

WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.



Parent-Child Home

Imagination Library

Countdown to Kindergarten

Child Care Training

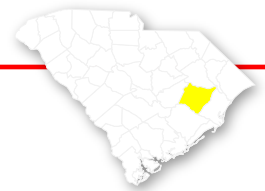
Annual Report

2015-16



OUR VISION:

Every South Carolina child will arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed.



By The Numbers

Indicator	SC	Williamsburg County
Children Under Five	289,990	1,724
Children In Poverty	26.4%	49.3%
3 rd Graders Below Standard in Reading	21.1%	39.1%
Births to Mothers With Less Than a High School Diploma	15.7%	15.2%

KIDS COUNT data provided by Children's Trust

- Since inception, Williamsburg County First Steps has leveraged **\$2,055,648** from sources outside state government. **That's \$.43 for every dollar received.**
- **621 hours of support and guidance** were provided to 29 families in our Parent-Child Home Program.
- **Childcare professionals received 34 hours** of technical assistance for early care best practices.
- Improved parent awareness of kindergarten expectations through **114 hours of home visits through the Countdown to Kindergarten Program.**
- **Total Children Served in FY16: 484**

Williamsburg County First Steps
 500 North Academy Street, Building
 Phone: (843)355-1031

Board Chair

Ophelia McClary Starks

opheliamccclary@aol.com

http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us/pages/WCSD/Department/First_Steps

Williamsburg County First Steps
Carletta Scott Isreal
Executive Director

Williamsburg County First Steps Partnership Board is proud of the many successes and collaborative partnerships that have been established to serve children and their families more efficiently and effectively in Williamsburg County. These collaborative efforts can be seen through our programs to include Parent-Child Home, Imagination Library, Countdown to Kindergarten and Child Care Training. The programs provide services to children and assist parents in getting their children ready for school. In addition, Williamsburg County First Steps has increased the quality of services available to children and families using research and data.

Through the SC Budget and Control Board's Office of Research and Statistics, programs and results are tracked longitudinally. In addition to independent reviews show that First Steps programs work with 66% of parents showing significant improvements in skills after participation in a First Steps parent education program. Similar results for child care providers participating in First Steps' quality enhancement efforts showing significant improvements in all measured domains of quality.

Williamsburg County First Steps will continue its efforts in providing high quality services to children and their families for all children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



Quality Child Care



Early Education



School Transition

County Programs

- Parent-Child Home
- Imagination Library
- Countdown to Kindergarten
- Child Care Training

State Programs

- BabyNet
- First Steps 4k

What We Do

Each of the six color blocks of the First Steps logo represents a core area of service, outlining our comprehensive strategy to prepare children for long-term school success.

With **measurable outcomes across each of its six school readiness strategy areas**, First Steps is getting results.



Healthy Start

We begin with a focus on providing a healthy start to life. This includes prenatal and post-partum services for both mother and baby. In 2007, First Steps collaborated with key philanthropic and agency partners to bring Nurse-Family Partnership to SC having a significant impact on reducing premature births and Medicaid costs.



Quality Childcare

Quality childcare starts with quality childcare providers. Our quality enhancement and training strategies lead to improved teacher-student interaction, which research shows has a significant impact on a child’s development and success in school.



Family Strengthening

Our home visitation strategies, such as Parents as Teachers, Parent-Child Home and Early Steps to School Success, are helping parents understand their responsibilities to care for and be positive models for their children. As a result of First Steps’ intervention and parenting support, 66% of clients initially assessed at “low” levels of parenting have achieved moderate or high levels of parenting skill.



Early Education

Private-public partnerships through First Steps 4K have led to significant cost efficiencies in the delivery of publicly funded 4K. One recent analysis suggests First Steps is achieving comparable results, without the need for costly capital construction, for 80 cents on the dollar.



Early Intervention

According to recent federal evaluations, outcomes for clients participating in BabyNet early intervention programs are above national averages. BabyNet matches the special needs of infants and toddlers who have disabilities and/or developmental delays with customized, community-based resources.



