



## PROGRAMS

Early Head Start

Imagination Library

Quality Counts

Nurse Family Partnership



# ANNUAL REPORT

2013



## VISION:

Every child  
in Spartanburg County  
will enter school ready  
to succeed

**First Steps WORKS for the children of Spartanburg County.**





# Spartanburg County First Steps

## Annual Report

### 2012-2013

## Who We Serve

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

Number of Spartanburg County children under 5:  
19,507

Number of Spartanburg County children under 5 living in poverty:  
2,887

Babies born each year in Spartanburg County to a mother without a high school diploma:  
1,036

Eligible for SNAP/Free School Lunches (130% of poverty or below)  
6,787

## Our Programs

Early Head Start

Quality Counts

Nurse Family Partnership

Imagination Library

## Our Results

### ✓ Early Head Start #'s

5 parents completed college  
178 children in quality childcare settings & home visits

### ✓ Quality Counts #'s

✓ 30% of early care and education programs in Spartanburg County are enrolled in Quality Counts

### ✓ Nurse Family Partnership #'s

69 Healthy Babies Born  
(3 Sets of twins)

### ✓ Imagination Library #'s

Presently enrolled: 19,507  
Books distributed: 102,995

***Vision:** Every child in Spartanburg County will enter school ready to succeed.*

***Mission:** Spartanburg County First Steps will be the engine to drive collaboration, partnership, effective resource utilization and funding to prepare children to be ready for school.*

***Is there a difference for children in Spartanburg County related to our mission and vision? Yes, because of Spartanburg's quality early education investments.***

*Research has indicated, for years, that investment in early childhood programs significantly increases a child's chances of success as well as having well-documented economic and societal value. Studies have shown that investments in quality early education can produce a rate of return to society significantly higher than returns to most stock market investments or traditional economic development projects*

### ***Spartanburg's Quality Early Education Investments in Preparing Children for School Readiness and Kindergarten Success***

- In the 2012-2013 program year, 178 children at 100% of poverty, 13 pregnant women, 151 families & 16 children with disabilities were served in First Steps Early Head Start - Children birth to 3 and families are exposed to high quality care and interventions that result in positive outcomes.
- Quality Counts - Currently 27 childcare programs are participating serving over 1200 children birth to five. Children benefit daily with quality learning environments, smaller ratios of teachers to children, increased staff qualifications as well as other quality improvements.
- Nurse Family Partnership served 160 first time mothers in 2012 through the collaboration with Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System and other community leaders, filling a gap of service to pregnant teens. Nurse weekly visits support outcomes of healthy pregnancy, mothers provide responsible and competent care for their children, and families become more economically self-sufficient.
- Over the past 11 years, 1,526,348 free books were provided to children under the age of five, delivered monthly by mail from the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in collaboration with First Steps & the United Way of the Piedmont for Spartanburg and Union counties. Children are exposed to age appropriate books for reading.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Brooks  
Executive Director  
Spartanburg County First Steps

Spartanburg County  
First Steps

Board Chair  
Elaine Sveen

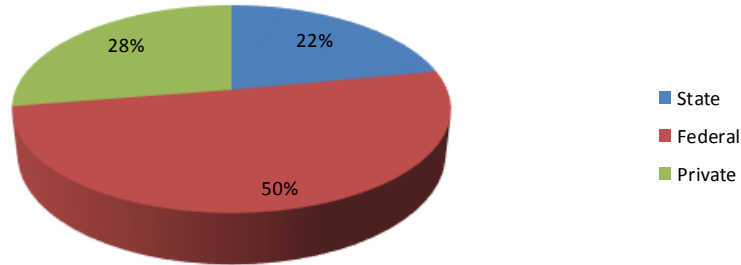
Executive Director  
Carolyn Brooks

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[www.1steps.org](http://www.1steps.org)

# Financial Impact

## Expenditures by Funding Source FY1213 (07/01/12 - 06/30/13)



Fiscal Year	State	Federal	Private	Total
07/01/2012 - 06/30/2013	\$ 651,039	\$ 1,495,790	\$ 815,395	\$ 2,962,223

