



Annual Report

2021-2022



OUR MISSION

To serve as a convener of early childhood champions to coordinate services to measurably improve the early childhood development of all children in Greenville County.

OUR VALUES

Operational accountability and transparency

Delivering research-based initiatives

Convening collaborative public-private partnerships

OUR APPROACH



High quality programs and services for children and families



Intensive training, resources and support for childcare providers



Strategic partnerships and community education



We rely on a community of partners, donors, and volunteers – **people like you** – who believe in a brighter future for children and families in our community.

OUR OVERARCHING MEASURES OF SUCCESS

More children arrive at kindergarten ready for success.

OUR OBJECTIVES

1. More students enter kindergarten demonstrating readiness in language and literacy.
2. More students enter kindergarten demonstrating readiness in social foundations.
3. Greenville First Steps will leverage public and private supports as a match to state funds provided to increase community investments in evidence-based early childhood strategies.

JOIN US



Gain valuable experience and give back to your community through service with First Steps AmeriCorps. Our AmeriCorps members **engage directly with families and communities**, helping to ensure that all children start school ready to reach their highest potential. Apply at scfirststeps.org/AmeriCorps.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



DEREK LEWIS

Executive Director
Greenville First Steps

Convening the Community

When the SC General Assembly founded First Steps in 1999- it was clear that the intent of our Legislators was to build a network of local partners embedded in the communities we serve, and focused on not just running high quality programs, but also strengthening the network of service providers already working to improve early childhood outcomes in our neighborhoods.

Since its inception, Greenville First Steps has contributed more than \$35 million into the Greenville Community- aimed at measurably improving early childhood outcomes- and nowhere is this more evident than in our investments in strengthening the Early Childcare sector.

Through investments in services like Palmetto Shared Services Alliance (providing back office supports to childcare providers- ensuring they are profitable and sustainable), the In-home childcare provider network (ensuring those providing home based childcare have connections with high quality best practices), and the Christ Church Book Warehouse (which was distributed more than 100,000 new children’s books to childcare providers across the county), as well as supporting the expansion of Free4KSC.org a statewide effort to ensure families have access to free 4 year old kindergarten, we have helped to ensure that our more than 220 childcare providers have the resources and supports needed to serve countless children and families throughout Greenville County.

This year, we convened our community childcare providers, local funders, and policy makers to discuss the challenges our providers have faced since Covid, and what can be done to better support them. Without question- staff recruitment and retention arose as the most significant issues. Where do we find staff? How do we afford to pay them enough to stay? What can we do when we can’t afford to pay them more to make them feel valued?

Working with Childcare providers we identified their greatest needs and began to brainstorm policy changes that may be needed – including expanding subsidies provided by SCFS and DSS, increasing access to state benefits programs, working with DSS to reduce regulations that are impacting operational costs, and working with local municipalities to reduce licensing and operational regulations that impact home-based providers.

Greenville First Steps will continue to support our community of childcare providers, not just as a funder of their work, but as a voice to policy makers to help make the work of these essential employees easier- so they can continue to provide safe, nurturing, and reliable childcare options for working families across the county.

Derek

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



Jeremy Watts

Chair
Greenville First Steps Board of Trustees

The great work of Greenville First Steps continues to impact the community in significant ways. I continue to see and hear about this work not just in my role as Chair of the Board of Directors, but in my role as a community member, and as a family with a young child. I will point out two areas of excitement. First, the Board of Directors continues to use school-based data to choose which zip codes in Greenville County should be prioritized for improving life and learning for young children. Second, the launch of the Greenville First Steps endowed fund has created greater financial stability and opportunity to continue investing in the lives of children and families in our county. It was invigorating to see the participation of giving from board members, past board members, and friends of Greenville First Steps! I continue to laude the Greenville First Steps staff who desire to continuously improve their practice in making lives better for young children in our community.

