



Parents as Teachers

Parent Child Home

Child Care Quality Enhancement

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

Annual Report

2017-18



OUR VISION:

Every Florence County child will be prepared for success in school.

www.florencefirststeps.org

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Flourishing with Florence County



As the summer ends and children return to school, we reflect on the tremendous work accomplished in the past fiscal year. FY18 saw the continued success of our Parent Child Home, Parents as Teachers, Child Care Quality Enhancement, Child Care Training, and Child Care Scholarship programs. Florence County First Steps was able to:

- Serve 915 children between the ages of 0 and 5 years.
- Serve 99 families and 99 adults.
- Provide training to 54 Early Childhood staff from 33 programs.
- Provide 228.5 hours of technical assistance to 100 child care providers from 10 programs.

This success was due, in part, to our partnerships with Florence County childcare providers, Florence County School Districts, SC DSS, and our local and state Early Care and Education allies.

Although Florence County First Steps has limited funds, every dollar goes towards our goal of assisting our youngest citizens in getting ready for school. Families in Florence County can rest assured that they will be served in some capacity by our partnership if they have at least one South Carolina First Steps qualifying risk factor. We want to ensure that Florence County children have access to high quality child care programs that employ highly trained and knowledgeable staff.

Furthermore, we want our families to not have to worry about the affordability of these programs as they work and/or attend school. No family should have to make the decision as to whether to pay for childcare or pay for rent/utilities. This is why we encourage and urge our community to donate and volunteer because their donations and time is put into action by helping every child to succeed.

OUR MISSION:

Collaborating with other entities, First Steps helps Florence families and caregivers prepare their children for school success by maximizing public and private community resources to deliver, enhance, and expand high-quality early childhood services.

Spencer

Spencer R. Scott
Executive Director

Find Florence County First Steps:



We get children ready.



THE NEED

School readiness **depends on the capacity of caregivers** to provide children with consistent, nurturing, and responsive relationships in safe, stimulating learning environments, **continuously**, starting at birth. Unfortunately, these quality early childhood experiences happen for too few children in Florence County.

How are Florence County's children doing?	What early learning programs are available for children in our county? Last year:	Where can families access child care in our county?
8,470 are under age 5	34 attended Early Head Start as infants and toddlers	70 licensed child care centers
27.8% live in poverty	289 attended free preschool or Head Start as 3-year-olds	98 licensed group/family homes
14.6% of babies born in 2016 were to moms without a HS diploma	576 4-year-olds attended free full-day public school 4K or Head Start	35% participate in the state's Quality Rating System (ABC Quality)
12.6% Low birth weight	630 0-5 year olds received early intervention or special ed.	23 providers are rated B or higher by ABC Quality
22.6% of last year's kindergartners demonstrated readiness	237 were served by 	1,009 families received assistance with affording child care last year
<i>Kids Count data provided by:</i> 	<i>Data provided by:</i> 	

THE GOALS

Our partnership's work, in collaboration with state and local partners, is focused on advancing Florence County towards these strategic goals in support of the *Profile of the Ready Kindergartner*, South Carolina's description of school readiness:

1. Increase board and staff participation in FCFS activities, community events, and meetings.
2. Increase the number of children served in rural areas of Florence County through scholarships, parenting programs, and Facility Quality Enhancement (FQE).
3. Gain participation from facilities in areas outside of the City of Florence through FQE.

THE IMPACT

In 2017-18, Florence County First Steps provided:

- ✓ **63 children and 64 adults with intensive support** to equip parents and caregivers with the confidence and competence to be a child's first and best teacher, and strengthen their family's health, economic, and overall well-being (**Parents as Teachers, Parent Child Home**)
- ✓ **127 staff** working in **27** child care providers, Head Start centers and preschool classrooms with training, technical assistance, resources and support, **helping them better meet the needs of 824 children ages 0-5 in their care** (**Quality Enhancement, Child Care Training**)
- ✓ financial assistance to help **46 children** 0-5 **attend quality child care** so their parents can work or attend school (**Child Care Scholarships**)
- ✓ a total of **855 children and 157 adults** were impacted by Florence County First Steps programs, resources, activities and events.