School Transition

Each of the corresponding blocks of services leads ultimately to the goal of transitioning children successfully to school. Programs like Countdown to Kindergarten and From Day One to Grade One are ultimately preparing children for school success.

Based on the needs of our community, Williamsburg County First focuses its investments in Quality Childcare, Family Strengthening, Early Education, and School Transition.

Imagination Library



Children’s reading scores improve dramatically when parents are involved in helping them learn to read.

Program Description

According to the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, the peak period for brain development related to language is around **nine months of age. One of the easiest and most effective ways to build this capacity in young children’s brains is to read to them.**

Williamsburg First Steps is the local sponsor of Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which provides free, age-appropriate books to children age birth to 5 years. Operated by the Dollywood Foundation, Imagination Library is currently in more than 1,600 communities internationally and mails books to about 700,000 children each month.

Children who register with Williamsburg First Steps receive one book per month by mail through the month of their fifth birthday. Each book is carefully selected by a committee of educational specialists.



Williamsburg County First Steps has provided free age appropriate books to children for the past 11 years funded by citizens and businesses from the county.

Imagination Library by the Numbers, 2015-16

Children Served	484
Books Given to Children 0-5	6051

This year, our Imagination Library program:

- ✓ Provided one book per month to 484 children who were referred from the Parent-Child Home Program, School District, First Steps 4K Programs, Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), and parents
- ✓ Received donations from community members, board members, local government, faith-based community, citizens, Williamsburg County School District, and local sororities in support of children’s literacy



Thank you to our partners!

- Williamsburg County School District
- Wells Fargo
- Farmers Telephone Cooperative
- Williamsburg County Retired Teachers Association

Williamsburg County First Steps
 PO Box 825, Kingstree, SC 29556
 843-355-1031
http://www.wcsd.k12.sc.us/pages/WCSD/Department/First_Steps

Child Care Training

Those who care for young children need high-quality, accessible, and affordable professional development.

Program Description

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce.

First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Best practices in training include not only the training itself, but follow-up in the classroom.

Trainings are conveniently located in the community.
K. Cooper, Former Center Director

Child Care Training Sponsored by Williamsburg First Steps, 2015-16

Topic:	Sessions:
Child Growth and Development	Three Sessions
Curriculum	Two Sessions
Child Guidance	Three Sessions
Professional Development	Three Sessions
Blood-Borne Pathogens	Two Sessions
Health and Safety	Four Sessions
Program Administration	Five Sessions



Over 85 child care providers from Williamsburg and surrounding counties attended the 2016 Week of the Young Child Conference held at Williamsburg Technical College in Kingstree.

Training by the Numbers, 2015-16

Total Training Attendance	506
Child Care Teachers and Directors Served	84
Number of Training Sessions Offered	16

This year, our Training program provided:

- ✓ 84 early childhood staff attended high quality training
- ✓ 45.5 hours of certified training and 1 hour of registered training for staff to meet annual re-certification requirements
- ✓ 23 follow-up visits with training participants to help put training into practice

Thank you to our partners!

- South Carolina Center for Child Care and Career Development
- Williamsburg County School District
- Williamsburg Technical College

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Bringing parents and teachers together as partners sets the foundation for success in school.

Program Description

Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a summer home visitation model connecting rising kindergartners and their families with their future teachers. The program is designed:

- ✓ to forge strong and lasting home-school relationships,
- ✓ to acquaint children and families with the state and classroom expectations to increase the likelihood of school success,
- ✓ to increase parent involvement in the early grades (particularly in hard-to-reach communities), when children's learning is foundational for life success; and
- ✓ to increase public awareness of the importance of school readiness and provide ways for parents and communities to impact children's early school success.

Countdown to Kindergarten integrates all of the following:

Home Visitation. Teachers make six visits over the summer to the homes of participating students and families. Children and families are introduced to actual materials used in kindergarten and are given a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit to keep.

Learning Celebration. The last visit is a "field trip" to the school where the child will attend class in the fall.

