

DARLINGTON COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parents as Teachers

Countdown to Kindergarten

Motheread/Fatheread

Early Identification and Referral

Early Education

Annual Report

2012-2013



OUR VISION:

Every South Carolina child arrives at kindergarten ready to learn.

First Steps WORKS for the children of Darlington County.



Annual Report

2012-2013

Who We Serve

First Steps serves children pre-birth to 5 years old and their families who are at risk of not being ready for school.

Number of Darlington County children under 5:

4,359

Number of Darlington County children under 5 living in poverty:

1,338

Babies born each year in Darlington County to a mother without a high school diploma:

1 in 4

Our Programs

Parents as Teachers

Countdown to Kindergarten

Motheread/Fatheread

Early Identification and Referral

Early Education

Our Results

- ✓ Provided direct services to over 200 adults and 149 children.
- ✓ Contributed over 660 hours to other partner organizations and other First Steps
- ✓ Collaborated with 15 different community partners

First Steps Works for the Children, Parents and Taxpayers of South Carolina

Darnell Byrd McPherson, Executive Director

First Steps works for children, parents, and taxpayers in Darlington County! How? Since 2001, the first grade retention in Darlington County has dropped by 14.8%, for a cost savings of over \$6.5M annually. Darlington County First Steps has leveraged over \$1.5M or 41% of our total funding since 2001.

Darlington County First Steps increases the quality of services for children 0-5 and their families

Through the implementation of evidence based program services, we are able to fill the gaps in services to pregnant and parenting teens and young parents and their children. Our primary services are provided through Parents as Teachers, a national model home visitation program. We partner with local elementary schools and contract with kindergarten teachers to offer the nationally recognized summer transition home visitation program, Countdown to Kindergarten. First Steps partnered with Darlington County School District to offer full day early education for four year olds at Southside Early Childhood Center. In an effort to positively impact the graduation rate of our adult parents and with the generous support of The Byerly Foundation, we partner with the Office of Adult Education to offer high quality child care for children under the age of five whose parents are completing requirement for their high school diploma and GED. Another key aspect of our service delivery system is ensuring pregnant and parenting high school students have access to information and education which support them in their role as teen parents and encourages them to complete their high school education.

Darlington County First Steps leverages resources for children and families through public-private partnerships

As a partner agency of United Way of Hartsville since 2009, we were honored to receive support for our model parent education and home visitation program services. Our local Kiwanis Club of Hartsville and Pee Dee Electric Cooperative provided needed support for Countdown to Kindergarten. During this past fiscal year, Darlington County was selected to participate in a federally funded "Innovative Approaches to Literacy Program" administered by National Parents as Teachers. This provided additional literacy based activities and resources for parents participating in this research program. The Bi-Lo Charities Foundation awarded \$7,000 to First Steps to support the nationally recognized model family literacy program, Motheread/Fatheread which is implemented in partnership with the Darlington County Public Library and Darlington County Head Start.