**Total 2012-13 Expenditures: \$2,962,223**

**\*Funds Leveraged: 355%**

**\*Percentage of federal, private, and/or in-kind funds added to State funds allocated to Spartanburg First Steps**

Strategy	State	Federal	Private	Total	%
Administrative	\$ 187,091	\$ 17,279	\$ 138	\$ 204,508	7%
Programmatic	\$ 94,184	\$ -	\$ 578	\$ 94,762	3%
Quality Counts	\$ 319,368	\$ -	\$ 151,097	\$ 470,465	16%
**Early Head Start	\$ 50,360	\$ 1,478,510	\$ 105,368	\$ 1,634,238	55%
Nurse Family Partnership	\$ 36	\$ -	\$ 555,527	\$ 555,563	19%
Children's Service Alliance	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,687	\$ 2,687	0%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 651,039</b>	<b>\$ 1,495,790</b>	<b>\$ 815,395</b>	<b>\$ 2,962,223</b>	<b>100%</b>
	22%	50%	28%	100%	

**\*\* EHS Federal Grant Analysis (Awarded vs. Expended) FY 12-13 07/01/2012 - 06/30/2013**

Budget Categories for Federal Funds										
Object Class Categories		Program Funds			Professional Development			Totals		
		Awarded	Obligated / Expended	Unobligated	Awarded	Obligated / Expended	Unobligated	Awarded	Obligated / Expended	Unobligated
A)	Personnel	667,332	672,031	(4,699)	-	-	-	667,332	672,031	(4,699)
B)	Fringe Benefits	240,136	272,888	(32,752)	-	-	-	240,136	272,888	(32,752)
C)	Travel	-	-	-	12,025	12,025	-	12,025	12,025	-
D)	Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
E)	Supplies	55,553	38,938	16,615	-	-	-	55,553	38,938	16,615
F)	Contractual	268,816	268,667	149	-	-	-	268,816	268,667	149
G)	Facilities/Construction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
H)	Renovations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
I)	Other	119,754	113,582	6,172	23,318	23,318	-	143,072	136,900	6,172
J)	Total (A-I)	1,351,591	1,366,106	(14,515)	35,343	35,343	-	1,386,934	1,401,449	(14,515)
K)	Indirect Charges	62,126	47,611	14,515	-	-	-	62,126	47,611	14,515
L)	Total (J-K)	1,413,717	1,413,717	0	35,343	35,343	-	1,449,060	1,449,060	0

### Notes

- A) Hired a new position in May
- B) Increase in health insurance premiums
- E) Reduction in supplies to offset increase in fringe
- I) Reduction in other spending to offset increase in fringe
- K) One staff member left organization in May

### Spartanburg County First Steps

900 South Pine Street, Suite C | Spartanburg SC, 29302  
Phone- 864-327-4900  
[www.1steps.org](http://www.1steps.org)



# Early Head Start



## Program Description

Early Head Start provides high quality, culturally sensitive child development and parent support in homes and centers.

### Spartanburg County First Steps Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten.

- Spartanburg County First Steps Quality Counts works with 30% of the child care centers in the county to improve the quality of early education for young children in Spartanburg County.
- All seven school districts are represented on the First Steps Board.
- The School Readiness Community Team includes school district personnel.
- FS EHS has contracts with two school districts to provide Early Head Start services in their centers which also are family literacy sites.



Family Coals Achieved	#
Completed College/Degree	5
Enrolled in College	2
Completed High School	6
Graduated from GED	2
Obtained Full Time Employment	5
Obtained Permanent Housing	1
Became Physically Fit	1
Achieved Financial Independence	1

Enrollment and Attendance	
Funded Enrollment- 120	120
Percentage Average Monthly Enrollment	100
Number of Children Served	178
Number of Families Served	151
Percentage of Eligible Children Served	2
Percentage of Attendance for the Year	81
# of Pregnant Women Served	13

Health Services	% Served
% of Children Served With Disabilities	15.8
% of Children Served Who Received Medical Exams	84
% of Children Served Up to Date on Dental Services (N/A for SC)	0
% of Pregnant Women Who Received Dental Services	70
% of Children Up to Date on Immunizations	84
% of Pregnant Women Who Received Post-Natal EHS Visit within 14 Days	100
# of Health Services Advisory Meetings	2

