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# Berkeley County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report*

## Summary

### *Numbers Served:*

537 children; 195 adults/families; 5 child care facilities, with 121 children total at those facilities; 6 child care centers achieved a higher quality status; 25 ABC scholarships; 467 health assessments and screenings; 1,625 home visits; 40 4-K slots and 6,044 books distributed; 20 children were served in the Countdown to Kindergarten Program; 18 children were served in the Private 4K Expansion Program and 347 children were served in the Imagination Library.

### *Total Budget:*

\$896,818

## Berkeley School Readiness Profile

Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	12,998- 9%
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)*	52%
Average Per Capita Personal Income	25,286
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5)***	16%
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	21%
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Reading **	13%
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Math**	23%
Low Birth Weight Infants	10%
Births to Mothers with Less than High School Education	19%
Less than Adequate Prenatal Care	31%

*Note: Data is for 2003 except where noted (\*2006, \*\*2004, \*\*\*2000).*

**Profile Comments:** *Berkeley County has low rates relative to other counties for several key risk indicators including teen pregnancies; but of the babies born to these teens, 91.1% were born to single mothers. Children in single-parent families made up 57.7% of all the county's children living in poverty. 10% of all the babies in the county were born with low birth weight. The result was an excess cost to the county of \$3,171,736. Berkeley County ranks poorly on several key educational attainment risk indicators including children not ready for first grade, students failing the first three grades, juvenile delinquency, and school dropout. Adults with no high school diploma are concentrated in the region of highest poverty. 19% of births to mothers not completing high school has risen in recent years. 31% of these mothers have less than adequate prenatal care. The*

## Berkeley County First Steps Partnership

*National Institute of Literacy estimates that 22.3% (or 64,410) of the adult population of the region is at the Level I Literacy Level. The greatest need and probably the greatest impact in our county has been the home visitation offered through our Parents as Teachers and DHEC programs. Intensity and duration, as well as a highly qualified and dedicated staff are key factors in the success of these parenting programs. We incorporate the Imagination Library Literacy Program into both programs as well as offering it to every child birth to five in Berkeley County. The Berkeley Partnership believes full day 4K is very beneficial to parents and to children's school readiness. Because of the Cooper ruling we participated in the private sector child care expansion pilot program, as a plaintiff county. Berkeley County First Steps was the fiscal agent for 3 child care centers that qualified for the private expansion program. Child Care Enhancement Grants are so important to a rural county. 65.2% of mothers with children under age six are in the labor force. They are constrained by the limited ability to pay for childcare. The weekly average charge for centers is \$84.18 and \$68.48 for day homes. Consequently, wages are low (\$6-\$8/hour) which attracts workers with limited education. First Steps funding not only helps improve the centers and homes by providing classroom supplies, it is also used for training staff.*

## SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES

### Early Education

**Statewide Goal** – South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness will leverage state, local and private resources to increase the quality of, and number of children participating in, developmentally appropriate pre-kindergarten programs in both the public and private sectors. Particular emphasis will be placed on *fidelity* to research-based instructional models and *targeting* of students at-risk of early school failure.

#### ***FY 2007 Results:***

**Partnership Goal** – Partnership with Berkeley County School District to expand early education opportunities for 4-year-olds at risk for not being ready for first grade. First Steps provided funding for teachers, aides and resources for expanding high quality early education programs at Whitesville and H.E. Bonner Elementary Schools. Duration and intensity are crucial to the impact of this program. The full day provides this and also additional support for working parents that need this arrangement.

- *Of the 40 children served, 40 were enrolled in the Imagination Library Literacy Program*
- *Of the 40 children served, 40 received health screenings.*
- *Of the 40 children served, 37 families received **two** or more home visits.*
- *Of the 40 children served, 39 parents attended one or more workshops.*

### Family Strengthening

**Statewide Goal** – South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness will work collaboratively with its agency partners, the faith community and private sector to support parents and families in their own efforts to maximize the school readiness, well-being and long-term academic success of the state's young children.

