



ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

OUR MISSION

The mission of Berkeley County First Steps is to improve the health and education of Berkeley County's youngest children so they can enter school ready to succeed and eager to learn.

OUR OVERARCHING MEASURE OF SUCCESS

1. Increase the availability of high-quality early care and education opportunities offered by first steps
2. Reduce the racial/ethnic gap in kindergarten readiness

OUR APPROACH



High quality programs and services for children and families



Intensive training, resources and support for childcare providers



Strategic partnerships and community education



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 VALUES

- As servant leaders we value families, their inherent strengths, resilience and ability to learn, grow and reach their fullest capacity.
- We have a culture of learning that promotes compassion, innovation, best practices and continuous improvement.
- We have a culture of progress that celebrates and encourages excellence.

OUR OBJECTIVES

1. Children are healthy and safe
2. High quality early education and care is accessible, equitable and affordable.
3. Community leadership, advocacy and messaging for optimal success and achievement.

JOIN US



AmeriCorps

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.



FIRST STEPS IS HERE

Last year, because of Berkeley County First Steps:



417 children
directly served
in Berkeley County



207 parents & caregivers

received services and support to be their child's first and most important teacher



197 educators

participated in First Steps training and professional development, benefitting 500+ children



\$1 = \$2.15

Berkeley County First Steps leveraged \$565,130 from sources outside of state government, providing a match of \$1.15 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



Adrienne Troy Frazier

Executive Director
Berkeley County First Steps

This fiscal year our staff and board members continued to work as champions for young children, parents and early educators despite the lingering challenges created by Covid. The pandemic had a devastating impact on child care centers and the workforce and our board and staff have been thoughtfully focused on increasing funding investments that support and rebuild our child care centers. Much needed funding from the Preschool Development Block Grant from SCFS allowed us to expand programs and support our strategic planning goals. Here are just a few highlights from the year that we are most proud to share:

- We trained over two hundred early educators and celebrated our Berkeley early care leaders with our first annual *Berkeley Early Childhood Professional Recognition Reception*.
- We transitioned our Parents As Teachers program in-house to strengthen, support and expand staffing and programming capacity to better serve families.
- We hosted our monthly story time sessions with Mr. Nathan to continuously promote inclusion in early care programs.
- We partnered with Healthy Steps, MUSC, PASO's and the Center for Community Health Alignment and welcomed new funding investments to improve access and equity in child health and opportunities for our employees to become certified community health workers.
- We co-developed an early innovation grant with Charleston and Dorchester County First Steps and received funding in the amount of 199K to support the work of the Tri-County Play Collaborative.
- We curated the first bilingual early childhood podcast series with our partners Circulos De Bienestar centered on the integration of the arts, culture, and the South Carolina Early Learning Standards.
- We provided free water safety and swim lessons to over forty children, parents and staff enrolled in our parenting programs in partnership with our local YMCAs in Berkeley County.

Berkeley First Steps will continue to prioritize young children and families and hope you will support our efforts by becoming a volunteer, board member or donor.

Please also join us in celebrating the unity, strength, and resiliency of our early childhood community in Berkeley County and our region.

For children,

Adrienne Troy-Frazier

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

Every child in Berkeley County will enter kindergarten safe, healthy, ready to succeed, and eager to learn.



FOUR-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN



an evidence-based program

First Steps 4K provides eligible children with free enrollment in full-day four-year-old kindergarten. In coordination with First Steps local partnerships and more than 250 private, community and faith-based preschool providers, First Steps 4K expands access to quality early education across the state.



ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for enrollment, a child must be:

- ✓ 4 years old on or before September 1
- ✓ Eligible for Medicaid, SNAP or TANF, experiencing homelessness or transiency, or in foster care
- ✓ Be a South Carolina resident

66

children enrolled

6

First Steps 4K providers

With First Steps 4K, families are in the driver's seat. They choose the school that best meets their needs. Families can enroll in any participating private, non-profit, or faith-based preschool provider. The majority of First Steps 4K providers offer an 8 hour instructional day with a year-round calendar, including summers. Through a partnership with SC Voucher, First Steps 4K families can also enroll in the First Steps 4K + Siblings scholarship program which provides whole care and education for all children, ages 0-12, in the household.





AMERICORPS

First Steps AmeriCorps provides part- and full-time service opportunities with Local Partnerships across South Carolina. There were 2 member roles during the 2021-22 program year: Family and Community Engagement and HIPPY Parent Educator. AmeriCorps member activities ranged from providing one-on-one support for families using the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) International curriculum to hosting events about school readiness and local early childhood services.