Board Chair
Patricia A. Toney

Executive Director
Darnell B McPherson

437 W. Carolina Ave, #1

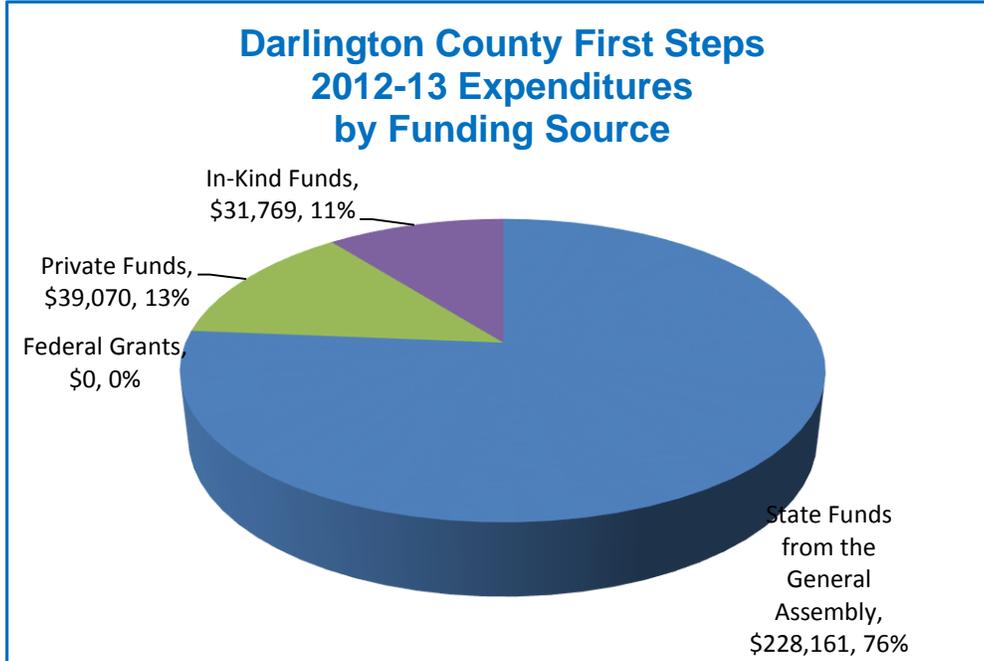
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Getting children ready for school.



Total 2012-13 Expenditures: \$299,000

State Funds Leveraged in 2012-13*: 31%

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

Add Countdown to Kindergarten to this chart

2012-13 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2012-13 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$41,075	\$0	\$12,590	\$1,960	\$55,625	18%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$2,913	\$0	\$3,460	\$0	\$6,373	2%
Early Identification and Referral	\$28,862	\$0	\$2,480	\$1,035	\$32,377	11%
Full Day 4k	\$66,830	\$0	\$0	\$22,300	\$89,130	31%
Motheread	\$31,722	\$0	\$19,122	\$2,590	\$53,434	16%
Program Support	\$40,568	\$0	\$1268	\$2,976	\$44,812	15%
Administrative Support	\$16,191	\$0	\$150	\$908	\$17,249	6%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$228,161	\$0	\$39,070	\$31,769	\$299,000	



Darlington County First Steps works as a collaborative partner with several community based organizations. One of our primary partners is Pee Dee Healthy Start which offers intensive support to pregnant and parenting women with children ages 0-2 years. Our partnership results in teen parents at Darlington High School receiving intensive health education and support services on site. Carolina Family Planning, another partner organization, provides supplemental parent education as well as baby clothes, furnishings and other supplies and materials to First Steps parents .



Partnerships Work!

The S. C. Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy identified First Steps as a partner organization to help engage the county in addressing the high incidences of teen pregnancy in Darlington County. First Steps hosted several community forums to facilitate conversations about this issue which adversely impact outcomes for young children. It is reported 48% of children born to a mother with less than a high school education are “retained or score below basic” by 3rd grade. Further, 43% of children born to a mother under the age of 18 are “retained or score below basic” by 3rd grade as reported by Dr. Baron Holmes, January, 2007, S. C. Data Warehouse. The Board of Darlington County First Steps adopted pregnancy prevention as a strategy to improve school readiness outcomes for the children of Darlington County.

Thank you to our partners!

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$228,161
(through South Carolina First Steps)

The Byerly Foundation: \$14,000

United Way of Hartsville: \$13,000

Bi-Lo Charities: \$7,000

Kiwanis of Hartsville: \$1,942

Pee Dee Electric Cooperative: \$500

In-Kind Support

CareSouth Carolina-Care Innovations

Carolina Family Planning

Darlington County Head Start

Darlington County Library

Darlington School District

McLeod Regional Medical Center

**Pee Dee Coalition Against Domestic and
Sexual Assault**

Pee Dee Healthy Start

**S. C. Department of Social Services – Project
Hope**

S. C. Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

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

Teen Parent Education/Training



I am an 18 year old teenage mother, my name is Jessica Williams. I am the teen mother of a beautiful two year old little girl name Nalaysha. During this past year, I graduated from Darlington High School and I am currently enrolled as freshman at Florence Darlington Technical College where I am majoring in Cosmetology. My goal is one day own my own beauty salon.

