



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

Board Chair:
Jennifer Bahen
Executive Director:
James Ella Collins
Contact Information:
6296 Rivers Ave., Ste. 308
North Charleston, SC 29406
Phone: (84) 745-0237
Fax: (843) 745-0895
E-mail:
cefs@charlestonfirststeps.org
Web site:
www.charlestonfirststeps.org

Summary

Numbers Served:

1,932 children; 416 adults/families; 17 child care facilities, 856 children received direct services, an additional children 588 children received indirect services from our trainings, with 1,444 children total at those facilities; 7 child care centers achieved a higher quality status; 355 higher adult education levels achieved; 442 health assessments and screenings; 1,649 home visits; 95 staff trained; and 3,286 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$1,247,969 (includes all funding sources)

Charleston School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	27,929 / 8%
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)*	46%
Average Per Capita Personal Income	32,088
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5)***	24%
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	21%
Children in Third Grade Performing Below Basic on PACT Reading **	11%
Children in Third Grade Performing Below Basic on PACT Math**	16%
Low Birth Weight Infants	10%
Births to Mothers With Less Than High School Education	22%
Less Than Adequate Prenatal Care	35%

*Note: Data is for 2003 except where noted (*2005, **2004, ***1999).*

Profile Comments

Charleston County:

To increase children's readiness for school and respond to parental concerns and County needs, Charleston County First Steps Partnership allocated its resources to strategies like Parenting/Family Strengthening (Family Literacy and English Speakers of Other Languages); Pediatric Home-Based Health Services; and Facility Quality Enhancement, Center Staff Training & Development, and Child Care Scholarships). Charleston School Readiness Profile indicates an increase of 3,129 more young children in Charleston County between the ages 0-5 over last year. The average per capita income for the county increased \$1,137 over last year. The percentage of children in poverty

remained the same over last year. The number of children increased who are over aged in third grade by 4% from last year. Children in third grade decreased performing below basic on PACT Reading by 3% over last year. Children in third grade performing below basic on PACT Math remained the same as last year. Low birth weight infants increased by 1%. Births of mothers with less than high school education increased 4% over last year. There was a 4% increase over last year with the number of mothers that received less than adequate prenatal care. Additional intervention has been proven to be beneficial in the area of improving utilization of prenatal care.

The population characteristics have shown increases in most areas, which is a strong indication that this county has significant work ahead to improve its school readiness profile. The 3% decrease in children in third grade performing below basic on PACT reading is a turn in the right direction.

SC Kids Count summarized the Charleston County's profile best and this is what they had to say: For two decades the Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery assessed language, social skills, visual and auditory discrimination, memory recall, and knowledge of colors, letters, numbers, names of objects, etc. Since 2001 the South Carolina Readiness Assessment has been carried out by classroom teachers for the entire school year to assess personal and social development and Math and English/Language Arts knowledge and skills tied to the state academic standards. These assessments have shown that too many children reach school without the readiness skills needed for success in learning. Moreover, some schools are not ready to respond appropriately to the varying developmental levels of children in the early grades. As a result, too many students do not experience the success needed to create the motivation and engagement that sustain learning.

**Kindergarteners Consistently Demonstrating Readiness in 2004
(% of group total)**

Kindergarten Assessment of Readiness for First Grade	White Female	White Male	AA&O Female	AA&O Male	Total
English-Language Arts:					
Communication	84.8	74.9	68.5	54.5	69.7
Reading	88.9	79.8	75.7	65.6	76.8
Writing	91	82.3	80	68.9	79.9
Mathematics:					
Mathematical Processes	78.7	76.7	62	54.2	66.8
Number and Operations	88.3	81.6	76.6	67.7	77.8
Patterns, Relationships, and Functions	90.7	85.2	81.9	75.3	82.7
Geometry and Spatial Relations	90.3	85.3	77.4	67.2	79.2
Measurement	87.9	80.2	72.7	63.7	75.2
Data Collection and Probability	85.8	78.7	72.5	63.5	74.3
Personal and Social Development:					
Self Concept	77.3	64.3	68	53.9	65.3
Self Control	92.8	76.2	82	64.6	78.2
Approaches to Learning	85.1	72.4	71.5	56.9	70.6
Interaction with Others	90.3	79.5	79.7	71.7	79.8
Social Problem Solving	89.4	77.4	77.4	63.8	76.3

Many of the serious difficulties of adolescence have deep roots in problems emerging during the pre-school years of life and during unsuccessful academic careers in kindergarten through grade three.

