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

Summary

Numbers Served:

596 children; 10 adults/families; 15 child care facilities, with 517 children total at those facilities; 1 child care centers achieved a higher quality status; 1 higher adult education levels achieved; 551 home visits; 18 staff trained; 33 private 4-K slots and 14,821 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$726,966

Lee County School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	1,626 8 %
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)	92 %
Average Per Capita Personal Income**	19,395
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5)***	27 %
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	22 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Reading *	24 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Math*	36 %
Low Birth Weight Infants	10 %
Births to Mothers with Less than High School Education	32 %
Less than Adequate Prenatal Care	41 %

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

Profile Comments:

Situated on the eastern edge of the Midlands and the western edge of the Pee Dee Region of South Carolina, Lee County is an isolated, rural community. The estimated population of Lee County in 2003 is 20,420. 63.6% of the population is African-American, 35% of the population is White, 1.3% is Hispanic, 0.2% is Asian, and 0.1% is American Indian. 26.6% of the population lives below poverty FY 04, and 38.6% of the population does not have a high school diploma. Also, 62.5% of Lee County children under five years and younger are enrolled in Medicaid. The Median family income is \$33,909. In 2002, there were 138 TANF Cases and 531 Food Stamp Cases with children under 6 in Lee County.

Moreover, more than 38.6% of the population in Lee County has not completed high school. 63% of Lee County Community and 81% of Early Childhood Educators have stated that parenting skills as a top priority in Lee County. To increase children's readiness for school and respond to parent concerns and county needs, Lee County First Steps Partnership targeted its resources toward Parenting/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 integrated a new strategy, The Dolly Parton Imagination Library, to promote literacy, reading, and Parent and Child Time (PACT).

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 number of children attending high quality early childhood education program by establishing Summer and After School Enrichment Program.

- Established New Bethel All Stars Program- Summer and After School Enrichment Program to address educational needs of children.

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 – Provide quality enhancement and curriculum for children attending quality early childhood education programs by funding staff development, program supplies and equipment that will impact the 3 full-day 4-K classes at Bishopville Lee Child Care Center and Lynchburg-Elliott Child Development Center.

- 33 children were enrolled in these programs.
- 30 children successfully completed the school year.
- Teachers and Para-Professionals participated in trainings provided by South Carolina First Steps staff.
- Creative Curriculum was utilized at both sites
- Parental involvement and parenting sessions were prevalent at both sites
- Bishopville-Lee received an ECERS visit from South Carolina Department Education.

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 – Increase the capacity of parents to be their child's best and most important teacher by expanding home visitation services.

- ***Average of 28 families (totaling average of 42 children served) received Parents As Teachers (PAT) visits. Using the program model to differentiate intensity according to need, 1% of the families received three or more monthly visits, 73% of these families received two monthly visits, while the remaining 26% of these families received at least one home visit monthly. 16 Families Exited the program***

- *A total of 537 home visits were delivered, providing parents with strategies, skills, information and resources to strengthen their role as their child's most important teachers. (Outputs web site)*
- *All PAT Educators completed training in the Born to Learn Curriculum, and during FY2005*
- *All PAT Educators, Executive Director, Head Start Staff, and one community member have successfully completed the MotheRead/FatheRead Training*
- *1 PAT educators has, at minimum, a Bachelor's level education*
- *2 PAT Educators have at minimum, an Associate Degree*
- *1 PAT Educator provides direct services to parenting high school students*
- *Parenting program has begun process for implementing component to specifically address father/ males being more active and involved with young children in a positive manner*
- *9 Group meeting were hosted and 105 parents participated in the meetings*
- *Successfully implemented Reading Is Fundamental (RIF), lent 9740, and distributed 3376*

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 and assistance to child care providers. Provided child care scholarships for families in Lee County to assist with the cost of child care.

- *Quality enhancement grants were offered to 7 child care providers, serving 676 children. These facilities represent 40% of the childcare community for Lee County. Through intensive technical assistance the following program outcomes were achieved: (Outputs Web Site)*
 - *1 family child care provider became ABC Enhanced*
 - *Little Wizard Child Development Center was approved to participate in the USDA Food Program, which will ensure that children a balanced nutritious meal.*
 - *50 Technical Assistance hours were provided to child care*
 - *40 Mentoring hours were provided to child care facilities*

- *1 child care center is finalizing the NAEYC re-accreditation self-study process*
- *A monthly average 18 staff participated in trainings, and video-conferences for DSS certified training regarding Health and Safety, Child Development and Curriculum, Program Administration, and Special Needs*
- *39.5 hours of child care training were provided to child care providers*
- *54 child care providers participated in training*
- *23 child care scholarships have been awarded to children to attend full day child care.*

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

- ***FY 2006 Results:** 30 identified children completed the Countdown program during summer 2006.*
- *94.44% of teachers (statewide) participating in Countdown to Kindergarten reported that the program made a positive difference in students’ readiness for school. 100% of these same respondents agreed that the program strengthened their abilities to help participating students meet state curriculum standards.*

Partnership Goal – Ensure an educationally beneficial school transition by serving 70 at-risk children in the Count Down To Kindergarten

- ***FY 2007 Results:** 70 identified children participated in the program during Summer 2007.*
- *Children were provided with academic assistance.*
- *Children participated in weekly culturally and academically enriching experiences.*
- *90% of children received all 7 visits*
- *Targeted 95% of Free and Reduced Lunch*

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

The Lee County Partnership has planned to offer 4-5 quality enhancement grants, and has determined to work more intensively with child care providers in order to result in more sustained quality improvements, which will include ABC Enhanced Providers for new providers, and accreditation for all providers .