Public Awareness. Throughout the summer, First Steps releases tips to media to help parents and caregivers get children ready for kindergarten.

*CTK by the Numbers, Summer 2015

Children Served	19
Families Served	18
Home/School Visits	114

**CTK program data is for June-August 2015, whereas CTK fiscal data includes expenditures from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.*



CTK gave my son a jump start to kindergarten!

The Singletary Family

This year, our Countdown to Kindergarten program:

- ✓ Increased the amount of time parents spent reading to children by 100%
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, 100% of CTK children performed as well as, or better than, their fellow students in approaches to learning and inquiry; emotional and social development; physical development; and self-help and motor skills during the 2015-16 school year.
- ✓ According to kindergarten teachers, 50% of CTK parents were more involved than other parents in their child's education in the areas of attending open house, school activities, joining school and parent groups; maintaining contact with the teacher; and volunteering in the classroom, school and field trips.

Thank you to our partners!

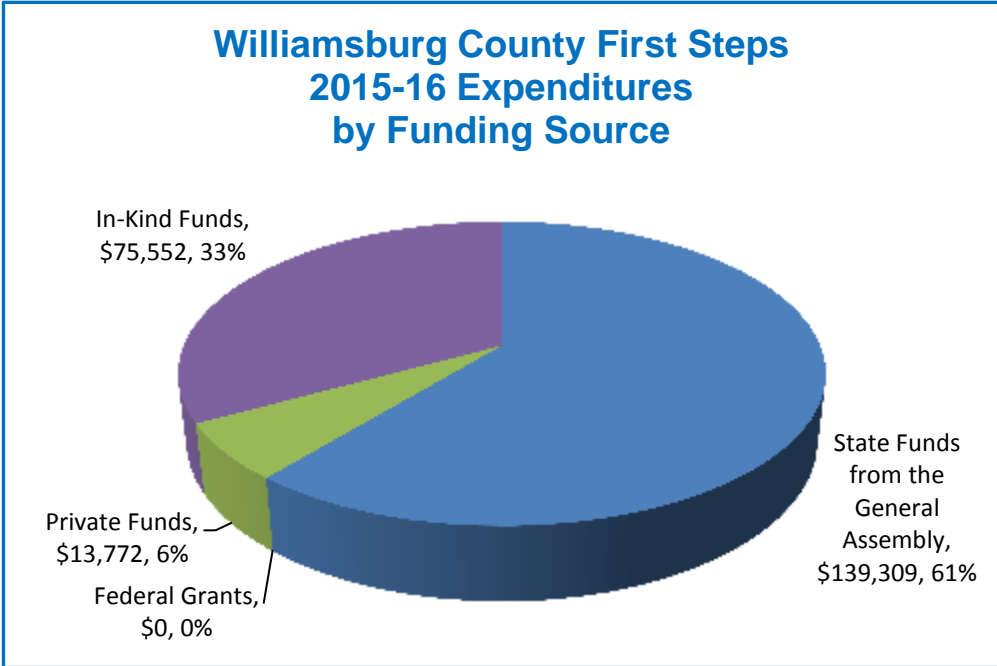
Williamsburg County School District
 Kaplan Early Learning Company

Williamsburg County First Steps

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Financial Impact



Total 2015-16 Expenditures: \$200,953

State Funds Leveraged in 2015-16*: 44%

*Percentage of state dollars matched by additional federal, private, and/or in-kind funds

2015-16 Expenditures by Strategy

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2015-16 Expenditures
Parent-Child Home Program	\$44,307	\$0	\$0	\$47,875	\$92,182	46%
Imagination Library	\$5,176	\$0	\$4,483	\$0	\$9,659	5%
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$6,278	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,278	3%
Child Care Training	\$24,956	\$0	\$5,187	\$0	\$30,143	15%
Other Programs - NFP	\$0	\$0	\$125	\$0	\$125	0%
Program Support	\$38,369	\$0	\$3,977	\$0	\$42,346	21%
Administrative Support	\$20,220	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,220	10%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$139,306	\$0	\$13,772	\$47,875	\$200,953	

Unaudited numbers for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016

Since inception, Williamsburg County First Steps has leveraged \$6,867,508 from sources outside of state government. That's 43 cents for every state dollar.