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### *FY 2007 Results:*

**Partnership Goal – Partnership with Berkeley County School District to provide home-based literacy and parenting services to families challenged by poverty, poor education, and language barriers. Families receiving services from our Parents as Teachers (PAT) program must have children ages birth to five. The program helps parents understand the ages and stages of development their child is going through. The parent educator offers practical guidance to encourage learning, manage challenging behavior and promote a strong parent-child relationship. This is a voluntary program based on the philosophy that parents are their children’s first and most influential teachers.**

- *The total number of home visits was 1,154. 187 families were served. .Of these families, 10 were teen parents, 11 had children with disabilities, 13 were parents with disabilities, 60 did not complete high school, 116 were low income families, 59 speak Spanish in their homes, 39 are single parents, 18 had low birth weight, 23 are involved with mental health or social services, 14 were uninsured.*
- *140 families participated in the group meetings held at their local schools.*
- *29 PAT children received completed health and developmental screenings.*
- *All parent educators have a Bachelor’s Degree. All have been trained in Ages and Stages, the Born to Learn Curriculum and PEP.*
- *31 PAT children received dental screenings.*
- *69 PAT children received hearing screenings.*
- *124 PAT children received vision screenings.*

### **Child Care**

**Statewide Goal – South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness recognizes quality child care as a research-based determinant of school readiness. As such, First Steps will collaborate with parents, the child care community and its agency and community partners to maximize child care quality throughout the state. Particular emphasis will be placed on assisting parents in their efforts to identify those settings most likely to maximize developmental outcomes, and assisting providers in their own efforts to maximize the learning environments they provide for young children.**

### *FY 2007 Results:*

**Partnership Goal – The method for improving child care in Berkeley County is to offer assessment, technical assistance and incentive grants to enhance child care providers (centers, group and family day homes). To qualify, a facility must agree to seek licensure or upgrade their center to enhanced status. Child care providers seeking to become NAEYC accredited will also be eligible for incentive grants. A detailed plan to improve staff qualifications, facility size or quality is developed and included in the application process. The ECERS-R and FDERS rating scale is used to evaluate the facilities. Grants are used to purchase resource materials, supplies, and equipment based on assessments.**

- *Quality enhancement grants were offered to 8 child care providers, creating 26 additional slots for children.*
- *2 centers are working to become NAEYC accredited.*
- *1 center achieved ABC Enhanced status.*

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- 52 staff attended 24 hours of training on health and safety, staff-child interaction, and curriculum. 7 workshop sessions were provided.
- 2 centers received ABC Enhanced status equivalent.
- 1 center received licensure.
- 438 books were given to children at the centers.

### **Healthy Start**

**Statewide Goal** – South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness recognizes the importance of a healthy start in maximizing both school readiness and the long-term wellbeing of the state’s children. The initiative will partner with families, the medical community and other stakeholders to leverage resources for - and increase awareness of - the healthcare, nutrition and early developmental needs of the state’s young children.

#### ***FY 2007 Results:***

**Partnership Goal – Health-oriented Newborn Home Visits are offered by DHEC within 48 to 72 hours after hospital discharge. The current DHEC program provides one post-partum visit to Medicaid mothers. Berkeley County First Steps enhances this program by providing additional intensive home visits based on assessment of “at risk” mothers. The nurses provide services to these children ages birth to five who are eligible for Medicaid, uninsured or under insured. They will be seen once a month for as long as they are willing to be in the program (until age 5).**

- *The nurses do physical assessments of the baby and mother; evaluate the safety of the environment; provide counseling and education about child care, health and safety; links the mother and baby to primary care, and makes referrals to Family Support Services when risks are identified.*
- *Home visits provide information, health teaching and training on: (1) early prevention services (2) developmental stimulation (3) recognizing special needs (4) parent/infant interaction (5) cognitive and language development (6) basic health related parenting skills (7) negotiating the healthcare system and (8) proper nutrition and oral hygiene for young children.*
- *72 family home environment assessments were done.*
- *46 infant health assessments and 38 health assessments for children were done.*
- *401 home visits were made last year.*
- *59 referrals were made last year.*
- *Of the 180 targeted goals, 648 goals were met.*
- *383 families were linked to medical homes.*
- *166 books were distributed to the children. In addition, all of the children were enrolled in the Imagination Library Literacy Program.*

### **School Transition**

**Statewide Goal** – South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness recognizes school entry as a pivotal transition point in each child’s educational career. In an effort to ensure strong collaborative relationships between the state’s families and schools, the initiative will develop strategies to maximize parents’ understandings of state and local expectations and ensure a smooth and beneficial school transition for each child.

#### ***FY 2007 Results:***

## Berkeley County First Steps Partnership

**Partnership Goal – Ensure an educationally beneficial school transition by serving 20 at-risk children in the Countdown to Kindergarten program. The teachers are certified in early childhood education and utilize the designed best practices curriculum for Countdown.**

- 20 identified children completed the Countdown program during summer 2006.
- 100 percent of the children received six or more home visits.
- 100 percent of the children qualified for free or reduced lunch..
- 100 percent of the families ranked the program “very helpful” on the Parent Satisfaction Survey.

### SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2006-2007

Berkeley County First Steps has not only achieved its mission, we’ve exceeded our own expectations. We have implemented the following strategies since 2001: Parents As Teachers; 4K Public Early Education; Facility Quality Enhancement Grants; DHEC Home-Based Health Services; ABC Scholarship Initiatives; Imagination Library (since 2004); Center Staff Training and Development (since 2004); Countdown To Kindergarten (since 2005); LEAP Summer Program (2001 & 2002); and Private 4K Expansion Pilot Program.

### FINANCIAL INFORMATION

State Appropriation	State-Private	In-kind	Local-Private	Lottery Appropriation	Federal	EIA Appropriation	TOTAL
\$555,690	\$6,685	\$94,641	\$13,770	\$189	\$0	\$38,916	<b>\$896,818</b>

*NOTE: The above State Appropriation amount leveraged all state-private, in-kind, local-private, lottery and federal dollars.*

READINESS STRATEGIES	EXPENSES
Parents As Teachers	\$258,167
Imagination Library	\$15,757
Extended 4-K	\$73,409
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$43,674
Child Care Training	\$902
Scholarship Initiative	\$62,999
Home-based Services	\$38,115
County Programmatic	\$71,217
County Administrative	\$38,927
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$546,467**</b>

## Berkeley County First Steps Partnership

\*\* Amount does not include Private 4K and CTK expenditures though the budget total does include these allocations.

DONOR'S NAME	AMOUNT
Berkeley Electric Cooperative	\$300
Trident United Way	\$1600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1900</b>

**Local Match Percentage for 2007: Our local match percentage this year was 17.27%.**

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### BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Berkeley County partnership board members volunteered 176 hours.  
Value of Volunteer Time<sup>1</sup>:  $\$18.04 \times 176 = \$3175$ .

#### BERKELEY COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Angela Thomas, Board Chair, Director of Community Education CCSD  
Kathleen Bounds, Former Board Chair BCFS, Board Chair BCSD, Foster Care Review Board, County Legislative Appointee  
Dr. Lillie Caldwell, Director of Adult Education  
Brenda Campbell, Parent of Child  
Dr. Luci Carter, Principal West View Elementary  
Cynthia Curry, CD Teacher BCSD, County Legislative Appointee  
Frank Oakley, Director DSS, County Appointee  
Sharon Fashion, Deputy Director/Youth Services Coordinator, Library Appointee  
Carolyn Glover, Center Director, Childcare  
Jean Gooch, Instructor, Early Care and Education, Community, Family and Child Services, Trident Technical College  
Sue Herring, Early Childhood Coordinator  
Dr. Annie Hurt, Title I, Adult Literacy  
Gene Kurtz, DHEC, County Appointee  
Richard Meister, Retired Principal, County Legislative Appointee  
Betty Pressley, HeadStart Appointee  
Angela Simmons, Former Board Chair BCFS, Teacher BCSD  
Betty Smalls, Center Director, Childcare  
Jean Turner, Guidance Counselor  
Gayle Williford, Home Economics/4-H County Extension Agent

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#### SUCCESS STORIES

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## Berkeley County First Steps Partnership

A parent in the Parents As Teachers Program wrote a letter of testimony to the program's merits. Her daughter was born 5 weeks early and diagnosed with Myotonic Muscular Dystrophy. Due to her health problems and prematurity, she played "catch up" for two years. The mother applauded the parent educator for her patience and focus on what her daughter could do, rather than what she couldn't do. She learned about her child's development and how to achieve the goals they set. Neither parent nor child thought of it as work or learning because they enjoyed the program and activities so much. Her daughter turned 3 in May and started school this fall. Because of Parents As Teachers she is well-prepared for success in school. In the last "Ages and Stages" questionnaire, she scored completely in the "white" area, which she had never done before. The mother believes that the early intervention and education that was provided, made a positive impact not only on her daughter but also on her.

The DHEC nurses reported that three of the children they were working with scored too high on the 4 year old kindergarten assessment to qualify for the program.

One parent used a "Mr. Yuck" sticker to call poison control after her child ingested bathroom cleaner.

Four parents signed up for the GED program.

The nurses did a workshop on vaccinations for Hispanic families and over 20 families attended.

All of the families participating in the DHEC program have been linked to medical homes.