



Board Chair:
John Bamberg
Executive Director: Pauletta Plowden
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Total children in county under age 6: 1117
Total Children in county living in poverty: 35.7%

Bamberg County Highlights

- 47 families participated in Parents As Teachers Program.
- 602 Certified Parenting Home Visits were conducted.
- 10 Families participated in the ABC Childcare Scholarship Program
- 3 daycare centers participated in Quality Enhancements.
- 194 Teachers from the local region participated in Certified DSS Childcare Training.
- 1500 books were distributed to children.

Bamberg County

First Steps Partnership

Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Report

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Bamberg County First Steps is a premiere early childhood program that continues to place a high priority on the quality of childcare and early education as a research based determinant of school readiness. As such Bamberg County First Steps continues to focus diligently in its efforts to “empower” the children and families of Bamberg County with high quality early learning strategies that will enhance and strengthen their position in overcoming school readiness obstacles. Those very serious readiness obstacles include:

Child poverty. (35.7%) Children in deep poverty often face a wide variety of school readiness obstacles, ranging from inadequate prenatal care and nutrition to low maternal education. Of the 1117 children under age six, 14.3 % receive federal TANF benefits during 2008, indicating a family income at or below 50% of the federal poverty definition. Approximately 1 out of every 7 child in Bamberg County has an annual family income of \$10,325 (or less) for a family of four. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 45% of these children will be retained by the third grade.

Birth to Single Mothers: Births to single mothers have increased steadily over four decades. In 2006, 88 babies, 38.3% of all babies, were recorded as born to single mothers. A decade earlier in 1990, the percentage was 39.9% and in 1960 it was 15.9%. In 2006, 13.8% of white children and 46.5% of African American and other children were born to single mothers.

Birth to Mothers with less than a high school diploma. In 2006, 65 babies, 28.3% of all babies born in the Bamberg County were born to mothers of all ages who had not completed high school. In 2006, 31.0% of White and 27.3% of African American and other babies were born to mothers who had completed less than the 12th grade. Children’s success is strongly influenced by the education of their parent. Recent analysis suggests that 48% of these children will be retained by third grade. Bamberg County parent surveys indicated the following areas as high priority needs: **DSS childcare scholarships for working parents and those attending school fulltime, Parents requiring Parenting /Family literary skills development, Children aftercare services for working parents, and higher quality of daycare programs.**

In seeking solutions to the reduction of problems that affect school readiness and school success in the early grades for our children ,Bamberg County First Steps Board has directed its resources toward the following strategies: **PAT/Home Visitation Services, Early Childcare Scholarships, Childcare Center Staff Training & Development and Childcare Center Quality Enhancements.**

As Bamberg County First Steps celebrates its tenth year of service to the local community, we will continue to focus on “Empowering our children for future Success”!



*Professionally Yours,
Pauletta Plowden
Executive Director
Bamberg First Steps*

First Steps to School Readiness Strategy Areas

The First Steps initiative approaches children's school readiness needs in five ways:

Family Strengthening: A parent is a child's first and best teacher. First Steps works to help parents become the best parents they can be. First Steps also helps parents further their own education.

Healthy Start: Children's development and ability to learn are profoundly impacted by their health in the earliest years. First Steps works to help families understand children's health needs through education and screenings while also working to help them access needed health services.

Quality Child Care: Quality child care provides immediate and long-term learning benefits for children. First Steps works to expand the availability of quality child-care to families and to enhance the level of quality in existing child-care environments.

Early Education: Research shows that children who participate in high-quality preschool classes are more likely to start school ready to learn, as well as be more successful later in life. First Steps works to expand high-quality 3-year-old and 4-year-old kindergarten opportunities in public and private settings.

School Transition: The transition into kindergarten is a critical time that sets the tone for children's perspectives about the school years, as well their parents' perspectives. Making a strong initial connection between school and home -- and supporting both parents and students during this transition time -- has been shown to impact students' later school success and parents' later involvement during the school years.

2008-09 County Partnership Programs by Strategy

FAMILY STRENGTHENING



Parents as Teachers

Program description:

The Parent as Teachers strategy continues to focus on the following goals utilizing best practices:

- Increase the capacity of parents to be their child's best and most important teacher by expanding home visitation services.
- Increase parent knowledge about child development and age appropriate activities for children.
- Increase parenting skills.
- Increase positive interactions between parents and children
- Increase health practices for children.
- Increase educational opportunities for parents.
- Increase families' knowledge of support services in the community.

