



2024-2025 Annual Report

GROWING FUTURES. STRENGTHENING FAMILIES. TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES.

This year, Vital Connections of the Midlands continued its commitment to ensuring that children and families have access to the resources, support, and opportunities they need to thrive. Through high-quality early childhood education, maternal health support, family engagement, and comprehensive health services, we helped build stronger foundations for lifelong success. Together with our families, staff, donors, volunteers, and community partners, we are creating pathways to brighter futures for every child we serve.

As we reflect on the 2024–2025 program year, we celebrate the remarkable achievements of the children and families we serve. Every milestone reached represents the dedication of our educators, family advocates, health professionals, donors, and community partners.

Our mission extends beyond preparing children for kindergarten. We work alongside families to strengthen health outcomes, promote economic stability, and create environments where children can thrive socially, emotionally, and academically.

This year, our outcomes exceeded expectations across every area of school readiness. We are proud of what we have accomplished together and grateful for the community support that makes this work possible.

WE ARE CONNECTED

"I joined the Policy Council and Governing Board because I believe in the power of connection—to contribute to meaningful change and help strengthen programs that connect and empower children, families, and future generations."

Latoya Jones-Manigo, *Governing Board and Policy Council*



WHO WE'VE SERVED

OUR REACH

During the 2024–2025 program year, Vital Connections served:
Children and Families

- 85 children enrolled
- 14 pregnant mothers enrolled in services
- 38 children participating in their third year of programming
- 31 children participating in their second year of programming

FAMILY SUPPORT

- 53 children from families receiving public assistance (TANF, SSI, or SNAP)
- 4 children in foster care
- 12 children experiencing homelessness

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 93 African American participants
- 1 Caucasian participant
- 2 Hispanic participants
- 3 participants identifying as other races/ethnicities

Every family we serve represents a unique story of resilience, growth, and opportunity. Our programs are designed to meet families where they are and provide comprehensive support that addresses both immediate and long-term needs.

WE ARE CONNECTED

I chose VCM Early Head Start because of its strong commitment to early childhood development and comprehensive family support. It was important to me that my child be in a safe, nurturing environment where he could learn, grow, and build essential social and developmental skills. I also value that the program supports the entire family and provides resources that empower parents to be active partners in their child's success.

Christin Chapman, *Parent*



SCHOOL READINESS SUCCESS

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Our goal is for 85% of children to meet or exceed developmental expectations. This year, our children surpassed that goal in every developmental domain.

School Readiness Outcomes

Development Area	Outcome
Social-Emotional Development	93.51%
Physical Development	88.61%
Language Development	89.22%
Cognitive Development	93.42%
Literacy Development	90.91%
Mathematics Development	92.21%

These results demonstrate the effectiveness of our comprehensive early childhood education model and reflect the dedication of our teachers, family advocates, and caregivers who work together to support every child's success.

WE ARE CONNECTED

“As a parent, I chose to join the Policy Council because I wanted to be more connected to my children’s program, have a voice in what shapes their experience, and better understand how I can support not only my own children, but other families as well.”

Angel Barsh, Parent and Policy Council Member



HEALTH AND MATERNAL WELLNESS

SUPPORTING HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

Healthy children learn better, and healthy families build stronger futures. Vital Connections prioritizes access to medical, dental, prenatal, and postpartum care to ensure families receive the support they need. Through these services, we are helping families establish healthy habits and reducing barriers to care during some of life's most critical developmental stages.



CHILD HEALTH OUTCOMES

- 81 children have an established dental home
- 78 children received dental care services
- 85 children are up-to-date on EPSDT screenings
- 6 children were identified as needing medical assistance
- 3 children received medical assistance services



MATERNAL HEALTH OUTCOMES

- 14 pregnant mothers maintained health insurance coverage
- 14 mothers received prenatal and postpartum care
- 14 mothers received safe sleep education

WE ARE CONNECTED

“As a community partner, I joined the Policy Council after a colleague who previously served in that role resigned, leaving a vacant seat. At the time, my supervisor asked me to step in and continue representing WellCare Medicaid. While my initial appointment was tied to filling that vacancy, I had the option to step away after completing the term.

However, I found the experience to be very fulfilling. I valued the opportunity to learn more about the agency that my company partners with on various initiatives, and I truly enjoyed interacting with the staff, parents, and students. What stood out most was the sense of connection—being able to engage directly with those we serve and build meaningful relationships across the community.

Having a seat at the table was not only meaningful, but it also reinforced how important those connections are in strengthening collaboration and supporting positive outcomes. That sense of purpose and connection is what has motivated me to continue serving on the Policy Council.”

Monya Terry, *Partner, Parent and Policy Council Member*

STEWARDSHIP AND LOOKING AHEAD

INVESTING IN LASTING IMPACT

Our supporters make every success story possible.

RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP

- 54.8% of all resources directly supported personnel, ensuring stable, high-quality services for children and families.
- In-kind contributions and non-federal share matches represented nearly one-fifth of our total budget, demonstrating strong community investment and partnership.
- Our signature event, Kicks for Community, was reprised for its second year, garnering increased dollars in sponsorships, attendance and event donations.
- Administrative and technical assistance expenses remained low, reflecting our commitment to fiscal responsibility and mission-focused spending.

THANK YOU

The achievements highlighted in this report are only possible because of our dedicated staff, families, volunteers, community partners, and donors.

Together, we are preparing children for school, supporting healthy families, and building stronger communities throughout the Midlands.

WE ARE CONNECTED

“Connection is not just in our name—it is our purpose. At Vital Connections, we link children to opportunity, families to essential resources, and communities to meaningful solutions. Connection builds trust, access, and support, driving stronger family engagement and improved outcomes. Through these relationships, we strengthen families today and create brighter futures for tomorrow.”

John Browne, CEO



PLAY A ROLE IN OUR SUCCESS

We exist to serve families. For over 30 years, Vital Connections of the Midlands has worked to provide high quality early childhood education to economically-challenged families in Richland County.

Our programs are designed to give children in our community the firm foundation needed to break the cycle of poverty, centering comprehensive development. This includes parent engagement initiatives, food access programming, and a nationally-accredited curriculum.

We serve approximately 80 children (ages 0-4) and pregnant moms annually and have seen incredible strides made in their academics, social-emotional learning, and physical health. We prepare these children and their families for success, and in turn, they become our family.

Get Connected

We're doing a lot of great things at Vital Connections of the Midlands, but we could do so much more! Connect with us through giving.



Donate

- Individual and corporate monetary gifts
- Wishlist items for our classrooms
- Conduct a fundraiser at work or church
- Sponsor field trips and special events
- Fund initiatives, like our backpack program or Donuts with Dads

Volunteer

- Become a foster grandparent
- Help with garden cleanup
- Join a committee
- Participate in a center cleanup day

Stay Connected

Our Locations:

Arthurtown
223 Riley Street

Children's Garden
1135 Blue Ridge Terrace

Tender Years
6862 Lower Richland Boulevard



Visit us at
www.vitalconnectionsmidlands.org to learn
more about our work or to donate.

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