## School Readiness

- ✓ Readiness does not happen at the same time or in the same way for all children
- ✓ 91% of Early Head Start children were developing typically based on GOLD Assessment- April 2013

## EHS by the Number\$ Early Head Start

Funding Source	FY1112	FY1213
State Funding	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,360
South Carolina First Steps	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,360
Federal Funding	\$ 1,482,128	\$ 1,488,579
Early Head Start	\$ 1,438,701	\$ 1,449,060
* CACFP	\$ 31,206	\$ 36,636
* ABC	\$ 10,920	\$ 2,883
* T.E.A.C.H.	\$ 1,301	\$ -
Private Funding	\$ 95,908	\$ 119,198
School District 7	\$ 87,276	\$ 107,968
Parent Co-Pays	\$ 8,632	\$ 11,230
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 1,628,036</b>	<b>\$ 1,658,138</b>

\* CACFP - Child and Adult Care Food Program

\* ABC - ABC Childcare Program

\* T.E.A.C.H. - Teacher Education and Compensation Helps

*"My daughter now goes to Montessori and she is doing so well. I know this is because of what EHS - Kelly's Kids did, they helped her get ready for school.*

*\_Terrill Banks, Father*



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# Early Head Start



## EHS Services

- Childcare
- Early Childhood Education
- Health & Nutrition
- Case Management
- Parenting
- Support in self-sufficiency goal attainment.



*178 children and their families received these comprehensive services that promoted school readiness & family well-being*

### Parent Training Topics

- ✚ If you have the money
- ✚ Family Literacy
- ✚ Portion Distortion
- ✚ Child & Family Well-being/Mental Health
- ✚ School Readiness & Assessment
- ✚ Transitions & Advocacy
- ✚ Safety

### Socialization Topics

- ✚ Come and Feed the Ducks
- ✚ Musical Mother Goose
- ✚ Rocking Babies
- ✚ Fall Planting
- ✚ Building with Blocks
- ✚ Holiday Place Mats
- ✚ Holiday Ornaments
- ✚ Valentine Decorations
- ✚ Prepare a Healthy Snack
- ✚ Kite Flying
- ✚ Make and Take a Book
- ✚ Ball Play in the Park
- ✚ Play Dough Fun
- ✚ Nature Walk
- ✚ Finger Painting
- ✚ Water Play
- ✚ Big Dig

**Thirty-one families logged  
980 reading hours with  
their children**

**CACFP - 34,494 nutritious  
breakfasts, lunches and  
snacks were served at FS  
EHS centers**

**4 Family Service Specialists completed  
1,226 home visits using  
Parents as Teachers Curriculum.**

- *Visits averaged 1 ½ hours each*



### Federal Requirements for Annual Report

**Results of Audit** – The A133 Single Audit of 2011-2012 was completed with no material findings and was filed with the Federal Clearinghouse in March 2013.

**Results of Federal Review**- The triennial Federal Review was held February 14-18, 2011. The agency received a letter from Ms. Yvette Sanchez Fuentes on April 5, 2011. The letter outlined the strengths of the program and stated that the annual report did not include all required information so the agency was not in compliance with the regulation. The information that had not been supplied (statement of % of enrollment and statement about triennial review) were corrected in the 2010 Annual Report before the group left. In a follow-up desk review in August 2011, with the Regional Office of Head Start, all areas were reported as corrected. A letter was received from Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, Director, and The Office of Head Start in December 2011, stating that “we have closed the previously identified findings. Accordingly, no corrective action is required at this time.”



**Playing is ...Learning!**



**Did you know... other counties in South Carolina are interested in implementing Quality Counts?**

## *Quality Counts Program Information*

### **What is Quality Counts?**

**Quality Counts is a quality rating improvement system for early care and education programs** funded through a partnership with the

**Mary Black Foundation.**

The voluntary system is designed to **assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in childcare programs.** The 18-month pilot began January 2012 and concluded June 2013.

