office, the local school district, and/or support services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, and programs in libraries and other community resources.
3. **Parent information** including strategies to monitor growth and development.

### Our EI&R program:

- ✓ Provides early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- ✓ Promotes services and activities that promote child development
- ✓ Increases children's school readiness and school success

**Kershaw County First Steps serves families in greatest need. Among our EI&R families:**

- 85% ... live in poverty
- 30% ... didn't graduate high school
- 60% ... were teen parents

*Thank you, for testing my child, she is ready to learn!*

T. Hall



## EI&R by the Numbers 2016-17

Children Served	96
Materials Distributed	431
Children Referred to BabyNet, Local School, or Other Services	78

## This year, our Early Identification and Referral program:

- ✓ Screened 96 number of children using Ages and Stages Questionnaire
- ✓ Referred 78 number of families to community resources after screening indicated need

## Thank you to our partners!

Kershaw County Head Start  
Lil Angels Child Care Center  
United Way of Kershaw County

## Kershaw County First Steps

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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

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

98% ... live in poverty



Books are given to families at each home visit.

*My child looks forward to our teacher visits.  
She teaches us both!*

M. Burris

## PAT by the Numbers 2016-17

Families Served	31	
Children Served	33	
Total Home Visits	408	
Hours Spent Serving Families	437	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	3.6	3.75

## This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged 13.6 home visits per family
- ✓ Identified and addressed 11 potential developmental delays and made 1 connections for families to services such as Babynet
- ✓ Kershaw County First Steps partnered with Lee County First Steps to administer the Parents As Teachers program in Lee County. 10 families received Parents as Teachers services in Lee County.
- ✓ Improved literacy skills by distributing over 126 books to families and encouraging reading each night. The Parent Educator followed up at each visit and discussed how to build literacy skills in the home.

## Thank you to our partners!

Lee County First Steps  
Lil Angels Child Care Center  
United Way of Kershaw County

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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, 2016-17

Child Care Providers Served	5
Number of TA Visits Provided	98
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	379

### Congratulations to our QE participants for 2016-17!

Child Care Provider	Pre/Post Improvement
Lil Angels Child Care Center	From 3.99 to 4.25
Bethesda Christian School	From 4.78 to 5.41
Stephanies' Preschool Blessings	From 2.25 to 3.52
ATEC Child Development Center	From 4.35 to 4.89

## This year, our Quality Enhancement program:

Data from post-tests showed that 99% of the centers increased their Environmental Rating Scale score. Combined, the 5 centers demonstrated an overall 60% improvement from the baseline to the post-test. The greatest areas of improvement were in program structure, activities, furnishings and arrangement of space, and interaction with the children. A side benefit has been improvement in business practices, which led to increased enrollment.

Recognizing the important role professional development plays in improving child care quality, the program has helped 8 child care center staff members meet DSS training requirements.

## Thank you to our partners!

United Way of Kershaw County  
Kershaw County Library

### Kershaw County First Steps

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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.

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 2016

Children Served	8
Families Served	8
Home/School Visits	48

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



*Countdown to Kindergarten Teacher, Ms. Julie Pigg*

## This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- ✓ 100% of the Parents completed the pre and post survey and indicated that Countdown to Kindergarten assisted them with preparing their child for school.
- ✓ Increased the amount of time parents spent reading to children by 95%

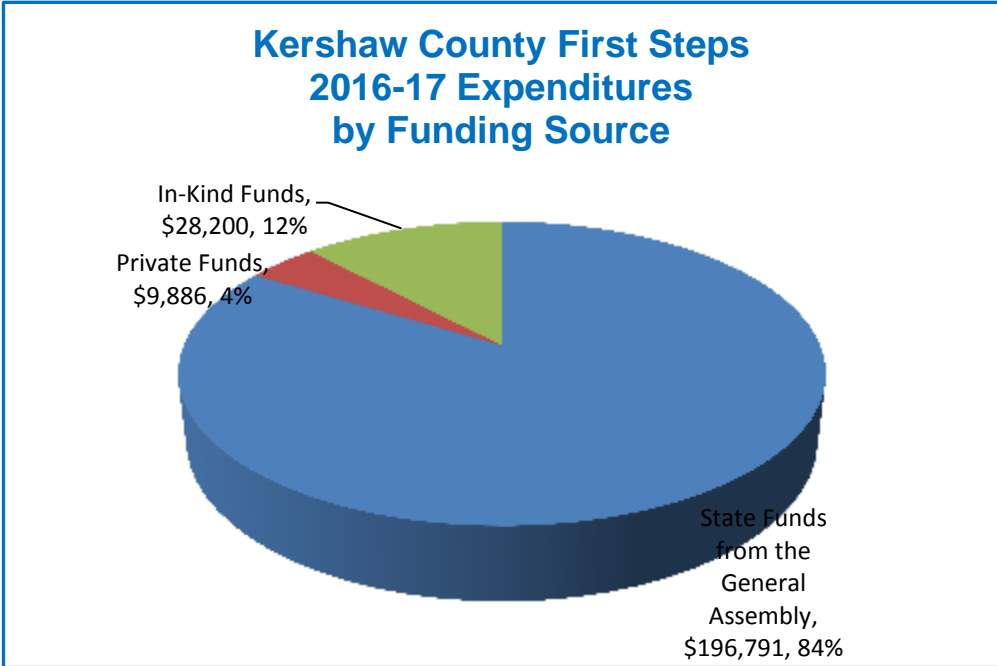
## Thank you to our partners!