School Readiness Outcomes

What is the KRA?

In 2017-18, kindergartners across the state were given for the first time South Carolina's newest assessment of school readiness: the **Kindergarten Readiness Assessment**, or KRA. The KRA provides a snapshot of students' abilities at the beginning of the school year, in four domains: Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Physical Development and Well-Being. Here are the results locally and for the state:

FSD 1 (1,138 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	41%	29%	30%
Language & Literacy	38%	42%	19%
Mathematics	42%	37%	21%
Physical Dev & WB	46%	24%	30%
OVERALL	42%	38%	20%

FSD 4 (48 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	27%	40%	33%
Language & Literacy	17%	33%	50%
Mathematics	15%	52%	33%
Physical Dev & WB	38%	19%	44%
OVERALL	19%	44%	38%

FSD 2 (80 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	48%	35%	18%
Language & Literacy	24%	50%	26%
Mathematics	33%	33%	35%
Physical Dev & WB	36%	24%	40%
OVERALL	35%	41%	24%

FSD 5 (80 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	50%	29%	21%
Language & Literacy	25%	54%	21%
Mathematics	38%	35%	28%
Physical Dev & WB	36%	16%	48%
OVERALL	43%	36%	21%

FSD 3 (173 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	30%	25%	45%
Language & Literacy	25%	49%	25%
Mathematics	35%	34%	31%
Physical Dev & WB	29%	27%	44%
OVERALL	31%	36%	34%

SOUTH CAROLINA (54,927 children)			
Domain	Emerging	Approaching	Demonstrating
Social Foundations	28%	27%	45%
Language & Literacy	23%	43%	34%
Mathematics	31%	38%	31%
Physical Dev & WB	28%	24%	48%
OVERALL	26%	38%	36%

1. Language and Literacy: reading, writing, speaking, and listening

2. Mathematics: counting, comparison, and sorting

3. Physical Well-Being & Motor Development: dexterity, muscular coordination, and balance

4. Social Foundations: following rules, asking for help, task persistence and other skills necessary to function within the kindergarten classroom

Demonstrating Readiness: student demonstrates foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards.

Approaching Readiness: student demonstrates some foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards

Emerging Readiness: student demonstrates limited foundational skills and behaviors that prepare him/her for instruction based on kindergarten standards

What is Florence County First Steps doing to improve KRA results?

Florence County's results for the first year of KRA shows that the majority of the children in our county are approaching school readiness by the time they begin kindergarten. Out of the five school districts in the county, only two, FSD3 and FSD4, have numbers that are close to meeting or exceeding the state's numbers for demonstrating readiness. Florence County First Steps remains dedicated to ensuring that **ALL** of your youngest learners are ready for school. In order to do this, we are continuing to offer high quality child care provider trainings. We would like to increase the number of children served in the rural areas of our county through the parenting and FQE programs, as well as expand our FQE program participation to facilities outside of the city of Florence.

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.

PCH by the Numbers 2017-18

Families Served	45	
Children Served	45	
Total Home Visits	2,992	
Hours Spent Serving Families	1,439	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	KIPS-0.72	ACIRI: A:0.25 C: 0.36

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

98% ... **Live in poverty**

98% ... **Eligible for SNAP assistance**

47% ... **single parent household and has need of other services**



This year, our Parent Child Home program:

- ✓ Averaged 6.74 home visits per month.
- ✓ Served 100% of families with at least one South Carolina First Steps approved Risk Factors.
- ✓ 1,450.5 hours were spent in homes with families.
- ✓ Average of 95.7% of families participating in PCH attended at least 1 group meeting.

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

100% ... live in poverty
 7% ... didn't graduate from high school
 20% ... were teen parents



This is such a great program! I have learned a lot of things that I did not know about my child's development and now I know more ways that I can support her as she grows.

- Shykia Jackson

PAT by the Numbers 2017-18

Families Served	15	
Children Served	15	
Total Home Visits	321	
Hours Spent Serving Families	321	
Average gain, <i>Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale</i> (pre-to-post):	KIPS- -0.08	ACIRI: A: 0.48 C: 0.5

This year, our Parents as Teachers program:

- ✓ Averaged 2.08 home visits per family
- ✓ Identified and addressed 1 potential developmental delay, and made 7 connections for families to services such as Clothing/Household item assistance, Dental Services, Family Activities, and Medicaid.
- ✓ Improved literacy skills for adults by 0.48 and children by 0.5.

