



ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



## OUR MISSION

To collaborate with the community to holistically support all preschool aged children and their families to ensure all preschool aged children are ready to succeed in school

## OUR VALUES

Support, Equity

Innovation, Collaboration

## 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 MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Increase availability of high-quality early care and education opportunities offered by First Steps

More children arrive to kindergarten ready for success.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

Children Health and Safety

Increase Access

Strengthen Interagency Accountability and

Collaboration

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





# FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of McCormick County First Steps:



**243 children**  
directly served  
in McCormick County



**43 parents & caregivers**  
received direct services and support to be their child's first and most important teacher



**2500+ books**  
delivered to families with young children



**\$1 = \$2.09**

McCormick County First Steps leveraged \$217,229 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$1.09 for every state dollar invested

## PROVEN RESULTS

A 2019 study found that children who received First Steps local partnership services were:



**74% more likely**  
to score at the highest level on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment



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

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

---



**NaToya Cartledge**  
Executive Director  
McCormick County First Steps

Over the past year, McCormick County First Steps’ staff have continued to step forward in unimaginable circumstances. Our staff and Board of Directors have remained dedicated to protecting our health and safety — while simultaneously balancing the same challenges in our personal lives. This report not only summarizes McCormick County First Steps’ programmatic and fiscal achievements for 2022, but it also demonstrates our resolve to promote the healthy well-being of preschool aged children and their families.

As always, thank you to our dedicated Board of Directors, partners, and donors; without you there would not be a McCormick County First Steps. It is my continued honor to work for this great organization and county!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "NaToya Cartledge".

# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

---



**Fredrick Fuller Jr**

Chair

McCormick County First Steps Board of Trustees

We are living through an unprecedented moment in time, but we have an equal commitment to responding to the needs of our preschool children and their families. While the needs of our county's youngest residents have never been greater, daily we see the impact of our donors' generosity and dedication of our staff.

To all our donors, partners, and others who have let us share in their generosity, and on behalf of our dedicated and talented Board, I offer my sincere gratitude.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white background with horizontal lines. The signature is cursive and reads "Fredrick Fuller Jr".

# 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

All preschool aged children in McCormick County will have the opportunity to reach their full potential.





# CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



*an evidence-based program*

Access to quality early care and education improves school readiness and long-term academic outcomes, and provides parents with the opportunity to work or attend school. Through First Steps and DSS-funded child care scholarships, eligible children receive tuition-free enrollment at quality child care centers.

## SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

**20**

number of children served

**2**

number of providers served

**20**

number of developmental screenings provided



McCormick First Steps, McCormick Headstart, and scholarship recipients participated in the county Christmas parade.



# 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 2021-2022

**106**

children served

**1154**

books distributed



The books my grandbabies receive are wonderful. They enjoy picking out a book at bedtime so Gigi can read it. Having the books come to our home gives us bonding time. And it also helps my babies learn new things and new words.



**MIRIAM HILL, GRANDMOTHER OF GRANDCHILDREN  
ENROLLED IN DPIL**





## LIBRARY BASED INITIATIVE



*an evidence-informed program*

Our library programs connect librarians with child care programs and preschool classrooms, providing books, storytelling, and staff training. Our library programs are designed to promote early language and literacy skills.

### LIBRARY BASED INITIATIVE BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

**48**

children served

**2**

providers & schools served

**550**

book distributed



Sharon Bordeaux, Children's Librarian at the county library, visits the childcare center twice monthly to provide storytelling, music and art lessons, and other activities such as having a magician to visit!



## NURTURING PARENTING



*an evidence-based program*

The Nurturing Parenting Programs are a family-centered trauma-informed initiative designed to build nurturing parenting skills as an alternative to abusive and neglecting parenting and child-rearing practices. Families can attend group-based programs, home-based programs, or a combination of group and home-based sessions.

### NURTURING PARENTING BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

**24**

families served

**24**

total group meetings



Nurturing Parenting helps me think about my actions and the way I say things to my children. The program opened my eyes to positive parenting. I learned that once I take care of myself, then I can take care of my children.



**LANESHIA KELLY, NURTURING PARENTING PARENT**





# COUNTDOWN TO KINDERGARTEN



*an evidence-informed program*

Developed by South Carolina First Steps – and identified as a promising state practice by the National Governor’s Association in 2005 – Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK) is a home visitation program pairing the families of rising kindergartners with their future teachers during the summer before school entry. Teachers complete six visits with each family, establishing strong connections during the summer that facilitate classroom learning throughout the year.

