

Annual Report

2019-2020

McCORMICK COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.

THE NEED

IN MCCORMICK COUNTY:

277

children under age 5

73.6%

of young children live in poverty
or low-income households

44%

of kindergartners are considered "not
ready" for school



THREE MOST COMMON RISK FACTORS:

1. SNAP Eligibility
2. Single Parent Household
3. TANF Eligibility

OUR MISSION

To improve the healthy development and school readiness of preschool children and their families by fostering collaboration and supporting quality early childhood programs that meet the needs of our children and families.

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 IMPACT

716

number of children and adults served by
McCormick County First Steps in 2019-
2020

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.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



NaToya Cartledge
Executive Director
McCormick County First Steps

The year 2019-2020 has been the year of change for McCormick County First Steps. The former Executive Director, Ruth Detrick, retired after 14 years of service to the children of McCormick County. I am grateful to the Board of Trustees for providing me the opportunity to lead this organization.

The spread of COVID-19 has impacted our daily lives and livelihoods in ways that are unprecedented. In the midst of a pandemic that forced activity into lockdown, we were able to be innovative with continuing services to our community. This would have been impossible without the continued support and contributions of our partners and collaborators.

This year has been a testament that we turn challenges into opportunities!

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



Fredrick Fuller, Jr.

Chair

McCormick County First Steps Board of Trustees

2020 has been a year of great challenges and real change not only to our nation but McCormick County First Steps as well. With the rise of COVID-19 epidemic the challenge to provide services to our children and their families has been a test for our program and staff. We have had to think outside the box and be innovative to deliver the services to our kids and families they desperately need. Our staff have risen to the occasion and performed magnificently during this health crisis. As we continue to strive to expand and improve the educational opportunities of some of the youngest among us we will continue to reach out to our community to join us in our fight to provide our children with a helping and guiding hand in assisting them with their First Steps on the road to a healthy and productive life.

“The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education.” – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white background, reading "Fredrick Fuller, Jr." The signature is written in a cursive style.

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 GOALS

In support of the Profile of the Ready Kindergartner, our approach is focused on advancing McCormick County toward the following strategic goals:

- Increase the number of families with the capacity to support their child's healthy development, particularly among underserved populations.
- Ensure children's emotional, social, cognitive, and physical development through high quality programs and enrichment activities
- Enhance leadership development and capacity building in child care providers and teachers to ensure we are prepared to meet the unique, individual needs of all students.

PIVOTING FOR COVID-19

When the coronavirus pandemic forced South Carolina to shut down in March 2020, McCormick County First Steps quickly pivoted to provide much-needed support to young children, their families and child care providers.

Our work has never been more critical. While children are at low risk for the serious health effects of the virus, the crisis is having a profound impact on their wellbeing and development. For children of color and low-income communities, these impacts are expected to be even more damaging. That is why McCormick County First Steps is enhancing our efforts to provide parents and caregivers with the services and resources they need to weather this storm.

IMPACT ON MCCORMICK COUNTY

HEALTH

Through June 30, McCormick County had a total of **18** confirmed COVID-19 cases and **2** COVID-19 deaths.

JOB LOSS

168.9%

increase in unemployment, 2019-2020

CHILD CARE

26.7%

children under 5 in McCormick County lived in a child care desert* before COVID-19

98.2%

children under 5 in McCormick County lived in a child care desert as of May 28, 2020



During COVID-19, McCormick County First Steps purchased childcare materials for Durant Family Daycare. Durant Family Daycare was still providing services to children and their families during this crisis and McCormick County First Steps wanted to be a valuable resource.

Pictured are some of the children enjoying some of the materials purchased!

*The Center for American Progress defines a child care desert as a ZIP code with at least 30 children under the age of 5 and either no child care centers or so few centers that there are more than three times as many children under age 5 as there are spaces in centers.



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 2019-2020

3

children served

20

number of home
visits provided

“ The Nurse Family Partnership program is appreciative to have the support of McCormick County First Steps. ”

Georgia Deal, Director of Early Childhood Services





PARENTS AS TEACHERS



an evidence-based program

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a home visiting program designed to build strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed. PAT services include:



Personal visits from a parent educator at least twice monthly



Monthly group connections with other PAT families



Screenings and assessments to identify developmental concerns



Connections to outside resources that families may need to succeed

PAT GOES VIRTUAL

Due to COVID-19, Parents as Teachers (PAT) National provided guidance for affiliates to deliver virtual services via interactive video conferencing and phone calls. South Carolina PAT affiliates rose to the occasion by engaging families in creative and meaningful ways while continuing to meet the Essential Requirements of implementing a quality PAT program during the pandemic.