Program results:

- *47 adults and 48 children participated in quality comprehensive parenting and family literacy services.*
- *Using the PAT Program model to differentiate intensity according to need, all families received weekly or biweekly visits.*
- *A total of 602 home visitations were delivered, providing parents with information and resources to strengthen their role as their child's most important teacher.*
- *90% of parents and children participated in monthly group meetings.*
- *Quality Assessment tools were utilized to enhance parenting services.*
- *100% of participants received Pre/Post KIPS Assessments with an average score of (Pre) 3.82 (Post)4.41*
- *100% of adult participants received Pre/Post ACIRI Assessments with an average score of (Pre)1.98 (Post)2.18*
- *100% of child participants received Pre/Post ACIRI Assessments with an average score of (Pre) 1.90 (Post) 2.07.*
- *All families received developmentally appropriate books, learning tools and materials on a monthly basis.*
- *All PAT Educators are certified in the Born to Learn Curriculum.*
- *3 PAT Educators have a Bachelor of Arts in Education degree.*
- *1 PAT Educator has an Associate of Arts in Education degree*
- *Families reported an average of 4.99satisfaction with this program (based on a 1(poor) to 5 (excellent) point scale).*

QUALITY CHILD CARE



Childcare Quality Enhancements Program description:

- The focus of this strategy will be to improve the quality of childcare by offering quality enhancements grants and assistance to childcare providers.
- Increase the supply of early education programs in Bamberg County meeting the high quality, professional standards to prepare children for success.
- Increase Technical Assistance/mentoring activity.
- Increase Pre/Post ITERS/ECERS Evaluations/program assessments.
- Increase Staff participation in the First Steps sponsored DSS Certified Training Activities.
- Increase Scholarship recipients' participation with community resource partners.
- Increase TEACH Scholarship participation.

Program results:

- *Quality Enhancement mini-grants were offered to 3 childcare providers in the community.*
- *All programs received an average of 2 monthly technical assistance and program mentoring visits.*
- *2 programs received ABC enhancement; 1 program worked toward ABC enhancement.*
- *All programs received quality developmentally appropriate materials and supplies per the ITERS/ECERS assessment.*
- *All childcare programs received quality ITERS/ECERS pre/post assessments with an average increase of 1.50 in scores.*
- *24 First Steps funded/and non funded childcare program staff participated in on-going DSS certified training offered by the county in conjunction with the QE strategy.*
- *Teachers and staff reported a satisfaction rating of 5.00 out of 5 (based on a 1(poor) to 5 (excellent) point scale).*
- *150 children were directly affected by this strategy.*
- *Families and staff reported a satisfaction rating of 5.00 out of 5 (based on a 1(poor) to 5 (excellent) point scale).*

Childcare Training and Development



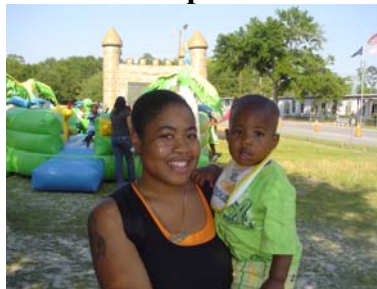
Program description:

The Childcare Quality Training and Professional Development Strategy will afford all First Steps funded childcare centers and local community providers the opportunity to receive high quality certified training and development in conjunction with technical support and mentoring. This premiere strategy impacts teachers in the surrounding six local rural counties each year.

Program results:

- *3 current and 7 former First Steps funded childcare programs participated in this strategy.*
- *24 First Steps funded childcare program staff participated in on-going DSS certified training offered by the county.*
- *194 non-funded childcare program teachers and staff from 6 local towns participated in DSS certified training offered by the county.*
- *All DSS certified training sessions were instructed by a Master University Instructor and Trainer certified by the South Carolina Center for Childcare Development.*
- *Teachers and staff reported a satisfaction rating of 5.00 out of 5 (based on a 1(poor) to 5 (excellent) point scale)*

Scholarship Initiatives



Program description:

- Bamberg County First Steps contracted services with the State Department of Social Services/ABC Voucher Program.
- This strategy afforded 10 full-time childcare scholarships to parents who met the ABC Child Care eligibility criteria.
- Bamberg County First Steps assisted parents in identifying quality childcare for their children.
- BCFS distributed applications/ conduct intake to eligible families.
- This strategy assisted with the removal of barriers that prevented children from receiving quality childcare in Bamberg County. These barriers included financial

constraints, lack of awareness of quality childcare providers, and the lack of available slots for the children of Bamberg County.

