



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

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Summary

Numbers Served:

1752 children; 1269 adults/families; 9 child care facilities, with 749 children total at those facilities; 3 child care centers achieved a higher quality status; 17 health assessments and screenings; 1378 home visits; 782 staff trained; 40 4-K slots and 2084 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$494,716 (includes all funding sources)

Dorchester School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	8,367 7 %
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)	37 %
Average Per Capita Personal Income**	25,382
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5)***	12 %
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	10 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Reading *	8 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Math*	13 %
Low Birth Weight Infants	8 %
Births to Mothers with Less than High School Education	17 %
Less than Adequate Prenatal Care	31 %

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

In FY 06, more than 75 identified as qualifying for placement in 4K (on the basis of compounded development, academic and family risk factors) were not served due to lack of space, 175 high-risk families were in need of parenting services and out of the 62 childcare facilities only 1 was Nationally Accredited. These figures also indicated that more than 17% of the parent's of these children in Dorchester County had received a high school diploma. During our most recent survey parents rated the need for parenting skills and quality childcare as an indicator for children not being ready for school. To increase children's readiness for school and to respond to county needs and parents concerns, Dorchester County Partnership focused on parenting skills, full-day quality early childhood education, quality childcare, early literacy and implementing a health curricula, in both the public and

the private sector. Recognizing the ongoing need for collaboration we continue to partnership with Trident Technical College. In Dorchester County, as in several counties in the state the need to alleviate the existing transportation barriers does exist. The county board will continue to collaborate with other community partners to help coordinate transportation services. In the county, we are experiencing a growing Hispanic/Latino population of 4% and a Native American increase of 3.8%.

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: Increase School Readiness through expansion of 4K Quality Early Childhood Education by establishing two classes at Windsor Hill and Harleyville Ridgeville Elementary School

- *40 children were continually enrolled in this program and successfully completed the school year*
- *Both lead teachers were certified in early childhood education, trained in the High Scope curriculum and the Work Sampling system through the SC Department of Education*
- *All DCFS funded classes meet the SC 4K curriculum requirement for curriculum, pupil-teacher ration, material and class size*
- *Families reported and average of 4.25 satisfaction with this program (based on a 1{poor} to 5 [excellent] point scale*

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: Strengthen and increase the capacity of parents to be a child's best and most important teacher by expanding home visitation services

- *53 families received Parents As Teachers (PAT) and Parent Child Home (PCH) visits*
- *59 children were directly impacted by visitations services of PAT/PCH expansion*
- *All parent educators were provided certified PCH training by the National Center and completed Born to Learn Training prior to delivering services*
- *Staff training conducting twice monthly by District 2 and weekly by District 4*
- *Workshops and group meeting are offered to parents in both districts*
- *Both districts utilized Bright Beginning and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for literacy*
- *All PAT educators have at a minimum a Bachelors; level education (OFS Benchmark)*
- *Collaborative partners and resources include Head Start, Dorchester County Adult Education Center, Mental Health, DSS, DHEC, County Library and other Faith-based organizations*

- *Families reported and average of 4.0 satisfaction with this program (based on a 1[poor] to 5 [excellent] point scale*

Child Care

Statewide Goal – South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness recognizes quality childcare as a research-based determinant of school readiness. As such, First Steps will collaborate with parents, the childcare community and its agency and community partners to maximize childcare 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 childcare by offering quality enhancement grants and assistance to childcare providers

- *10 childcare facilities from a pool of 11 applicants were selected to participate in September 2006.*
- *Applicants participated in the annual vendor fair and Quality Enhancement Application training*
- *9 childcare staff received an average of 30 hours per person in support and assistance around setting up quality learning areas and how to maximize use of new materials.*
- *2 facilities began the National Accreditation Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation (NAEYC) self-study process*
- *1 family day care provider became licensed; 2 facilities in process of earning licensed and ABC-enhanced status.*
- *Centers received unlimited information, resources regarding developmentally appropriate material, referrals to the TEACH program and supplies,*
- *Implemented Resource Center and Lending Library providing resources to parents, family and childcare providers in Dorchester County*
- *Parenting with all Teachers for Success (PATS) conducted 16 developmental appropriate workshops and participants received DSS Accreditation 100% of selected providers expressed satisfaction with this program.*
- *749 children were affected by this strategy by means of additional age-appropriate books, toys, manipulative, playground equipment and providers who received training.*

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 40 at-risk children in the Countdown to Kindergarten program.

