



Beaufort County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report*

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Summary

Numbers Served:

839 children; 46 adults/families; 18 child care facilities, with 790 children total at those facilities; 1 child care center achieved a higher quality status; 23 health assessments and screenings; 236 home visits; and 14,048 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$1,182,147

Beaufort School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	12,059 9 %
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)*	47 %
Average Per Capita Personal Income	36,570
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5)***	16 %
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	12 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Reading **	16%
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Math**	25 %
Low Birth Weight Infants	10 %
Births to Mothers with Less than High School Education	22 %
Less than Adequate Prenatal Care	49 %

*Note: Data is for 2005 except where noted (*2006, **2004, ***2000).*

Profile Comments: In Beaufort County there is an insufficient supply of early education and childcare programs meeting high quality standards necessary to prepare children for school success. According to Beaufort County's Kids Count 2003, this is evident in the fact that 34.3% of children were assessed as not consistently ready for the 1st grade, 13.3% are over age in third grade, and 12.7% of eight and nine year olds are placed in special education. It was also noted in this report that when comparing South Carolina Readiness Assessment Scores within the state, Beaufort County scores lower in first grade readiness in every area (i.e. English, Language Arts, Mathematics, Personal and Social Development) concerning consistent demonstration of school readiness. Only 3% of childcare programs (3) in Beaufort County are nationally accredited. In 33.3% of centers, most pre-school staff and in 50% of centers most assistants have only a high school degree. In 48.1% of centers few to none of the pre-school staff have early childhood credentials. In childcare homes,

44% of lead providers have no more education than a high school degree or GED; 12% have less than a high school degree.

As part of growth in 2002-2003, Beaufort County Latino student enrollment jumped to an astounding 11% of the 17,700 students in the district schools. Seven years ago the Latino population was less than 1% in Beaufort County Schools.

As Kids Count Data sums it up in the Readiness Summary: "A serious problem exists in terms of student readiness and school success in the early grades...Such positive family-school-community efforts (in Beaufort County) could improve South Carolina's national Kids Count ranking from the bottom 10 to the average or even into the top 10 by prevention of unnecessary problems affecting children and youth."

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES

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.

FY 2007 Results:

Partnership Goal- Expand existing collaborative approaches to parent education and family strengthening services by serving families in the 2 priority target areas for children at-risk for not being ready for success in school.

- *46 families were served primarily in the 3 priority target locations of Sheldon and Big Estate.*
- *49 children participated with parents in the Parents as Teachers home visitation program.*
- *236 home visits were conducted by First Step Parent Educators.*
- *12 group parenting education meetings were conducted for the two target locations.*
- *An average of 11.5 parents attended group meetings.*
- *454 referrals to outside agencies were made by the PAT staff.*
- *23 screenings were conducted including health, vision, and hearing.*
- *Staff participated in Universal Staffing meetings with other community agencies for staffing of families.*
- *3 car seats were distributed with car seat safety training to First Step families during the Program Year.*
- *306 books were given out to families through the RIF program*
- *3 parents and their children completed the PAT Program in FY 07..*
- *Overall, 100% of the families who responded (80% return rate) to the PAT Program Evaluation said that they were very satisfied with the PAT program and would recommend it to a friend.*
- *100% of parents responding to the PAT Program Evaluation had child screenings and found the information helpful to their understanding of their baby's growth.*

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 – Improve and expand the delivery of high quality childcare services through mini-grants, training, technical assistance, literacy efforts, and the establishment of plans to impact the physical, social/emotional, and cognitive development of children.