## CTK BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

**1**

schools served

**2**

kindergarten teachers  
trained as home visitors

**16**

children served

**96**

total home and school  
visits



McCormick County First Steps in collaboration with SC First Steps, with funding provided by the federal Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Initiative hosted a back to school event for rising kindergartners. The event took place at Skate Away USA skating rink and participants received a bookbag full of school supplies, free skate admission and rental, gas cards, and kindergarten readiness handouts.





## EARLY EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN UNDER 4



*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 4 BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

**22**

children served

**2**

providers served



McCormick County First Steps partners with McCormick County School district and Durant Family Daycare to provide funding and other resources to the McCormick School of Early Education and Durant Family Daycare. Both childcare centers provide quality childcare and education for infants and toddlers.



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

---

**EDIT:** 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 2021-2022

**238**

Families served

**422**

Materials distributed





## 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

Earl Anderson - \$15	Ruth Detrick - \$25
Edward Morton - \$25	McCormick Lion's Club - \$500
Annie Marshall - \$25	Fate Jennings - \$50
Emma Bennett - \$40	Good Shepherd Men's Club - \$1000
Friends of the Library - \$500	Selisa McTeer - \$150
Larry Tarbet - \$250	Lutheran Church - \$300
Millway Baptist Church - \$200	Good Shepherd Women - \$200
Charles Jennings - \$50	
Sherri Kumle - \$100	
Mt. Lebanon Baptist Church - \$200	

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

McCormick County School District  
McCormick County Lion's Club  
McCormick County Senior Center

## JOIN US

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

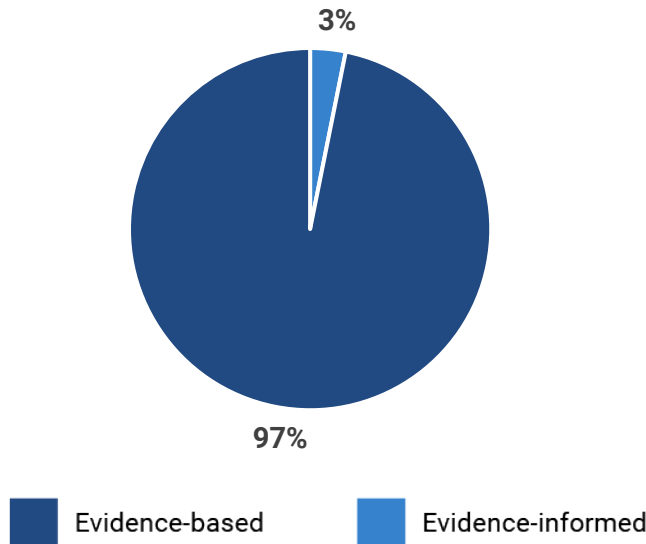




# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



## ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, McCormick First Steps has leveraged **\$2,876,658** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.75** for every state dollar.

## SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Administrative Functions	\$24,038		\$1,510	\$5,130	\$30,678
Core Functions	\$7,745		\$1,200		\$8,945
Library Literacy	\$3,469				\$3,469
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library	\$4,100		\$946		\$5,046
Nurturing Parenting	\$39,953	\$7,299	\$674	\$15,285	\$63,211
Early Education for Children under 4	\$80,696		\$800	\$71,816	\$153,312
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$2,930	\$3,622			\$6,552
Childcare Scholarships	\$39,571				\$39,571
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$202,502</b>	<b>\$10,921</b>	<b>\$5,130</b>	<b>\$92,231</b>	<b>\$310,784</b>



## LEADERSHIP

---

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fredrick Fuller Jr, Chair

April Ouzts

Nathan McCasline, Vice - Chair

Brenda Moore

Mae Phillips Turner, Asst. Secretary

Rev. R.C. Holloway

Sharon Bordeaux

Selisa McTeer

Daniel Lott

Ann Snyder

Deborah Gunter

Donna England

### STAFF

NaToya Cartledge, Executive Director

Margaret Wideman, Parent Educator

## CONTACT US

PO Box 1060 1421 S. Main St, McCormick, SC 29835 | 864-852-3763 |  
[mccormickcountyfirststeps.org](http://mccormickcountyfirststeps.org)







*Total number of documents printed: 13. Cost per unit: \$19.12. Total printing cost: \$248.57.*