AmeriCorps Members

1

Family and Community
Engagement AmeriCorps
member(s)

Hours served in the community

970

hours served by Family and Community
Engagement AmeriCorps member(s)

1

HIPPY Parent Educator
AmeriCorps member(s)

596.5

hours served by HIPPY Parent
Educator AmeriCorps member(s)

\$7794

total in Segal Education Awards
received by members





QUALITY COUNTS



an evidence-based program

Developed by Spartanburg County First Steps, Quality Counts is a community-based child care quality improvement strategy. It is designed to build and sustain high quality in early care and education programs using relationship-based technical assistance, mentoring, specialized training, and a director network.

Technical assistance and support is targeted based on the center's star rating and includes regular classroom visits, at least 8 hours of training, monthly directors network meetings, and grant funding for equipment and materials.



Quality Counts has helped us to connect us with other providers throughout our communities and other quality centers



Quality Counts has helped me understand the importance of building and sustaining relationships with our children and families



Berkeley County First Steps
**Directors
Network Meeting**

Join our Discussion
Help us in discussing these following topics:
Center Operations & Management
Building Staff Relations
Dealing with Challenging Behavior
Health & Safety
Support Needs

When
February 4th, 2022
12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

Where
Register in advance
Via this link: t.ly/WqPR

BERKELEY COUNTY
FIRST STEPS
getting children ready for school

Join us for our next
**DIRECTORS NETWORK
MEETING!**

BERKELEY COUNTY FIRST STEPS

Come take part in a discussion of classroom management and staffing. Learn and help navigate issues of COVID in the classroom, staff retention, and the necessary support systems needed in the workplace.

SAVE THE DATE!
Wednesday, Dec 1
12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

REGISTER
Online via Zoom
bit.ly/dir-network

BERKELEY COUNTY
FIRST STEPS
getting children ready for school



QualityCounts

recognizing excellence in early care & education



CHILD CARE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT



an evidence-based program

Many private child care centers strive to provide high quality care but lack the resources often available to publicly-funded early childhood programs. Our Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) program aims to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children.

Our services include:



Rigorous quality assessments



On-site technical assistance at least twice monthly



Funding for equipment and materials



Training and workforce development



Coordination with community partners

QE BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

5

child care providers served

107

number of TA visits provided

69

number of children 0-5 enrolled in provider classrooms

Before QE

After QE



Before QE

After QE





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107

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number of children 0-5
enrolled in provider
classrooms



"The Child Care Quality Enhancement Program, has help provide us with the skills and knowledge we need to enhance quality to help better serve our young children and families."

BETTY'S PRESCHOOL AND DAYCARE

"This program has helped support us through difficult times while trying to find staff and keep staff. Our teachers greatly appreciate the support of this program."

CREATIVE KIDS CDC

"This program is highly needed in our community."

DENISE STANLEY BAKER

"This program has really provided us with the support we needed to help us survive the pandemic."

ST.JAMES AME CDC



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.



We have many working families that the child care scholarships helped. Parents are able to get a discounted child care rate while learning parenting tips and tricks that will last a lifetime. They know their children are in a safe and caring environment to learn. Everyone benefits!



NICOLE WILSON, DIRECTOR, CREATIVE KIDS CDC

SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

8

number of children
served

3

number of providers
served

8

number of
developmental
screenings provided





SUPPORTING CARE PROVIDERS THROUGH VISITS



an evidence-informed program

The Supporting Care Providers through Visits program (SCPV) supports Family Child Care Home providers with research- and evidence-informed information to encourage developmentally appropriate practices.

The providers pass this knowledge on to the parents of the children in their care through specifically designed activities.

SCPV BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

2

child care providers served

30

total provider visits

7

total children enrolled with
providers



It was very beneficial to the parents. Parents and children enjoyed the activities. This program helped parents that didn't think they had any parenting skills build on the skills they discovered they did have.



DENISE STANLEY-BAKER, FAMILY CHILD CARE DIRECTOR





TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



an evidence-based program

Child care training programs aim to advance the early care and education profession, creating pathways to success for early childhood educators and the children and families they serve. Our affordable, high-quality professional development offerings are certified through SC Endeavors and include topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, and program administration.

TRAINING AND PD BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

37

total training hours

170

total providers trained

"Entire training was great. Many takeaways from team members that attended."

