

BERKELEY COUNTY



Getting children ready for school



@berkeleycountyfirststeps



berkeleyfirststeps.com

A lifetime of learning

Berkeley County First Steps is a state-based initiative to prepare young children for school and a lifetime of learning beyond. Our mission is to improve the early development of Berkeley County children aged 0-5 by providing resources and leadership to their families, enabling them to prepare their children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed.

HOW WE DO IT:

- Helping to improve child care and early education in our county
- Providing scholarships to child care and preschool to those in need
- Helping to improve healthcare in our county, and expanding access to it
- Strengthening families through parenting skills programs
- Collaborating with community partners



Parents As Teachers

Our Parents As Teachers program serves expecting families and families with children up to 5 years old at no cost to them. We provide the information, support, and encouragement parents need to help their children develop optimally during the crucial early years of life, building their learning ability and potential for a lifetime of success. Using a relationship-based approach, we customize learning experiences for each family and child.

WE PROVIDE:

- Child health screenings
- Certified parent educators
- Monthly home visits
- Facilitated access to healthcare, child care, & other resources
- Group connections with other families
- Fun family incentives



Ready Kindergartener

We base each of our programs on a central goal: to ensure young children enter kindergarten physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally prepared to learn. South Carolina First Steps' Profile of the Ready Kindergartener defines the criteria, from the ability to share with others, listen to and retell stories, and sort items into categories to strong eye-hand coordination. See the complete list at bit.ly/ready-k.

SCHOOL-READY ACROSS FIVE CATEGORIES:

- Emotional & social development
- Language & literacy development
- Mathematical thinking
- Physical development, self-help, and motor skills
- Approaches to learning and inquiry



Early care & education

We support the child care and early education workforce by providing training and consultation free of charge, striving together to improve the quality of early education. In addition to trainings in best practices, we work with them to engage more with families, and remove barriers that prevent young children from loving to learn—positioning them to successfully transition up through all phases of their education. We also seek to raise child care quality by advocating for equitable compensation, benefits, and award programs that reward the value that outstanding early educators bring to the lives of young children.

TRAINING TOPICS:

- Stages of early childhood development
- Early learning standards
- Early language
- Socio-emotional learning concepts
- Culturally responsible teaching
- Active & reflective supervision
- Preventing challenging behaviors
- Harnessing interest areas
- And many more



Children's health

We work with child health, welfare, and early childhood developmental partners to deepen health equity by increasing health literacy and providing individual referrals. We also work together to support mental health by understanding trauma and its impact on children, educators, and families, and by enabling access to affordable, culturally congruent healing modalities. We support all children, especially those with special needs, by understanding brain science and early learning, and advocating for the inclusion of children with disabilities in child care. We also offer development screenings for early identification.



WE OFFER:

- Birthing, childbirth education, and lactation support and referrals
- A bilingual, certified community health worker from PASOs Connections for Child Development
- Monthly Healthy Steps community convenings
- A social inclusion program providing equitable access to child care for children with developmental disabilities
- Support for children with special needs via our equity coaching for caregivers, built on the Pyramid model
- An Emergency Crisis and Immediate Needs Fund