- This program is administered through a Memorandum of Agreement/ Letter of Authorization with the Department of Social Services/ABC Voucher Program.
- BCFS received a twenty percent match of slots from the Department of Social Services.
- 100% of all scholarships were utilized by high risk families demonstrating need.
- Families reported a satisfaction rating of 5.00 out of 5 (based on a 1(poor) to 5 (excellent) point scale).

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

(Use whole dollars)

Expenditures By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$102,748.00
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$54,732.00
Lottery Appropriation (<i>Fund 35</i>)	\$-0-
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 60</i>)	\$728.00
C.O.E. Appropriation (<i>Fund 65</i>)	\$-0-
N.F.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 70</i>)	\$-0-
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$24,426.00
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$5,891.00
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$15,228.00
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$114,517.00
TOTAL:	\$318,264

Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name	
Parents AS Teachers	\$127,796.00
Childcare Quality Enhancements	\$20,800.00
Childcare Training / Professional Development	\$14,300.00
Childcare Scholarships	\$27,200.00
Rural Initiative Grant	\$27,290.00
	\$27,298.00
	\$6,586.00
	\$
	\$
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$55,203
Administrative Functions	\$39,081
TOTAL:	\$318,264

NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	<i>AMOUNT</i>
Rev. Yvonne Singleton	\$50.00
Wilson Law Firm	\$50.00
Rome Baptist Church	\$50.00
Raffle Ticket Sale	\$234.00
Anonymous	\$40.00
Bake Sale	\$95.60
Bamberg Sch. Dist. 1	\$500.00
Mary Jane School of Dance	\$20.00
Dr. Michael Watson	\$20.00
Orange Grove United Methodist Church	\$100.00
Progressive Family Life Center	\$50.00
Cindy Hurst	\$220.00
DSS	\$50.00
Genrose Braye	\$25.00
Home Federal Savings & Loans	\$20.00
Jennifer Naimzadeh	\$20.00
John Bamberg	\$20.00
John K. Waddell	\$50.00
Lisa Peaye	\$20.00
Madge Fleming	\$35.00
TOTAL: \$1,594.60	

Local Match Percentage for FY 2009:

101.64%

(at least 15% Legislative requirement)

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES



Bamberg County Board Chair John E. Bamberg, Pauletta Plowden, Executive Director and Former S.C. Governor Jim Hodges

Board Membership

Name	Category	Employment	
(Secretary) 1. Gwendolyn Folk		Pre through Primary Educator	Richard Carroll Elementary School
2. Madge Fleming		Pre through Primary Educator	Richard Carroll Elementary School
3. Genrose Braye		Family Education and Training	Retired
4. Barbara Turner		Childcare/Early Child Development	Richard Carroll Elementary School
5. Nannette Davis		Childcare/Early Child Development	Baby Bear Daycare
(Board Co-Chair) 6. Dr. Michael Watson		Healthcare Provider	Retired
7. Joann Stroman		Healthcare Provider	Bamberg Job Corps
8. Dr. Gloria James		Transportation Provider	BCDSNB
(Board Chair) 9. John Bamberg		Non-Profit Organization Family Services	Retired
10. Barbara Tyler		Non-Profit Organization Family Services	Bamberg County DSS
11. Rev. Yvonne Singleton		Faith Community	Voorhees College
12. James Barnwell		Business Community	B & B Meat and Fish Market
(Asst. Secretary) 13. Contrilla Gainyard		Parent of a Preschool Child	Bamberg Middle School
			Dr. Michael

14. Lisa Peay	Parent of a Preschool Child	Dental Office
15. Shontae' Chisolm	Parent of a Preschool Child	VCEHS
16. Becky Brunson	Early Childhood Education	Richard Carroll Elementary School
17. Ricky A. Kears	Early Childhood Education	Bamberg County School District One
18. Cindy Hurst	Early Childhood Education	Richard Carroll Elementary School
19. Anita J. Butler	DSS Appointee	Bamberg DSS
20. Jennifer Naimzadeh	Library Appointee	Bamberg County Library
21. Mabel Frazier	School District Appointee	Richard Carroll Elementary School
22. Christine Patrick	Legislative Appointee	Clemson Extension – Bamberg County
23. Candance Darnell	DHEC Appointee	DHEC
24. Claire Williams	Head Start Appointee	Voorhees College EHS

COUNTY DATA SNAPSHOT

In FY09, First Steps County Partnerships statewide made it a priority to become increasingly data-driven. County Partnerships successfully began using powerful new components of the First Steps data system, and County Partnerships also utilized data in new ways to drive their FY09 program plans. In addition to enhanced program data tracking, County Partnerships are also focusing on the best available data about children and families to best understand their communities' needs. At the end of FY08 and the beginning of FY09, County Partnerships began an extensive analysis of this data, including data about the risk factors known to impact children's potential school success, such as low birth weight, teen mothers, and families living in poverty. A county-level risk data report is included in the subsequent pages of this report.