- Kershaw County School District
- Second Look Charities
- Timrod Baptist Church

Like us on Facebook!  
 Countdown to Kindergarten-South Carolina:

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# Financial Impact



**Total 2016-17 Expenditures: \$234,877.81**

**State Funds Leveraged in 2016-17\*: 19.35%**

*\*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
Parents as Teachers	\$38,440	\$0	\$2,275	\$0	\$40,715	17%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$5,792	\$0	\$611	\$0	\$6,404	3%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$51,629	\$0	\$7,000	\$0	\$58,629	25%
Early Identification & Referrals	\$37,028	\$0	\$0	\$28,200	\$65,228	28%
Indirect Program	\$40,799	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$40,799	17%
Administrative Support	\$23,103	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$23,103	10%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$196,791</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$9,886</b>	<b>\$28,200</b>	<b>\$234,878</b>	

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

**Since inception, Kershaw County First Steps has leveraged \$1,318,912.50 from sources outside of state government.**



## A Successful Year



*Kershaw County First Steps Board of Directors and Camden Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. partnered to distribute books*



*Kershaw & Lee County First Steps partnered to host staff development trainings*



**Kershaw County First Steps celebrated 9 families graduating from the Parents As Teachers Program**

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

# First Steps Partnership Board



Kershaw County First Steps Partnership Board met with community partners during 2016-2017. Key Outcomes from the Meetings held in July 2016 and August 2017. These participants saw the need for a commitment to the holistic needs of children and families that is community-based, culturally competent, and championed by leaders from all sectors of the community. They proposed ideas regarding ways to:

- Provide support to families of young children
- Encourage involvement of local businesses and business leaders in early childhood care and education issues
- Identify, recruit, and retain qualified and inspired caregivers and teachers for our youngest children
- Improve collaboration among initiatives and programs that support Kershaw County families with young children

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

Name	Position	Board Category
Stephen Wilson, Chair	VC3	Business Community
Jennifer Kelley, Vice Chair	Kershaw County Library	Library Representative
Charlene Hayward, Secretary	Wateree Community Action Agency	Head Start Representative
William James, Treasurer	CPA	Business Community
Jeanne Hanna	Kershaw County Department of Social Services	DSS Representative
Cynthia Bolin	Bethesda Christian School	Child Care
Veronica Lewis	Kershaw County Board of Disabilities and Special Needs	Nonprofit Families and Children
Margaret Lawhorn	United Way of Kershaw County	House Appointee
Leslie Williams	Central Carolina Technical College	Family Education , support
Pam Whitehead	Kershaw County School District	School District Representative
Florence Darby	Teacher	Pre K / Primary Education
Meredith Hines	Montessori School of Camden	Child Care
Melissa Williams	KC Department of Corrections	Parent of Preschooler
Betty Turner	Kershaw County School District	Pre K./ Primary Education
John Corder	Pastor	Faith Community
Shelia Williams	Williams Plumbing Company, LLC	Business Provider
Lydia Hall	Kershaw County School District	Pre K./ Primary Education



# 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 with Medicaid-eligible children who live in eligible school districts can contact any participating provider to complete an application for free, full-day 4K. To view a list of participating First Steps 4K providers, visit:

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



### EARLY HEAD START – CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIP

Low income families with children 0-36 months, and families with infants or toddlers with special needs, are invited to apply for this year-round, comprehensive program. Available in the following counties: Allendale, Anderson, Bamberg, Berkeley, Dillon, Georgetown, Laurens, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, Saluda and York, and coming soon to Fairfield and McCormick counties. To apply, visit:

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



[I CAN] is First Steps' public awareness campaign for school readiness, in support of the state's Profile of the Ready Kindergartener. Includes resources for parents, providers and communities to learn what they can do to support school readiness.

Visit: [ican.sc](http://ican.sc)

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