

Who We Serve

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

Number of Richland County children under 6:

30,347

Number of Richland County children under 6 living in poverty:

5,523

Babies born each year in Richland County to a mother without a high school diploma:

1 in 6.5

Our Programs

Parents as Teachers

Child Care Quality Enhancement

Child Care Training

Early Head Start

Nurse Family Partnership

Health/Nurse Consultant

Our Results

- ✓ Our programs served over 1,200 children aged 0-5.
- ✓ Over 1,220 training hours were provided to Early Childhood Staff and Parents.
- ✓ In EHS, an increase of .65 in parenting skills as assessed through KIPS.
- ✓ In ExCEL, the average ERS scores increased by 1.48.

Like a Lewis and Clark Expedition.....

It was 13 plus years ago that Governor Jim Hodges signed the legislation establishing First Steps. What a long, exciting and rewarding (sometimes strange) journey it's been. Like Lewis and Clark exploring the west in the early 1800s, First Steps has been a pioneer in the creation and development of research and evidence based programs and systems for the delivery of early (birth to 5 years), childhood education and learning, since our launch in 1999. At that time South Carolina was only the third (3rd) state in the US to adopt a statewide early education initiative joining North Carolina (Smart Start.....the initiative we've modeled) and California. We were actually true pioneers.

Richland County First Steps (RCFS) has been here at ground zero, the state capital, and enjoyed significant success. I've been fortunate to be here for virtually all the journey so far, coming in as the first employee in 2000. The annual report that follows documents our recent activities and positive outcomes for FY12. I encourage you to read and digest the explanations and data regarding our four (4) comprehensive evidence based programs: Early Head Start, Nurse Family Partnership, Parents As Teachers, and ExCEL. As they say, "it's good stuff."

First of all, with the resources we've been allocated by the state budget, \$11 million over the period, we have generated additional resources of almost \$9 million from Federal and private sources. This is a very good return on the investment of your tax dollars.

Second, although we can only claim "partial credit" for the impact, the percentage of students ready for school has increased significantly since 1999. There is not yet a universally accepted index/measurement of school readiness but there is a valid indicator and that is the retention rate of students in the early grades (kindergarten through second grade). In other words the number of children who "fail" a grade or are "held back" has decreased over 50% in Richland County since the creation of First Steps. There are many factors, and other organizations, that have contributed to this positive outcome but "common sense" would argue that our efforts were a significant contributing factor.

Third, because of the original "blueprint" establishing 46 County Partnerships (CP) across the state, programs and services are under "local control" with the opportunity to be more efficient and effective. That is certainly the case in Richland County.

Fourth, after all these years, most CPs have established themselves as the "go-to agency" for early childhood information, advice, and services. RCFS is certainly one of the go-to agencies in a metro region blessed with significant resources relative to the rest of our state.

Fifth, and finally, and perhaps most importantly, Richland County First Steps programs are evidenced based, meaning there is research to show that when the program models are implemented with fidelity, the results are predictable and significant/impactful. RCFS implements these programs with duration and intensity for maximum impact. We concentrate on serving the children and families most in need of our services with the best programming and staffing possible in order to improve the school readiness of each and every child we serve.

Please carefully read the report that follows. I trust you will be as proud as I am of the progress we've made and the potential for even more progress in the years ahead. Thank you for your interest and support.

