

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** (more than 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), that provide services in six major areas impacting school readiness:



Healthy Start



Family Strengthening



Early Intervention



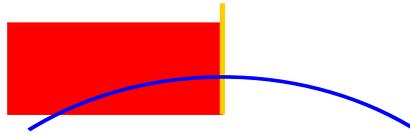
Quality Childcare



Early Education

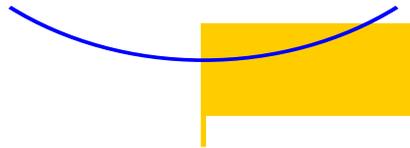


School Transition



*Serving Charleston County Children, Families,  
and Early Child Care Professionals*

**CHARLESTON COUNTY FIRST STEPS**  
Is a non-profit county partnership of  
**South Carolina First Steps  
to School Readiness**



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Helping prepare  
**your child**  
to reach school  
**healthy & ready to  
LEARN**

**START  
EARLY**



## Child Care Quality Enhancement

For infants, toddlers and preschoolers, the quality of care they receive is crucial to their healthy development and eventual readiness for school. First Steps offers the resources that are commonly available to publicly-funded early childhood programs, such as educational materials, on-site professional development, and other support to affiliated child development centers.

**First Steps' Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE)** produces measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children. Each child in our affiliated centers receives **FREE** individual developmental assessments. Participating child care providers are selected through a competitive process that requires a strong level of commitment to QE.



## TRAINING

### Child Care Training & Development

Our efforts to improve the quality of child care includes **affordable, high quality training** to meet the needs of the local child care workforce. We offer these services for **FREE**.

First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics **in the areas of nutrition, health & safety, curriculum, child growth & development, child guidance, professional development and program administration**. These certified trainings meet the annual professional development requirements of SC Child Care Licensing.

## OUR PROGRAMS

**| All of Charleston County First Steps programs provide a one-stop shop for high quality child care wrap around services |**

### Early Head Start Child Care Partnership



The **Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP)** program is a federally funded grant that works to provide Early Head Start services to private child development centers by creating stable, long-term, high quality childcare for children ages 0-36 months and working families with vouchers.

#### Our Program Offers:

- ◆ High Quality Early Education
- ◆ Individualized Teaching
- ◆ Family Support Services
- ◆ Parent Education
- ◆ Health Screenings & Developmental Assessments
- ◆ Mental Health Services



### Charleston First Steps Partners

Academy Kingdom Childcare Center  
Foster's Child Development Center  
Johns Island Early Childhood Christian Academy  
Plymouth Child Development Center

### Parents As Teachers Home Visitation Model



The **Parents as Teachers** model and the **Early Head Start Home-based Option** model (a collaboration with the *Charleston County School District*), are both evidence-based early childhood home visitation frameworks that focus on families with children prenatal through 3 years old. Home visits are conducted weekly by certified Parent Educators and are designed to meet the needs of low income families.

#### Program Components:

- ◆ Personal Visits
- ◆ Group Connections
- ◆ Resource & Referral
- ◆ Parent/Child Assessments

Ask me about...

**30  
MILLION  
WORD  
GAP**

### Engaging Families Through Literacy

By offering **Raising A Reader**, an evidence based book-lending and caregiver training program, CCFS aims to engage families in a routine of book sharing to foster healthy brain development, a love of reading, and foundational language and literacy skills critical in closing the 30 Million Word Gap.

### Engaging Teachers with Actionable Feedback

**LENA Grow** is a professional development program for teachers that aims to increase interactive talk in infant and toddler classrooms. Data from recording devices offer feedback on the quantity and quality of adult/child interactive talk and is used to improve early language, close gaps in cognitive, emotional, and social development, and increase school readiness.