Charleston County First Steps Partnership

These problems are described statistically through the Kids Count report data on family, economic status, health, readiness, and early school performance. These data present a troubling picture of children's life circumstances and development during the early years:

	Year	Total	White	African American & Other
Low Birthweight	2003	10.8%	7.2%	16.2%
Births to teen mothers under 18	2003	4.4%	1.7%	8.5%
Births to teen mothers under 20	2003	11.7%	5.7%	20.9%
Births to mothers not completing high school	2003	18.8%	13%	27.9%
Births to single mothers*	2003	41.2%	19.5%	74.2%
Children under 6 in single parent families	2000	32%	13.7%	58.4%
Females in the labor force with children under 6	2000	64.4%	62.4%	67.1%
Poverty rate for children under 6	2000	24.6%	7.1%	45.5%
Kindergarteners not consistently demonstrating readiness**	2004	25.9%	17.9%	32.2%
Failures during grades 1-3	2004	8.9%	5.8%	11.1%
Special Ed placement (ages 8 & 9)	2003	12.6%	12.2%	13.1%

* Data include cases of paternity acknowledgement by fathers not married to the mothers.

**Calculated as an average of SCRA English/Language Arts, Math, and Personal and Social Development. This weighted average is not based on a scored determination of ready-vs.-not ready as was calculated for the CSAB but rather is an "order of magnitude" estimate by Kids Count and not by SDE of approximately how many children are not sufficiently ready. For the actual assessments, see the table at the top of the page. Number tables and refer to the table numbers?

Statewide data on trends affecting children in the early years present a mixed picture. The number of single parent families has increased. More and more parents of young children are working. Education of parents has improved since. Infant mortality is down since, but low birth weight has not improved. Poverty declined dramatically in the 1970's but has not changed much for young children since then, especially among the growing numbers of children in families headed by single mothers. In Charleston County, the following trends have affected young children:

	1970	1980	1990	2000	Most Recent
Low Birthweight	9.8%	9.6%	8.4%	10%	10.8%
Births to teen mothers under 18	7.6%	7.7%	4.8%	4.8%	4.4%
Births to mothers not completing high school	36.5%	27.1%	21.3%	18.6%	18.8%
Births to single mothers*	18.1%	26.3%	33.4%	41.7%	41.2%
Children under 6 in single parent families	18%	19.9%	26.3%	32%	NA
Children under 18 in single parent families	19.3%	24.9%	30%	37%	NA
Females in the labor force with children under 6	34.2%	53.1%	64.3%	64.4%	NA
Poverty rate for children under 6	NA	24.8%	27%	24.6%	NA
Not ready for 1st grade	NA	36%	29.7%	17%	25.9%

* Beginning in 1980, data include paternity acknowledgement cases.

*** Most recent is SCRA for children in kindergarten.*

Research on early childhood and brain development emphasizes the critical importance of healthy fetal development, followed by nurturing and stimulating family and early care environments during the preschool years. These factors are especially important for school readiness in developing such strengths as extensive language, awareness of speech sounds, happy disposition, harmonious interpersonal skills, a positive orientation towards books, and general knowledge such as shapes and colors. Behavior, language, speech, and reading readiness deficiencies often prevent success in the early grades, especially success with reading fluency.

Until 1996-97, state-wide first grade readiness had not improved since the early 1980s, as assessed by teachers of these students. Large percentages of students are still placed in special education, even though many of them are recognized as disabled only in academic learning but not in other areas of life. Trends that appear to be promising are data on increased readiness, reduced school failures, and fewer students over-age for grade 3.

Year	"Not consistently demonstrating readiness" for 1st grade*	Failures grades 1-3	Over-age for grade 3	Grade 3 Reading**	Grade 3 Math**
1994	29.4%	13.8%	22.9%	15.3%	17%
1995	31%	13.4%	21%	19.4%	20%
1996	26.8%	13.7%	18.1%	14.8%	20.2%
1997	23.4%	15.3%	17.3%	14.6%	17.9%
1998	21.8%	15.2%	19.2%	13.9%	17.3%
1999	19.6%	16.6%	22.6%	33%	46%
2000	17%	16.6%	18.5%	26.5%	33.4%
2001	16%	N/A%	20.5%	21.9%	29.1%
2002	N/A%	16%	20%	21.4%	29.7%
2003	N/A%	10.2%	20.3%	17.8%	18%
2004	25.9%	8.9%	17.2%	14%	16.1%