Rick Noble, Chief Executive Officer
 October 2012

Board Chair
 JANET TAPP

Chief Executive Officer
 RICK NOBLE

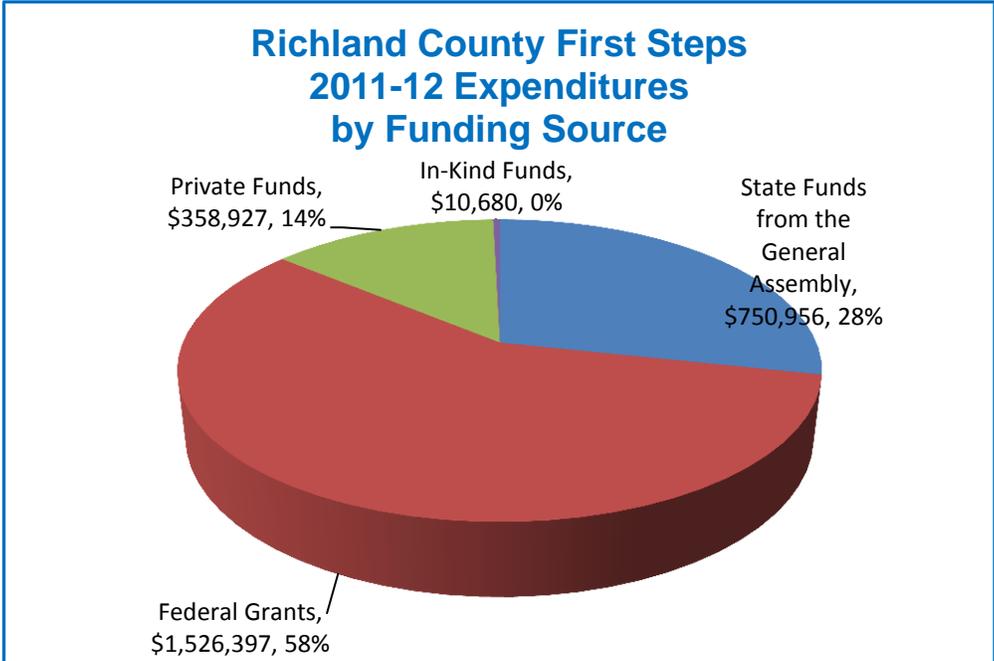
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Financial Impact



Total 2011-12 Expenditures: \$2,646,960

State Funds Leveraged*: 251%

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

	State \$	Federal \$	Private \$	In-Kind \$	Total \$	% of 2011-12 Expenditures
Parents as Teachers	\$172,676	\$0	\$2,395	\$10,680	\$185,751	7%
Nurse Family Partnership	\$0	\$0	\$337,230	\$0	\$337,230	13%
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$175,926	\$0	\$18,872	\$0	\$194,798	7%
Child Care Training	\$59,119	\$0	\$430	\$0	\$59,549	2%
Health/Nurse Consultant	\$65,230	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$65,230	2%
Early Head Start	\$41,018	\$1,526,397	\$0	\$0	\$1,567,414	59%
Program Support	\$91,249	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$91,249	3%
Administrative Support	\$145,738	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$145,738	6%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$750,956	\$1,526,397	\$358,927	\$10,680	\$2,646,960	

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

Success Stories

There seems to be a definite trend toward success in children and parents enrolled in our programs. We have included news and parent feedback from the PAT, Nurse Consultant, and Early Head Start programs:

- “Kim” enrolled in RCFS when her baby was 7 months old. They were living with her mother; they were trying to recover from the loss of the baby’s father. She had a high school diploma but no job or transportation. Today, she and her 20-month-old son are living on their own in public housing. A soldier who was to be deployed was trying to get rid of her old SUV so Kim was able to acquire the vehicle for free. This transportation enabled Kim to enroll in school and now she is keeping a rigorous, yet satisfying, schedule at Cosmetology School. She hopes to complete the course in 10 months.
- “Sonya’s” youngest of four children, “Zarah” was a participant in RCFS when she was a baby. She is now 7 years old and an avid reader. Sonya recently became legal guardian of her 2-month-old nephew, but felt her parenting skills were somewhat rusty when it came to infants! Sonya has enrolled in RCFS again – this time with her nephew. When I asked her if she had worked on getting her GED in the interim, she said no. I shared with her locations where free GED classes were presently being offered. She knew that was something this Parent Educator would have urged her to do.....again! Sonya stated that she has enrolled in the GED classes as well as computer classes.
- Wendy and her son were enrolled in RCFS when he was 8 months old. Today he is 5 years old and one of the best and brightest student in the class, according to his teachers. Wendy recalls the activity about Phonological Awareness, (the Parent Educator introduced it when he was 3 ½ years old). Rhyming words at that time did not make a lot of sense to him. Now, he gets it! His teacher wants to put him in an advanced reading group. It appears RCFS laid the building blocks for his success in Pre-K, the first year of school.



