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Cherokee County
First Steps Partnership
Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report

Summary

Numbers Served:

1,641 children; 0 adults/families; 17 child care facilities, with 774 children total at those facilities; 0 child care centers achieved a higher quality status; 0 higher adult education levels achieved; 120 health assessments and screenings; 58 home visits; 63 staff trained; 40 4-K slots and 6,753 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$335,619

Cherokee School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	4,408 8 %
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)	58 %
Average Per Capita Personal Income**	22,562
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5)***	15 %
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	6 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Reading *	19 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Math*	24 %
Low Birth Weight Infants	14 %
Births to Mothers with Less than High School Education	34 %
Less than Adequate Prenatal Care	27 %

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

Profile Comments: To increase children’s readiness for school and respond to parent concerns and county needs, Cherokee County First Steps Partnership targeted its resources toward Family Literacy and quality early education in both the public and private sectors. Recognizing the importance of early literacy activities on children’s future success in school, the partnership has also continued to integrate a strategy to promote family reading through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Program.

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: To provide high quality early childhood education programs by funding two (2) full day 4K classes at the Student Development Childcare Center and Corinth Elementary School.

- *All students were targeted for participation on the basis of compounded school readiness risk factors (DIAL-3) screening score in the bottom 25%, free and reduced lunch status, mother's education, etc.)*
- *All CCFS funded programs met South Carolina 4K requirements for curriculum, pupil-teacher ratios, materials and class size.*
- *Parents volunteered to assist with classroom activities and for field trips.*
- *Parents donated materials for classroom use.*
- *Appropriate healthcare referrals were made throughout the year.*
- *Parents attended workshops and trainings on parental involvement.*

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: To increase the capacity of parents to be their child's best and most important teacher by providing materials and supplies for parent educators to conduct home visits.

- *CCFS provided funding for the materials and supplies to Cherokee County School District parent educators.*
- *Families reported increased satisfaction with the level of educational materials that they were afforded the opportunity to use.*

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 child care training opportunities to child care providers.

Cherokee County First Steps Partnership

- *CCFS offered training opportunities that were certified by the Center for Child Care Career Development.*
- *CCFS collaborated with the Adult Learning Center of Cherokee County School District to maximize dollars for the program.*
- *CCFS trained 17 Cherokee county centers and homes throughout the year in quality child care based training.*
- *CCFS collaborated with other First Steps partnerships to ensure child care providers received needed training.*

Partnership Goal: The Region II Childcare Enhancement Strategy promoted new approaches to enhancing the environment in all 40 centers involved in the program. Our goal was to improve early childhood developmental opportunities in our facilities, which allowed more children to start school ready to learn and be successful in school.

- *On site technical assistance was provided by 2 certified technical assistants and quality learning materials were provided to child care providers.*
- *The program promoted and built strong relationships between technical assistants and caregivers/teachers and between caregivers/teachers and children.*
- *Provided on-going, individualized research based training and technical assistance program impacted 17 child care centers in Cherokee county.*
- *The selected child care centers received a pre and post ECERS assessment or ABC assessment.*
- *Training locally, on site technical assistance and quality learning materials are provided to child care providers in targeted pre-school classrooms.*
- *Training topics created from ECERS pre-assessment reports in areas that were scored low in the rating scale.*
- *5 different training sessions were provided for child care staff covering the following topics: Music and Movement, Math and Manipulatives, I Am Diversity, Art for Preschoolers, Sand, Water and Science.*
- *2 training sessions were provided for technical assistants (mentors)*
- *6 selected centers were provided training. (Centers received \$2000.00 worth of materials to support the training sessions and technical assistance.)*
- *Certified Technical Assistants or mentors worked closely with child care staff on the appropriate use of resource materials.*
- *63 staff members were trained over the course of this training period.*
- *Pre ECERS scores averaged 2.95 and post ECERS scores averaged 3.80 which reflect a 28.9% gain in improvement.*
- *194 hours of Technical assistance provided to centers throughout Cherokee County.*
- *774 children were impacted by the TA program.*
- *Increased networking opportunities among center staff.*

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: Due to limited resources, CCFS has not been able to implement a formal health care initiative. We are, however, committed to continuing to ensure that children have a healthy start in school by using screening and referral based health-care in most of our programs. Additionally, we have the participation of local pediatricians in offering Dolly Parton Imagination Library brochures to their clients.

