



Annual Report

2020-2021



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

OUR OVERARCHING MEASURE OF SUCCESS

More children arrive at kindergarten ready for success.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Greenville First Steps will invest in proven early literacy best practices.

Greenville First Steps will invest in social and emotional supports for children and families.

Greenville First Steps will seek opportunities to increase local, regional, and national investments in evidence-based early childhood strategies within Greenville County priority areas.

JOIN US



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.



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 County First Steps

"It takes a village" That phrase was never more true than in 2020 and 2021. The global pandemic has impacted everyone – and while some communities shut down and became insular, the Greenville County childcare, business, faith, and philanthropy communities united to help tackle the big problems facing our neighbors.

In the summer of 2020- Greenville First Steps, in partnership with Greenville County- launched a \$4.2 million effort to invest federal CARES funds into our childcare sector.

Reopening childcare centers: Greenville First Steps partnered with **132** childcare providers to provide training, materials, and supports to help them remain open. In May 2020, 120 of Greenville County's 220 registered childcare providers were closed- most due to lack of staff, and inability to pay operation costs. Thanks to \$1.7 million in direct pass through funds- all but 5 of these providers re-opened by August 1 and remained open throughout the year

Providing supports and materials: Greenville First Steps provided resources and materials to help our centers with COVID related expenses. Thanks to a partnership with Christ Church Episcopal Greenville, 65,000 children's books, 430,000 gloves, 195 gallons of disinfectant were distributed to our providers.

Expanding access to School Age care: Greenville First Steps invested \$2.5m in CARES funds to help 120 childcare centers adjust to serve 4,900 school age children- including investments in arts, fitness, wellness and tutoring enhancements to help our providers adapt to this older age group.

I am so thankful for our friends at Greenville County Council, the 120 childcare providers, Christ Church, and our countless community partners who rolled up their sleeves to support our families and childcare providers when they most needed our help.

Derek



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



JEREMY WATTS

Chair

Greenville County First Steps Board of Trustees

Greenville First Steps continues to do inspiring work in serving the Greenville Community. I would argue collaborations and partnerships with child care centers, educational entities, and non-profits, just to name a few, are stronger than ever. I hardly go anywhere in these arenas where folks do not stop to express a special sense of gratitude for the contribution of Greenville First Steps, specifically during these unprecedented times since early 2020. Greenville First Steps is an organization that has a team of staff that is proficient, resourceful, and always ready to serve the community in new ways. As chair of the board of directors, I continue to count it an honor to serve alongside many who continue to strive to make each day better for a specific group at risk in our community—our young children.

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.



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Addressing the needs of young children is a shared endeavor. In addition to providing services to families and support for child care 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 2020-2021

85,442

books distributed

430,000

PPE items distributed



In partnership with the YMCA of Greenville, Greenville County Schools and Greenville County Council, Greenville First Steps distributed \$4.2 million in CARES funding to 169 childcare providers. That support ensured families had access to stable and reliable childcare during COVID. Thanks to this public private partnership, Greenville First Steps was able to provide childcare vouchers, operational support, PPE, books, and access to enrichment activities.



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.

BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

283

children served

379

number of home
visits provided



Nurse-Family Partnership not only helped me navigate motherhood, but also showed me how to navigate my life. And now, I have a happy, healthy 8 year old, and I am a certified nurse home visitor in the Nurse-Family Partnership program.



K Brown, Former NFP client and current Home Visitor





REACH OUT AND READ



an evidence-based program

Reach Out and Read prepares young children to succeed in school by partnering with pediatricians and medical providers to prescribe books and encourage families to read together. According to child development research, 80% of a child's brain is formed between birth and age three. Reach Out and Read begins at the 6 month check up and continues through age 5. Families who participate in Reach Out and Read read together more often and their children enter kindergarten with larger vocabularies, stronger language skills, and are better prepared to achieve their potential.

REACH OUT AND READ BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

2,000

children served

19

clinics



With your investment, you helped make positive relationships a reality for children in Greenville County by giving medical providers a tool and an opportunity to model and share with families the importance of spending time together reading, telling stories, and engaging with each other. Children who experience Reach Out and Read, thanks to funders like you, are bolstered by strengthened relationships, cognitive growth, and enhanced resilience.



**EMILY BARTELS, STATE DIRECTOR
REACH OUT AND READ SOUTH CAROLINA**



TRIPLE P: POSITIVE PARENTING PROGRAM



an evidence-based program

Triple P – The Positive Parenting Program – is one of the most effective evidence-based parenting programs in the world, backed up by more than 35 years of ongoing research. Triple

P gives parents simple and practical strategies to help them build strong, healthy relationships, confidently manage their children’s behavior, and prevent problems developing.

Greenville First Steps was selected by the Children’s Trust of SC and the Duke Endowment as the Activating Agency for the planned expansion of Triple P across Greenville County.

TRIPLE P BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

1,003

practitioners
serving parents

326

parenting classes
and 1-on-1
sessions offered



The biggest lessons I learned from Triple P are the best ways to use appropriate discipline. I’ve also learned that just by using positive words and focusing more on the positive of what my kids are doing, they will be more likely to continue to do the positive behaviors.