The Lee County First Steps Board Child Care Committee will continue its active role in the implementation process of the quality enhancement grants by conducting pre and post assessments of the child care facilities to ensure accountability and board active participation.

Center Staff Training and Development will be targeted to ensure that child care providers complete ECD 101, School Age Child Care, There's No Place Like Home, and Creative Curriculum, PITC, Mandatory Reporting, E-LAP and LAP-III, and other areas that will strengthen Early Care in Lee County.

Lee County First Steps will aggressively work with family child care providers who have received Quality Enhancement Grants for at least the past two years to begin the self-study process so that they can become accredited by the NAFCC (National Association for Family Child Care).

Lee County First Steps will host a minimum of four Lee County Child Care Directors' Forum to discuss issues impacting them, and to ensure that training needs are been adequately addressed.

Lee County First Steps will continue with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, and will seek to generate additional local funds to ensure the self-sustainability of the program.

LCFS will continue efforts to implement a Fatherhood initiative Program.

LCFS will continue to implement the Family As Readers Programs Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) Program which includes a lending library and book distribution program for children in child care, public and private schools in Lee County (birth to 3rd grade) .

LCFS has been in collaboration with the Lee County Schools, Wateree Head Start, and private care providers to establish a county-wide perspective for the Pilot 4K Program to ensure that all entities are collaborating to ensure that every eligible four-year-old child in the county is served.

LCFS has secured funding to provide comprehensive services to Bishopville Lee Child Care Center and Lynchburg Elliott Child Development Center with the implementation of the Centers of Excellence (COE) Model.

LCFS and Darlington County First Steps Partnership in collaboration with the South Carolina Office of First Steps has secured an Early Reading First Grant to provide comprehensive services to three and four year-olds at the following sites in Lee County: West Lee Elementary School, Wateree Head Start (Bishopville Site), Bishopville-Lee Child Care Center, Lynchburg-Elliott Child Development Center. This grant will provide intensive professional development and support for all Lee County Sites.

FY 2008 promises to be an active and productive year as the Lee County First Steps continues its commitment to ensure that the children of Lee County are at school 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	4K	TOTAL
\$150,013	\$1,890	\$254,693	\$51,145	\$51,766	\$42	\$56,937	\$160,480	\$726,966.00

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

READINESS STRATEGIES	EXPENSES
Early Education	\$124,257
Family Strengthening	\$100,198
Child Care	\$65,000
School Transition	\$18,660
Literacy	\$11,558
Family Strengthening	\$94,602
County Programmatic	\$20,977
County Administrative	\$27,689
TOTAL	\$462,941.00

NOTABLE DONORS

DONOR'S NAME	AMOUNT
Angela Tidwell	\$5.00
Annie Hannibal	\$50.00
Bishopville-Lee Child Care Center	\$120.00
Central Carolina Community Foundation	\$5,000.00
Communities in Schools of Lee County	\$4,000.00
Dennis Community Development Corporation	\$50.00
Ella M. Laws	\$90.00
Eva Hannibal	\$10.00
FTC	\$600.00
Gloria Burris	\$10.00
Gracie Dizzley	\$10.00
Gwendolyn Frederick	\$10.00
Jerlene Atkinson	\$50.00
Kaplan	\$1000.00
Kiddieland Family Daycare	\$80.00
Lakeshore Learning Materials	\$250.00

Lee County Department of Social Services	\$30.00
Little Wizard Child Development Center	\$40.00
Lynchburg-Elliott Child Development Center	\$334.00
Maverick Wilson, Etal	\$181.00
New Zion AME Church	\$107.00
Pee Dee Electric Cooperative, Inc.	\$2500.00
Progress Energy	\$300.00
Reading Is Fundamental	\$14,000.00
Sarah I. Anderson	\$40.00
Sytricia Price	\$10.00
Target	\$1,500.00
Thomas and Sharon Teigue	\$30.00
United Way of South Carolina	\$1,000.00
TOTAL	\$31,407.00

Local Match Percentage for 2007: **47.34%** (at least 15% required)

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Lee County First Steps Partnership Board Members volunteered 235 hours, including board meetings, and Annual Meetings.