Thank you to our PAT partners!

Florence 1 Schools

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Parents as Teachers meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an **evidence-based** program.



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, 2017-18

Child Care Providers Served	10
Number of TA Visits Provided	127
Number of Children 0-5 Enrolled in Provider Classrooms	458

Congratulations to our QE participants for 2017-18!

Child Care Provider	Pre/Post Improvement
Creative Learning Center	From 3.05 to 3.86
Live Love Grow, 2-yr-old room (New)	2.71
Live Love Grow, 4-yr-old room (New)	3.28
McFadden Learning, (new)	1.90
Mon-Dae Morning (New)	2.97
Posh Tots, 3-4-yr-old room (New)	3.06
Precious One, Infant/toddler room (New)	3.21
Sugar Bear, Infant/toddler room(New)	2.00

This year, our Quality Enhancement program:

- ✓ Provided 228.5 hours of technical assistance to child care providers, contributing to the professional growth of 100 child care teachers and directors
- ✓ Provided \$5,967 in materials grants to participating child care providers
- ✓ Funded scholarships for 20 children within participating child care providers

Thank you to our Quality Enhancement partners!

Colonial Child Care	Posh Tots
Creative Learning Center	Sugar Bear Child Care Center
Little Creations Learning Center	Precious Ones Learning Center
Live Love Grow Learning Center	Mon-Dae Morning Child Care Center
McFadden's Learning & Academic Center	The Sunshine House Early Learning Academy

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Child Care Quality Enhancement meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an **evidence-based** program.



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.

Thanks to the FCFS trainings I have now gotten new ways to work with toddlers.

- Tiara Alston

Mrs. Weeks does a great job covering information in the trainings! She is very interactive and her participation activities keep things fun and moving right along.

- Gloria McClain

Training Sponsored by Florence County First Steps, 2017-18

Topic:	Sessions:
Leading & Motivating Your Team	One Session
Discipline 101 for ECE	One Session
An Intro into NLD: Non-Verbal Learning Disorder	One Session
S.T.E.M in the Preschool Classroom	One Session
Building Babies Brains	One Session
Approaches to Literacy In ECE	One Session
Stages of Writing Development	One Session
Social and Emotional Development in ECE	One Session



Family and Group Child Care providers engaged in a training conducted by master certified trainer Nicole Weeks.

Training by the Numbers, 2017-18

Total Training Attendance	225
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	27
Number of Training Sessions Offered	8

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 27 early childhood staff with high quality training
- ✓ 14.75 hours of certified training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 366 children across 17 programs had access to teachers that were trained through FCFS

Thank you to our Training partners!

- Florence Darlington Technical College
- Florence County Library
- South Carolina Child Care Career Development

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Child Care Training and Professional Development meets the First Steps legislation's definition of an **evidence-based** program.



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:

- 26% ... live in poverty
- 0% ... didn't graduate from high school
- 6% ... were teen parents
- 3% ... had developmental delays

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.

Scholarships by the Numbers, 2017-18

Children Served	42
Providers Served	14

It has been absolutely amazing. Because of the scholarship, my child has been able to receive a quality education and child care at one of the best facilities my community has to offer. I am able to work a full time job and attend school full time because child care is no longer a worry. My child is safe and cared for. Her facility offers education in addition to child care, which would not have been an option had she not had the scholarship.

- Tracy Johnson



One of the businesses supported by Florence County's Child Care Scholarship Program

This year, our Scholarship program:

- ✓ Provided 42 children with scholarship assistance so their parents could work or attend school
- ✓ Identified and addressed 22 potential developmental delays among scholarship children
- ✓ Made 27 connections for families to services such as BabyNet, DHEC-WIC, Domestic Violence Services, DSS Food Stamps, Child Care Program
- ✓ Supported 14 small businesses in Florence County by subsidizing child care tuition for families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality care
- ✓ Provided 2 hours of training for scholarship parents in topics such as Quality Child Care and Accessing Resources

Thank you to our Scholarship partners!