PAT IN MCCORMICK COUNTY 2019-2020

15

families served

346

total home visits

McCormick County's 2019 – 2020 APR data demonstrates fidelity to all of the Essential Requirements of the Parents As Teachers model, even during these unprecedented times. --- Christy



Roberts, Manager of Implementation Support
Parents As Teachers National Center



IMAGINATION LIBRARY



an evidence-based program

As the local affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, we provide free, high-quality books to children from birth until age five, no matter their family's income.

Children enrolled in our Imagination Library program receive one book per month by mail. Each title is selected by a panel of early childhood literacy experts, who are responsible for choosing books that meet the age-specific developmental needs of young children.

IMAGINATION LIBRARY BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

100

children served

1056

books distributed

Books are 100% free to children in McCormick County because McCormick County First Steps secures the funds to cover the cost of books and shipping fees.

Sponsor a child for just \$25 a year.





CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



an evidence-based program

For many families in McCormick County, the cost of quality child care is out of reach. Our scholarship program makes payments to child care providers to care for children from low-income families so their parents can return to school or work.

All children who receive scholarships are enrolled in McCormick County School of Early Education. They also attend our Library Literacy program. McCormick First Steps offers scholarships to families enrolled in our Nurse Family Partnership program, our Parents as Teachers program as well as income-eligible children whose parent attends school or works at least 20 hours per week.

SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

18

number of children
served

1

number of providers
served

18

number of
developmental
screenings provided

100% the money paid to child care providers goes back into our local economy to benefit the citizens of McCormick County.



LIBRARY LITERACY PROGRAM



an evidence-informed program

To improve our children's literacy skills, we provide story time twice each month. At each session each child receives a book to take home and keep. To further increase pre-reading skills, twice each month a music teacher provides music, songs, and rhymes. In addition art projects and special events are provided as part of this program.

LIBRARY LITERACY BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

62

families served

2

providers served



Ms. Heather from the McCormick Arts Council at the Keturah providing an art lesson to the children in the childcare center.



EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM



an evidence-based program

This program provides quality child care for infants and toddlers. We focus on the most at-risk children, especially those children with multiple risk factors and developmental delays.

We use certified child care providers, who continually increase their knowledge of early childhood development through training each year.

EARLY EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN UNDER FOUR BY THE NUMBERS 2019-2020

23

children served

1

providers served



McCormick County's Executive Director, Director of McCormick County School of Early Education, and child care providers at the McCormick County School of Early Education participating in the Christmas parade.



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, McCormick County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in McCormick 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 2019-2020

343

Families Served in
Community
Education &
Outreach

48

Families Served in
Local Portal

“ We are thankful that an organization such as First Steps is present and is providing local children with a good foundation for entering school. ”

Good Shepherd Catholic Church Women's Club



OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

Good Shepherd Women's Club \$200

Lutheran Church by the Lake \$300

McCormick First Steps Fundraisers \$1689

McCormick Lion's Club \$500

Walmart #8115 \$1000

IN-KIND SUPPORT

McCormick School District

Carolina Health Centers, Inc.

McCormick Lions Club

JOIN US

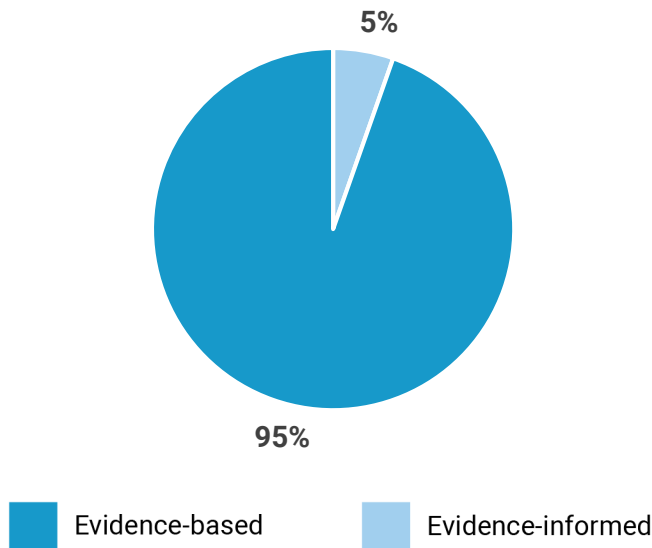
For more information about our partnership visit our website at:



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, McCormick County First Steps has leveraged **\$2,677,164.58** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.78** for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$30,417		\$972	\$20,845	\$52,234
Library Based Literature	\$8,621				\$8,621
Dolly Parton Imagination Library	\$2,300		\$333		\$2,633
Nurse Family Partnership	\$8,044			\$1,875	\$9,919
Early Education for Children Under Four	\$83,574		\$1,011	\$74,113	\$158,699
Scholarships	\$38,485				\$38,485
Partnerships & Community Education	\$6,339	\$362	\$85		\$6,786
Administrative Support	\$13,549		\$1,149		\$14,698
Total Expenses	\$191,329	\$362	\$3,550	\$96,833	\$292,075



LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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STAFF

NaToya Cartledge, Executive Director

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