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

Summary

Numbers Served:

1,563 children; 190 adults/families; 26 child care facilities, with 858 children total at those facilities; 23 child care centers achieved a higher quality status; 15 higher adult education levels achieved; 79 health assessments and screenings; 416 home visits; 184 staff trained; 14 4K slots and 1793 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$1,515,547.00 (includes all funding sources)

Georgetown School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	4,518 7 %
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)	63 %
Average Per Capita Personal Income**	28,103
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*	12 %
Low Birth Weight Infants	10 %
Births to Mothers with Less than High School Education	22 %
Less than Adequate Prenatal Care	46 %

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

Profile Comments: *Cultural, linguistic, educational, and economic factors place many Georgetown County children at risk of poor performance in school. In FY 06, the Hispanic population moving into Georgetown County continued to increase. In addition to language and cultural barriers, these families are often unaware of available child care services. The Georgetown County Partnership is collaborating with public and private agencies to provide outreach and assistance to these families.*

An additional problem for families of Georgetown County is that 32% of young people ages 18-24 have not finished high school compared to 25.3% nationally. Through collaborations with the Georgetown County Public Library storyteller and bookmobile, Miss Ruby's Kids, the child care centers in the county, and other family support programs, the Georgetown County Partnership is

Georgetown County First Steps Partnership

working to increase family literacy for these at-risk children. Minority children, including African Americans and Hispanics, make up 80% of our targeted at-risk preschool population. Over 83% of this group qualifies for free and reduced lunch upon entry to public school. Georgetown County First Steps serves as a catalyst for change in the community, filling gaps and linking people to services. By building strong community partners, the way people view the importance of pre-school education will change. This past year GCFS in partnership with the United Way Success by Six, Williamsburg First Steps, and GTWN and Williamsburg Public Schools implemented the Early Reading First grant. This 2.65 million dollar grant was the only one awarded in South Carolina in 2006.

Georgetown County is also experiencing the effects of childhood obesity epidemic that has plagued our country. Through the help of a grant by the Francis P. Bunnelle Foundation we have received money for a Child Safety Coalition. This grant has allowed us to hire a consultant to come into each of our Centers of Excellence and do a fitness program and help educate preschoolers on healthy lifestyle choices.

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 the number of at-risk children attending high quality pre-school programs by continuing the Library Based Literacy Program, Centers of Excellence Program, State 4K Program, Early Reading First Program and the Facility Quality Enhancement Program.

- *25 Kids attended the 4K State Funded Program at Little Smurfs Daycare. To date Little Smurfs has expanded this to 2 4K State Classrooms. We are*
- *A coalition under the Georgetown County United Way umbrella received a three-year, \$2.65 million federal grant to boost early childhood education programs (ERF) for at-risk children in Andrews in Georgetown County and in Williamsburg County. We are now beginning year two.*
- *144 Kids reached throughout the school year through the 4K Early Reading First (ERF) Classrooms at Andrews Elementary and 15 in the 3K ERF Classroom at Little Smurfs Learning Center.*
- *19 Kids received full 9 week 4K summer school scholarships at Sampit Community Center and an additional 44 kids received full 4K summer school scholarships at Little Smurfs Learning Center.*
- *Literacy and story-telling activities are held monthly at 40 child care centers administered by the Georgetown County Library.*
- *Storybooks, "Big Books", and music collections are provided to the centers*
- *Take home books are provided to the enrollees*
- *Field trips are taken to the local library*
- *15) Facility Quality Enhancement grants were given to enable childcare providers to move to the next level of quality of care*
- *6 Centers of Excellence child care centers were given training, technical assistance, and developmentally appropriate educational materials, and healthcare education and screening*
- *# partial scholarships were made available to children at-risk for delays because families are below the poverty level*
- *1,793 new library books were provided from the Georgetown Library through the storyteller program*
- *1 outdoor environment was awarded to Sampit Community Daycare Center*

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 our state's young children, aged birth to 5.

FY 2007 Results

Partnership Goal: Support parents in strengthening their families and in promoting the optimum development of their young children to assure school success by providing the Parenting as Teachers Program

- 79 families served (totaling 76 children)
- 13 families received 1-5 PAT visits
- 15 families received 6-9 PAT visits
- 30 families received 10-12 PAT visits
- 6 families received 13-19 PAT visits
- 17 PAT Hispanic families served
- Completed 416 home visits
- 156 families participated in family strengthening workshops held at the Centers of Excellence
- 165 families linked to community services
- 50 PAT families receive child care assistance
- 12 Hispanic families participate in March of Dimes program
- A website is available at www.firststepsofgeorgetown.org to provide access to information about the programs
- The parenting program has been expanded to “Strengthening Families” provided through the Centers of Excellence
- Collaboration with Miss Ruby’s Kids family literacy program has provided at-risk families with parenting training, reading readiness activities, and take home books for Centers of Excellence participants.
- Training on child abuse is being offered to all parents and primary caregivers.
- Collaboration and referrals from Georgetown County School District’s Evenstart Program and Howard Adult Education Center.