When I discovered I was pregnant I was frightened, scared, overwhelmed and ashamed. I did not want to tell my mother because I knew she would be very disappointed. You see, I was about to become the first person in my family to graduate from high school. I also knew that giving birth to a child while still in high school would be very difficult. As it turned out, my mother, grandmother and Nalaysha's father formed a support network for me which allowed me to concentrate more on my studies. They all have played a major role in my daughter's life thus far. I am grateful to my family at home and to my other family at school, the member of the Teen Parent Education and Training program at Darlington High School. Our school nurse, Ms. Wright worked to bring First Steps and Pee Dee Healthy Start into our school for teen parents such as myself. We met during our lunch hour and learned about how to take care of a baby, how to avoid a second pregnancy, and other topics to help make all of us better parents. There were ten other teens in my school who were either pregnant or expecting a child. My Teen Parent Educator, Miss Sanders encouraged each member of our group to pursue their dreams. I really enjoyed the group setting because it allowed me to share my feelings and talk about things that were bothering me. I did graduate with my high school class! The support and encouragement I received helped me to stay focused on my goal of completing high school. As a college student, I am even more determined to become independent and one day owning a business! I am grateful to my school nurse, Ms. Wright and Ms. Sanders of First Steps for bringing in people to share information and help me learn how to be a good parent. Ms. Nickelson from Pee Dee Healthy Start made sure I understood how important good health and nutrition was to my baby's development. This is not an easy journey and I wish I had waited to start a family but I did not! I do plan to make the best of my situation and be the best parent I can be!.

Community Impact

Numbers Served by First Steps in Darlington County: 2012-13

	Implementing Agency or Organization	Children 0-5 Served	Parents/Adult Family Members Served	Early Childhood Staff Who Received Training	Child Care Providers, Head Start Centers, and/or Schools Served	Technical Assistance Visits	Technical Assistance Hours	Group Training Hours
Programs Funded by Darlington First Steps:								
Parents as Teachers: Parenting/lifeskills education in the home with families prenatal-5 years.	First Steps	15	22	25	1			12
Countdown to Kindergarten: Instruction in the home with parents and children the summer prior to kindergarten.	First Steps	30	30	6	6			N/A
Motheread/Fatheread:	First Steps	60	240		5			
Early Identification and Referral:	First Steps	1	1		133			
Early Education 4k classroom: Expanding access to quality preschool programs.	Darlington County School District	20	20	2	1	N/A	N/A	N/A
NUMBER SERVED BY DARLINGTON FIRST STEPS:		126	213	33	146	0	0	12
Other First Steps Programs in XYZ County:								
Child Development Education Pilot Program: full-day public 4K offered in Head Start and private child care settings.	SC First Steps		N/A			N/A	N/A	N/A
BabyNet: early intervention for infants and toddlers with significant developmental delays or disabilities.	SC First Steps	12	12	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL NUMBER SERVED:		12	12	0	0	0	0	0

Contact us to learn more!

From 2001 to 2010, the number of children held back in the first grade dr

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Parents as Teachers

Parents play an irreplaceable role in their child's development.

Program Description

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) model is an evidence-based early childhood home visiting framework for families with children prenatal through kindergarten entry that builds strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to learn.

Program Components

- 1. Personal Visits** are designed to meet the needs of each individual family with intensity ranging anywhere from twice monthly to weekly.
- 2. Group Connections** are provided monthly to ensure families build social connections with each other and learn new ways to support their child's development.
- 3. Screening** is done on a regular basis for each child's health and developmental progress.
- 4. Resource and Referral Network** connects families to needed resources, strengthening protective factors and fostering positive change.

Briefly describe your target population and how they are recruited/selected.

