

Glossary of Agency Terms

In the Program Evaluation Report, the agency was asked to provide a list of terms, phrases or acronyms the agency uses which the Committee or general public may not know, along with the meaning of the term, phrase or acronym. Below is the list of those terms, phrases and acronyms.

If there are additional terms that you have questions about, please contact the agency.

Term, Phrase or Acronym	Meaning of the Term, Phrase or Acronym	Department which often utilizes the term (if the entire agency uses it, type "Entire Agency")
BabyNet	South Carolina's name for the federal program serving infants and toddlers with special needs, as defined in Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). First Steps was named the lead agency for BabyNet in 2010.	Entire Agency
Board of Trustees	Refers to South Carolina First Steps Board of Trustees, which govern the SC First Steps initiative per state law. Members include appointees from the Governor, Speaker of the SC House, and Pro Tempore of the SC Senate; legislators; directors of child-serving state agencies; the SC Head Start Collaboration Director; and the director of the Children's Trust. The BOT also serves as the state's Early Childhood Advisory Council, per First Steps legislation.	Entire Agency
BRIDGES Data System	BRIDGES is the new interagency client data system for BabyNet.	Entire Agency

<p>Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE)</p>	<p>Several local partnerships fund Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE), which is intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided to young children within child care settings. 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 include: on-site Technical Assistance (TA) at least twice monthly; equipment and materials funding; integration with locally available training, provided by First Steps and other partners; workforce development; coordination with community partners; and pre/post assessments of the classroom environment and teacher-child interaction, using nationally-recognized observational tools for infant/toddler and preschool settings (the Environment Rating Scales).</p>	<p>Entire Agency</p>
<p>Countdown to Kindergarten</p>	<p>Countdown to Kindergarten is a First Steps program operated by local partnerships based on other successful school transition models from around the country. Its goals are: to increase the successful transition of South Carolina’s most at-risk children into the K-12 school system; to increase parent involvement in the early grades (particularly in hard-to-reach communities), when children’s learning is foundational for life success; and to increase public awareness of the importance of school readiness and provide ways for parents and communities to impact children’s early school success. Teachers make six visits over the summer to the homes of participating students and families. Children and families are introduced to actual materials used in kindergarten and are given a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit to keep. The last visit is a “field trip” to the school where the child will attend class in the fall. Partner school districts place as many children as possible in their home visitor’s classroom for kindergarten, thereby building upon the teacher-child and parent-teacher relationships built over the summer.</p>	<p>Entire Agency</p>

Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)	The federal Head Start reauthorization act in 2007 requested the creation of state Early Childhood Advisory Councils for the purpose of increasing access of low-income children to quality early care and education programs. The SC First Steps Board of Trustees became South Carolina's ECAC in 2010 by Executive Order, and then by statute in 2014.	Entire Agency
Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships	Early Head Start is a federal-to-local grant program that provides full-day early care and education, as well as comprehensive services (health, parenting/family support, etc.) to infants and toddlers living in poverty or who have special needs. EHead Start grantees within First Steps include the Spartanburg and Richland First Steps partnerships, and the Charleston First Steps partnership is the contracted provider of home-based Early head Start services for its local grantee, the Charleston school district. Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships is a new grant program by the federal Office of Head Start awarded for the first time in December 2014, which establishes the Early Head Start center-based model within child care settings. First Steps grantees for Early Head Start- Child Care Partnerships include the state office of First Steps for multiple counties, as well as Charleston First Steps and Spartanburg First Steps and Lancaster First Steps.	Entire Agency
Early Steps to School Success	Early Steps to School Success is a language and pre-literacy development program operated by Save the Children. Early Steps is the birth-to-five component of a continuum of Save the Children programs which focus on literacy and language development, physical fitness and nutrition programs for children birth to age 12. Early Steps provides early childhood education services to pregnant women and children birth to five years of age, education services to their parents, and ongoing staff training to the community early childhood educators involved with the program. Early Steps provides home visits twice monthly, parent/child education groups in school and community settings, child play groups and storybook hours, Raising a Reader bookbag lending program, and community referrals and follow-up. Currently, four local partnerships fund Early Steps.	Entire Agency