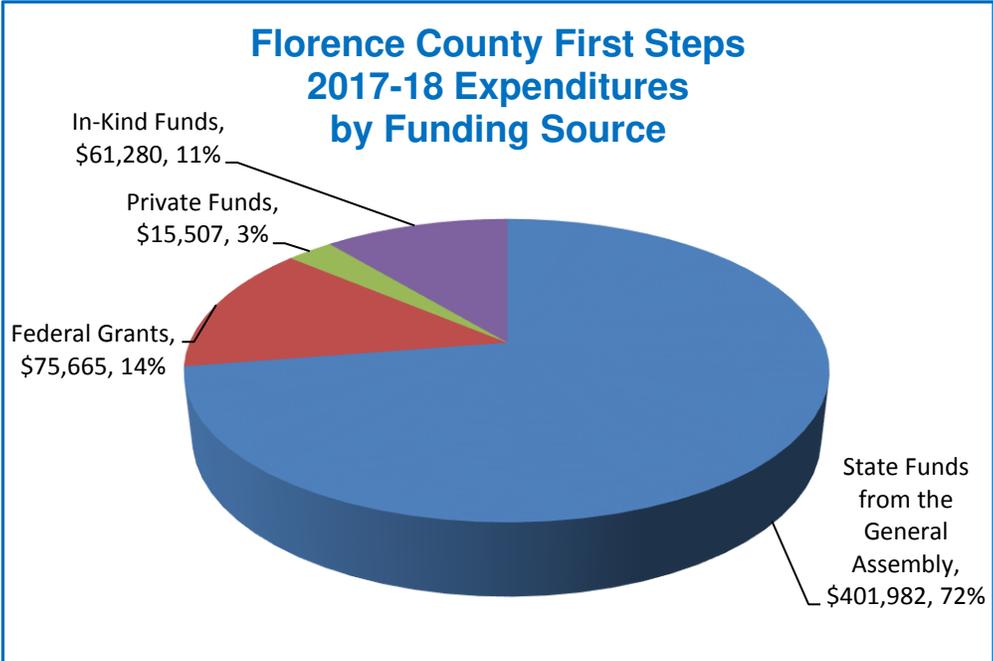
- Angel's Inn
- Zion Canaan CDC
- Posh Tots, Inc
- Colonial Child Care
- The Sunshine House
- La Petite Academy
- Echols Family Daycare
- Sugar Bear Child Care Center
- Mon-Dae Morning CCC
- Creative Learning Center
- Live Love Grow Learning Center
- Little Places Learning Center
- Precious Ones Learning Center
- Excellent Learning Preschool Inc

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Our partnership's Child Care Scholarship strategy is considered *evidence-based* because it is connected to the following evidence- based programs:
 Quality Enhancement



Financial Impact



Total 2017-18 Expenditures: \$401,982

State Funds Leveraged in 2017-18*: 38%

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

2017-18 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2017-18 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$3,701	\$23,701	4%
Parent Child Home	\$59,374	\$0	\$0	\$29,500	\$88,874	16%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$51,765	\$75,665	\$0	\$3,579	\$131,009	24%
Child Care Training	\$45,821	\$0	\$1,106	\$0	\$46,928	8%
Child Care Scholarships	\$108,500	\$0	\$14,000	\$24,500	\$147,000	27%
Program Support	\$85,659	\$0	\$332	\$0	\$85,992	16%
Administrative Support	\$30,862	\$0	\$68	\$0	\$30,930	6%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$401,982	\$75,665	\$15,507	\$61,280	\$554,434	100%

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018

Since inception, Florence County First Steps has leveraged \$2,455,807 from sources outside of state government. That's .29 cents for every state dollar.

Thank you supporters!

Through partnerships and collaborations, as well as financial support from grants and contributions, Florence County First Steps leverages state dollars to enhance and expand services to children and families.