### **What is the Goal of Quality Counts?**

The goal of Quality Counts is to partner with the local child care community to create high quality learning environments that will allow young children to thrive and benefit from optimal care and education experiences.

### **Who is Participating?**

A total of 27 early care and education programs participated in the Quality Counts pilot, representing 30% of the programs in Spartanburg County. At the end of the pilot **100% of the programs made the decision to remain in Quality Counts.** Our future goal is move from 30% to 40% by June 2014.

### **Why Does Quality Counts Matter?**

Quality Counts supports learning environments that promote healthy brain development for young children. **Healthy brain development helps children to arrive at school ready to learn and better prepared for future success.** Healthy, prosperous communities need a strong workforce and engaged citizens; preparing for the future means investing in our young children today.

## *Quality Counts Program Partners*

Quality Counts is a partnership between the Mary Black Foundation and Spartanburg County First Steps. A critical component of Quality Counts is the support from the local community. The **Quality Counts Advisory Council** has become a vital link in the communication and education of to the community. Guidance and feedback from the Advisory Council has helped with the broader implementation of Quality Counts. The Council members offer unique expertise, wisdom, and knowledge of our community that can inform our decisions and continued growth.

### **Funding Partners**

- Mary Black Foundation
- United Way of the Piedmont
- Spartanburg County First Steps

### **Community Partners**

- College Hub
- Institute for Child Success
- Spartanburg Chamber of Commerce
- Spartanburg County Foundation
- Spartanburg Regional Foundation
- Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System
- Spartanburg County School Districts
- Spartanburg County Department of Social Services

### **PROGRAM by the Number\$**

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>FY1011</b>	<b>FY1112</b>
<b>State Funding</b>	\$ 249,099	\$ 255,396
<i>South Carolina First Steps</i>	\$249,099	\$255,396
<b>Federal Funding</b>	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Local Private</b>	\$ 125,642	\$ 188,300
<i>Mary Black Foundation</i>	\$125,642	\$180,300
<i>United Way of the Piedmont</i>	\$0	\$8,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 374,741</b>	<b>\$ 443,696</b>

### **Spartanburg County First Steps**

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# Quality Counts Community Impact



## *Quality Counts for All Children*

The achievement gap, which the National Governors Association calls "one of the most pressing education-policy challenges that states currently face" is almost universally defined as a problem of low-income children and the distance between them and their higher-income counterparts in academic achievement. That gap certainly exists, and absolutely must be addressed. But there is a much larger and more significant gap -- a gap whereby all of our children aren't living up to their full potential and aren't gaining the life skills they need to thrive now and in the future.



***"There is no question in my mind that we won't be able to address the achievement gap for some of our children if we don't address this life skill gap for all of our children."***

**—Ellen Galinsky, Co-founder, CEO of the non-profit research organization, Families and Work Institute**

***"Quality Counts helps to give better quality to all children regardless of income. As a director it helped me to get parents involved in my center."***

**Joye Guyton, owner and director, Precious Little Angels, Pacolet, SC**

## *Quality Counts as a Tool for Parents*

Quality Counts is a quality initiative that is capable of impacting all children. **Inclusive in nature**, Quality Counts includes all types and sizes of early care and education programs representing all of Spartanburg County's seven school districts.

Because all parents want the best for their child, and that includes the best start in life that will set the stage for the future, **a key component in Quality Counts is educating parents about what quality care and education is and how to find it.** Throughout Spartanburg County in doctor's offices, churches, libraries, community centers, and government agencies, brochures and posters from the Quality Counts communication plan can be found. A brochure called **RATE** helps parents to understand four simple steps to choosing quality. A second brochure explains the basic intent of Quality Counts and offers a simple explanation of the **Star Ratings**. **The key is educating parents to be good consumers of their child's earliest education experiences.** More information visit; [www.spartanburgqualitycounts.org](http://www.spartanburgqualitycounts.org)

## *Quality Counts by the Numbers*

- More than **500** child care providers participated in **80** hours of Certified Training
- Quality Counts TA's invested over **1900** hours with participating programs working on quality improvement goals
- More than **1200** children benefited daily from enhanced learning environments