First Steps 4K	Refers to the portion of state-funded full-day 4K services authorized by the Read to Succeed Act, which occur in center-based programs outside of public school districts.	Entire Agency
First Steps Data Collection System	Web-based data system operated by the SC Dept. of Revenue and Fiscal Affairs (formerly ORS) in which local partnership staff and vendors enter data on client demographics, program services, and screenings and assessments for program strategies that collect client-level data. The FSDC also includes a Child Care Provider section whereby local partnerships track activity within their Child Care Quality Enhancement programs.	Entire Agency
Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)	The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is the written plan developed for BabyNet-eligible children that describes the individualized services the child and family will receive. Each service will include the frequency, intensity, duration and method of delivery. Each plan will include service coordination. Other services can include one or several of the available sixteen BabyNet services, including special instruction. The plan must be developed by the IFSP team, to include the family, within 45 days of the date the initial referral is made to the local BabyNet point of entry office and must be reviewed every 6 months.	Entire Agency
Local Partnerships	Refers to the 501c3 non-profit organizations established in each county in SC as subsidiary non-profits of SC First Steps, whose board composition, purpose and goals, process of receiving annual state funding from SC First Steps is defined in Act 287.	Entire Agency

Nurse-Family Partnership	Nurse-Family Partnership is an evidence-based home visitation program that provides ongoing home visits from registered nurses to low-income, first-time moms so that they 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. Several local partnerships fund NFP services through state and/or private funds, and SC First Steps is the state coordinating office for the model in South Carolina.	Entire Agency
Parent-Child Home Program	The Parent-Child Home Program is an innovative home-based literacy program serving families challenged by poverty, low levels of education, language barriers and other obstacles to educational success. The program emphasizes the parent-child verbal interaction critical to developing early language and literacy skills. The curriculum is designed to support two critical aspects of young children’s early literacy: their social emotional development and language development. Home visiting services are provided to families of children who are 2 and 3 years old on a twice- weekly basis for a period of two years.	Entire Agency
Parents as Teachers	The Parents as Teachers model is an evidence-based early childhood home visiting framework for families with children prenatal through kindergarten entry that builds strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to learn. Program services include: 1. Personal Visits minimum twice monthly in the client’s home 2. Group Connections with other client families at least monthly 3. Screenings and Assessments to identify issues early 4. Resource and Referral Network connecting families to needed resources First Steps partnerships are the primary funder of Parents as Teachers in South Carolina, and the state office of First Steps serves as the State Office for the national model.	Entire Agency

Regional Finance Managers	Contracted fiscal managers that provide accounting services on behalf of SC First Steps at the local level. Regional Finance Managers serve three major functions: 1. fiscal agent for local First Steps partnerships; 2. provider payments for First Steps 4K; 3. payments to private providers for the BabyNet system.	Entire Agency
Renewal	Renewal refers to both the time period (April-June) when local partnerships submit their application to the state office of First Steps to receive state funding for the upcoming fiscal year, and the application document, called a Renewal Plan, which local partnerships submit to the state office of First Steps as their official request for funding.	Entire Agency
Scholarships	Scholarships refer to child care scholarships, which several local partnerships fund so that low-income families who are not able to receive child care vouchers from SCDSS can afford quality child care for their children 0-5. Partnerships have the option to operate their scholarship program in-house on a full- or part-time basis, with or without parent co-pays, or through SCDSS. First Steps scholarships are to be used with child care providers at a "B" level or higher or who are participating in a First Steps QE program, although exceptions are made if these types of child care providers do not have openings or are not within a reasonable geographic distance for families. First Steps program standards require regular monitoring visits to providers and scholarship children receive at least one developmental screening per year, with appropriate referrals made to BabyNet or other services.	Entire Agency
South Carolina First Steps	South Carolina First Steps is both an entity of state government and a 501c3 non-profit organization created in state statute to be the school readiness initiative for South Carolina. It refers to the entire First Steps system, which includes the state office of First Steps and the programs it operates (BabyNet, First Steps 4K, Early Childhood Advisory Council, Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships, Nurse Family Partnership State Office, Parents as Teachers State Office) and the network of local First Steps partnerships, one per county, each subsidiary non-profit organizations led by a local partnership board of directors.	Entire Agency

Technical Assistance Staff	Refers to staff employed by the state office of First Steps who spend at least a portion of their time supporting local partnerships through training and technical assistance. Each local partnership is assigned a technical assistant to be their initial point of contact for assistance; in addition, technical assistants specialize in certain areas such as parenting, data, Nurse-Family Partnership, board development, etc. The technical assistance staff are responsible for reviewing partnership renewal plans and recommending strategies for approval to the SC First Steps Board of Trustees.	Entire Agency
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