Your 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile will be inserted by OFS after this section. For your reference, a PDF of this risk profile was sent to you along with your Annual Report Template

The SC General Assembly created in 1999 the South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness Initiative as a "comprehensive, results-oriented initiative for improving early childhood development by providing, through county partnerships, public and private funds and support for high quality early childhood development and education services for children by providing support for their families' efforts toward enabling their children to reach school ready to learn"...here's what happened next:

First Steps Strategy Areas Notable Moments

Family Strengthening

Bamberg County First Steps
Cordially Invites
You & Your Family
To The

2008-2009 Annual Meeting Celebration

Date: April 30, 2009

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Richard Carroll Elementary School – Campus A (Gym)

153 McMillan Street

Bamberg, South Carolina 29003

Theme: "Bamberg County First Steps: Paving The Way To A Brighter Future"



Quality Child Care

Bamberg County First Steps Awards Childcare Grants



Shown are Childcare Directors June Kemp-Doodle Bugs Daycare Center, Shirley Bell- Progressive Family Life Daycare Center, Cathy Self- First Baptist Church Daycare Center and Pauletta Plowden, Executive Director-Bamberg County First Steps Initiative

Bamberg County First Steps to School Readiness Initiative recently awarded Quality Enhancement Mini Grants to the following local childcare centers: Doodle Bugs Daycare Center, Progressive Family Life Daycare Center, and First Baptist Church Daycare Center.

South Carolina First Steps recognizes the importance of quality childcare as a research based determinant of school readiness. As such, Bamberg County First Steps has been diligent in its efforts to assist local providers in their effort to maximize and enhance the learning environments that they provide for the children of our county. Each center will receive a grant in the amount of \$3,000 to purchase developmentally appropriate materials and supplies based on the (ECER-R) Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scales-Revised assessment tool. Additionally, each program will receive monthly technical assistance from a South Carolina certified Technical Assistant to focus on the following areas of importance: *Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Language and Reasoning, Activities, Interaction, Program Structure and Parents and Staff.*

To date Bamberg County First Steps has awarded childcare mini grants to the following centers: Baby Bear Daycare, Voorhees Early Headstart, Little Precious Angels Daycare, Wee Care Daycare, Progressive Family Life Daycare, and First Baptist Church Daycare Center.

Bamberg County First Steps provides other quality childcare services as well. They are as follows: Parents as Teachers Parenting Program, Childcare Center Staff Training and Development, DSS ABC Scholarships, and Full Day 4-K.

The mission of Bamberg County First Steps is to ensure that every child arrives at the first grade healthy and academically prepared to succeed in life.

Anyone interested in learning more about First Steps, you may contact Pauletta Plowden, Executive Director at 803-245-6513.

Early Education



Back to School Bash



Count Down To Kindergarten



BAMBERG COUNTY FIRST STEPS TEAM



My name is Mrs. Shirley Bell and I am the director at Progressive Family Life Childcare Center located in Denmark, South Carolina. I am very pleased to express that Bamberg County First Steps has done some very wonderful and marvelous things for our child development center. There isn't any

other agency or organization that has offered mini-grants for childcare centers to enhance their environments, technical assistance and staff training for teachers. We are forever grateful to Bamberg County First Steps for expanding our enrollment, providing professional training for our teachers and staff and supporting our parents in many, many ways. For the last eight years, we've been recipients of quality enhancements through Bamberg County First Steps. Ms. Pauletta Plowden and Ms. Erica Smith are excellent people to know and work with. They have gone the extra mile to help our program become more polished and professional. We are blessed to be affiliated with these ladies and an agency that care so much about our children and families.

Respectfully,

-Shirley Bell, Director--Progressive Family Life Center, Denmark, South Carolina ---First Steps Board Member

My name is Shemika Sease and I am a single parent of two little girls, ages two and nine years. I have been involved with the First Steps Parenting program for four years and I also receive the childcare scholarship. First Steps has helped me in many ways to be a better mother to my children. I now do a variety of learning activities with my youngest daughter that I didn't know about for my oldest child. I work full time for minimum wage and the childcare scholarship has helped me and my family tremendously. Thank you First Steps for the hard work that you do for Bamberg County's families!