"These trainings have really made me to reflect on myself and the way that I teach."

"I have learned a lot of strategies to use in my daycare."

"The trainer is amazing!"

98% of trainees thought that the trainer and information was highly effective and meet their needs (percentage calculated from survey).



CHILD CARE TRAINING



an evidence-based program

High-quality child care hinges on high-quality professional development that meets the needs of the local child care workforce. Our training programs are certified through SC Endeavors and include topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Our 2021-2022 trainings included:



TRAINING BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

402

total training attendance

94

child care teachers and
directors served

19

number of training
sessions offered

DATE	TIME	TRAINING	HOURS	TOPIC
July 8, 2021	Virtual	Active Reflection Supervision	2.5	Pro. Admin.
July 28, 2021	Virtual	Professional Communication with Families	2.5	Professional Dev.
August 10, 2021	virtual	Ableism 101	2.5	Spec. Needs
August 18, 2021	Virtual	No, No Biting	1.0	
August 18, 2021	virtual	Want to be a Millionaire	2.0	Prog. Admin.
August 26, 2021	virtual	Affirming Culture	2.5	TBD
February 10, 2022	6:30-8:30 pm	Understanding Early Language and Literary Development	2.0	G & D
February 22, 2022	6:30-8:30 pm	Reading Aloud	2.0	Curriculum
March 8, 2022	6:30-8:30 pm	Pyramid Series Part 1	2.0	Curriculum
March 24, 2022	6:30-8:30 pm	Pyramid Series Part 2	2.0	Health & Safety
April 7, 2022	*6:30-7:30 pm	Handwashing 101	1.0	Health & Safety
April 7, 2022	7:30-8:30 pm	Making Diapering Count	1.0	Professional Dev.
April 16, 2022	6:30-8:30pm	Active Supervision Zoning and Tracking	2.0	Health & Safety
April 26, 2022	*6:30-7:30 pm	Physical Activity	1.0	CURR-ABC Physical
April 26, 2022	7:30-8:30 pm	Nutrition Upgrade	1.0	Act. Approved
April 28, 2022	virtual	Beloved Book Series	2.0	NUTRITION-ABC
May 14, 2022	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Be True to The Game-Curriculum Fidelity	3.0	Spec. Needs
May 24, 2022	6:30-8:30 pm	Transforming Staff into a Super Workforce	2.0	Professional Dev.
June 4, 2022	9:00 am-12:00 pm	Enhancements for An Effective Work Environment	3.0	Prog. Admin.
		TOTAL	37.0	



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:

Is a collaboration with PASOs and Berkeley County First Steps and incorporates the PASOs Community Health Worker (Promotor) model to build trust and best meet the needs of the Latino Community



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 2021-2022

100

children served

24

referrals to BabyNet or other local services



A mother was in a domestic violence situation. She contacted me so that I could help connect her with resources. I visited the family and provided needed support and referred her 2 children to BabyNet and Family Connection to assist with potential delays. The mother was very grateful for all the support we gave them.



PASOs
Educate. Connect. Advocate.



HEALTH SERVICES



an evidence-informed program

The integration of Health and Human Services has been shown to improve health, reduce health inequities, and reduce long-term health care costs. We coordinate with partners to support the health and wellbeing of families with young children.

HEALTH SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022



Children: 179
Adult: 91

Social Determinant of
Health

Children: 62
Adult: 72

Access to Care

119

Outreach



PASOs
Educate. Connect. Advocate.



HEALTHY STEPS



an evidence-based program

Healthy Steps is an evidence-based, team-based pediatric primary care program that serves children birth to three. The program model consists of 8 core components that promote the health, well-being, and school readiness of babies and toddlers, with an emphasis on families living in low-income communities. Families at participating healthcare clinics receive HealthySteps services including developmental and behavioral screenings, a dedicated contact line, and resource needs assessments.

HEALTHY STEPS BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

422

children served

1372

total screenings completed



It's great having someone with me at the well-child visit. I love the support I received from the Healthy Steps Specialist!



A PARTICIPANT OF HEALTHY STEPS





HOME INSTRUCTION FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS



an evidence-based program

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home visiting program that supports parents in their role as their child's first and most important teacher. HIPPY partners with parents to prepare their children for success in school.



Expose children
to literacy.



Strengthen
families.



Provide tools for
childhood success.



Promote early
learning.

HIPPY BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

10

families served

163

total home visits



Quotes from the families:

"HIPPY helped me find new ways to do a lot of our daily routines."

"I have changed a lot. I interact with my child more on his level."

"I really enjoyed and appreciate everything and everyone that has helped me."

"Ms. Angie is awesome!"





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



8

families served

15

total group meetings

110

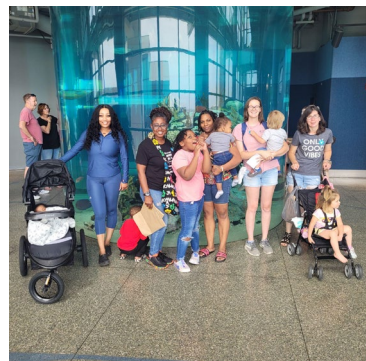
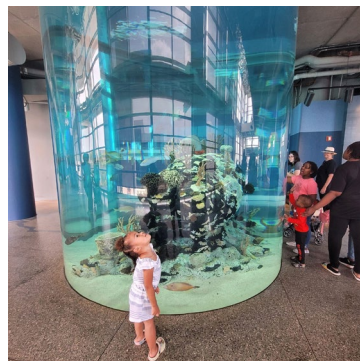
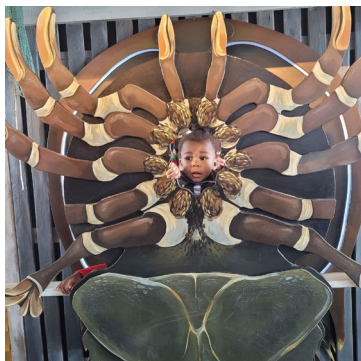
home visits



The Nurturing Parenting Program has been such a great program for my children as well as for me as a mother. It's great to know I have such a big support system outside of family.



WHITNEY MARTIN, PARENT





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 BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

54

families served

849

total home visits

45

total group sessions

“Being In the First Steps Program has really helped me be more hands on with my child and interacting more with her in different settings. Exposing my child to different environments all while learning new things. We have attended just about every event for the first steps program. From Boo for Books, Snails and Tails Field Trip, The Curbside Spring Event, The Curbside End of the Year Event, as well as used the resources of the Goose Creek Police Department to secure and inspect both my children’s car seats and start my daughter’s first lessons with swimming and so much more! This program has made me feel more confident as a parent to know that I’m going all the rights things with my child; while also getting help with education and resources to provide that kick start in early learning for my child.”

JALIYAH L. IVEY, PARENT





PUBLIC AWARENESS

Thanks to the Charles Webb Grant, in 2021 - 2022 The Social Inclusion program saw lots of growth in the form of direct service and through our virtual story time. We had **1356** people check out our story time. We also supported other programs in 10 trainings and co-facilitated a training on Ableism in children's literature.

The program provided virtual social stories to help parents support their children in dealing with specific behaviors. We also saw an increase in referrals made. Our top referrals were to Family Connections of South Carolina, AccessAbility, and Babynet.

Social Inclusion Project BY THE NUMBERS 2021-2022

23

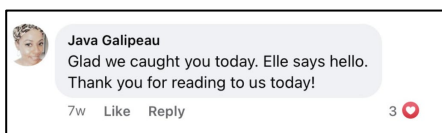
materials
distributed

22

Story Time and
Trainings

18

Children Directly
Served



What did you enjoy about the presentation?

5 responses

Everything

It had participants that could share their personal experiences.

Hearing experiences from other centers

Hearing other workers stories





COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Addressing the needs of young children is a shared endeavor. In addition to providing services to families and support for child care providers, Berkeley County First Steps mobilizes partners and community members to ensure all children in Berkeley County begin school ready to succeed. We serve as a:

LOCAL PORTAL

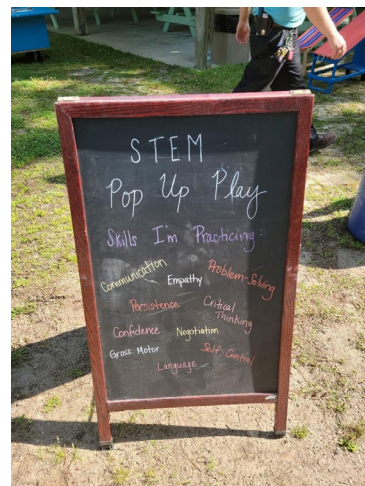
connecting preschool children and their families to services

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

10

Play Partners

500

Children Served

“

We are so glad to have these experiences. We do not always get the chance to go to places like the children's museum so it was nice to see this at this park.

