



# Annual Report

## 2020-2021





## OUR MISSION

The Abbeville County First Steps Mission is to help prepare children for school and to work together to achieve this goal.

## OUR VALUES

The years of early childhood are a critical window of development during which much of human potential is shaped

## 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 MEASURE OF SUCCESS

**INCREASE THE REACH OF Abbeville County FIRST STEPS SERVICES:**

By FY23, the percentage of children in need who are directly served Abbeville County First Steps will increase from 25% to 50%.

## OUR STRATEGIES

Nurturing Parenting Home Visitation

Nurturing Parenting Groups

Nurturing Fathers

Child Care Training

## 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](https://scfirststeps.org/AmeriCorps).

# First Steps successfully gets children ready for school.

## South Carolina

**341,977**  
children under age 6

**46%**  
of young children live in poverty  
or low-income households

Data Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey

In fall 2020, **27%** of entering  
kindergartners were ready.

Data Source: 2020 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Results

Compared to their like peers, children  
who received First Steps services  
were...

**34%** less likely to be chronically  
absent in kindergarten.

**74%** more likely to enter  
kindergarten ready.

Data Source: 2019 External Evaluation of First Steps

## Abbeville County

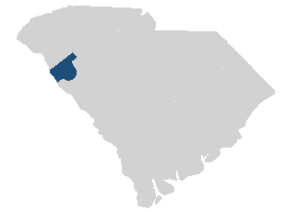
**1,426**  
children under age 6

**55%**  
of young children live in poverty  
or low-income households

Data Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey

In fall 2020, **26%** of entering kindergartners  
in Abbeville County were ready.

Data Source: 2020 Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Results



**910**  
children, adults, and workforce members were served  
by Abbeville County First Steps in FY20-21.

Since inception,  
Abbeville County First Steps  
has leveraged  
**\$1,508,717.22**  
from sources outside of  
state government.

That is  
**\$0.37**  
for every  
state dollar.

School District	# of children <6	% of young children living in poverty or low-income households	# entering kindergartners tested	% ready
Abbeville	1,386	54%	201	26%



# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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**Angela Pruitt**  
Executive Director  
Abbeville County First Steps

Abbeville County First Steps has had a very unusual year with COVID. While things continue to change during this pandemic, ACFS continues to operate the Nurturing Parenting home visitation program through drop offs with the families, Nurturing Parenting Groups, and Nurturing Fathers which has continued to operate through Zoom.. Abbeville County First Steps is planning to move back to Abbeville by January 1, 2022 to continue partnerships within the community.

*Angela Pruitt*

# 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

To strengthen parents and teachers with appropriate practices that develop social, emotional, physical, and cognitive skills of Abbeville County's young children.



# 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:

**Ages and Stages 3 Questionnaire**

**Stress Management for Directors and Staff**

**Calming Activities for Children**

**The Effects of COVID on a Young Child**

**Parents Are Important**

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## TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

**111**

total training attendance

**42**

child care teachers and  
directors served

**6**

number of training  
sessions offered



“I liked the interaction with other centers and the training topics.”

**Prissy, The Playhouse Learning and Daycare Center**





# NURTURING PARENTING PROGRAM



*an evidence-based program*

The Nurturing Parenting Program is a compilation of evidence-based programs designed to offer long term, more comprehensive parenting education. Parents & Their Infants, Toddlers & Preschoolers participate in a Home Visitation Program that utilizes a parenting curriculum that allows more interactive time between parent and child.

## NURTURING PARENTING BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

**20**

families served

**389**

total home visits



“The Nurturing Parenting home visitation program is great for young mother who have children. It is a great program,”

**Khree**







## NURTURING PARENTING PARENT TRAINING



*an evidence-based program*

The Nurturing Parenting Parent Groups are a comprehensive group-based parenting program for parents of young children. Sessions are offered weekly and parents learn skills needed for a healthy nurturing parenting lifestyle. Clients must complete a total of 15 sessions to receive a certificate of program completion. This program is operated inhouse and the goal is to increase Parental involvement and reduce abuse and neglect

### NURTURING PARENTING BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

**22**

families served

**27**

Children served



“I loved it and I feel like I learned a lot. It really helped me learn patience with the transition of my son coming home.”

**Justin**





## NURTURING FATHERS FATHERHOOD



*an evidence-based program*

The Nurturing Fathers program has 15 sessions that range from topics of self nurturing skills, the role of a father, and a time and place for fathering. There is a graduation ceremony at the end of 15 sessions.

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### NURTURING FATHERS BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

**23**

families served

**28**

children served



“Fatherhood is a great program that has assisted me a lot.  
I really learned a lot.”

**Ketorus**





## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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Families receive benefit bank services to receive food, housing, and community support through the local portal services. Community partnerships are valuable to families receiving additional resources and support.