Funding Support

State of South Carolina: \$750,956
(through South Carolina First Steps)

Nurse Family Partnership: \$333,333 (8 months)
(through The Duke Endowment)

Head Start, Administration of Children and
 Families: \$1,526,390

In-Kind Support

Eau Claire Community Health Center
 Richland County School District One at
 Horrell Hill Elementary School

Community Impact

Success Stories Continues

- From Our Nurse Consultant: I received a call from a center director asking me what she should do about a child whose mother had told her the child had been diagnosed with Pertussis (whooping cough). The child in question had not received immunizations under the Religious Exemption clause. I was able to guide her through the process of notifying the DHEC Epi Team, assuring other children and staff were all up- to- date on immunizations, especially DTAP and TDAP. I encouraged her to ask staff and parents about any symptoms of Pertussis, ie: coughing, fever, malaise. This was one of the centers whose staff received TDAP several years ago when the RCHD had doses which were going to expire, and I was able to give them to the staff at no charge.
- From a parent: "Richland County First Steps has been awesome in supporting me and my family. I really feel as though my child is developing at a more advanced rate to prepare him for school readiness. I would like to them to know that I acknowledge everything that first steps has done for my family. I am looking forward to seeing my child's progress as time goes by as for I know he will be prepared to start school when that time comes. So thanks (Richland County) First Steps for everything you do and you encouraging and inspiring words. Sincerely, Ashley C Hall"



Numbers Served by Richland County First Steps in 2011-12									
	Number of Children 0-5 Served	Number of Parents/ Adult Family Members Served	Number of Early Childhood Staff Trained	Number of Child Care Providers, Head Start Centers, and Schools Served	Number of Training Hours Provided to Early Childhood Staff and Parents	Number of Staff Positions Supported Within First Steps		Number of Staff Supported Within Partner Organizations Using FS Funds	
						FT/PT	Other	FT/PT	Other
Parents as Teachers	63	43				3/1			
Early Head Start	167			1	24 (parents)	11/2		16/1	
Health/Nurse Consultant	63		176	8	28			1	
Child Care Quality Enhancement	808			12	268	3			
Child Care Training			766	15	97	1			
Nurse Family Partnership	100	100						6	
Other Programming						2/1			
TOTAL Number Served	1,201	143	942	36	417	20/4		23/2	

Parents play an irreplaceable role in their child's development.

Program Description

Serving the Lower Richland area (Eastover, Gadsden and Hopkins), we have 3 Parent Educators (Home Visitors) that are certified through Parents As Teachers. Parents As Teachers is an early childhood parent education and family support program which serves all 50 states and 6 countries outside of the United States.

The Richland County First Steps "PAT" program serves prenatal moms and children from birth – 5 years old.

- 1. Personal Visits:** If a family has two or more risk factors, the Parent Educators are required to meet with the families weekly for 60 minutes and for the families with one risk factor, they meet 60 minutes, twice a month.
- 2. Group Connections:** The families also meet once a month for parent meetings. The meetings are designed so families and their children can get together to interact with other families and children. Some of the past meeting topics were: Planting, Making Ice Cream, Zoo Trip, EdVenture Museum, Stranger Danger, Abuse and Neglect, Dental Health, Color Me Healthy, BabyNet and A Step Ahead Presenters, Vision and Hearing Screening, and Choosing Appropriate Toys.
- 3. Screening:** The Parent Educators has assessment tools that are administered to the children: KIPS (Keys to Interactive Parenting), Ages and Stages-3(ASQ-3), Ages & Stages -SE, (ASQ-SE), ACIRI (Adult/Child Interactive Reading Inventory) and, new for 2012, Life Skill Progression model. The Parent Educators are all certified to administer all the above assessments.
- 4. Resource and Referral Network** connects families to needed resources, strengthening protective factors and fostering positive change. The resources and referrals that our families has been connected to are BabyNet, Richland County School District One (Gadsden, Horrell Hill & Webber Elementary), WIC, Harvest Hope, Eau Claire Community Health, Shelter for battered Women, Magic Johnson's Center and local churches.

Richland County First Steps' target population is families in the Eastover, Gadsden and Hopkins area. Risk factors are identified as: poverty, infants with low birth weight, teenage parents or children with developmental delays. The families are recruited with the help of the local health departments, Department of Social Services, WIC, Webber and Horrell Hill Schools and families that have been served in the PAT program.