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 grants, technical assistance, and training opportunities to child care providers. A major component of this goal is the development of six Centers of Excellence offering high-quality, intensive language, cognitive and comprehensive instruction and curricula, based on scientific research, to improve educational outcomes for high risk children.

- 26 child care centers received assistance to improve the quality of their programs by encouraging exploration and discovery, fostering curiosity and creativity, building self-esteem and providing and environment for learning
- We will provide parenting workshops and home visits that focus on supplying parents with the knowledge and skills needed to enhance language and literacy development in the home. This will include a comprehensive recruitment and servicing of Hispanic families through our bi-lingual consultant.
- These centers will not only provide in-depth professional development for their existing staff, but will also make these sessions available to other providers throughout our county so that they may benefit from the training as well.
- Georgetown County First Steps will collaborate with our established partnerships (Head Start, Department of Social Services, United Way, Service Over Self, Georgetown County Library, Miss

Ruby's Kids, Department of Special Needs and Disabilities, and the public schools) along with the Bunnelle Foundation to insure that all available county resources are integrated into this project. We will maintain one common outcome, to improve the quality of early learning and educational experiences of Georgetown County's children, age's birth to five, through our newly established Centers of Excellence. We will conduct ongoing formal and informal assessments and observations of student achievement and progress, and make our findings available to the community.

- *To encourage providers to enroll the most at-risk children, tuition scholarships will be based on need. To this end, the scholarship amount would be highest for a child with multiple risk factors. This creates an incentive for providers to recruit and register children who require more resource.*

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 well being 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 with primary care providers and other health care providers to ensure that families have access to health care and early childhood development information and support.

- *First Steps of Georgetown County receives referrals from local pediatricians and the county hospital, and holds parent meetings that increase knowledge in all areas of early development*
- *First Steps and the United Way provide information and resources through the "Born Learning" campaign.*
- *The March of Dimes provided a grant of \$27,500 for Hispanic prenatal care*
- *Bunnelle Foundation provided a grant of \$25,000 for a Child Safety & Health Coalition*
- *First Steps collaborates on home visits with Babynet and pediatric nurses for visits with new mothers*

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

Georgetown County First Steps continues to offer meaningful services and programs to children ages 0-5 years old and to their families. Our primary goal is to be an active partner with parents, caregivers, and the community at large in supporting school readiness programs and providing appropriate services that will ensure that all of Georgetown County's preschoolers have the opportunity to participate in quality early childhood educational programs. Our goal is to ensure that all children have a successful start in school and continued educational success.

Georgetown County First Steps Partnership originally offered the same assistance to all daycare centers in the Facility Quality Enhancement (FQE) Program. While the goal remains the same, "to ensure that all of Georgetown County's children arrive at school healthy and ready to learn," our strategy plan is constantly evolving to improve the quality of our program. The strategy this fiscal year includes assisting six daycare centers (Centers of Excellence) (601B) in self-study, working towards achieving National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation. This program will transform existing preschool programs at six pre-selected daycares into centers that offer high-quality intensive language, cognitive, and comprehensive instruction and curricula, based on scientific research, shown to improve later educational outcomes for high-risk students.

Georgetown County First Steps Partnership

In addition to our Centers of Excellence (6012B) we are continuing our 2nd year in the state 4K initiative. We now have two 4K State funded classrooms at Little Smurfs Learning Center and a first year 4K classroom at Rainbow Child Care Development Center.

We also will be entering our 2nd year in the Early Reading First Grant and will continue a 3K classroom at Little Smurfs Learning Center. In addition, we will continue the four 4K Classrooms by the Early Reading First Grant in Andrews Elementary.

The Scholarship Program (7032A –FQE 7032B-COE) will still be given to all the FQE centers. We will continue to meet and exceed the state guidelines for 30% at risk enrollment at the Centers of Excellence. FQE will concentrate solely on providing technical assistance and supplies to encourage quality care at group centers.

The FQE Strategy (6012A) will focus on development of gross motor skills. We will accomplish this by giving the qualifying daycare centers in our FQE program grants for gross motor equipment, and by offering grants for outdoor environments. One outdoor environment was awarded in the past year. Construction of appropriate outdoor environments will provide daycare centers with additional assistance in working towards NAEYC accreditation, while providing a safe, challenging, and fun play environment for their children now and for years to come.