”

HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDER



OUR SUPPORTERS

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

FUNDING SUPPORT

Coastal Community Foundation - \$12,200

Medical University of South Carolina - \$11,456.65

PASOs - \$9950

Charles Webb/Ed Croft - \$7000

Sisters of Charity - \$5000

SC Endeavors - \$2000

Magnolia Plantation Foundation - \$1000

Fact Forward - \$948.70

A Bauman Family Foundation - \$500

Board and Staff Contributions - \$815

Individual Contributions - \$550.56

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Berkeley County School District - \$60,000

The AIO Group - \$3025.66.

JOIN US

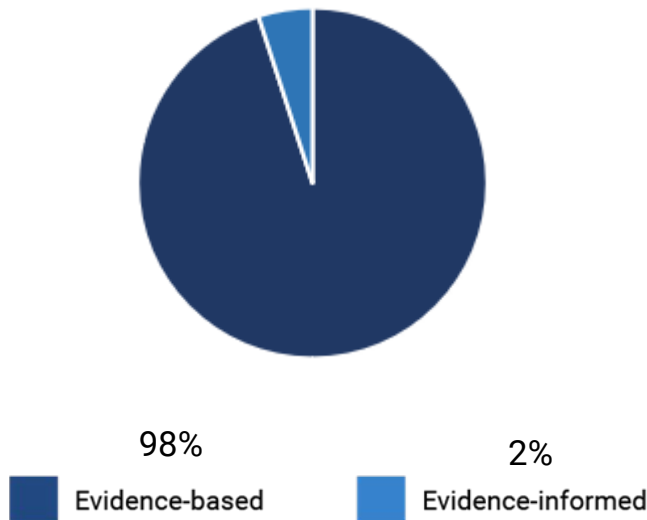
For more information on partnership opportunities, visit our website at www.berkeleyfirststepsteps.com



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

OUR INVESTMENT IN QUALITY

Expenditures of State Funds by Program Type



ESTIMATION OF COST SAVINGS

Since inception, Berkeley County First Steps has leveraged **\$2,986,069** from sources outside of state government.

That's **\$0.25** for every state dollar.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES BY STRATEGY

	State Funding	Federal Funding	Private Funding	In-Kind Contributions	Total
Parents as Teachers	\$196,173.30	\$2000.00	\$38,006.26	\$60,000.00	\$296,179.56
SCPV - Supporting Care Providers	\$0	\$2,268.46	\$0	\$0	\$2,268.46
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$55,333.89	\$67,224.73	\$4,924.80	\$0	\$127,483.42
Child Care Training	\$31,637.62	\$0	\$4,560.52	\$0	\$36,198.14
Scholarship Initiatives	\$46,092.15	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$46,092.15
Nurturing Parenting	\$2509.00	\$51,481.92	\$4,787.38	\$0	\$58,778.30
HIPPY	\$11,890.76	\$4,236.00	\$0	\$0	\$16,127.36
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$7,334.24	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$7,334.28
Early Identification and Referral	\$64,754.08	\$46,321.70	\$0	\$0	\$111,075.78
Partnerships & Community Education	\$58,401.66	\$4,169.65	\$78,788.81	\$3,025.56	\$144,385.78
Administrative Support	\$58,862.68	\$0	\$901.14	\$	\$59,763.82
Total Expenses	\$532,989.38	\$177,703.06	\$131,968.91	\$63,025.66	\$905,687.01



LEADERSHIP

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Donna McQueen, Chair	Michelle Green
Lindsay Odell, Vice-Chair	Melissa Miller
Simone Chinnis, Secretary	Patricia Miller Limehouse
Megan Andreas, Treasurer	Betty Pressley
Jocelyn Clark-Quiggle	Marcia Thierse
Linda Fontaine	Sharon Thomas

STAFF

Adrienne Troy-Frazier, Executive Director	Nathan Todd, Inclusion Specialist
Abigail Santiago, Community Health Worker	Monica Stukes, Program Coordinator
Stephanie Cook, Admin/Fiscal Coordinator	Ashley Brailsford, TriCounty Play
Erla Soto, Community Health Worker	Simone, Lee, Lead Parent Educator
Ivory Mitchell, Program Manager	Collaborative, Program Coordinator

AMERICOPRS SERVICE MEMBERS

Angelique Stewart, Parent Educator
Samantha Hernandez, Outreach Coordinator

CONTACT US

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