Parent-Child Home Program Field Trip to EdVenture Children's Museum

Parent-Child Home Program

Williamsburg County First Steps in collaboration with Williamsburg County School District Parent-Child Home Program traveled to Columbia, SC to EdVenture Children's Museum on Friday, May 20, 2016. Over sixty parents, children, and staff visited the museum to explore many hands on exhibits to spark the curiosity of young children.

First, the group had the opportunity to participate in an educational session entitled Astonishing Animals. Children were able to put their knowledge to the test as they explored how different, or similar, animals can be. In addition to exploring animals of the deep blue sea, trek through the flourishing forest, and even cuddled up with a similar furry friend from home. Next, parents were actively engaged with their child in a self-guided tour of the museum. The program participants explored the largest 10 year old boy named Eddie. Children were able to listen to Eddie's stomach growl, his heart beat and much more. Also, families were able to explore the following exhibits as well:

body detectives, wags and whiskers, maker works, my backyard, and world of work. Finally, the trip concluded with a delicious and nutritious lunch at McDonald's across the street from the children's museum.



Children listened to a story during Astonishing Animals educational session at the museum.

Children and parents were thrilled to enter the museum to see the world largest 10 year old boy. The children were even more excited to explore Eddie as they listened to his stomach growl, his heart beat and air passed through his lungs.

2016 Week of the Young Child Celebrated in Williamsburg County

Child Care Training and Professional Development

More than eighty five child care providers throughout Williamsburg and surrounding counties attended the 2016 Weekend of the Young Child Conference held at Williamsburg Technical College on Saturday, April 16, 2016. The Week of the Young Child was held from Sunday, April 10 to Saturday, April 16, 2016. As part of the national Week of the Young Child celebrated across the country, Williamsburg County honored young children and all those who made a difference in children’s lives.

“All young children need and deserve high-quality early learning experiences that will prepare them for life, and Williamsburg County has a great opportunity to do our part to help young children,” said Carletta S. Isreal, Executive Director. “Week of the Young Child™ was a time for Williamsburg County to recognize that Early Years are Learning Years® for all young children.”



Patricia Lewis conducted several training sessions during the Week of the Young Child Conference.

During the week of April 10-16, 2016, Williamsburg County First Steps in collaboration with Williamsburg County School District, Department of Social Services, Williamsburg County Library, and Williamsburg Technical College hosted several events. The first day was Sunday, April 12th, Pass the Pan. Local churches were asked to collect a donation to sponsor children to receive the Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library books. The second day was on Friday, April 15th, the Awards and Recognition Banquet and Opening Session of Mini Conference. The final day was on Saturday, April 16th, the Kids Jamboree, continuation of the Mini Conference, and Taste of the Pee Dee held at Williamsburg Technical College

Local Youth Donated Books as a part of Williamsburg Technical College Book Drive for First Steps

Williamsburg Technical College Phi Theta Kappa under the leadership of Ms. Judy Coker, former board member, and the Early Childhood Department under the leadership of Dr. Early Walker-Kelly held a book drive during the month of March 2016 to benefit Williamsburg County First Steps. The organizations asked the community to donate new or gently used children’s books by March 31, 2016. The college collected and presented First Steps with more than 3,000 books as a part of the Week of the Young Child Conference held at Williamsburg Technical College. Also, R. J. Blakely was presented with a certificate and recognized

for donating fifty of his own books to the book drive. His mother shared that he wanted to share his books and the love of reading with other children.



Pictures from Left to Right: Gwendolyn McFadden, board member; Kimberly Blakely, RJ’s mother; R. J. Blakely, donor, Dr. Earlene Walker-Kelly, Department Head for Early Childhood Development, Carletta Scott Isreal, Executive Director; Ernestine Young, board members; and Adrian Dukes, board member.