Risk Factor Profile:

% in Poverty	100%
% < HS Diploma	47%
% with Developmental Delays	0%

PAT Outcomes

- ✓ Increase parent knowledge of child development and improve parenting practices
- ✓ Provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- ✓ Prevent child abuse and neglect
- ✓ Increase children's school readiness and school success

First Steps PAT programs measure progress through pre/post assessments of parenting skills using the Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS) and the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI).

Thank you to our partners!

United Way of Hartsville

National Parents as Teachers

The Byerly Foundation

Why PAT Works

Clients in First Steps home visitation programs, including PAT, saw **significant increases in their pre- and post-assessments**. Overall, **54%** of participants who scored at a low quality of parenting improved to a moderate quality of parenting, **44%** who had moderate parenting skills moved to high quality, and **11.9%** who had low quality parenting at pre-test increased their skills to high quality.

*First Steps Evaluation
 High Scope Educational Research Foundation, 2009*

Miss Bright makes learning fun.

Nyressia

Program Results 2012-13

- ✓ **Enrolled 22 families and 30 children. Serving one family raising great-grandchildren**
- ✓ **Increase of parenting skills as assessed through Adult Child Interactive Reading Inventory +.67**
- ✓ **Increase in number of families with high levels of risks**
- ✓ **Distributed 369 books to parents and children**

PAT by the Number\$

	2011-12	2012-13
State Funds	\$50,130	\$41,075
Federal Funds	\$10,433	\$0
Private Funds	\$103,369	\$7547
In-Kind Funds	\$750	\$1960
Total	\$74,682	\$50,582
State \$ Leveraged	49%	23%
Families Served	20	22
Cost per Family	\$3,734	\$2,299
Number of Visits	319	369
Cost per Visit	\$234	\$137

Darlington County First Steps

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

Program Description

Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a First Steps program based on other successful school transition models from around the country. Its goals are:

- ✓ to increase the successful transition of South Carolina's most at-risk children into the K-12 school system;
- ✓ 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.

Program Components

Home Visitation. Teachers make six visits over the summer to the homes of participating students and families. Visits are hour-long sessions whereby children and families are introduced to actual materials used in kindergarten and are given a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit (backpack filled with books, puzzles, clay, blocks, floor mats, etc.) to keep.

Learning Celebration. The last visit is a "field trip" to the school where the child will attend class in the fall. The child and parent are greeted by the principal. The child and parent enjoy time at the school, complete kindergarten registration and enjoy great fellowship and food.

Public Awareness. Throughout the summer, First Steps releases tips to statewide media to help parents and caregivers get children ready for kindergarten.

Countdown to Kindergarten Schools:

- Cain, St. John, and Pate Elementary schools, Darlington
- Lamar Elementary, Lamar.
- Rosenwald Elementary, Society Hill
- Southside Early Childhood Center, Hartsville

Darlington County School District places all CTK children in their home visitor's classroom for kindergarten, thereby building upon the teacher-child and parent-teacher relationships built over the summer.

Thank you to our partners!

Kiwanis of Hartsville

Pee Dee Electric Cooperative

United Way of Hartsville

Why CTK Works

Kindergarten teachers reported that **CTK children have greater familiarity, confidence and excitement** about attending kindergarten, and that **CTK parents are more involved in school** and more likely to contact them. CTK parents felt a **stronger connection with their child's teacher**, and saw in their children increased confidence and excitement about school. Teachers also said the CTK experience **had a significant positive impact on their professional practice**.

*First Steps Evaluation
 High Scope Educational Research Foundation, 2009*

"Thank you for coming into my home to help me teach my child".

Program Results 2012-13

- ✓ All CTK parents provide volunteer services to their child's school during the school year.
- ✓ All CTK parents increased the number of hours and days they read to their children.
- ✓ All CTK parents expressed high levels of satisfaction with the program services.
- ✓ School principals have become more engaged in the end of summer activities.

CTK by the Number\$

	2011-12	2012-13
State Funds	\$3,070	\$2,913
Federal Funds	\$6,140	\$0
Private Funds	\$3,070	\$3,981
In-Kind Funds	\$500	\$300
Total	\$12,780	\$7,194
State \$ Leveraged	80%	120%
Children Served	40	23
Cost per Child	\$307	\$305
Number of Visits	240	138
Cost per Visit	\$30	\$30

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Motheread Inc.

Parents are the primary educators of their children. Developing literacy skills and strengthening the bond between parent and child is fundamental to Motheread.

Program Description

Motheread is an evidence based family literacy program model. Parents are engaged in learning how to select age-appropriate books, to read to their children, to extend the story line of each book, to learn about child development, and to introduce parents to adult literature.

Program Components

1. Groups are led by a certified Motheread facilitator.
2. Group meeting with parents are held at local Head Start centers and local county libraries.
3. The curriculum uses a variety of activities that promote the use of oral and written language to explore every day experiences and encourage vocabulary development
4. The Motheread sessions encourages adults to hold or sit close to children, engaging them in the story-reading process through the use of props, discussion questions and story related activities, songs, and games.
5. Helping parents see themselves as learners and participants in a literate society.
6. Pre/post assessments

Congratulations to the parents who participated in Motheread sessions at M. B. Burno Head Start Center, St. Joseph Head Start Center, and Darlington Library.

Congratulations to Grandparent, Regina Jett-Martin whose news article entitled **Grandmother's Perspective on Reading** was published in the Darlington News and Press. She is quoted as saying "It is so important that we, as parents and grandparents, help spark their interest in reading. We start by simply reading. So let's do our part and read to our children and grandchildren."

Why Motheread Works

An important goal of Motheread classes to develop a learning environment where parents (students) improve their literacy skills as they also enjoy reading and discussing themes in children's books and other literature. Participants invest time and effort in their own skill development, with support from other adults, with an aim toward improving their relationship with their children. *-Measuring Success: Review of Research & Evaluation*

Lots of "hands-on" learning that helps me to be a better person and better parent.

-Jan Merklin

Program Results 2012-13

- ✓ Improvement in language and expressive writing experiences of participating parents.
- ✓ Increase in the number of participating parents who obtain library cards for themselves and their children
- ✓ Increase in parental awareness of age appropriate reading materials and books

Motheread by the Number\$

	2011-12	2012-13
State Funds	\$37,229	\$31,722
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Private Funds	\$1,349	\$11,871
In-Kind Funds	\$750	\$2,590
Total	\$39,328	\$46,183
State \$ Leveraged	6%	46%
Families Served	202	240
Number of Session	112	112
Avg. Cost per Book	\$5	\$5
Cost per Family	\$195	\$192

Thank you to our partners!

United Way of Hartsville

Bi-Lo Charities Foundation

Belk Charity Foundation

Darlington County First Steps

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Early Identification and Referral

Too many children in Darlington County are under-identified for special services.

Program Description

The First Steps early identification and referral (EI&R) strategies are intended to produce measurable improvements in the number of infants and toddlers screened for delays in development as measured by 1) an increase in the number of children whose initial IFSPs are developed within 45 days; 2) an increase in the number of screened referrals to the BabyNet Early Intervention System; and 3) an increase in the number of follow-up referrals to local early learning partners for children found ineligible for BabyNet services

We disseminated BabyNet brochures, posters and other public awareness and child find materials to offices of medical professionals, health clinics, and other public places where parents of young children received services. We participated in health fairs, parents training sessions and similar events where groups of parents were introduced to the services available through BabyNet.

First Steps provided a location in Darlington County for the regional BabyNet InTake Coordinator to conduct parent interviews and screenings.

Why Early Identification and Referral Works

Children develop in an environment of relationships that includes their immediate and extended families, non-family caregivers, neighbors, and community - and poverty can compromise those relationships. **When children receive few opportunities for positive serve-and-return interactions - when the responses from adults are sporadic, inappropriate, or missing entirely - they are not getting the stimulation their brains need to develop in a healthy way.**

The Long Reach of Early Childhood Poverty, National Scientific Council on the Developing Child

Here's a great quote from a client!