**SCRA rating of less than "consistently demonstrates" for 2004 for the average of Math, English/Language Arts, and Personal/Social Development; CSAB all prior years; 2002 AND 2003 SCRA data are not available.*

***Below standards on BSAP through 1998; Below Basic on PACT starting in 1999.*

If these improvements are the result of better performance by children in the early grades, it is cause for celebration; however, lower failure rates may be the result of delayed timing of retention, as schools wait for testing results in grades 3 or 4 to implement under-performance interventions. It is hoped that enhanced attention to successful learning in the early grades such as through Act 135 and full-day kindergarten can be shown to cause a decline in retention.

While many students are making solid progress in school, too many others are performing below minimum academic standards. Approximately 19% of 4th graders in South Carolina perform below a basic level on the National Assessment of Education Progress in math and 43% in reading, as compared with 21.3% of 4th graders scoring Below Basic in math and 19.1% scoring Below Basic in reading on PACT in Charleston County.

2005 PACT Scores

	Grade	Total	White Male	White Female	AA&O Male	AA&O Female
Math	Grade 3	12.3%	4.4%	4.5%	21.2%	15.4%
Math	Grade 4	21.3%	4.5%	6.3%	34.9%	32.1%
Math	Grade 5	22.1%	4.7%	7.9%	35.8%	34.1%
Reading	Grade 3	11.4%	5.6%	2.6%	23.9%	9.4%
Reading	Grade 4	19.1%	6.8%	4.7%	36.5%	22.7%
Reading	Grade 5	23.9%	8.5%	4.8%	44.4%	32.8%

For further information, please contact Kim Hazel-Lohr or Baron Holmes at the SC Kids Count Project, 1000 Assembly St. Suite 425, Columbia, SC 29201; and Phone: (803) 734-1295; Fax: (803) 734-3619. You may also view all our other reports on the World Wide Web at www.sckidscount.org.

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: Address the educational needs and literacy levels of the whole family including English Speakers of Other Languages; provide opportunities to increase the amount of quality time the parents spend with their children; and increase the capacity of parents to be their child’s best and most important teacher by implementing home visitation services.

FAMILY LITERACY

- 70 parents participated in the program
- 82 children participated in the program; child care was provided during the adult GED classes
- 2 participants attained a GED
- 276 higher adult education levels were achieved
- 77 referrals were made to other community resources
- 4 Nationally Certified Parent Educators trained in Parents As Teachers provided home visits
- All four major components of Family Literacy were implemented: Adult Ed., Early Childhood Ed., Interactive Literacy, and Parenting (Parents As Teachers)
- Goodwin Elementary program was held at Cross Community Church of the Nazarene and English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes were running simultaneously with Family Literacy. The ESOL class was also a First Steps funded class. Participating parents receive home visits and engaged in literacy activities with their children. This program was the only ESOL program where parents receive home visits.

Parents as Teachers Home Visitation- Family Literacy

- *Parents as Teachers was the parenting component of the Family Literacy model*
- *80 families (totaling 82 children served) received home visits from certified parent educators of the Parents as Teachers Home Visitation Program. Using the program model to differentiate intensity by need, 4 of the 80 recipient families received weekly visits, 60 bi-weekly visits, 8 received visits three times per month, while the remaining 25 families received at least one home visit monthly*
- *A total of 574 home visits were delivered, providing parents with information and resources to strengthen their role as their child's most important teachers.*
- *72 families were provided with medical and social service referrals*
- *89 screenings were conducted (44 vision; 45 hearing)*
- *All PAT educators completed training in the Born to Learn Curriculum.*
- *All PAT educators have, at minimum, an associate's level education*
- *75 parents returned to school to earn GEDs after receiving support from PAT educators*
- *2 parents attained their GED through the Family Literacy program*
- *748 books and age appropriate educational toys were distributed via the home visits with instructions provided to the parents to track the child's developmental growth*