Support Williamsburg First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer.

Board Continued to Serve Children and Families through Innovative Programs

Williamsburg County First Steps Board Members continues to advocate for children and garnering the support needed to assist families in getting their children ready for school. The board has continued to implement the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP), the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL), Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) Program and Child Care Training. The board has partnered with Williamsburg County School District (WCSD) to ensure children are engaging in literacy experiences prior to entering the K-12 school system through the PCHP. As well as sponsoring more than 60 children to receive books through the DPIL along with community partners. Building relationships and understanding the expectations of kindergarten has fostered the board's energy to work diligently with WCSD to implement the CTK Program in schools where the district saw children with the most need before the first day of kindergarten. Evidence-based "best practices" in early childhood education is critical in children's child growth and development for school readiness. The board understands the importance of providing certified training in the county to support and develop the skills of the most important early childhood professional, our child care providers. It is through this level of understanding and advocacy that WCFS Board Members are committed and dedicated to ensuring each and every child in Williamsburg County is ready for school.

Williamsburg County First Steps Partnership Board, 2015-16

Name	Position	Board Category
Joe Castle, Jr.	Retired SCDJJ	Family Education, Training and Support Provider
Dr. Doretha M. Cooper, Chaplain	Retired Educator	Faith Community
Adrian D. Dukes	Law Office of Ronnie A. Sabb, LLC.	Business Community
Angela B. Fulton	Retired Educator	Pre K/ Primary Educator
Ella Fulton	Lane Head Start	Childcare/Early Childhood Development
Dr. Janice M. Gamble	Retired Educator	Legislative Appointee
Jannice P. Gamble	Hope Health Care	Healthcare Provider
La-Dine' Williams Gamble, Parliamentarian	Williamsburg County School District	Legislative Appointee
Vastine S. Graham	Waccamaw Center for Mental Health	Healthcare Provider
Ernest J. Jarrett, Vice Chair	Jenkinson, Jarrett & Kellahan, P.A.	Legislative Appointee
Janie McCrea	Wells Fargo Bank	Business Community
Keisha L. McDonald	Self-Employed	Childcare/Early Childhood Development
Gwendolyn McFadden	Wilson's Daycare	Childcare/Early Childhood Development
Josa Epps McIntosh	Unemployed	Faith Community
Kimberly Matthews, Treasurer	Williamsburg County Library	Legislative Mandated Member
Nathaniel Myers, Jr.	Williamsburg County Department on Alcohol and Drug Abuse	Legislative Appointee
Aisha Singletary	Department of Health and Environment Control (DHEC)	Legislative Mandated Member
Jeff Singleton	Williamsburg County EMD	Local Government
Latetia Staggers	Williamsburg County School District/Childcare	Pre K/ Primary Educator
Ophelia McClary Starks, Board Chair	South Carolina First Steps	Non-Profit Organization
Wilhelmina Whitfield	Lane Head Start, Director	Legislative Mandated Member
Eric T. Williams, Secretary	Williamsburg County Disabilities & Special Needs Board	Non-Profit Organization
Ernestine Young	Williamsburg County School District	Legislative Mandated Member

Getting children ready for school.

The Goals of First Steps

- (1) provide parents with access to the support they might seek and want** to strengthen their families and to promote the optimal development of their preschool children;
- (2) increase comprehensive services** so children have reduced risk for major physical, developmental, and learning problems;
- (3) promote high-quality preschool programs** that provide a healthy environment that will promote normal growth and development;
- (4) provide services** so all children receive the protection, nutrition, and health care needed to thrive in the early years of life so they arrive at school ready to succeed; and
- (5) mobilize communities** to focus efforts on providing enhanced services to support families and their young children so as to enable every child to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.

-- Section 59-152-30



Interested parents can contact any participating 4K providers to complete an application. To view a list of participating First Steps 4K providers, visit:

<http://scfirststeps.org/4k>



BabyNet

South Carolina's Early Intervention System

BabyNet in Williamsburg County:
LOCAL SPOE PHONE # - 843-839-5045

<http://scfirststeps.org/babynet/>

Thank you donors!