Jeremy

GETTING CHILDREN READY FOR SCHOOL

All children are ready to benefit from a quality kindergarten experience when they are five years old by September 1 of that school year. But kindergarten readiness—the critical stage at which children are prepared for learning and success—is more than a matter of age. For a strong start in school, children need positive relationships and supportive learning environments beginning at birth. At First Steps, we partner with families, caregivers, and communities to ensure that all children are prepared for success.

South Carolina's Profile of the Ready Kindergartner

Developed by SC First Steps and the SC Department of Education, the state's description of school readiness includes 60 developmental milestones across 5 categories:



Approaches to learning & inquiry



Emotional & social development



Physical development, self-help & motor skills



Mathematical thinking



Language & literacy development



OUR VISION

Families, early childhood educators, and community partners are equipped with the tools and resources needed to ensure children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.



CHILD CARE TRAINING



an evidence-based program

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce. Our training programs are certified through SC Endeavors and include topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Our 2021-2022 trainings included:

PARENTS ARE PART OF THE JOB

STRENGTHENING BUSINESS PRACTICES

ROUTINES, RITUALS, TRADITIONS

READ ALOUDS ARE KEY

READING FOUNDATIONS

MARKETING YOUR PROGRAM

TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

1,871

total training attendance

959

child care teachers and
directors served

793

number of training
sessions offered



The training was very useful. The trainer was professional and kept everyone engaged. I appreciate the variety of certified trainings offered in Greenville.



GREENVILLE COUNTY CHILDCARE TEACHER



COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN



an evidence-informed program

Developed by South Carolina First Steps – and identified as a promising state practice by the National Governor’s Association in 2005 – Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a home visitation program pairing the families of rising kindergartners with their future teachers during the summer before school entry. Teachers complete six visits with each family, establishing strong connections during the summer that facilitate classroom learning throughout the year.

CTK BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

3

schools served

10

kindergarten teachers
trained as home visitors

30

children served

180

total home and school
visits



I love how she comes weekly to work with my daughter to get her comfortable. Me and my daughter loved the whole program. Because of the Countdown program, I now am better prepared to support my child with kindergarten academic and behavioral skills.



PARENT OF RISING 5K STUDENT





ENHANCED EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM



an evidence-based program

In partnership with Greenville County Schools, Greenville First Steps provides funds to supplement the preschool experiences for children throughout the Greenville County School District. Enhancements include access to Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) training, Palmetto Basics, parenting supports, and access to community resources to enhance the great work already being done throughout the district.

ENHANCED EARLY EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

815

children served

983

parents served



Having the support of First Steps has made a HUGE difference in my 4K classroom. From the additional books and resources, to the parenting workshops provided by the Triple P program, to the great ongoing arts enrichment programming provided by the SC Children's Theatre, our relationship with our students and their families is stronger because of First Steps.



HEDRICK LEWIS, 4K TEACHER, GREENVIEW CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER, GREENVILLE COUNTY SCHOOLS



IMAGINATION LIBRARY



an evidence-based program

As the local affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, we provide free, high-quality books to children from birth until age five, no matter their family's income.

Children enrolled in our Imagination Library program receive one book per month by mail. Each title is selected by a panel of early childhood literacy experts, who are responsible for choosing books that meet the age-specific developmental needs of young children.

IMAGINATION LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

756

children served

3,157

books distributed



Our favorite day of the month is the day our book arrives in the mail. Our daughter is so excited every month to see what the book will be about. Thank you for bringing this program to Travelers Rest!



PARENT OF 4-YEAR-OLD





NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP



an evidence-based program

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) helps transform the lives of first-time mothers and their babies. Through ongoing home visits from registered nurses, moms receive the care and support they need to have a healthy pregnancy, provide responsible and competent care for their children, and become more economically self-sufficient. From pregnancy until the child turns two years old, Nurse-Family Partnership Nurse Home Visitors form a much-needed, trusting relationship with their clients, instilling confidence and empowering them to achieve a better life for their children – and themselves.

NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

223

families served

1,346

total home visits



“It was really exciting to have Dwan visit because I never knew what having a baby entailed. I learned a lot from Nurse-Family Partnership and I had a lot of support from Dwan (nurse)

”

JENNIFER – GREENVILLE NFP MOM





NURTURING PARENTING



an evidence-based program

The Nurturing Parenting Programs are a family-centered trauma-informed initiative designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglecting parenting and child-rearing practices. Families can attend group-based programs, home-based programs, or a combination of group and home-based sessions.

NURTURING PARENTING BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

48

families served

133

total group meetings



The biggest lesson I have learned is that patience is key in parenting, especially when trying to teach my son something new.



NURTURING PARENTING YOUNG PARENT





POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAM (HIGH INTENSITY)



an evidence-based program

The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) is a parenting and family support system designed to prevent – as well as treat – behavioral and emotional problems in children up to age 12. Triple P is a multi-level system of support including five levels of increasing intensity. Offerings include a self-help program, one-on-one consultations, small group sessions, and in-home support. Specialist programs are available for parents of children with a disability; parents of children with health or weight concerns; parents going through divorce or separation; and for Indigenous families.

TRIPLE P BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

56

families served

249

total parent trainings



The Triple P patience and consistency tools I received from attending the groups have helped tremendously to stay calm and implement what I learned.



PARENT WHO ATTENDED LEVEL 4 GROUP



for every parent



POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAM (LIGHT TO MODERATE INTENSITY)



an evidence-based program

The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) is a parenting and family support system designed to prevent – as well as treat – behavioral and emotional problems in children up to age 12. Triple P is a multi-level system of support including five levels of increasing intensity. Offerings include a communications campaign, small to large group sessions and one-on-one support.

TRIPLE P LIGHT TO MODERATE BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

411

families served

165

total home visits



I learned to allow my child to continue expressing their feelings in appropriate ways and without judgement.



PARENT WHO ATTENDED LEVEL 2 SEMINAR





REACH OUT AND READ



an evidence-based program

Reach Out and Read integrates books into pediatric practices and promotes reading as a catalyst for healthy childhood development. Reach Out and Read Partners with pediatric medical providers to serve children and families through well-child visits, beginning at birth.

REACH OUT AND READ BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

29,984

total books prescribed

16,533

clinics intergrated



Primsa Health-Upstate's Developmental Pediatric clinic was thrilled to join Reach Out and Read's program earlier this year. The process to apply was straight forward and implementing the program has been simple. Reading is one of the most impactful tools we have to promote children's development. A book gives us the opportunity to begin discussion about the importance of reading and benefits we see. We are so grateful to be able to provide this tool to patients and their families at their office visits. Reach Out and Read also provided additional parent resources to improve reading in special need patient populations.



**BETH ALEXANDER – PEDIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER,
DEVELOPMETNAL PEDIATRICS**



CAROLINAS



PUBLIC AWARENESS

Greenville First Steps believes parents are their child's first and most important teacher. We help parents understand their role through The Palmetto Basics and Triple P's Level Up Your Parenting Game campaign. The Palmetto Basics are five fun, simple, and powerful ways that every family can give every child a great start in life. Level Up Your Parenting Game helps parents understand everyone benefits from a parenting class and parenting supports. Parents can visit www.GreenvilleParents.com to to access parenting supports and PalmettoBasics.org to find out how to use the Basics. Additionally, Greenville First Steps has continued its partnership with Christ Church to provide high quality books to child serving organizations.

PUBLIC AWARENESS BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

3,400

podcast downloads

1,255,971

social media impressions





FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN



an evidence-based program

First Steps 4K provides eligible children with free enrollment in full-day four-year-old kindergarten. In coordination with First Steps local partnerships and more than 250 private, community and faith-based preschool providers, First Steps 4K expands access to quality early education across the state.



ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for enrollment, a child must be:

- 4 years old on or before September 1
- Eligible for Medicaid, SNAP or TANF, experiencing homelessness or transiency, or in foster care
- Be a South Carolina resident

362

children enrolled

16

First Steps 4K providers

With First Steps 4K, families are in the driver's seat. They choose the school that best meets their needs. Families can enroll in any participating private, non-profit, or faith-based preschool provider. The majority of First Steps 4K providers offer an 8 hour instructional day with a year-round calendar, including summers. Through a partnership with SC Voucher, First Steps 4K families can also enroll in the First Steps 4K + Siblings scholarship program which provides whole care and education for all children, ages 0-12, in the household.





COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Addressing the needs of young children is a shared endeavor. In addition to providing services to families and support for childcare providers, Greenville County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Greenville County begin school ready to succeed.

We serve as a:

LOCAL PORTAL

connecting preschool children and their families to services

CONVENER

of community stakeholders to develop an effective and comprehensive early childhood system

CHAMPION

of the importance of school readiness to our children's future

OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

46,130

books distributed from book warehouse

30,000

PPE materials distributed



We are so thankful for the books. We are going to pass them out to children who completed our summer reading challenge. It is amazing to be able to reward our kids with new books.



GREENVILLE COUNTY CHILDCARE PROVIDER



OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

SC Children's Trust: \$100,000

United Way of Greenville County: \$50,000

Little Steps: \$35,000

Individual Gifts: \$23,652

Total: \$208,652

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Prisma Health System (Match for Nurse Family Partnership): \$500,000

JOIN US

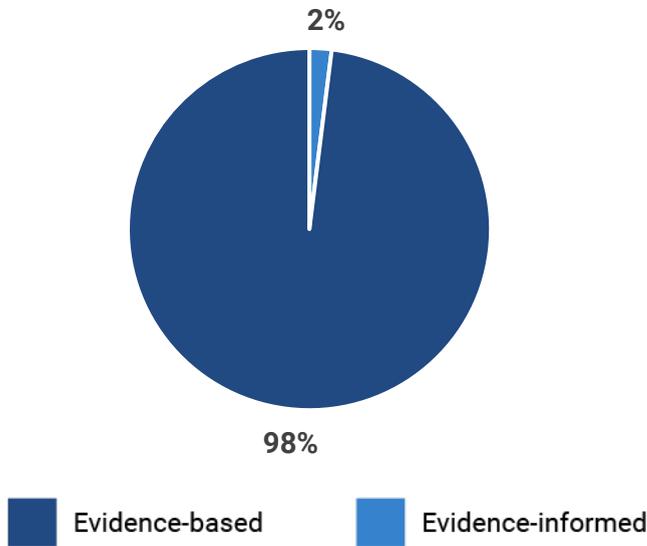
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at greenvillefirststeps.org



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Greenville First Steps has leveraged **\$25,241,242.70** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.98** for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Childcare Training	\$226,765	\$40,870	\$0	\$0	\$267,635
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$16,519	\$13,209	\$0	\$0	\$29,728
Enhanced Early Education	\$45,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$45,000
Imagination Library	\$18,126	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$18,126
Nurse Family Partnership	\$100,000	\$0	\$0	\$500,000	\$600,000
Nurturing Parenting	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$50,000
Positive Parenting Program (1-3)	\$27,039	\$16,974	\$51,670	\$0	\$95,683
Positive Parenting Program (4)	\$323,522	\$48,000	\$0	\$0	\$371,522
Reach Out and Read	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000
Partnerships & Community Education	\$115,386	\$142,021	\$49,129	\$0	\$306,536
Administrative Support	\$105,928	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$105,928
Total Expenses	\$1,058,285	\$261,074	\$100,799	\$500,000	\$1,920,158



LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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STAFF

Derek Lewis, Executive Director
Beth Jamieson, Operations Director
Nicole Sheppard, Program Director
Jamaal Rashad, Program Director

CONTACT US

700 N Pleasantburg Drive, Greenville SC 29607 | 864-248-4757 | greenvillefirststeps.org