Parents as Teachers Home Visitation- Stand Alone

- *Certified Parent Educators provided home visits to parents who only received parenting services.*
- *30 families (totaling 40 children served) received home visits. Using the program model to differentiate intensity by need, 30 bi-weekly visits, 14 received visits three times per month, while the remaining 10 families received at least one home visit monthly*
- *A total of 206 home visits were delivered, providing parents with information and resources to strengthen their role as their child's most important teacher*
- *10 families were provided with medical and social service referrals*
- *14 screenings were conducted (6 vision; 8 hearing)*
- *All PAT educators completed training in the Born to Learn Curriculum.*
- *All PAT educators have, at minimum, an associate's level education*
- *234 books and age appropriate educational toys were distributed via the home visits with instructions provided to the parents to track the child's developmental growth*

ENGLISH for SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

- *131 adults participated in the program*
- *160 children participated in the program; child care was provided during the adult classes*
- *79 higher adult education levels were achieved*
- *33 referrals were made to other community resources*
- *Pre- and post-measures on the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) showed that participants gained at least one functioning level by the end of the classes*
- *The ESOL class at Cross Community Church was integrated into the Family Literacy Model which allowed that program to be more comprehensive than others, because some of the parents received home visits from a bilingual certified parent educator.*

Family Strengthening Collaborations

FAMILY LITERACY

Collaborations included Charleston County School District (St. James-Santee Elementary School (McClellanville), Goodwin Elementary (N. Charleston), Cross Community Church of the Nazarene

(N. Charleston) offered classroom space for the Family Literacy program to be held across from Goodwin Elementary. Early childhood education classes were held for children birth to 5 years old to participating parents in the program.

ESOL

Collaborations included Trident Literacy Association, St. Matthews Lutheran, and Charleston County School District. ESOL classes were held at Cross Community Church, St. Matthews Lutheran Church, Midland Park, Lambs Elementary, and Trident Literacy Association. Early childhood education classes were held for children birth to 5 years old to participating parents in the ESOL program.

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 the quality of child care by offering quality enhancement mini grants and assistance to child care providers; provide Center staff training and development; and offer child care scholarships to increase the availability of affordable childcare to parents who work or attend school full-time.

FACILITY QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

- *17 child care facilities were selected to participate in the quality enhancement initiative; another 37 centers received indirect services such as newsletters and training participation, resulting in a total of 54 participating facilities in fiscal year 2007*
- *1,444 children were impacted by this strategy*
- *10 classrooms were assessed using the Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) and Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)*
- *10 classrooms were furnished and stocked with equipment and supplies in order to provide a developmentally appropriate learning environment*
- *700 hours of technical assistance were provided to directors and teachers*
- *2 child care facilities are working with First Steps to complete the accreditation self study process for National Association of Education for Young Children (NAEYC).*
- *100% of the assessed classrooms have improved the learning environment*
- *100% of classrooms assessed improved their ITERS/ECERS scores*
- *Results of the Director Satisfaction Survey showed that 100% of participating directors believe that their centers benefited from the Charleston County First Steps Quality Enhancement Initiative. They reported:*
 - *Their teachers have benefited from the assessment and the technical assistance plan developed for their classroom*
 - *They have been allowed to find resources to improve the quality of care*
 - *Children have become more imaginative in their play*
 - *Their staff sense that others care and are willing to offer their expertise/support/guidance*
 - *Experienced fewer behavior problems*

- *The learning environment improved with the addition of new equipment, the low shelves allow children to select materials and have more choices of developmentally appropriate materials*
- *The program has become more hands-on which provides meaningful experiences*

CENTER STAFF TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

- *17 centers received direct services and 15 centers received indirect services through training participation*
- *A total of 11 training seminars were presented to teachers and directors addressing areas of child development such as: program administration, curriculum-visual arts, infant and toddler/brain development, developmentally appropriate practice, developing lesson plans, assessments: ELAP & LAP3, diversity, outdoor activities, language development, room arrangement, math activities and Creative Curriculum*
- *95 center staff participated in on-going DSS certified training with an average monthly attendance of 65*
- *A lending library is available to provide additional resources to center directors and teachers*
- *Results of the Teacher Satisfaction Survey showed that 100% of participating teachers believe that participation has increased motivation and enthusiasm for their jobs. They reported:*
 - *Developmentally appropriate practice and improvements, room arrangement, room display, and staff/child interactions have motivated teachers to continue to strive further in a high-quality child care environment.*
 - *Health and safety practices have improved through proper hand washing, diapering, sanitation procedures, schedules, classroom communication, curriculum and supervision of children*

CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIPS

43 childcare scholarships were awarded to families who participated in First Steps programs.