Risk Factor Profile:	%
% In Poverty (family)	72%
% < HS Diploma (parent)	30%
% Low Birth Weight (child)	16%
% Teenage Moms (parent)	11%

PAT Outcomes

- ✓ Increase parent knowledge of child development and improve parenting practices
- ✓ Provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues
- ✓ Prevent child abuse and neglect

Why PAT Works

Clients in First Steps home visitation programs, including PAT, saw **significant increases in their pre- and post-assessments**. Overall, **54%** of participants who scored at a low quality of parenting improved to a moderate quality of parenting, **44%** who had moderate parenting skills moved to high quality, and **11.9%** who had low quality parenting at pre-test increased their skills to high quality.

*First Steps Evaluation
High Scope Educational Research Foundation, 2009*

First Steps and the PAT program helped me define my role as a parent.

PAT mother, 25 years old with 4 children

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ Served 43 families (63 children) and conducted 1,218 home visits
- ✓ Increase of parenting skills as assessed through KIPS: 0.7 and ACRIC 0.35
- ✓ After screening, 7 children were identified for services through BabyNet.
- ✓ More than 566 books were provided for children and families in the program.

PAT by the Number\$

	2010-11	2011-12
State Funds	\$158,570	\$156,647
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Private Funds	\$625	\$2,396
In-Kind Funds	\$12,217	\$10,680
Total	\$171,412	\$169,722
State \$ Leveraged	8%	8%
Families Served	40	43
Cost per Family	\$4,285	\$3,947
Number of Visits	778	1,218
Cost per Visit	\$220	\$139

Richland County First Steps

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Child Care Quality Enhancement

In order to thrive, children need nurturing, responsive relationships and a supportive learning environment, both within and outside the home.

Program Description

For infants, toddlers and preschoolers, the quality of care they receive is crucial to their healthy development and eventual readiness for school. Child care providers strive to provide that type of quality care, but often lack the resources that are commonly available to publicly-funded early childhood programs, such as educational materials, on-site professional development, and other support.

First Steps' Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) is intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children. Participating child care providers must serve a significant percentage of at-risk children, and are selected through a competitive process that requires a strong level of commitment to the QE process.

Program Components

1. On-site Technical Assistance (TA) at least twice monthly
2. Equipment and materials funding
3. DSS certified training provide by ExCEL and other partners to the whole county
4. Workforce Development through emphasis on TEACH
5. Pre/post assessments of the classroom environment and teacher-child interaction, using nationally-recognized observational tools for infant/toddler and preschool settings (ITERS, ECERS, FCCERS)

Congratulations to some of ExCEL's most improved classrooms for 2011-12!

Child Care Provider	Pre/Post Improvement
Children's World, toddler room	From 2.11 to 4.57
Little Peoples, 2-yr-old room	From 1.9 to 3.79
Westminster Pres, 2-yr-old room	From 2.47 to 4.93
St. Stephens, 3-yr-old room	From 1.83 to 3.83
First Nazareth, 2-yr-old room	From 1.84 to 4.16

Thank you to our partners!

- SC DHEC for our Nurse Consultant
- Shandon Presbyterian Church for training space

Why QE Works

Universally, child care centers and providers who participated in First Steps Quality Enhancement strategies showed **significant increases in pre/post scores of assessed child care quality.**

*First Steps Evaluation
 High Scope Educational Research Foundation, 2009*

"You have enhanced my awareness in regards to children. You have enhanced their knowledge [children's] and my knowledge. We are where we are because of you all [ExCEL]."

Barbara Scott of Myers Daycare in Hopkins, SC

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ **ExCEL served 26 classrooms in 13 centers.**
- ✓ **The average ERS increase of the classroom pre and post scores was 1.48 – an all-time high!**
- ✓ **Two EXCEL centers increased their ABC rating from a C to a B Level.**
- ✓ **A center on the ExCEL "Breakfast Club" applied for NAEYC accreditation.**
- ✓ **ExCEL's Nurse Consultant provided resource consultation at 8 targeted ExCEL centers.**

QE by the Number\$

	2010-11	2011-12
State Funds	\$151,759	\$179,971
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Private Funds	\$288	\$18,871
In-Kind Funds	\$2,113	\$0
Total	\$154,160	\$194,294
State \$ Leveraged	2%	10%
Centers Served	7	13
Cost per Center	\$22,023	\$14,946
Number of Visits	60	55
Cost per Visit	\$367	\$272

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

Program Description

Efforts to improve the quality of child care must include providing affordable, high quality training 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, but also follow-up with supported practice in the classroom.