Client name

Program Results 2012-13

- ✓ Darlington County parents of children with a suspected developmental delay received initial assessments in their local community.
- ✓ Over 130 primary referral sources were contacted.
- ✓ Over 1670 pieces of public awareness materials were distributed.

Training by the Number\$	2012-13	
State Funds	\$0	\$28,862
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Private Funds	\$0	\$2,084
In-Kind Funds	\$0	\$1,035
Total	\$0	\$31,981
State \$ Leveraged	\$0	11%
Children Served	0	
Cost per Child	0	

Thank you to our partners!

United Way of Hartsville SC

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Early Education

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

Program Description

Twenty four year olds received high quality early education services at Southside Early Childhood Center which is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young children and is a Comer School Development site.

All children met the First Steps criteria for services, eligible for free and reduced lunch among other factors.

Southside serves all kindergarten age children and a select group of children in a part-day 4-K setting. Children deemed eligible for full day were selected from applications made at the school.

Parents were encouraged to volunteer as classroom aides. Children participated in local field trip opportunities and received support from community partners such as Carolina Kids which provided backpacks with food for the weekend.

Early literacy is a primary component of the education focus in the full day 4-K classroom. Children were provided books and materials to take home which supplemented the classroom environment.

All children were transitioned into the full day 5-K program and demonstrated good readiness skills.

Why 4K Works

Well-designed preschool education programs produce long-term improvements in school success, including higher achievement test scores, lower rates of grade repetition and special education, and higher educational attainment. Some preschool programs are also associated with reduced delinquency and crime in childhood and adulthood.

*Preschool Education and its Lasting Effects:
 Research and Policy Implications
 National Institute for Early Education Research, 2008*

Program Results 2012-13

- ✓ **Twenty 4 year olds received early education services in a model classroom environment taught by certified teacher and assistant.**
- ✓ **Parents were provided at-home lessons to reinforce the classroom learning experiences**
- ✓ **All children transitioned into the program for 5 year olds at the same school and were rated ready for kindergarten.**

4K by the Number\$

	2011-12	2012-13
State Funds	\$67,665	\$66,830
Federal Funds	\$0	\$50,000
Private Funds	\$0	\$0
In-Kind Funds	\$22,300	\$22,300
Total	\$89,965	\$89,130
State \$ Leveraged	33%	33%
Children Served	20	20
Cost per Child	\$4,498	\$4,457
Classrooms Funded	1	1
Teacher Positions Funded	2	2

Thank you to our partners!



Darlington County School District

Darlington County First Steps

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Community Leadership in Early Childhood

Advocating, Collaborating, and Coordinating!

The Darlington Partnership Board led a collaborative venture which brought together local and state elected political leaders, school board members, child advocates, representatives of social service agencies, higher education, faith based community, and business leaders to address the high teen pregnancy rate in our county. The board hosted several community meetings with the S. C. Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and determined it would lead the effort to reduce teen pregnancy; thereby, improving the school readiness indicators for young children.

The Friends of our friends are our friends! The Darlington County Partnership Board worked together as a team to make a difference for others in the community! The member of the board worked together to support a food distribution partnership with Harvest Hope Food Bank which provided food to First Steps, Head Start, and other at-risk families as part of a day of community service event!

Darlington County First Steps Partnership Board

Name	Position	Board Category
Patricia A. Toney	Board Chairman	School District Appointee
Lori Strickland	Secretary	County Library Appointee
Beth Campbell	Member	D. S. S. Appointee
Kaynnera T. Capers	Member	Transportation
Thomasena M. Davis	Member	Business Community
Nancy P. Gandy	Member	DHEC Appointee
Alvin J. Heatley	Member	Non-Profit Organization
Winfred Herrington	Member	Faith based Community
James Jackson	Member	Legislative Appointee
Ella Johnson	Member	Legislative Appointee
Connie Knotts	Member	Legislative Appointee
Jacqueline Moore	Member	Early Childhood Education
Vanessa Sansbury	Member	Family Education, Training and Support Provider
Shari Stokes	Member	Early Childhood Education
Ronnie Williams	Member	Head Start Appointee



Getting children ready for school.