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: Due to funding limitations, CCFS was not able to offer a School Transition program during this fiscal year.

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

The partnership collaborates with the SC Department of Social Services to offer subsidized child care to families that meet the criteria and qualify for assistance in paying for child care expenses. The recruited families are those that are working, attending school or in a job training program.

The partnership is continuing the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program for Cherokee county. This program is being integrated with other strategies in order to emphasize the importance of family literacy and the impact that reading can make in the life of a child.

The partnership will be meeting with the Adult Learning Center at the School District to discuss collaboration in providing quality child care training.

CCFS has published a partial training schedule for the current fiscal year, which includes meeting dates for an informal child care network for Cherokee County providers.

CCFS will provide facility quality enhancement to include materials and supplies and playground equipment grants.

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
\$259,882		\$46,061	\$13,715			\$15,961	\$335,619

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	\$19,862
Dolly Parton Imagination Library	\$11,724
Full Day 4K - Private	\$70,000
Full 4K – Public	\$99,304
Childcare Quality Enhancement	\$35,265
Childcare Training and Prof. Dev.	\$20, 821
County Programmatic	\$66,120
County Administrative	\$29,332
TOTAL	352,428

NOTABLE DONORS

DONOR’S NAME	AMOUNT
Alcoa Foundation	\$5,000
United Way of Cherokee County	\$1,592
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
TOTAL	\$6,592

Local Match Percentage for 2007: 19.66%

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Cherokee partnership board members volunteered 210 hours, including Dolly Parton Imagination Library recruitment, board meetings, and committee meetings.

Value of Volunteer Time¹: \$18.77 X 210 = \$3,942.

CHEROKEE COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

- Mr. Grady Evans, Board Chair, Transportation
- Mr. Troy Gaffney, Vice Chair, Business Community
- Ms. Deloris Blackwell, Secretary, Family and Children Services Provider
- Rev. Kris Showen, Treasurer, Faith Based Community

- Jean Brewington, Family Education, Training & Support Provider
- Laura Camp, School District

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

Ola Copeland, Non-Profit Serving Children and Families
Benny Dukes, Senate Appointee
Kathy Dukes, Transportation
Verlene Eaker, Child Care Provider
Lana Gardner, Library
Sandra Greene, Senate Appointee
Rev. Brian Harris, Parent
Dr. Angela Hinton, House of Representatives Appointee
Vanessa Jefferies, Head Start
Dr. Joette Johnson, Parent
Rev. Flor Morales, Faith Based Community
Joy Phillips, Early Education Provider
Deedi Pruitt, Parent
Shirley Reynolds, House of Representatives Appointee
Dr. J. W. Sanders, Jr., Non-Profit
Louise Scruggs, Business Community
Rachel Smoak, Parent
Kayron Wall, Early Education Provider
Larry Wall, DSS
Teresa Welch, Health Department
Linda Wilson, Child Care Provider

SUCCESS STORIES

We are lucky here in Cherokee County to have First Steps and Dorothy Priester who is so very helpful to the day care directors and workers as far as getting our training hours. If you have a problem getting a certain area that needs to be covered, just give Dorothy a call and she is always willing to do what she can as far as setting up the classes. Directors need 20 hours of training per year while the workers need 15 hours. Most classes we were able to get at Limestone Learning or at Spartanburg Community; these were 3 hour classes meaning we had to go at least 5 times to get the needed 15 hours. The suggestion was made to have 5 hour classes and Dorothy was able to get this set up for Cherokee County.

I feel it's great to get together with folk from other day cares and be able to discuss with one another any suggestions or problems we are having. For this reason, I am looking forward to getting involved in our **new** Child Care Network Meetings.

Submitted by: Mrs. Linda McCraw, Director/Owner
Little Angels Day Care
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