The RCFS ExCEL (Excellence in Care and Early Learning) program offered many opportunities for certified trainings to child caregivers in Richland County and the state:

- Through a grant from SCFS, we offered all seven modules of the new SC Infant-Toddler Guidelines for free for the whole state through the SCPITC website; one per month from October to April 2012 with dinner included.
- We offered Directors' Lunches - one hour trainings in Program Administration to our 13 centers ExCEL directors five times during the year.
- We offered two Saturday morning trainings for our ExCEL center staffs with classes focused on best practice and ERS related topics.
- We offered Tuesday Trainings – one hour classes for directors and teachers, five times during the year.

The ExCEL staff taught many of these trainings, our staffs of four are all Certified Trainers, two are Master Trainers with the Center for Child Care Career Development and two are trained on the Infant-Toddler Guidelines (one was on the ITG committee).

Our trainings are designed to meet the needs of our ExCEL team staffs based on their ERS assessments. The goal is for the ERS scores to increase due to training and technical assistance.

Thank you to our partners!

South Carolina First Steps

Shandon Presbyterian Church

DHEC Region 3 for our Nurse Consultant

Why Training Works

Research shows that well trained and educated individuals in the child care workforce are **key to ensuring that children are both safe and in a setting to promote their healthy development.**

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Quotes from a Saturday training event:

"Great way to spend a morning!"

"I learned a lot." "Today was great."

"Got a lot of great ideas to do in my room."

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ ExCEL delivered 97 hours of certified DSS training to 766 people in 35 trainings opportunities.
- ✓ Our SC Infant-Toddler Guideline trainings were so popular that SCPITC said we were the only classes to always fill up of any offered in the state.
- ✓ We had 4 people from the same center attend all 7 modules of the Infant-Toddler Guidelines.
- ✓ The ExCEL Nurse Consultant provided 33 special trainings on safe and healthy environment issues/topics to her 8 targeted centers

Training by the Number\$

	2010-11	2011-12
State Funds	\$53,688	\$58,653
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Private Funds	\$0	\$0
In-Kind Funds	\$735	\$430
Total	\$54,423	\$59,083
State \$ Leveraged	1%	1%
Child Care Staff Trained	803	766
Providers Represented	30	26
Number of Training Hours	48	97
Cost per Person Trained	\$68	\$77

Richland County First Steps

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Early Head Start

Children learn best in the context of relationships.

Program Description

Early Head Start is a federally funded community-based program for low-income families with infants and toddlers and pregnant women. Its mission is simple: to promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women; to enhance the development of very young children; and to promote healthy family functioning.

The Richland County First Steps Early Head Start program serves families in the Richland County zip codes of 29203, 29204, 29206, 29210, 29212, 29016, 29036, 29045, 29063, 29223, and 29229.

Risk Factor Profile:

% at or below Poverty (Family)	100%
% < HS Diploma (Parent)	52%
% with Developmental Delays (Child)	40%

Program Components

1. Early Education Services in a range of developmentally appropriate settings.
2. Individual Home Visits are designed to meet the needs of each family through weekly 90-minute visits.
3. Parent education and parent-child activities.
4. Comprehensive health and mental health services.
5. High quality child care, provided in collaboration with our community partner – Ridgewood Missionary Baptist Church.

Early Head Start measures progress in a variety of ways:

- Initial Screening: Ages and Stages Questionnaires (3 for development and SE for Social Emotional.)
- Pre/post assessments of parenting skills using the Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS)
- Ongoing assessment through Parents as Teachers Milestones chart and the Creative Curriculum Continuum.
- Classroom assessments using the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS).

Why Early Head Start Works

Early Head Start focuses on relationships. The large body of research on brain development and how babies learn clearly states the importance of learning in the context of relationships. The social and emotional development of young children and the nature of their relationships and attachments are critical to their development. It is through these relationships and interactions with families and other adults that babies and toddlers learn and develop – physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually. Intimate, positive, and nurturing daily interactions based on individual and responsive care between babies and primary caregivers set a secure foundation for healthy development in all areas. A trusting attachment among families, babies and toddlers, and caregivers supports that babies’ learning in all areas – growth and motor, emotional security and trust, language and communication, self-regulation, and the foundation for cognitive development.

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ **100% of participants were screened using the ASQ-3 and ASQ: SE tools. After screening, 17 children were identified as eligible for BabyNet services.**
- ✓ **Increase of .65 in parenting skills as assessed through KIPS.**
- ✓ **Average increase of .35 (statistically significant) in classroom environments as assessed through ITERS.**

EHS by the Number\$

	2010-11	2011-12
State Funds	\$20,069	\$33,944
Federal Funds	\$896,358	\$1,526,397
Private Funds	\$0	\$0
In-Kind Funds	\$	\$
Total	\$916,427	\$1,560,341
State \$ Leveraged	2%	2%
Children Served	96	167
Cost per Child	\$9,546	\$9,343
Classrooms Funded	2	4
Teacher Positions Funded	5	8

Thank you to our partners!

Department of Health and Human Services,
Administration for Children and Families

Richland County Public Library

Ridgewood Missionary Baptist Church

South Carolina Department of Health and
Environmental Control

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Lexington-Richland 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) helps transform the lives of vulnerable first-time moms and their babies. Through on-going home visits from registered nurses, low-income, first-time 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 the first-time moms, instilling confidence and empowering them to achieve a better life for their children – and themselves.

Lexington-Richland County Nurse-Family Partnership is implemented through the Richland County Health Department.

Our program strategies include the following;

- Improve pregnancy outcomes by increasing pre-natal care and health services.
- Improve child health and development by helping parents provide responsible and competent care.
- Improve economic self-sufficiency by helping parents plan for the future, plan future pregnancies, continue education and find work.

Risk Factor Profile:

% in Poverty (family)	100%
% < HS Diploma (parent)	45.4%
% with Developmental Delays (child)	6.6%
Median age of mothers in program (parent)	19 years

Thank you to our partners!

- The Duke Endowment
- The Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation of SC
- South Carolina First Steps
- DHEC, Region 3

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 material employment, and improved school readiness.**

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ Our number of clients reached maximum capacity of 100 with a waiting list.
- ✓ 28 Children and mothers graduated the program this year.
- ✓ Major Partners include WIC, Family Planning, The Nurturing Center, Birthright, Daybreak CPC and First Choice.
- ✓ Our program partnered with Reach Out and Read to provide books for our clients.

NFP by the Number\$

	2010-11	2011-12
State Funds	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$
Private Funds	\$500,000	\$333,333
In-Kind Funds	\$0	\$0
Total	\$500,000	\$333,333
State \$ Leveraged	0%	0%
Families Served	93	100
Cost per Family	\$5,376	\$3,333
Number of Visits	4,650	5,000
Cost per Visit	\$108	\$67

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NURSE CONSULTANT

Providing parents and child care providers with health resources, screenings, referrals, and health and safety training.

Program Description

The RCFS Nurse Consultant, secured under contract with SC DHEC, works in partnership with RCFS **ExCEL** staff working in child care programs to assure that the programs are receiving the services they need and are making progress towards the goals of safe and healthy children. The RCFS Nurse Consultant worked closely with **PAT** parent educators to assure they receive the support they need to assure their children are adequately screened and their families are referred for any necessary services.

Outcomes for this program include:

- Increase linkages to services for young children among childcare providers and parents.
- Increase/enhance health practices in child care centers.
- Increase health-related knowledge of child care directors and staff.

Outputs for the RCFS Nurse Consultant are measured by the following:

1. Number of referrals made
2. Number of parent workshops and staff trainings completed
3. Number of child care directors and providers successfully completing health and safety training

Why Health Consulting Works

While emphasis on quality child care has continued to grow nationwide, child development experts, health care providers and policy makers have become increasingly aware of the importance of quality health and safety practices in the child care setting.

Richland County First Steps is a great support for me and my family.