- *18 Childcare Programs serving 790 children participated in FY 07 as partners and 16 of those received some funding to help increase the quality of care for children.*
- *15 Programs (of the 18) consisting of 32 classrooms participated in a third or fourth round of assessments using the Environmental Rating Scales (ERS).*
 - *2 new programs were added and assessed for the first time in FY 07.*
 - *Of the 16 continuing programs assessed in FY 07, there was a significant increase in scores by an average of 0.88.*
 - *17% of participating program partners in FY 07 scored an average of “5” on the ERS.*
- *1 facility became enhanced in FY 07.*
- *24 childcare programs serving 952 children requested technical assistance and were served by Partnership staff.*
- *First Steps staff spent 176 hours with child care programs providing technical assistance and planning for improvements.*
- *98 training sessions were provided for child care providers giving 195 hours of DSS training credit.*
- *804 child care providers (643 unduplicated) were trained in the areas of child development, health and safety, curriculum, professional development, and administration in FY 07.*
- *21 training sessions teaching First Aid, CPR and/or Blood Borne Pathogens were taught by the partnership staff awarding 101 child care providers with Red Cross Certification.*
- *The fifth annual Director’s Conference was attended by 39 Child Care Directors representing 4 surrounding counties.*
- *The literacy program (Mommy & Me) in its 4th year provided a total of 31 literacy group sessions for community stay-at-home moms and their children serving families and children in FY 07.*
- *The Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program in its 5th year provided 90 literacy events for parents and children through 30 partner distribution sites in Beaufort County.*
- *13,742 books were distributed into homes of approximately 4000 at-risk children through the RIF Program*
- *Two NAEYC model sites were developed providing 35 on site training hours to 7 childcare providers from facilities serving 323 children within Beaufort and Hampton counties.*

- *The First Steps Lending Library in its 5th year of operation lent out 226 books, 264 toys/literacy resources to child care providers and parents. .*
- *The second Annual Lowcountry Early Childhood Conference providing 55 workshops was attended by 245 Early Child Care Providers from around the state.*
- *97% of the respondents to the Lowcountry Early Childhood Conference Evaluation agreed or strongly agreed that the conference offered a wide variety of workshop selections that adequately met their training needs.*
- *100% of the respondents from a survey taken at the Director's Retreat indicated that they would like to see Directors' Retreats continue on a yearly basis.*
- *94% of child care programs that responded to the yearly satisfaction survey (86% return rate) either agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the local First Steps' services to their child care programs.*
- *Overall, all respondents were satisfied or highly satisfied with First Steps' services on all statements. Only 2 respondents had no opinion one way or the other on either statement.*

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

Beaufort County First Steps' Quality Enhancement Program plans to provide quality enhancement funds to 8 continued childcare programs). Technical assistance will be offered to all partner childcare programs, past or present with most of the focus on the 8 continuing programs. These programs will receive a minimum of two hours of bi-weekly technical assistance visits for each participating classroom. All of the participating classrooms will be assessed later in the year using the ERS scale to measure their progress. Training will continue to be open to all childcare providers in Beaufort and surrounding counties, with a more specific focus on partner programs. Much of the training and most all of the technical assistance will be designed for programs with specific needs related to the Environmental Rating Assessment Scores with intent to improve the overall classroom environments. A literacy effort to reach 4000 children and parents through the national RIF Book Program will also continue to be implemented.

The Parenting and Family Strengthening Program will continue to serve approximately the same population on the North side of the County. Families on the South side of the county will continue to be served by the Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) program as well as organized parent education meetings. Due to the loss of funding for a bilingual parent educator on the south side of the county, there are no plans for home visiting in FY 08. The Mommy and Me Literacy Program and Resource Center located on the side of the county will focus on increasing literacy skills to the Latino community. First Steps staff will be on site to provide tips on child growth and development. Also, to assist families with resource acquisition.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

State Appropriation	State-Private	In-kind	Local-Private	Lottery Appropriation	Federal	EIA Appropriation	TOTAL
\$421,013	\$32	\$266,746	\$30,849	\$140,325	\$23,276	26,378	\$908,295

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

READINESS STRATEGIES	BUDGET	ACTUAL EXPENDITURES	DIFFERENCE
Parents as Teachers	\$131,464	\$108,389	\$23,075
Quality Enhancement	\$590,232	\$359,572	\$230,660
EIA	\$26,378	\$23,528	\$2,850
County Programmatic	\$89,447	\$86,191	\$3,256
County Administrative	\$70,774	\$65,665	\$5,109
4K Full Day (Private)	\$273,852	\$9,385	264,467
TOTAL	\$1,182,147	\$652,730	\$529,417

Actual expenses were less than planned due to continued implementation of Lottery strategies. Difference is included in the FY 08 budget for completion of strategies. In addition, personnel and utilities costs were less than anticipated. Also, 4K Full Day student enrollment was less than number of children contracted to serve.

NOTABLE DONORS

DONOR'S NAME	AMOUNT
Federal Program: Reading is Fundamental	\$19,800
TOTAL	\$19,800

Local Match Percentage for 2007: 15.57%

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Beaufort County Partnership board members volunteered 22 hours, including working at the Second Annual Lowcountry Early Childhood Conference.