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# Nurse-Family Partnership

**Helping vulnerable first-time moms empowers them to achieve a better life for themselves and their children.**

## Program Description

### NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP (NFP) IN OUR COMMUNITY

Nurse-Family Partnership® (NFP) is an evidence-based, community health program that helps transform the lives of vulnerable mothers pregnant with their first child. Each mother served by NFP is partnered with a registered nurse early in her pregnancy and receives ongoing nurse home visits that continue through her child's second birthday. Independent research proves that communities benefit from this relationship — **every dollar invested in NFP can yield more than five dollars in return.**

### NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP GOALS

1. Improve pregnancy outcomes by helping women engage in good preventive health practices, including thorough prenatal care from their healthcare providers, improving their diets, and reducing their use of cigarettes, alcohol and illegal substances;
2. Improve child health and development by helping parents provide responsible and competent care; and
3. Improve the economic self-sufficiency of the family by helping parents develop a vision for their own future, plan future pregnancies, continue their education and find work.

*In Spartanburg County, Nurse-Family Partnership is implemented through Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System, Home Health Division and Spartanburg County First Steps serves as Fiscal Manager and hosts the Community Advisory Board.*

### Risk Factor Profile:

% Single Mothers	<b>90.9</b>
% < HS Diploma	<b>54.3</b>
% with Developmental Delays	<b>3.5</b>

### Thank you to our partners!

.....DHEC Region 2  
.....Spartanburg Regional Hospital Systems  
.....United Way of the Piedmont  
.....Congregational Nursing Program  
.....Spartanburg Regional Home Care  
.....Spartanburg County First Steps  
.....SC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy  
.....The Duke Endowment  
.....Children's Trust of South Carolina  
.....

## Why NFP Works

NFP is supported by the most extensive research foundation of any maternal and child health program. Three randomized controlled trials in 1997, 1988 and 1994 - which are still being examined today for long-term impact - show consistently proven results in the areas of **improved prenatal health, fewer childhood injuries, fewer subsequent pregnancies, increased intervals between births, increased maternal employment, and improved school readiness.**

## Program Results 2011-12

### Spartanburg County NFP by the Numbers

- ✓ **113** Clients
- ✓ **80** Babies Born (3 Sets of twins)
- ✓ **60** Clients Graduated from Program
- ✓ **3735** Total number of NFP home visits
- ✓ **53** Clients on Waiting List



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# Imagination Library



*By mailing high quality, age-appropriate books directly to children's homes, Dolly Parton wants children to be excited about books and to feel the magic that books can create. She insures that every child in the program will have books, regardless of their family's income.*

## Program History and Description

In 1996, Dolly Parton launched an exciting new effort, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, to benefit the children of her home county in East Tennessee, USA. In the year 2000, Dolly would replicate the program in any community that would partner and support it locally. Spartanburg County School District 1 and 4 were the first in Spartanburg County to bring the program to SC. Spartanburg County was the first county in the nation, outside of several counties in Tennessee, to fully replicate the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The research based, age appropriate books are mailed to children's homes in Spartanburg and supported by the funding efforts of United Way of the Piedmont and recruitment and enrollment by Spartanburg County First Steps.

## Making A Difference

*Marsha and Jimmy Gibbs were the first significant donors to the Imagination Library and continue to support the worthwhile effort today.*

## The Little Engine that Could is the first book a child receives...



## How the Program Works

Any registered child under the age of five living in Spartanburg or Union County receives a free age-appropriate book each month in the mail. While the Dollywood Foundation oversees the selection and delivery of the books and **Spartanburg County First Steps** registers children, it is up to the local community to raise the funds. United Way of the Piedmont serves as the primary fundraiser for the project and is charged with the responsibility of securing **\$30 per child per year to support program costs.**

Anyone who lives in Spartanburg or Union Counties of South Carolina may register their children in this free program.