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE

This year was our first year of implementing our child care Centers of Excellence (COE). We have selected 4 of our 17 child care centers that currently participate in Facility Quality Enhancement. There are nine (9) components of the Centers of Excellence, and they are:

- 1. Child Care Scholarships for at-risk children*
- 2. Research-Based Curriculum(Creative Curriculum)*
- 3. Age-appropriate assessments (ELAP & LAP3)*
- 4. High-quality Parent Education Component*
- 5. Health Component (hearing, vision and dental)*
- 6. Quality Enhancement Component (currently provided by First Steps)*
- 7. Mentoring and Technical Assistance*
- 8. Teacher incentives*
- 9. Sustainability*

The Centers of Excellence allows us to enhance Facility Quality Enhancement with the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP) & Learning Accomplishment Profile (LAP-3) assessments kits. These kits assist the child care center directors and classroom teachers in

providing age appropriate assessments that provide a systematic method for observing children in the birth to 36 month age range (ELAP), and 36-72 month age range with LAP3. These instruments will also be used to track developmental outcomes. After the assessments, these centers provide individual progress on children, overall center reports, and reports by domains of development (gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, language, self-help, social emotional, and pre-writing). Fourteen (14) out of the 17 child care centers have trained to conduct the ELAP & LAP-3 assessment. The Charleston First Steps staff would oversee the assessment process. Some center results have shown significant gains in the developmental profile. The two developmental domains that scored consistently low were cognitive and language. The First Steps staff will provide technical assistance to these centers to help improve the scores in those two domains as well as the others. The seven developmental domains are: gross motor, fine motor, cognitive, language, and self-help, social / emotional and pre-writing.

24 Child Care Scholarships were provided this year and Parenting Workshops. These scholarships are administered by Charleston First Steps office and can only be used at the four centers of excellence. The four First Steps Centers of Excellence are:

- 1. Nia Infant and Toddler*
- 2. New Israel CDC*
- 3. Preschool Academy*
- 4. Carousel Early Learning*

Child Care Collaborations

- Collaborations included the College of Charleston, Childcare Resources and Referrals, State Department of Education, Trident Technical College, the Center for Child Care Career Development, and community volunteers for service delivery, and all 17 child development centers that participated in Facility Quality Enhancement. The child development centers participated in our Third Annual Art Exhibit to encourage creativity in young children. The children's artwork was showcased at the Charleston County First Steps Annual Meeting.*
- The 17 Child Care Facilities that participated in our Quality Enhancement Program are:*
 - 1. New Israel CDC*
 - 2. Carousel Early Learning*
 - 3. Preschool Academy*
 - 4. Nia Infant & Toddler*
 - 5. First African CDC*
 - 6. Joy & Learning CDC*
 - 7. Septima Clark CDC*
 - 8. Hope's Treasure Chest I*
 - 9. Hope's Treasure Chest II*
 - 10. Rising Star*
 - 11. Recovery Room*
 - 12. John & Mattie Washington*
 - 13. Frasier's Christian Learning*
 - 14. Lil Angels Palace*
 - 15. Goodwill CDC*
 - 16. Sea Island CDC*
 - 17. Imagine That*

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: Partner and collaborate with community healthcare providers to expand service capacity to families with children birth to five years old who are not insured and non-Medicaid eligible with pediatric home-based services.

- *Services provided included*
 - *early prevention and intervention*
 - *developmental stimulation*
 - *recognizing children with special needs*
 - *parent and infant interactions*
 - *cognitive and language development*
 - *basic health related parenting skills*
 - *negotiating the healthcare system*
 - *coordination of related services throughout the county*
- *105 families were visited an average of 6 total times*
- *121 children participated in the program*
- *122 health assessments and screenings were conducted*
- *122 home environment assessments were conducted*
- *56 families were linked to medical homes*
- *1 referral was made for additional necessary services*
- *394 books and age-appropriate educational toys were distributed via the home visits with instructions provided to the parents to track the child's growth*
- *100% of children maintained their well-baby visits*
- *100% of families enrolled in the program have a medical home*
- *Home visitation nurses utilized the HOME Inventory as the measurement tool for outcomes. Ages and Stages, Keys to Care Giving, and other tools were used to monitor developmental growth of each child.*

Healthy Start Collaborations

Collaborations included DHEC.

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.

Partnership Goal: Ensure an educationally beneficial school transition by serving 74 at-risk children in the Countdown to Kindergarten program.