### 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

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## OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2020-2021

**50**

families served  
with local portal  
activities

**100**

total families



“Abbeville County First Steps has been a great partner to the Tracy Jackson Program”

**Mary Lou Edens**





## **OUR SUPPORTERS**

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

### **FUNDING SUPPORT**

Abbeville Rotary Club  
7750 District Grant  
Jane Agan, Board Member  
CSX Transportation  
Abbeville Lions Club  
Cold Springs Enterprises  
Sage Automotive  
Little River Cooperative  
West Carolina Telephone  
Merls Countertops

### **IN-KIND SUPPORT**

Abbeville County Recreation Department  
Christmas Angel Tree  
Goodwill Industries  
Abbeville Adult Education  
Abbeville Presbyterian Church  
Abbeville County School District

## **JOIN US**

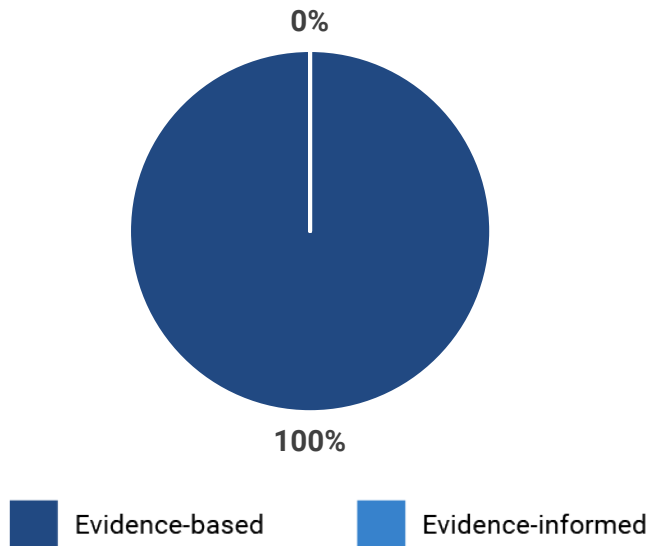
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at  
[scfirststeps.org/abbeville](http://scfirststeps.org/abbeville)



# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



## ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Abbeville County First Steps has leveraged **\$1,508,717.22** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.37** for every state dollar.

	State Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Administrative	\$6,762	\$520.00	\$1,316	\$9,046
Core Functions	19,762	\$398	\$23,010	\$48,055
Nurturing Parenting Home Visitation	\$64,124	\$661	\$34,133	\$104,122
Nurturing Parenting Groups	\$44,124	\$3,213	\$8,380	\$63,528
Nurturing Parenting-Fatherhood	\$47,603	\$5,348	\$12,004	\$74,204
Childcare Training	\$17,721	\$88	\$18,721	\$37,495
Totally Expenses	\$200,000	\$9,767	\$97,210	\$336,454



# LEADERSHIP

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Suffx.	First Name	Last Name	Title	Organization	Board Position
Dr.	Charles	Costner	Principal	Abbeville High School	Finance Chair
Mrs.	Mary Jane	Trainor	Retired – Lander University		Early Childhood Chair
Mrs.	Jane	Agan	United Christian Ministries		Member
Mrs.	Mary Lou	Edens	Tracy Jackson Summer Food Program		Secretary
Mr.	Lee	Logan	Retired		Vice Chair
Mr.	Henry	Green	Newspaper Editor	Press and Banner	Board Chair
Mrs.	Sarah	Kennerly	Guardian Ad Litem		Member
Mrs.	Ursula	Best	CPS Supervisor	Abbeville DSS	Member
Mrs.	Mary	Stackhouse	Regional Supervisor	Abbeville Health Department	Member
Mrs.	Amy	Glover	Center Coordinator		Member
Mr.	Joe	Bryson		New Life Worship Center	Member
Mr.	Lou	Paradis	Retired-Business Community		Member
Mrs.	Cynthia	Kennedy	Calhoun Falls Police Chief	Calhoun Falls Police Department	Member
Mrs.	Brenda	Anderson	Nurse	Abbeville Home Health	Member
Mrs.	Cathy	Ricketts	Owner of the Playhouse	Playhouse Learning and Daycare Center	Member
Mrs.	Corrina	Gambrell	Pastor	Rocky River Presbyterian Church	Member
Mrs.	Millie	Ricketts	Principal	Long Cane Primary	Member
Mrs.	Rita	Gamble	Retired-teacher		Member
Mrs.	Adrienne	Padner	Adult Education	Abbeville School District	Member
Mrs.	Melissa	Depung	Manager	Ingles	Member
Mr.	Daniel	Crawford	Principal		Member
Mrs.	Janet	Vandiver	Retired/Volunteer	Abbeville County School District	Member
Mrs.	Connie	Normand	Nurse	Free Clinic (United Ministries)	Member
Mrs.	Mary	Elizabeth	Land	Abbeville County Library	Member

## CONTACT US

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**SCFIRSTSTEPS.ORG**