Thank you.

Your support of Beginnings SC resulted in 1,303 children receiving hearing screenings in 31 child care programs across the state in 2021 and more than 5,992 children have been screened since the program’s inception.

Each donation made and each hour volunteered – continue to strengthen every family who called our office, every child who received a hearing screening, every child care provider who sees a child in need, and every parent who attends a meeting at no cost to them.

The COVID-19 pandemic required that the Beginnings team adapt to new needs of our families – meaning that we also reached more families with virtual events on social media in 2021. As we identify more and more children and families, our need for resources grows. In 2022, we focused on addressing the needs of the 9,000 children in South Carolina who are deaf or hard of hearing, are not identified and are not receiving appropriate interventions or support.

We are so grateful to all of you who supported the Beginnings SC community. Your support makes our mission possible and we are proud of the investments and positive changes we are bringing to our communities – together. We’re confident we will make even greater impacts in 2022 as we celebrate 10 years of Beginnings!

Cara Smithwick
Executive Director

Mary Reaves
Director of Programs

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-FOUNDERS

MISSION

Beginnings SC provides expert knowledge and individualized planning strategies for parents, professionals, & communities to promote successful outcomes for children who are deaf or hard of hearing in South Carolina. We believe every SC child who is deaf or hard of hearing will reach his or her fullest potential.
FIGURES OF PROGRESS

EDUCATE

We educate the families about the challenges that deaf and hard of hearing children face.

- Reached more than 100 families through 366 hours of individualized meetings including 75 home visits.
- Partnered with SC Hands & Voices to host 7 Topic Tuesday webinars for parents and hosted audiologist & author Jim Bombicino for a family book reading.
- Hosted the Back to School Bash for 94 family members to meet 24 vendors and led 6 Virtual Circle Time playgroups for 4 preschoolers.
- Provided ASL tutoring & Deaf Advocacy Specialist services to 7 families.
- Coordinated attendance for 6 SC families at national Early Hearing Detection & Intervention conference.

ADVOCATE

Together with the family, we assemble and support both short and long term game plans that increase the opportunities for both the child and family.

- Received 87 new family referrals.
- Advocated with parents at 20 IEP meetings.
- Referred 20 families to parent support group, SC Hands & Voices and became SC Thrive Benefit Bank Counselors to link families to state systems of support.
- Expanded tutoring programs to include Clemson and Columbia College for LSL and ASL students and hosted evening social activities for teens, including 3 Teen Game Nights.

FACILITATE

We connect and facilitate the professional resources required to maximize the successful belonging of both the child and the family.

- Screened 1,303 children’s hearing in 31 child care programs across the state totaling 5,992 children screened since the program’s inception.
- Provided training to 226 child care professionals to identify signs of hearing loss with 69 technical assistance sessions.
- Partnered with Dept. of Mental Health, SC Association of the Deaf, and SCDHEC to host 3 COVID-19 webinars for the Deaf community.
- Established a state-wide Lending Library to increase hearing screening opportunities to 2 programs totaling 20 people.
- Conducted 21 hours of Technical Assistance during OAE screenings.

75 Home Visits 226 Professionals Trained 1,303 Children screened
TAKEESHA JOHNSON’S FAMILY STORY

"Beginnings SC has been a big support for our family.

On December 28, 2020, we found out that our sweet baby girl Eda’Leigh Tiana’Grace had profound hearing loss. I can remember that day just like it was yesterday. At the time, I did not really understand what profound hearing loss was or to what extent it was, this was all new to me. My husband and I knew that we were going to do all that we could to support and help our sweet Eda’Leigh through this process. It was not until our initial session with Lisa Jolly at Beginnings that my husband and I really understood the medical knowledge of Eda’Leigh’s condition. The medical terminology that she shared with us was so helpful and very much needed. Beginnings has been a great resource for us and moving forward with being able to assist Eda’Leigh with spoken language. Thank you so much Beginnings!"

READY, SET, SCREEN

1 in every 100 children in our state are deaf or hard of hearing – but not being identified.

Beginnings is working to change that.

To learn more about free hearing screenings in your community, visit: beginningssc.org

BECAUSE OF YOU...

Beginnings SC was able to reach more families than ever before!

100 families reached
707 contacts to families made
366 hours of individualized meetings
75 home visits
155 advocacy sessions

@BeginningsSC
@beginnings_sc
@beginnings_sc

2021 Back to School Bash
437 Center St.
West Columbia, SC 29169
(803) 216-1171
beginningssc.org