Value of Volunteer Time¹: \$18.77 X 235 = \$4,411

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

LEE COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Board Member's Name	Position on the Board
1. Mr. Andrew Moses	Legislative Appointee, Board Chair
2. Angela Tidwell	DHEC
3. Bertha S. Scott	Early Childhood Education
4. Pat Saverance	Business Community
5. Lillie Patterson	Non-Profit Organization
6. Belinda Butler	Business Community
7. Pastor Marcus Benjamin	Faith Community
8. Bernard Simon	Transportation
9. Debbie Bartholoma	DSS
10. Betty D. Addison	Preschool through Primary Educator
11. Vacant	County Library
12. Jerlene Atkinson	Early Childhood Education
13. M. Deloris LeGrant	Preschool through Primary Educator
14. Vacant	Parent of Preschool Child
15. Vacant	Non-Profit
16. Rev. Archie Temoney	Faith Community
17. Hannah Hickman	Legislative Appointee
18. Betty Rogers	Head Start
19. Vacant	Health Care Provider
20. Vacant	Parent of Preschool Child
21. Maverick Wilson	Legislative Appointees
22. Thelma Hannibal	Family Education, Training and Support
23. Nicole Simon	Parent of Preschool Child
24. Mattie Westry	Childcare and Early Childhood Development Education
25. Cheryl Mott-Sims	Family Education, Training, and Support (Secretary)
26. Sharon Teigue	Legislative Appointee
27. Socoro White	Early Childhood Education
28. Diana Williams	Early Childhood Education (Asst. Secretary)
29. Mary Lee Arthur	School District
30. Sandy Jenkins	Transportation
31. Sheila Moses	Health Care Provider
32. Valarie Haywood	Childcare and Early Childhood Development Education
33. Pete Barovich*	Business Community
34. Rev. Herbert Fogle	Non-Profit (Vice-Chair)
35. Blondell Miller	DSS
36. Elizabeth Snyder-Powell	County Library
37. Leroy Woods	Parent of Preschool Child
38. Mary Mitchell	Health Care Provider
39. Eva Michelle Hannibal	Parent of Preschool

*No longer on Lee County First Steps Board, but served during a portion of FY2007.

SUCCESS STORIES

Gracie Dizzley, Lee County First Step Parent Educator continues to work with young parents. Ms Kiarra Stephenson strives to be the best mother. Her concerns about her future were shared with her parent educator. Her son attends Bishopville Lee Child Care Center. If Ms. Kiarra Stephenson did not received assistance from Even Start she would not be able to send her young son to a quality child care, and ultimately she would not be able to complete her education at the Sumter Lee Adult Education Program (Bishopville Site). Kiarra states that the home have helped to establish long term and short term goals for herself and her son, and ensures that she accomplishes the short term goals step by step. On a daily basis, this teen mother has contact and conversations with her parent educator before she leave adult education program.

Kiarra consistently attends classes, participates in home visits, parenting classes, and has shown significant improvement in her responsibilities as a teen parent.

Kiarra has set goals for herself and her child. Her immediate educational goal is to complete her high school education and receive her high school diploma. This young mom is working hard to accomplish her high school diploma. Adult Education requires that students attend four days a week, but this young mother attends more sessions than required. Kiarra will be completing her English IV in the pilot online course program. Also, Kiarra' teacher recognizes that Kiarra is working hard to accomplish her goals.

This teen mother also has a part time job, and her Parent Educator is helping her to understand the process of budgeting as she is preparing for future independence as an independent parent. Once she receives he high school diploma, Kiarra will enroll in Central Carolina to continue her education.

Gracie is extremely proud of the progress and tenacity that Kiarra continues to demonstrate as she achieves her goals!

Parent Success Story

Gloria Burris, Lee County First Steps Parent Educator continues to work with parents. Nimat Brown is a former Lee/Sumter Adult Education student. Because of Mrs. Brown dedication and hard work, she received her High School Diploma through the Adult Education program December 31, 2006. After completing her hours for the diploma program, she continues to volunteer her time in helping other students with class work at the Adult Education center. Mrs. Brown also volunteers at the Bishopville Lee Child Care Center, reading to the classes during story time once a week. She also takes time out to visit her older son's school. Whenever Mrs. Burris made a home visit to Mrs. Brown's home, she observed strong, positive parent/child interaction, that Mrs. Brown had instilled in her children the same dedication and drive that was developed when she decided to go back to school. The Brown children told Mrs. Burris that they love their school and don't want to miss any days. Mrs. Brown has received a part-time position working at the Adult Education center as Teacher assistance.

Mrs. Burris was very pleased with the dedication and all the hard work that Mrs. Brown, not only a young wife and mother, was bestowed the honor of being one of the Sumter-Lee Adult Education Graduation Ceremony Speakers on May 30, 2007. Mrs. Brown wrote a powerful, emotional, and inspirational speech that stirred the audience to tears and enthusiasm. Mrs. Brown received the highest grade from her graduating class, recognized as a National Adult Education Honor Society Recipient Award, and was presented with her high school diploma.

Mrs. Brown is currently working part-time with Sumter Adult Education Program (Bishopville Site), and she serves as a mentor and inspiration to the students at the school that they can receive their high school diploma. Mrs. Brown is now working on receiving Financial Assistance from Central Carolina Technical College.

Mrs. Brown's long term goal in life is to be a writer and artist.

Gloria Burris is proud of the accomplishments of Mrs. Brown, and is expecting great things for this young family.