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$401,982
(through South Carolina First Steps)

SC Department of Social Services \$100,375

SC Center for Childcare Career Development: \$2,000

In-Kind Support

Florence County School District One \$3,000

Florence County School District Three \$3,536

Florence County School District Four \$3,000

Florence County School District Five \$6,250

ABC Child Care \$21,700

Kaplan Learning Company



How your support helps children in Florence County:

- ✓ \$25 provides a young child with a book per month for one year!
- ✓ \$50 feeds dinner to low-income families attending a parenting workshop
- ✓ \$150 helps a low-income family afford quality child care for one month

HOW TO GIVE: All contributions can be submitted to:

Florence County First Steps,

415 South Coit Street, Florence SC 29501

Save the Date!

- Terrific Toddlers Baby Contest will be held December 2018
- StrollerWalk 2019 will be in September/October 2019

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

Moving On.....

3K/4K FCCH/GCCH Graduation

On Thursday, May 17, 2018, four children from four different Family Child Care Homes participated in our Annual FCCH/GCCH graduation ceremony. This is our fifth year providing a "moving-on" ceremony for children who attend Family and Group childcare facilities in Florence and Marion Counties. Mrs. Beryl Collington of Marion County First Steps provided words of wisdom



to parents about the importance of reading, talking, and encouraging children. Children were presented with a certificate from FCFS along with a book bag filled with materials to ensure they are ready for school. The highlight of the evening was the slideshow where each child and their FCCH/GCCH was represented. The celebration night concluded with food, mingling, and many family photos.

FLORENCE COUNTY FIRST STEPS CELEBRATES PROVIDER OF THE YEAR



During this year's *Week of the Young Child*, Florence County First Steps (FCFS) had the honor of recognizing our outstanding childcare providers and showing them how much we appreciate the important role they play in lives of young children. Childcare providers work tirelessly to provide children with their endless love, unwavering compassion, guidance, knowledge and wisdom. They understand the importance of what they do and see their efforts so much more than a job. They do it not for the money or the praise, but instead they work with young children in efforts to change their lives for the better by providing social, emotional and academic foundation they need to succeed in life.

Florence County First Steps was proud to recognize **Mrs. Beverly McClam as the FY 18 Florence County First Steps Childcare Professional of the Year** during this year's Family and Group Childcare Graduation Ceremony.

Mrs. McClam is the owner of McClam's family child care. She has operated her facility for the past 30 years. Florence County First Steps Partnership Board member Margaret Echols presented Mrs. McClam with her award.

First Steps Partnership Board

Florence County First Steps Partnership Board, 2017-18

Name	Position	Board Category
Darren McClam	Board Chairman	Pastor
Debbie Quesada	Treasurer	Florence County Library
Mary Brayboy	Member	Florence School District 4
Lura Marsh	Member	Representative Appointment
Ivey Staley	Past Board Chairman	FSD #1
Margaret Echols	Member	Childcare Provider
Denita Davis	Member	Health Care Provider
Valencia Brand	Member	Business Community
Pheobe Clark	Member	Business Community
Sharon Williams	Member	FSD #3
Brenda Hanna	Member	FSD #5
Nicole Echols	Vice Board Chair+	Nonprofit Organization
Orbree Friday	Member	Florence County DSS
Ticey Fleming	Member	FSD #2
Valerie Lowery	Member	Head Start
Sandra Sturkie	Member	Senate Appointment
Debbie Jones	Member	Senate Appointment
Sam Fryer	Member	Representative Appointment



What is First Steps?

At the state level and in every county, First Steps leverages state funding with other public and private resources to help South Carolina’s children enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. First Steps programs and services support families as their child’s first and most important teacher and are customized to meet the unique needs of local communities, grounded in strong evidence, fueled by stakeholder collaboration, and accountable for results.

First Steps Goals

- (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.

First Steps Building Blocks of Quality Early Childhood Programs and Services



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

From Greenville to Charleston, Abbeville to York, First Steps local partnerships serve as ...

- Local portals** connecting preschool children and families to services
- Conveners** of community stakeholders to address the needs of young children and their families
- Champions** of the importance of school readiness to our children’s future.



for South Carolina and to learn about First Steps 4K programs in your area:

scfirststeps.org

for Florence County First Steps:

www.florencefirststeps.org



[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.

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