



PICKENS COUNTY



Getting children ready for school.

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2018-2019

## THE NEED

### IN SOUTH CAROLINA:

**42%**

of people live in a childcare desert, where there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots

**53%**

of children ages 3 and 4 are not enrolled in nursery school or preschool



### IN PICKENS COUNTY:

**6,392**

children under age 5

**16%**

of young children live in poverty or low-income households

**67%**

of kindergartners are considered “not ready” for school

## OUR MISSION

We will continue to serve as a convener of early childhood champions to coordinate services to measurably improve the early childhood development of all children in Pickens County.

## 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

**3,140**

number of children and adults served by Pickens County First Steps in 2018-2019

## 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.



## OUR STORY

Our story is one of collaboration and partnership. Pickens County is a very relational county. Awareness of this unique culture informs everything that we do. We are grateful for the generous and steadfast support of our collaborating partners.

We are grateful for our board's forward-thinking commitment to the young learners in Pickens County. We are grateful for an efficient and experienced staff that has enhanced the services, communication, and community involvement of Pickens County First Steps.

Most importantly, we are grateful for the children and families who allow us to step into their lives and offer our support. Each family has a unique story and our desire is to always seek to honor the experiences of others in our language, attitudes, actions, and services. Our hope is that our efforts always reflect the real and present needs of Pickens County families.

## OUR GOALS

Our partnership's work is focused on advancing Pickens County's mission through these strategic goals:

- **Goal 1:** Integrate the Palmetto Basics messaging into all programs.
- **Goal 2:** Increase access to high quality, stable childcare environments.
- **Goal 3:** Increase knowledge and parenting skills necessary to promote school readiness.
- **Goal 4:** Improve literacy outcomes for children 0-5.

United Way of Pickens County values the strong relationship we share with Pickens County First Steps. Our partnerships is a vital component in our community efforts to support early childhood education. We achieve much more together than we can separately.

**KAREN CULLEY, VICE PRESIDENT, UNITED WAY PICKENS COUNTY**





# EARLY IDENTIFICATION & REFERRAL



*an evidence-based program*

First Steps' Early Identification and Referral (EI&R) programs serve families with young children with suspected delays in development, acting as a local portal to connect families to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children. EI&R services include:



Screenings for children ages 0-5 with suspected delays in development



Referrals, based on screening results, to appropriate resources and support services



Patient information including strategies to monitor growth and development

## EI&R BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

# 12

children served

# 8

referrals to BabyNet or other local services



Early detection of delay is essential to the growing brains of our county's youngest learners. Early intervention services can change the trajectory of a child's developmental path and improve outcomes for children, families and communities.



# 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 IN THE NEWS

PAT recently received the highest rating from the federal Prevention Services Clearinghouse. This recognition validates the effectiveness of Parents as Teachers as a strategy for improving parenting practices, promoting early detection of developmental delays and health issues, preventing child abuse and neglect, and enhancing school readiness and success.

## PAT IN PICKENS COUNTY 2018-2019

**35**

families served

**819**

total home visits



Parents as Teachers.  
*Model Affiliate*



# CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS



*an evidence-based program*

Economic disparity is great in our county. In many homes this is due to the lack of resources to pay for childcare. Recent research tells us that this economic inequality is producing a generation of children who lack the exposure to meaningful early experiences necessary to later pursue the "American Dream."

Child Care Scholarships provide opportunities for vulnerable families to look for employment and/or seek education that will grant them the ability to provide better resources for their children, thus leading to self-sufficiency. Child Care Scholarships give participating children meaningful early experiences in a quality setting.

Our scholarships serve families with children that are most at risk for school failure. These at-risk families will also possess the desire to become financially stable but lack the resources to maintain employment and/or school attendance because of the financial barrier to quality childcare. Families served must be denied Pickens vouchers and provide verification of employment or school attendance.

## SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**22**

number of children served

**4**

number of providers served

**32**

number of developmental screenings provided

**100% of the money paid to childcare providers goes back into our local economy to benefit the citizens of Pickens County.**

Childcare Scholarships are made possible by grant funds from:



United Way of Pickens County





# BOOK FLOOD



*an evidence-informed program*

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.

Book Flood is a literacy model designed to enhance book exposure and increase shared reading time at home. It also develops, enhances, and increases literacy awareness skills in a home / school collaboration while fostering a love of reading. It is implemented in the public 4K classrooms in the School District of Pickens County as well as private childcare centers.

Age-appropriate books are distributed by rotation among 4K teachers/providers in the county. Students take home a different book each school night to read with a family member.

## BOOK FLOOD BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**848**

children served

**49**

4K programs served

**86,653**

books read





## RAISING A READER



*an evidence-based program*

Raising A Reader is a nationally recognized early literacy program designed to increase literacy and family engagement. The program includes teacher training and two parent education sessions that teach shared reading techniques.

Children 2-4 years old in participating childcare scholarship centers receive a take-home bag with 4 age-appropriate books each week. The take-home bags are rotated among participating children.

### RAZOR READERS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**154**

children served

**4**

providers served



Over the course of the year, our friends read over 49,000 books. That equates to an average over 900 hours of reading a month!





# RAZOR READERS



*an evidence-informed program*

Taking place in local barber shops, Razor Readers is a community-wide literacy program for boys 0-10 years old. We partner with United Way of Pickens County and the Call Me Mister program. The “Misters” offer on-site support to participating barbershops on Friday afternoons or Saturday mornings. Boys read books and earn a free haircut upon completion of their “punch card.”

Relationships are a powerful vehicle for providing resources and programs to the children and communities that need them most. Razor Readers promotes literacy in a way that’s fun, in a setting that’s familiar, and with young men who are educational role models.

## RAZOR READERS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**95**

Children served

**3**

Barbershops served



“I learned that my impact as an educator is bigger than I thought it was! Not only did I affect the children that I read with, but also adults in the Barber Shop as well! It has been great to learn and grow from the whole Razor Readers experience!”

-MiSTER A. Richard





## PUBLIC AWARENESS



*an evidence-informed program*

The Palmetto Basics are five fun, simple, powerful way to help all children become the happiest and most successful they can be. The Palmetto Basics Campaign is working to make sure that every parent and caregiver knows what they can do to make the most of every opportunity to give the youngest learners they love a great start in life!

### The Five Basics are:

1. Maximize Love, Manage Stress
2. Talk, Sing, Point
3. Count, Group and Compare
4. Explore through Movement and Play
5. Read and Discuss Stories

## PALMETTO BASICS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**1,438**

materials  
distributed

**10**

events held

**1,612**

total event  
attendance



**The  
Basics  
PALMETTO**



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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Pickens County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure the youngest learners in our county begin school on track and ready to learn.

**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

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## OUR PARTNERSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

**305**

total convening  
attendance

**19**

events held

I admire your [Amity's] tenacity. You never give up on bringing us all together for the good of children.

L. SOENEN, PRISMA HEALTH



## OUR SUPPORTERS

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

### FUNDING SUPPORT

Dabo's All In Foundation  
\$3,000

United Way of Pickens County  
\$37,900

### IN-KIND SUPPORT

School District of Pickens County

## JOIN US

For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at

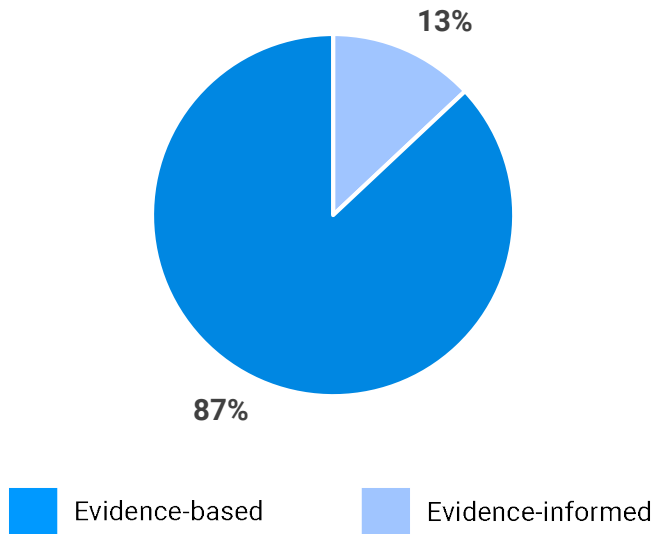
[PickensCountyFirstSteps.org](http://PickensCountyFirstSteps.org)



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

### OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

#### Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



### ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Pickens County First Steps has leveraged **\$2,020,045.38** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.32** for every state dollar.

### SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$107,711.00	\$	\$	\$27,700.00	\$135,481.00
Book Flood	\$22,662.95	\$	\$	\$	\$22,662.95
Raising A Reader	\$22,871.00	\$	\$	\$	\$22,871.00
Childcare Scholarships	\$33,021.93	\$	\$30,027.44	\$	\$63,049.37
Early Steps Identification	\$11,508.50	\$	\$	\$	\$11,508.50
Partnerships & Community Education	\$30,611.49	\$	\$26,076.09	\$	\$56,687.58
Administrative Support	\$27,936.70	\$	\$685.22	\$	\$28,621.92
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$256,458.32</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$56,788.75</b>	<b>\$27,700</b>	<b>\$340,882.46</b>



## LEADERSHIP

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mandy Bowling	Kevin Nichols
Diane Brown	Katrice Seawright
Erika Hays	Cecilia Vazquez, Secretary
George Hicks	Erika Walters
Patti Hunnicutt, Chair	Heath Ward, Vice Chair
Melanie Morgan	Carol Wiley
Faye Nichols	Greta Young

### STAFF

Amity Buckner, Executive Director  
Tyla Hill, Programs Director  
Marian Vischer, Communications Director

## CONTACT US

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