**Donate:** [www.uwpiedmont.org/imaginationlibrary](http://www.uwpiedmont.org/imaginationlibrary)

**Register Online:** [www.1steps.org](http://www.1steps.org)

## Program Results 2012-13

A recent study of Imagination Library graduates in Spartanburg and Union Counties revealed:

- **81.3% read to their children more frequently**
- **95.9% feel their children's love of reading is enhanced**
- **59.1% of parents feel their children would have access to fewer books without the program**
- **93.3% feel their children are better prepared for school because of Imagination Library**

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# Getting Children Ready for School

## Early Learning ... A Priority in Spartanburg

In collaboration to learn from each other and help change a community of learners, Spartanburg County School District Seven set as a priority an early learning center concept in the Park Hills community.

Principal Wanda Owens-Jackson said ... *"It will help us to get on one chord, as far as serving our early learners. We'll be able to pool our resources and make this a wonderful experience for our early learners."*

Over 20 partnerships were formed to make this early education effort possible including Spartanburg First Steps Early Head Start, the Mary Black Foundation, Boys and Girls Club, ReGenesis Community Health Center, Silver Hill United Methodist Church, Spartanburg County Adult Education Program, Spartanburg County Foundation, Spartanburg Housing Authority, Spartanburg Regional Foundation and others.

## Spartanburg County First Steps Partnership Board

Name	Position	Board Category
Kim Ashby	Spartanburg County School District Two	School District Representative
Laverne Byrd	Retired Teacher	Family Education, Training
Tamara Cook	Spartanburg Regional Healthcare Nurse	Healthcare Provider
Amanda Cox	Teacher/ Early Education	Parent
Wanda Fowler	Middle Tyger Community Center, Executive Director	School District Five Representative
Clarisa Giles	Nurse Family Partnership, Director	Healthcare Provider
Ann Greene	Spartanburg County School district One	School District Representative
Derrick Lawson	Spartanburg Public Library	Public Library
Karyn Lemon	McAbee, Talbot, Halliday (CPA)	Fiscal – Required by EHS
Sarah Love	Childcare, Early Childhood Development	Children, Early Childhood
Mary Mathes	Retired – Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System	Healthcare Provider
Dr. Lindi Metcalf	Spartanburg County School District Six	School District Representative
Karen Neal	Spartanburg County School District Four	School District Representative
Bob Page	Early Childhood Education	Retired Principal
Kay Phillips	Budweiser of Spartanburg/Business	Legislative Appointee
Kelly Pope	Attorney	Legislative Appointee
Sabara Quinn	Spartanburg County School District Seven	School District Representative
Alissa Ritzo – Duncan	County Transportation	Transportation
Phillipa Sellers	Early Childhood Education	Head Start
Cindy Snead	Spartanburg County School District Three	School District Representative
Elaine Sveen, Board Chair	South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind	School Representative
Katie Brophy	Department of Social Services (DSS)	DSS
Catherine Voelker	Department of Health and Environmental Control	DHEC

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**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.

**Local BabyNet Office: Serving Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union**

**Location:**

S.C. School for the Deaf and Blind  
355 Cedar Springs Road  
Spartanburg, SC 29302

**Lead Supervisor: Melissa Swann**

**Office: 864.591.8645**

**Cell: 864.360.4102**

**Main Telephone Line: 864-591-8641**

**BabyNet is South Carolina's interagency early intervention system for infants and toddlers under three years of age with developmental delays, or who have conditions associated with developmental delays.**

BabyNet matches the special needs of infants and toddlers who have developmental delays with the professional resources available within the community. Services are provided in everyday routines, activities and places relevant to the life of the family. BabyNet is funded and regulated through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and managed through South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness.

Anyone (a parent, doctor, caregiver, teacher or friend) can make a referral by the number listed below. The earlier a baby or toddler receives help, the better!

**To make a referral or to get more information call 1-877-621-0865 or send an email to [babynet@scfirststeps.org](mailto:babynet@scfirststeps.org) for assistance**







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.

## 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 Spartanburg County School District 7**

Qualifying children must live in Scholl District Seven 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/2013-14SCFSAApprovedCDEPPProviders.pdf](http://www.scfirststeps.org/4K/2013-14SCFSAApprovedCDEPPProviders.pdf)



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