Yolanda Connors

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ 84% of children referred received early intervention or medical services
- ✓ 88% of child care centers receiving intensive services implemented at least two new policies related to health practices.
- ✓ 88% of child care centers receiving intensive services participated in at least one training offered by the Nurse Consultant

Nurse Consultant by the Number\$

	2010-11	2011-12
State Funds	\$45,876	\$65,230
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Private Funds	\$0	\$0
In-Kind Funds	\$	\$
Total	\$45,876	\$65,230
State \$ Leveraged	0%	0%
Centers Served	8	8
Cost per Center	\$5,734	\$8,367
Number of Visits	157	157
Cost per Visit	\$38	\$53

Thank you to our partners!

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
 BabyNet

Richland County First Steps

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Read 2030

Literacy is important. Early Literacy is extremely important!

RCFS has been engaged in providing early literacy services and experiences since 2000 through programming such as Parents As Teachers, First Steps to the Library, Early Head Start, ExCEL, Nurse Family Partnership and Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. We’ve also organized and co-hosted Book Fairs in collaboration with community groups including the Columbia Housing Authority.

Our early efforts caught the eye of the Central Carolina Community Foundation which has now become the “community champion” for literacy efforts at all age levels. Building on RCFS’ collaborative success, CCCF has organized and convened literacy service provide educators, business leaders, legislators and passionate volunteers, harnessing their interest in breaking the intergenerational cycle of low literacy in our state.

Literacy 2030 unites these stakeholders under an admittedly aspirational and yet important goal....reaching 100% literacy in the Midlands of South Carolina by the year 2030, working to connect, equip and support them on this long difficult but critical journey to a more literate community.

RCFS is committed to continuing to play a major role in addressing and supporting increased literacy for the community’s youngest members from birth through 3 years of age when we hand them off to other providers.

Richland County First Steps Partnership Board

2011-2012

Name	Position	Board Category
Janet Tapp, Chair	SC Department of Health and Environmental Control	Health Care Provider
Richelynn Douglas, Vice Chair	Family Services/One Stop	Non-Profit
Marsha Moseley, Secretary	Richland School District Two	School District Appointee
Helen Anderson	School District Five of Lexington/Richland Counties	School District Appointee
Jamie Browder	Richland County School District One	Pre-k/Primary
Allen Carter	Richland County DSS	RC DSS Appointee
Garnell Cauley	Center for Health Services and Policy Research	Legislative Appointee
Thomas Clark	Richland County – CASA	Legislative Appointee
Mahalie Davies	Community Volunteer	Legislative Appointee
Deborah DePaoli	Richland School District Two	Family Education
Tonya Dorsey	Blue Cross Blue Shield of SC	Business
Michael Harris	School District Five of Lexington/Richland Counties	Family Education
Laura Hart	Duff, White & Turner, LLC	Business/Legal/EHS
Sally Huguley	Retired	Early Childhood Education
Debbie Hunter	Edward E. Taylor Elementary School	Early Childhood Education
Melissa Klosterman	Center for Inquiry/Richland School District Two	School District Appointee
Christine LeBlanc	Richland School District One	School District Appointee
Dolores Long	Community Volunteer	Faith
Lyn Richards	Lyn Richards CPA. LLC	Business/CPA/EHS
Suzanne Sanders	DHEC Region 3	DHEC Appointee
Chiquita Singletary	Richland County Sheriff’s Department	Faith
Penny Tolson	Retired	Early Childhood Education
Missy Wall-Mitchell	School District Five of Lexington/Richland Counties	Early Childhood Education
William Witherspoon	US Department of Justice	Legislative Appointee

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

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.

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 every three years - 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.

www.scfirststeps.org

Special First Steps Services in Richland County

Our Nurse Consultant is a certified Child Care Health Consultant!

This means as health care professionals with specialized training and experience in child health issues, Child Care Health Consultants can provide expert guidance and technical assistance to child care providers on a wide range of health and safety topics.

In addition, the Child Care Health Consultant also has the training to access appropriate resources to assist the child care provider in successfully including children with special health, medical and/or behavior needs.



BabyNet

South Carolina’s Early Intervention System

First Steps is the lead agency for BabyNet, South Carolina’s early intervention system for children under 3. Parents of children 0-3 years old with disabilities or suspected developmental delays should contact their local BabyNet office to schedule an evaluation.

BabyNet in Richland County: (803) 576-2990

Richland County First Steps

Board Chair
JANET TAPP

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RICK NOBLE

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