FY 2007 Results

- *74 identified children completed the Countdown program during summer 2007.*

- 100 percent of the children received five or more home visits.
- 75% percent of the children were placed in their Countdown home visitor's kindergarten class.
- 95.65 % of the children qualified for free lunch.
- 4.35 % of the children qualified for reduced lunch.
- Countdown to Kindergarten resulted in improvements in parent-child interactions, including:
 - Played toys, games or sports with their child
 - Took child with them while doing errands
 - Involved the child in household chores like cooking, cleaning, setting the table, or caring for pets
 - Read to /listened to the child read from a book.
 - Talked about letters, words or numbers with child
 - Sang songs or danced with child
 - Drew, painted, or did other arts and crafts with child
 - Kept a regular morning or bedtime schedule for the child
 - Praised the child for accomplishments or doing things that you want him/her to do
 - Visited the library with the child
 - Attend a house of worship with the child

School Transition Collaborations

Collaborations included parents, certified teachers from our local school district, Children's Museum of the Lowcountry, First Student and other community partners.

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

Charleston County First Steps assessed the effectiveness of its programs and implemented the following changes this year:

Program Code 2012 – Parenting

During the first half of the year, we noticed a tremendous challenge for some of our families that were participating in Family Literacy to meet all four (4) program requirements (adult education, early childhood education, interactive literacy and parenting). They wanted to continue the parenting services, but could not keep their commitment to the rest of the program for various reasons. In January we began to offer separate parenting services in addition to the parenting services offered in Family Literacy to meet the needs of those parents.

Program Code 2111 - Family Literacy

This program was held at three different site locations in the county. A lack of participation in all four required components at the McClellanville site was the reason for the change to only offer the parenting services in the communities instead of all four required family literacy components. The program participants in this area were very challenged to meet those requirements and wanted to continue to participate with the parenting services. Some of them found new jobs or were faced with other distractions. The parent educator would continue to provide parenting services in the community to 20 families twice a month. The remainder of the funding from the McClellanville location was absorbed in the other two locations (Cross Community Church and the Child and Family Development Center) to further strengthen those locations with additional staff and other needed items.. Participation in all four components has been strong in these locations. The total amount budgeted for this strategy did not change.

Program Code 205 - English Speakers of Other Languages

Due to an overwhelming Hispanic population in the Midland Park area, more families could be served if program restructuring took place. The site downtown would no longer be funded due to a lack of participation over the years. Trident Literacy and Midland Park are the two sites this strategy will fund. More families will be served. The total amount budgeted for this strategy did not change.

Program Code 6012 – Facility Quality Enhancement

This year we will provide more technical assistance in the child care centers, focusing on the needs of each center identified by the ELAP & LAP-3 assessment scores from last year. Our two main developmental areas of focus across the board will be cognitive & language. Additional assessment training will be provided to the staff.

Program Code 7031 – DSS Child Care Scholarships

This year we will not fund DSS Child Care Scholarships. These scholarships were given to families that participated in our programs. We recommended they use child care centers that First Steps was involve with in Facility Quality Enhancement (FQE). We are aware of the quality of services offered in our FQE centers. We discovered that the families were going to child development centers that we were not affiliated with First Steps, and we were not sure of the quality of services offered in those other centers. Some of the families moved multiple times to different child care centers and did not remain in the program. These scholarships are matched with federal funding and because of that, we could not enforce our recommendation for them to attend one of the centers we have worked with and knew the type of quality offered.

We are funding scholarships through our Program Code 7032 – In-House Centers of Excellence Scholarships. We have full and complete control over what centers these child care scholarships will be used in.

The complete funding from program code 0731 was reallocated to fund an additional staff person to work with the in-house Facility Quality Enhancement Program. A substantial amount of technical assistance will be offered in these centers as we focus more on age-appropriate development of the child and their classroom environment. More technical assistance will be provided to the directors and teachers specifically for improved assessment scores in the areas of cognitive and language.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

D O L L A R S (budget only)							
State Appropriation	State-Private	In-kind	Local-Private	Lottery Appropriation	Federal	EIA Appropriation	TOTAL
\$947,140	\$15,487	\$170,371	\$47,834	\$0	\$0	\$67,137	\$1,247,969

NOTE: The above State and EIA appropriation amounts leveraged all state-private, in-kind, local-private, lottery and federal dollars.