Getting children ready for school.

What is First Steps?

South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness was created in 1999 by the South Carolina General Assembly for the purpose of **having every child in South Carolina arrive at kindergarten ready to learn**. Sadly, many South Carolina children possess one or more risk factors that put them at **high risk** (greater than a 1 in 3 chance) for **“early school failure”** – either being retained or scoring below grade level in reading or math – by third grade.

First Steps exists to bring together efforts in early childhood at the state and local level, public and private, to focus and intensify services and assure the most efficient use of all available resources to serve the needs of South Carolina’s young children and their families.

First Steps works to accomplish its mission through a state coordinating office and a network of county partnerships (46), each a private non-profit organization led by a board of early childhood stakeholders. With a modest recurring appropriation of state funding, First Steps leverages cash and in-kind resources at the federal, state and local level to improve services for young children in five strategy areas:

Family Strengthening

A parent is a child’s first and best teacher.

Healthy Start

Children’s development and ability to learn are profoundly impacted by their health.

Quality Child Care

Access to high-quality care is a critical component of a child’s healthy development.

Early Education

Quality preschool opportunities set the stage for success in school.

School Transition

Preparing children and parents for a successful transition into kindergarten.

Each First Steps county partnership determines how to spend its funds based on an annual needs and resources assessment and collaboration with community partners to **fill gaps in local services** for young children and their families. First Steps has proven its impact through strong program and fiscal accountability and independent evaluations - a requirement of its enabling legislation.

All programs that receive First Steps funding - whether they are operated by a First Steps county partnership or a collaborating partner, such as a school district – must adhere to program standards that require programs to be research-based and operated with fidelity; staff who have appropriate qualifications, training, and supervision; services to be comprehensive and coordinated with available community resources; standard assessment instruments that document client outcomes; and programs that **target services to children most at risk** for not being developmentally ready for school.

First Steps Works for the Children, Parents, and Taxpayers of South Carolina:

First Steps works with community partners to reduce first grade retention. **From 2001 to 2010, first grade retention dropped by 48% statewide, saving taxpayers \$21 million annually.**

First Steps leverages resources for families of young children through public-private partnerships. **Since 1999, local partnerships have leveraged \$97 million in increased services, equal to an additional 46 cents for every state dollar invested.**

First Steps has increased the quality of services available to young children and families, using research and data to improve programs.

First Steps is a national leader in state-local collaboration to benefit families and communities.

www.scfirststeps.org

Other First Steps Services in Darlington County

Public 4K Expansion: CDEPP

Since 2006, First Steps has been the administrator of state Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) funds to expand access of low-income children to full-day, four-year-old kindergarten within select rural and high poverty school districts, using community-based settings such as Head Start and private child care.

In 2013, the General Assembly appropriated funding to expand CDEPP eligibility to residents of Darlington County School District.

Qualifying children must live in Darlington County, be four years old by September 1 of the current year, and qualify for free/reduced lunch or Medicaid.

Interested parents should contact one or more participating CDEPP providers to complete an application. Qualifying children may enroll at any participating CDEPP provider, regardless of their county of residence.

To view a list of participating CDEPP providers, go to:

www.scfirststeps.org/4K/2013-14SCFSApprovedCDEPPProviders.pdf



BabyNet

South Carolina’s Early Intervention System

First Steps is the lead agency for BabyNet, South Carolina’s early intervention system for children under 3. Parents of children 0-2 years old with disabilities or suspected developmental delays should contact their local BabyNet office to schedule an evaluation.

BabyNet in Darlington County: 843-857-3148

Darlington County
First Steps

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