BEAUFORT COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Mr. York Glover, Board Chairman/ health care provider
Ms. Wendy Allen, Beaufort County Library
Ms. Myrna Bolden, County Head Start
Ms. Julia Burns, early childhood educator
Ms. Kathy G. Carter, family education, training & support provider
Ms. Frances Pringle Cherry, health care provider
General Howard Davis, legislative appointee
Dr. Belinda Eggen, child care, early childhood development/education provider
Ms. Shirley Fry, faith Community
Mr. Leroy Gillard, transportation
Ms. Felisa Johnson, parent of pre-school children
Ms. Ruby Stradford Johnson, faith community
Mr. Thomas F. Hudson, non-profit organization
Ms. Nan Krueger, Department of Health & Environmental Control
Mr. Jimmy N. Mackey, family education, training & support provider
Mr. Ronald Manyin, early childhood education
Ms. Latarsha McLeod, parent of pre-school children
Mr. Howard Mufuka, business community
Ms. Sara' Reynolds, early childhood education
Ms. Gloria Settles, pre-k, primary educator
Dr. Cynthia Gregory-Small, business community
Ms. Aylea Smith, parent of pre-school children
Ms. Janet Smith, child care, early childhood development/education provider
Mr. Fred S. Washington, Jr., Department of Social Services
Ms. Veronica Williams, pre-k, primary educator

SUCCESS STORIES

The following are only a few of the many positive comments that came from Child Care Directors, Child Care Providers, and Parents who have been touched by Beaufort County First Steps' Services during FY 07.

“The General Assembly created the S.C. First Steps to School Readiness in 1999. This initiative is statewide with a focus on increasing school readiness outcomes for all children ages 0-5 years. Every South Carolina County has a First Steps office that identifies local needs and collaborative opportunities to help our state's youngest learners be better prepared for school. First Presbyterian Day School has been identified as a “Model Site Program” in our county. As participants in this program, our teachers now serve as mentors for other preschool and day care providers. We assist and train other teachers in the areas of classroom management, curriculum, and developmentally appropriate practices for young children. Our school has received a grant from Beaufort County First Steps to enhance our curriculum. As a result, we have added a new water-play system to the playground and purchased other needed curriculum materials for classrooms. We are pleased to be a part of the statewide effort to enhance the quality of early childhood education and insure that all children are prepared for kindergarten.”

Sissey Jarrell
Director
First Presbyterian Day School
Hilton Head Island, SC

“I am a group home childcare provider in Beaufort County and have provided services in the community for the past three years. During this time, Beaufort County First Steps has played a very important role in the success of my business by offering affordable monthly trainings, and also opportunities for me to participate in annual conferences/retreats where a variety of very helpful topics are presented. In addition, I've been the recipient of First Steps grants. As a result I was able to purchase educational materials that helped to expand growth, play experiences, and learning opportunities for the children in my care. The friendly and professional staff members at Beaufort county First Steps have always been very prompt and attentive to our program needs. First Steps is a valuable asset.”

Jannie Cuevas
Owner/Childcare Provider
Beary Special Friends Group Home Childcare

“Rise and Shine Child Development Center has been a partner with Beaufort County First Steps since 2005. Our children, families, and center have enjoyed free books through the RIF program which we participate in faithfully each year. We have attended workshops and classes that are DSS accredited. These experiences have definitely enhanced the professionalism and developmentally appropriate practices within our center. We look with great anticipation to many years of partnership with Beaufort county First Steps.”

Thank You!
Lenora Henry
Owner/Director
Rise and Shine Child Development Center

“I have learned so much from my home visits. My parent educator has been visiting since my baby was three weeks old and he is now two and a half years old. I am grateful for the information about his development and how I can be his best teacher. My parent educator has always been there for me.”

Kendra Burns

“My parent educator helped me understand that babies learn from their parents and to be positive. I am very happy to be in this program. I really appreciate my parent educator. I wouldn't ask for another teacher.”

Shanita Jones

“The PAT program is wonderful. My sister recommended it to me. I recommended it to my sister-in-law. “

Tanisha Fripp

“The PAT program is an excellent developmental program.”

Floretta Williams