READINESS STRATEGIES	EXPENSES
Parents As Teachers	\$139,028
Trident Literacy - ESOL	\$87,219
Charleston County School District- Family Literacy	\$204,385
Charleston County School District - ESOL	\$19,432
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$29,202
Facility Quality Enhancement	\$141,924
Center Staff Training & Development	\$39,611
Child Care Scholarship Initiatives (DSS)	\$64,863
Child Care Scholarships (Centers of Excellence)	\$62,424
Pediatric Home-Based Services	\$115,233
County Programmatic	\$119,473
County Administrative	\$125,340
TOTAL	\$1,148,135

Local Match Percentage for 2007: 19.99% (at least 15% required)

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Charleston County Partnership Board Members volunteered 810 hours, including community events such as Kids Fair, Week of the Young Child, First Day Festival, and Countdown to Kindergarten.

Value of Volunteer Time¹: $\$18.77 \times 810 = \$15,203.70$

¹ http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html

CHARLESTON COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Last Name	First Name		Category Represented
Bahen	Ms. Jennifer	Board Chair	Childcare & Early Childhood Development
Banis	Ms. Caroline		DHEC Appointment
Bell	Ms. Gloria		Legislative Appointment
Bennett	Ms. Gwendolyn		Legislative Appointment
Brantley	Rev. Clinton		Faith Community
Davis	Ms. Dena		Family Education, Training and Support Provider
Davis	Ms. Julia- Ellen		Head Start Appointment
Diggs	Rev. Cecil	Vice Chair	Faith Community
Donoho	Ms. Rachel		Family Education, Training and Support Provider
Ford	Ms. Phyllis		Charleston County School Dist. A
Humphreys	Mr. David		Business Community
Hussey	Ms. Julie	Secretary	Pre-K through Primary Educators
Inman	Ms. Diana		Health Care Provider
Johnson	Ms. Mamie		DSS Appointment
Jowers	Ms. Glennett		Early Childhood Education
Lanahan	Mr. Brain		Early Childhood Education
Lewis	Rev. James		Faith Community
McClain- Brown	Ms. Sherrie		Transportation Provider
Moody	Ms. Sarah		Legislative Appointment
Nairn	Ms. Amanda		Pre-K through Primary Educators
Ngozi	Ms. Georgina		Early Childhood Education
Powers	Ms. Lorraine		Legislative Appointment
Rhodes	Mr. Monroe	Treasurer	Non-Profit Organization
Simon	Ms. Kathy		Health Care Provider
Threadgill	Ms. Catherine		Charleston County Public Library A
Vandross	Mr. Anthony		Transportation Provider
Washington	Ms. Iroasha		Parent of Preschool Child
Zia	Ms. Barbara		Business Community

SUCCESS STORIES

One of the parents in the Family Literacy program was selected as the Parent Volunteer of the Year. She has two children that attended the Child and Family Development Center. She constantly assisted her children's teachers in the classroom, interacted with her children, and asked for learning strategies to use with her children at home. This parent has started and stopped with the GED program many times due to reason beyond her control. She finally committed this year to attend on a regular basis and completed her GED test in May. She passed ½ of her GED (math and writing) test. This was a great accomplishment for her because she really struggled in math. She will retake the reading section. She has learned and applied many parent strategies including how to be a partner in her child's education. She was not confident in approaching her child's teacher when she began the program. She has gained confidence and modeled this to the other parents. Her son will be in kindergarten this fall, and she is ready to be an active member at his new school.

Hispanic Population

One of the Hispanic children was suspended from school due to the insufficient number of received vaccinations. After a brief conversation with his teacher whether he understood the letter from school right, he was able to make a doctor's appointment for Charlie in order so he would get the necessary vaccinations.

One of the parents negotiated calling a cab when her car's fan belt broke and she was able to get home with her child.

One parent spoke with a man and got a job cleaning his house, she was also able to call an exterminator

One parent was able to rent an apartment. She opted out of living in a Spanish community and moved to all American neighborhoods.

One parent spoke with her boss about some missing pay on her checks.

One parent clarified a recent raise in her rent with an American landlord.

All 3 locations of one of the ESOL programs held Christmas parties with very high attendance numbers. Midland Park Church offers a regular language exchange to its parishioners. It is done once per month over a nice dinner (typical Mexican and American dishes) and most of the students who attend Midland Park's site take part in this event. In just the month of December, 18 of our students took part in PTA's meeting.