PARENT WHO PARTICIPATED IN TRIPLE P PRIMARY CARE



NURTURING PARENTING



an evidence-based program

Nurturing Parenting is a family centered trauma informed program designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglecting parenting and child rearing practices. Our partner, Little Steps, works with teen and young parents to ensure they have access to the supports they need to be better parents.

NURTURING PARENTING BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

45

parents served

86

group parenting
classes held



My time at Little Steps (and with Nurturing Parenting) was always fun and yet at the same time, always learned something new. My favorite parts were learning the concept of personal power, ways to develop empathy, and FREE DIAPERS!!



LITTLE STEPS CLIENT



ENHANCED EARLY EDUCATION



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 2020-2021

898

children served

948

parents served



We have enjoyed working with Greenville First Steps. Thanks to their ongoing support we have been able to include arts enrichment, Triple P programming, and early literacy efforts within our 3K and 4K classrooms and parenting support services.



**AMANDA LACARUZ, PRINCIPAL, GREENVILLE COUNTY
SCHOOLS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS**



FOUR-YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN



an evidence-based program

South Carolina First Steps provides eligible children with free enrollment in full-day four-year-old kindergarten. In coordination with First Steps local partnerships and more than 230 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

FIRST STEPS 4K IN GREENVILLE COUNTY 2020-2021

59

children enrolled

4

First Steps 4K providers

PREPARING FOR STATEWIDE EXPANSION

With First Steps 4K, families are in the driver's seat. They choose the program that best meets their needs. Families can enroll their child in any of the 244 private, nonprofit, or faith-based child care centers or schools participating in the program. The majority of First Steps 4K providers offer 8-hour day and year-round instruction, including summers, which is at no cost to parents.



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 2020-2021 trainings included:

Recruiting and Retaining Staff
Inquiry Based Early Learning
Childcare Marketing During COVID
Budgets, Projections, Planning
10 Mistakes That Childcare Directors Make
Budgets, Financial Reports, and Internal Controls
Insurance for Childcare

TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

972

total training attendance

972

child care teachers and
directors served

94

number of training
sessions offered



The family childcare home training collection that was presented by Palmetto Shared Services Alliance, the Greenville Chamber of Commerce, the Kellie Rynn Academy and Greenville First Steps offered existing and new family childcare providers the opportunity to join a network of support and complete specialized trainings designed specifically for them in order to complete their required yearly training hours.



**LESLIE LATIMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
PALMETTO SHARED SERVICES ALLIANCE**



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 find out more information on how to use the Basics in their home and access parenting supports.

PUBLIC AWARENESS BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

18,705

visits to websites

32,141

social media impressions





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

Children's Trust of South Carolina: \$76,422

Appalachian Regional Commission: \$90,000

United Way of Greenville County: \$19,143

Individual Donors: \$12,000

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Prisma: \$1,000,000

JOIN US

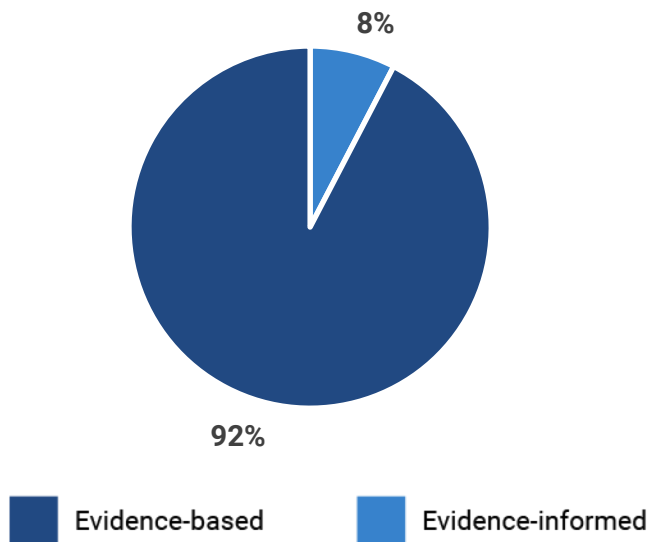
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at www.GreenvilleFirstSteps.org



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Greenville County First Steps has leveraged **\$24,379,369.67** 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
Nurse Family Partnership	\$180,857	\$0	\$19,143	\$1,000,000	\$1,200,000
Reach Out and Read	\$30,000	\$0	\$252	\$0	\$30,252
Triple P Levels 1-3	\$63,556.27	\$0	\$76,422.18	\$0	\$139,978.45
Triple P Level 4	\$180,125.33	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$210,125.33
Nurturing Parenting	\$47,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$47,000
Enhanced Early Education	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$30,000
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$0	\$1,050	\$0	\$0	\$1,050
Childcare Training	\$300,562.89	\$90,000	\$7,000	\$0	\$397,562.89
Administrative Support	\$99,289	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$99,289
Core Functions	\$105,271.88	\$3,975,209.89	\$44,762.72	\$0	\$4,125,244.49
Total Expenses	\$1,036,662.37	\$4,096,259.89	\$147,579.90	\$1,000,000	\$6,280,502.16



LEADERSHIP

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