The Parenting Program (PAT) (2012) will remain the same, but will also be used as a referral vehicle for our scholarship awards. PAT will screen and identify qualifying families while doing home visits. All of our families receiving scholarships outside of our Centers of Excellence program will be enrolled in the Parenting Program. Using this strategy, we have already seen significant growth in our PAT Program.

Our Library-based Literacy Program (2091) will remain the same and will continue to reach hundreds of Georgetown County children through its story-telling and interactive program.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Fund 10	Fund 15	Fund 20	Fund 25	Fund 30	Fund 35
State Approp.	State Private	Local Private	Local In-Kind	Federal Grants	Lottery Approp.
\$241,301.00	\$1,092.00	\$361,123.00	\$84,258.00	\$431,349.00	\$34,414.00

Fund 40	Fund 55	Fund 60	Fund 65	ANNUAL TOTAL
Lottery Private	EIA Approp.	4K COC Initiative	COE Approp.	
\$35,751.00	\$200,000.00	\$75,240.00	\$37,500.00	\$1,516,772.00

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

READINESS STRATEGIES	EXPENSES
2012 Parents as Teachers	\$ 53,263.06
2091 Library Based Program	\$ 43,967.19
6012 Childcare Quality Enhancement	\$ 356,928.05
6052 Childcare Training & Prof. Dev.	\$ 22,107.00
7032 Scholarships (In house)	\$ 301,375.50
1502 County Programmatic	\$ 41,783.63
1012 County Administrative	\$ 573,374.47
TOTAL	\$ 1,459,497.47

(Any residual money is carried over for scholarships.)

NOTABLE DONORS

All CASH contributions made to the partnership from July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007

DONOR'S NAME	AMOUNT
Bill and Lila Fairey	\$ 50.00
L.W. Short Insurance	\$ 100.00
Katherine Kelly	\$ 100.00
Carolina First	\$ 100.00
Elizabeth Taylor Satterfield, Interior Design, Inc.	\$ 100.00
John and Nancy Bracken	\$ 20.00
Georgetown Pediatric Center	\$ 100.00
Martha Davis	\$ 20.00
Madeleine Ritchie	\$ 25.00
Georgetown Kraft Credit Union - Robbie Jordan	\$ 50.00
Anna Raye Lesley	\$ 25.00
Brenda Bessinger	\$ 10.00
Trebol	\$ 250.00
Elizabeth Marlow	\$ 25.00
Pawleys Island Daycare	\$ 20.00
Pawleys Island Masonic Lodge	\$ 150.00
Garvey Winans	\$ 200.00
Gerald and Mischelle Napoleone	\$ 50.00
Felix and Dianna Rhue	\$ 30.00
Dwight McInvail	\$ 50.00
Lynne Ford	\$ 15.00
Elizabeth Krauss	\$ 15.00
Total	\$ 1,505.00

Local Match Percentage for 2007: 170.29% (at least 15% required)

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Georgetown County partnership board members volunteered 150.23 hours, including 38 hours that were devoted to Spaghetti with Santa. Spaghetti with Santa is a fundraiser sponsored by First Steps of Georgetown County. Funds raised contribute to the Facility Quality Enhancement (FQE) Program. This event is designed for pre-school aged children and their parents. Each child was introduced to Santa Claus and received a gift of an age-appropriate book. Dinner was served by the First Steps Board Members and Service Over Self volunteers. Entertainment was provided.

Value of Volunteer Time¹: \$18.77 X 150 = \$2,819.82

GEORGETOWN COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Elizabeth G. Jenkins, Chair, Early Childhood Educator
Othelia Britton, Vice Chair, Childcare & Early Childhood Development
Martha Davis, Parenting Program, Georgetown County School District
Nellie P. Doby, Non-Profit Organization
Beverly Dunn, Legislative Appointee
Lynne Ford, Service Over Self, Legislative Appointee
Elizabeth Krauss, Secretary, Legislative Appointee
Dwight McInvaill, Georgetown County Library
LaRhonda McKnight, Transportation
Leona Miller, Healthcare
Sharon Mills, Blue Cross Blue Shield
Sylvia Mitchum, Department of Social Services
Gloria Myers-LaSane, Treasurer
Dianna Rhue, Early Childhood Educator
Jacqueline Stegman, Family Education
Deborah Vince, Montessori School
Donna Watson, Early Childhood Educator
Garvey Winans, Legislative Appointee
Cecilia Wragg, Non-Profit Organization
Jane Terhune, Grant Writer, Retired Paralegal

SUCCESS STORIES

Recommendation Letter from Vida O. Miller – House of Representatives July 28, 2007

It is with great pleasure that I submit this letter of support for the Georgetown County First Steps Premier Cares Award application. The Georgetown County First Steps Centers of Excellence Program is a state model program that has been used to craft early childhood statewide legislation and create programs throughout South Carolina.