Sincerely,

-Shemika Sease, Parent, Bamberg, South Carolina



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Bamberg County

Total Children Under Six: 1,097

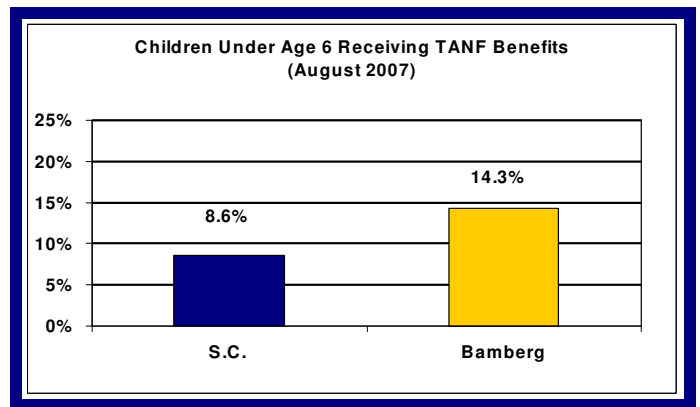
CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%

Bamberg County (2007): 14.3%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 7 Bamberg County children has an annual family income equivalent to \$10,325 (or less) for a family of four. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 45% of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Children in deep poverty often face a wide variety of school readiness obstacles, ranging from inadequate prenatal care and nutrition to low maternal education.
- 157 of Bamberg County’s 1,097 children under age 6 received federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits during 2007, indicating a family income at or below 50% of the federal poverty definition.



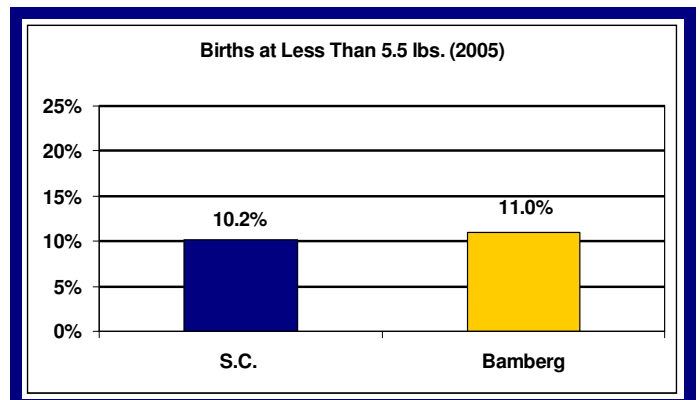
CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

Bamberg County (2005): 11.0%

Fast Fact: 1 in 10 Bamberg County children is born at a weight less than 5.5 lbs. A recent statewide analysis suggests that at least one-third of these children (36%-52% depending on weight category) will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Babies born at low weights are often prone to developmental delays associated with early academic failure.
- Many have received inadequate prenatal care and suffer from significant health complications.
- 21 of the 191 children born in Bamberg County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



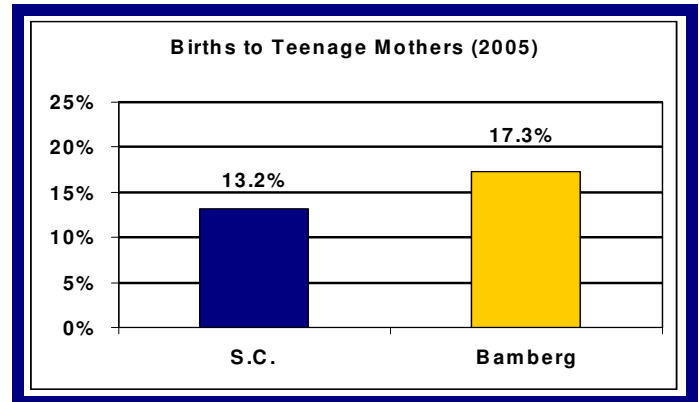
BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Bamberg County (2005): 17.3%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 5 Bamberg County births is to a mother under 20 years of age. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 43% of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Teenage parents often lack the maturity and knowledge required to optimally fulfill important parental responsibilities, are less likely to advance their own educational attainment and often fail to advance beyond low-income status.
- 33 of the 191 children born in Bamberg County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%

Bamberg County (2005): 25.7%

Fast Fact: 1 in 4 children in Bamberg County is born to a mother possessing less than a high school diploma. A recent statewide analysis suggests that roughly half (48%) of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

- Research suggests that a mother’s own educational attainment is closely linked to the subsequent academic performance of her children.
- 49 of the 191 children born in Bamberg County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