FY 2007 Results

- *40 identified children completed the Countdown program during summer 2006. 95 percent of the children received five or more home visits.*
- *10% percent of the children were placed in their Countdown home visitor's kindergarten class.*
- *85% percent of the children qualified for free lunch.*

- 15% percent of the children qualified for reduced lunch.
- Countdown to Kindergarten resulted in improvements in parent-child interactions, including:
 - 45% improvement in families reading to their children
 - A 25% improvement families drawing, painting or other arts and crafts with their children
 - A 47% improvement families talked about letters, words or numbers with children

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

The county originally planned to offer 10 quality enhancement grants, however we determined that working with fewer providers resulted in more effective quality efforts. During the FY08, the county plans to serve 7-8 childcare facilities and continue providing center staff training to providers and collaborate with Trident Technical College to offer accredited classes for an Associates Degree for childcare providers in Dorchester County. The county will continue the partnership with the Department of Health & Environment Control (DHEC) for the implementation of the Color Me Healthy Curriculum, which provides a health curriculum training for teachers.

Furthermore, we have learned that collaboration is the key component for the future of this organization. We continue to develop working relations with Trident Technical College; Trident United Way, DHEC, School Districts, DSS, Head Start, local Rotary International, private physicians and other local community organizations. We will continue to assure that all of Dorchester Counties’ children reach the 1st grade healthy and ready to learn.

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
\$339,014.	\$9,362	\$50,164.41	\$17,672	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$29,764	\$382,876.56

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

READINESS STRATEGIES	EXPENSES
Imagination Library	\$8,343
PAT/PCH District Two	\$32,399
PAT/PCH District Four	\$37,000
Full Day 4K District Two	\$57,661
Extended Full 4K District Four	\$45,766
Center Staff Training and Development	\$28,919
Facility Quality Enhancement Grant	\$47,984
County Administrative	\$24,318
County Programmatic	\$40,319
TOTAL	\$339,014]

NOTABLE DONORS

DONOR'S NAME	AMOUNT
Kiwanis Oakbrook	\$3,100
Summerville Oakbrook Rotary	\$1,000
Trident United Way	\$4,150
Wachovia	\$2,810
TOTAL	\$11,060

Local Match Percentage for 2007: 18% (at least 15% required)

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Dorchester County partnership board members volunteered 200 hours, including 75 hours to the Kohl's Healthy Kids

Value of Volunteer Time¹: \$18.77 X 275 hours = \$5,162

DORCHESTER COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Ms. Wanda Brown, Dorchester County Library
Ms. Elaine Bryant, Early Childhood Education
Ms. Teresa Frasier, Non-Profit Organization
Ms. Susan Gadson, Dorchester School District Two
Ms. Elaine Glover, Business Community Chair
Ms. Yvonne Greatheart, Mandated Agency Representative, DSS
Ms. Flossie Grundy, Early Childhood Education
Ms. Betty Harrison, Head Start
Ms. Ethel Harrison, Non-Profit Organization
Ms. Karen Hill, Mandated Agency Representative, DHEC
Mr. John Pence, Legislative Delegation

SUCCESS STORIES

"We believe the greatest success of our program to be the connections we were able to make with families during this school year. Through the funding provided by First Steps, we were able to provide several family night activities that gave parents a chance to see what their children were working on in school and to learn about the ways they could enhance this learning at home. We showed parents how to create learning opportunities at home and allowed them to directly experience some of the things their children were learning and doing in school. We feel that, as a result of these connections, the children will begin kindergarten with greater background knowledge and will be able to find success in school. We also feel that, as a result of this program, parents will feel a stronger connection to their child's education and realize the important role that they play in their child's learning."

--Carrie Simpson

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