As a result of the innovative Program, Georgetown County is seeing three-year-olds reading and with the support of United way, over 200 at-risk children were enrolled in summer programs. In addition, new buildings in the western part of the county have been added and the Centers of Excellence have provided a strong health component that includes screening for learning disabilities, physician referrals, prenatal care, and remediation in all fine and gross motor skills.

Having been a part of the original legislation that created SC First Steps, I can truly say that Georgetown County First Steps Director, Staff, and Board Members have developed an exemplary program in our county that continues to provide unparalleled efforts in serving our most needy population.

It is without reservation that I wholeheartedly endorse this most deserving application and ask that you give Georgetown County First Steps every consideration as you go through the nomination process of awarding the Premier Cares Health Grant.

Thank you Letter from Georgetown Pediatrics Susan J Spradlin, RN - Newborn Home Visiting Nurse

I wanted to share with you my perception of the important results from the work accomplished through First Steps. Being a home visiting nurse for newborns and their mothers who receive Medicaid, it is acutely obvious to me that new mothers need every opportunity to receive support and education. Handling the responsibilities of motherhood for their newborn child's welfare is a daunting task for many of my patients. All of us that work with the youngest of the population find it easy to believe that their little minds are absorbing all that they are exposed to in their environment, even in the first weeks of life. Thank you for reaching out to these mothers to show them how to stimulate the minds of their children to become better equipped to be high achievers when they reach school age. It is comforting to know that there will be other professionals that will visit with these mothers after my initial visit to continue the mission of empowering mothers to succeed. First Steps may be the most important routine referral I make after my initial visit.

Also, I would like to thank you for allowing Natty to assist me when visiting the Hispanic population. I am now reaching a population that had been under served due to a language barrier. I was unable to communicate with my Hispanic mothers prior to her assistance. She is a joy to work with. Thank you and your organization for caring enough to make a difference in the life of a mother, and in the life of a child.

First Steps serves kids spaghetti; Santa Claus visits Georgetown Times, December 21, 2006 by Georgia Williamson

It was a drastically different scene in the Georgetown County School Board room Monday night at the Beck Administration Building. Instead of administration personnel and school board members discussing money and policy in suits and ties and dresses and pant suits, children ran about in jeans and Christmas shirts talking loudly about Santa Claus- who was to arrive any moment. More than 120 children awaited the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. Claus at First Steps annual Spaghetti with Santa event. Spaghetti with Santa is a fundraiser sponsored by First Steps of Georgetown County. All funds raised will be contributed to the Facility Quality Enhancement Program. First Steps, in partnership with the Georgetown County School District, supports school readiness programs and provides services to Georgetown County preschoolers with the opportunity to participate in quality early childhood educational programs. These programs are largely meant to benefit at-risk children. Monday's Spaghetti with Santa was a way for First Steps to give area preschoolers whose families are struggling financially a Merry Christmas. The number of children attending Spaghetti with Santa doubled from last year said the coordinator, Pamela Peterson.

In 2005, Georgetown County First Steps served 799 children; 37 adults/families; and 20 child care facilities, with 750 children total at those facilities. Because of First Steps' work in 2005, 34 child care centers achieved a higher quality status; 20 health assessments and screenings were given; 276 home visits were made; and 2,302 books were distributed to children. Spaghetti with Santa is designed for preschool aged children and their parents. Each child in attendance, age infant to five-years-old, got a chance to sit on Ol' Saint Nick's lap and whisper their Christmas wishes in his ear. After visiting with Santa, each child received an age-appropriate toy,

thanks to the Toys for Tots program, and a book donated by the Georgetown County Library. Community volunteers and teenagers with Service Over Self served the children and their parents a helping of spaghetti, bread and salad.

Thank You Letter – Center of Excellence: Pawleys Island Child Development Center Lillian Reid, Center Director

I am writing this letter to let you know how blessed we are to be a part of the First Steps Program. Since coming aboard with First Steps our center has been greatly enhanced. First Steps provided us with new equipment to better serve our children. Our staff is receiving ongoing training through First Steps to help them become more proficient in their jobs. Our center also receives Story Telling Workshops throughout the year for parents, teaching them how to read to their children and help with other learning skills. We have children that attend daycare through First Steps, that otherwise would not be able to attend without that help. The scholarship money that First Steps provides helps keep our doors open to children that so desperately need us. We are so grateful to Carol Daly and her staff for all that they do to help the Pawleys Island Child Care Center excel in providing a loving and nurturing learning environment for our children.