Funding Support

Greenville Technical College: \$2,000
 Jenkinson, Jarrett & Kellahan, P.A.: \$100
 Redmond-Richardson Funeral Home: \$125
 Anderson Brothers Bank: \$100
 Cornerstone Support Services, LLC: \$100
 Wells Fargo Foundation: \$1,000
 Kimberly Matthews: \$80
 Bethel United Methodist Church: \$100
 Michelline Cooper Williams: \$30
 Greater St. Mark AME: \$150
 Cedar Swamp Methodist Church: \$50
 FTC: \$250
 Bank of Greeleyville: \$100
 Dotherine Williams: \$30
 Barbara Parrott: \$130
 Hemingway Elementary School: \$50
 Nazareth AME Church: \$100
 McCall-Thomas: \$500
 Broad River: \$200
 Coastal Electric: \$450
 Mid Carolina: \$100
 CEE-US: \$1,000
 Newberry: \$100
 Tri County: \$100
 Edisto: \$100
 DSM: \$350

Funding Support

Carletta S. Isreal: \$90
 Linda B. Huell: \$30
 Willie A. Bartelle: \$30
 Regina S. McKnight: \$30
 Emma R. Murray: \$30
 Julia B. McFadden: \$30
 Selma H. Conyers: \$30
 Angela B. Fulton: \$80
 Fannie A. Gibson: \$30
 Emma F. Cooper: \$30
 Lillie C. McGill: \$30
 Delores Giles: \$30
 Janice M. Gamble: \$205
 Ophelia McClary Starks: \$80
 Doretha Cooper: \$60
 Janie McCrea: \$80
 Carrie White: \$30
 Joe Castle, Jr.: \$80
 Mid Carolina: \$100
 York Electric: \$100
 Shealy Electric: \$100
 Palmetto Electric: \$100
 Newberry Elec. Coop: \$100
 Marlboro Elec. Coop: \$100
 Sumter Utilities: \$500
 Broad River Coop.: \$100
 Aiken Electric: \$100

Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$139,309
(through South Carolina First Steps)
 Absolute Total Care: \$750
 Williamsburg County Council: \$1,300
 Delta Tau Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority: \$50
 Fulton's Septic Tank Service, LLC: \$25
 Nan Ya Plastics Corp., America: \$250
 Lambda Theta Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority: \$250
 Law Office of Ronnie Sabb: \$250
 Stephanie Pendergrass- Good Samaritan: \$30
 Williamsburg County Retired Teachers Association: \$150
 Kingstree-Lake City Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority: \$100
 Williamsburg County Development Board: \$530
 Friendship United Methodist Church: \$340.81

In-Kind Support

Williamsburg County School District - \$48,201
 Williamsburg Technical College - \$16,397

How your support helps children in Williamsburg County:

- ✓ \$30 provides a young child a book per month for one year!
- ✓ \$250 provides a child toys and books for 46 home visits!
- ✓ \$327 provides 6 homes visits to a child by his/her kindergarten teacher prior to the start of a new school year

HOW TO GIVE: Please make check or money order payable to Williamsburg County First Steps and mail to PO Box 825, Kingstree, SC 29556

Save the Date!

- **Annual Meeting** – Tuesday, October 11, 2016 at 6:00 PM in the Hemingway Elementary School Cafeteria
- **Annual Board Training and Orientation** – Saturday, November 5, 2016 from 9:00 AM to 12 noon in the Williamsburg County School District Annex (WCSDA) Staff Development Room
- **Week of the Young Child Banquet & Conference** – Friday, April 28, 2017 at 6:00 PM in the WCSDA Cafeteria
- **Week of the Young Child Conference** – Saturday, April 29, 2017 from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM at Williamsburg Technical College (WTC)
- **Kids Jamboree and Taste of the Pee Dee** – Saturday, April 29, 2017 from 12 noon to 2:00 PM at WTC

Support Williamsburg First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer!