



FAITH-BASED SOLUTIONS TO GREENVILLE COUNTY'S CHILDCARE CRITICAL NEED

www.GreenvilleFirstSteps.org/childcare

The Need



Greenville County is experiencing a critical need for childcare, especially serving infants and toddlers. Greenville County has a population of young children (ages birth to 5) of **35,700** (Annie E Casey). Of those, **5,300** are living in poverty (US Census). Based on current DSS reporting, our 216 childcare providers have a capacity to serve fewer than half of Greenville's children. And the problem worsens with infant and toddler care. Greenville County infants and toddlers lack access to reliable, affordable, quality childcare.

The biggest challenges we face are:

1. Lack of Supply: we could build 30 new childcare centers serving 100 children and not meet the need.
2. Lack of Staff: Workforce issues in childcare sector are worsening.
3. Population growth: Greenville County is projected to add an additional 222,000 residents by 2040.

Families with newborns, infants, and toddlers are experiencing the most severe lack of care. Currently, there is a 1-2 year wait for over 6,000 children to get into a childcare center in Greenville County. As Greenville continues to grow in population, the need for additional childcare will continue to rise.

INFANT/TODDLER CHILDCARE NEEDS

BASED ON CURRENT
CHILDCARE UTILIZATION
ESTIMATES

4,000

1,500

2,500

VS

INFANT/TODDLER
SLOTS NEEDED IN
GREENVILLE COUNTY

INFANT/TODDLER
FULL PAY SLOTS

INFANT/TODDLER
SUBSIDIZED SLOTS

BASED ON 2040 GROWTH
PROJECTIONS:

6,400

2,400

4,000

The Opportunity

Faith-based organizations across Greenville County have a unique opportunity to be a part of the solution to our critical lack of childcare. Many churches in our community have underutilized Sunday School space that could be used to open childcare classrooms during the week.



There are many benefits a church could see from opening a childcare center (or allowing someone to operate a center in the space):

- **Increased engagement** - Many faith-based organizations see an increase in membership of young families after opening a childcare center. Families get involved with church events and feel a connection to the organization.
- **Revenue** - Empty space could be rented out to a childcare business owner to operate a center.
- **Jobs for congregants** - As a perk for working in a childcare center, employees often receive a discount on childcare tuition and fees. Would be great for young parents and even grandparents.

“There is a great need for quality childcare in Greenville. Churches already have one component that is needed to provide this: space! Having shared spaces that are used between the school/church ensures that each program/ministry has quality equipment, maintains cleanliness, and serves a greater purpose of community engagement. Many of the families of the students who join our school end up visiting and joining our church as well.

The school is a great promotion for our church!”

-Cara Puntch, Director, Westminster Weekday School

“The greatest benefit for churches to offer childcare is the opportunity for us to reach families as a part of our ministry to lead children to the Lord and be in a loving and caring environment.”

-Christina Via, Director, St Matthew UMC Preschool

Jasmine is a single mother with a one-year-old child, working as a paralegal. Her mother watches her child during the day while she is at work. Unexpectedly, her mother became seriously ill and had to be placed in an assisted living facility. Jasmine's work was understanding and gave her 30 days off, with pay, so she could make arrangements for her mother, and find childcare for her child.

Jasmine's story.

She was able to find an assisted living facility for her mother and set out to find a childcare provider. Her first call was to a childcare center two blocks from her office. She was told they were full, and there was a year-and-a-half waiting list. She called over 20 other childcare centers and discovered the waiting lists were roughly the same for all of them.

After 30 days, she was feeling desperate. A friend suggested Jasmine call SC Childcare Resource and Referral (SC CCR&R) for help finding care. SC CCR&R helped Jasmine identify a faith-based childcare provider within 5 miles of her home that had recently opened a new toddler classroom.

Not only was Jasmine able to enroll her child in the childcare center, she also started to get involved with the church. She attended church events, started attending Sunday service, and even volunteered to help a church member navigate a legal issue. Now, Jasmine and her child have a home, a childcare home, and a spiritual home.



All the help you need.

Greenville First Steps has partnered with Palmetto Shared Services Alliance to help faith-based organizations who are interested in opening a childcare center or renting space to a childcare provider. PSSA, through their online and onsite supports, helps providers of all sizes and varieties run their businesses efficiently and successfully by giving them access to a variety of childcare resources to help them keep their programs in top shape, including a variety of childcare training opportunities.

Additionally, Greenville First Steps is currently exploring other opportunities to support the creation of new childcare centers such as a loan fund to allow new facilities to borrow money for renovations/expansions to meet DSS requirements and an employee pipeline that recruits college students to work in sector while earning degrees.

Please visit www.GreenvilleFirstSteps.org/childcare to explore more, ask questions, and reach out!



SEARCHlight, a group of retired working professionals, is partnering with Greenville First Steps, with support from the United Way of Greenville County, United Ministries and Greenville Chamber of Commerce to expand access to quality childcare in Greenville County.