



# BERKELEY County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Report*

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**Executive Director:** Nancy Osborne

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**Total children in county under age 6: 13,093**

**Total Children in county under 6 living in poverty: 16.5%**

## Berkeley County Highlights

- 100% of the children in BCFS health programs have medical home and immunizations
- 39 children received child care scholarships
- 207 child care workers received quality training attended trainings
- 100% of the children in BCFS program received books monthly.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

According to Kids Count data, Berkeley County appears to be improving in the school readiness, reduced school failures, and fewer students over-age in third grade. Berkeley County First Steps offers program in the areas of Family Strengthening (Parent as Teachers), Health, Child Care and Early Childhood Education. The Nurse Family Partnership Program provides first time mothers, including teen moms, up to the 28<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy home visitation services until age two of their child. Through a partnership with DHEC, the Home-based Health Services Program enhances the home environment and parenting skills to promote optimum health, growth and development of children. The Parent as Teachers program provides families whose children are prenatal to three years of age. This program provides home visitation, group meetings, developmental screenings of children and agency referrals based on the family's needs.

Berkeley County First Steps participates in the Child Development Education Pilot (4K) and has 2 private child care centers with the capacity to serve 20 children. Through our Child Care Quality Enhancement program, we provide technical assistance and developmentally appropriate curriculum materials to child care providers. We also provide training and professional development opportunities for child care staff. We provide child care scholarships to assist families with accessing quality child care. Children participate in the Imagination Library Program and receive age- appropriate books monthly.

The Berkeley First Steps Partnership Board is committed to programs that meet crucial needs of young children and their families. Our programs are important in promoting healthy children, extensive language, awareness of speech sounds, positive disposition, interpersonal skills, and a love of books and learning. We have made positive strides in our county, but there is still work to be done for our youngest and most vulnerable children. On behalf of the Berkeley County First Steps Board, we thank our partners for their continued commitment of its resources to improve the school readiness of children in Berkeley County.

Nancy Osborne  
Executive Director

*Quote from Pericles, "What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others." Carry on.*

## **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 year

## **2008-09 County Partnership Programs by Strategy**

### **FAMILY STRENGTHENING**

#### **PARENTS AS TEACHERS (PAT)**

**Program Description:** PAT services are provided to families whose children are prenatal to three years of age. These children are more likely to experience significant school readiness problems because of family literacy and education, lack of parenting skills, and other barriers for successful social, emotional and health development. Parent educators provide home visitation, group meetings, developmental screenings of children and agency referrals based on the family's needs. The parent educators encourage learning and play through the Born to Learn Curriculum. Promoting a positive parent child relationship and improving parenting skills have a direct effect on a child's school readiness. PAT encourages learning, managing challenging behavior, and promotes

positive parent-child relationships; therefore, improving parenting skills and ultimately, school readiness.

**Program Results:**

- Served 176 families
- 11% improvement of parents interacting while reading to their children.
- 2,456 home visits were conducted by parent educators
- 1,302 books were distributed to children
- 100% of the children participate in the Imagination Literacy Program
- Conducted 71 parent groups
- Served 402 Hispanic families.
- 82% of the families served had multiple priority risk factors.
- Completed 145 health screenings

**DOLLY PARTON IMAGINATION LIBRARY**

**Program Description:** Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library is a literacy program that enrolls children from birth to five years of age. Each child receives monthly a personalized age appropriate book in the mail. Imagination Library promotes a love of reading and learning. Bonding with the child, pointing to pictures in a book and turning pages are all part of the process of learning to read. Because we incorporate these books into other programs, the parent understands the value of reading and develops skills for encouraging their children to read. Even siblings benefit from program.

**Program Results:**

- Served 495 children
- Increased parents interacting with children through reading

**HEALTHY START**

**DHEC Home-Based Health Services**

**Program Description:** Berkeley County First Steps is one of the few counties that provide a home health visitation program. We are also partnering with DHEC to provide the Family Nurse Partnership Program. Because of the alarming low birth weight rate, a lack of adequate pre-natal care, and the number of teen pregnancies in the county, programs with the medical component are crucial. The program enhances the newborn DHEC Home Visit by providing more than the initial visit, if the families are “at high risk”. The RN’s visit the families at least once a month and enhance the home environment and parenting skills to promote optimum health, growth and development of the child. They perform physical assessments for the baby and mother, link the family to a medical home and help them navigate the system. The RN’s makes referrals when risks are identified and ensures the child receives appropriate immunizations.

**Program Results:**

- 68 adults served; 86 children served.
- 70% of parents completing the Keys to Caregiving increased their parental knowledge of child development.
- Average pre-score on Keys to Caregiving was 69%. The average post-score was 97%.
- 300 home visits were made.
- 100% of the children were enrolled in the Imagination Library Literacy Program.
- The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) was used to decrease the potential for undetected developmental delays; 5 children had significant delays and were referred to BabyNet.
- 100% of the children were connected to a medical home and were up- to-date on age -appropriate immunizations.

**QUALITY CHILD CARE.****Child Care Quality Enhancement**

**Program Description:** Berkeley County First Steps as always focus on improving child care in family, group and child care centers because of our mission to serve the neediest children. Parents often enroll their children with affordable child care providers but not necessarily to quality providers. The program consists of three components: an assessment of the child care environment (using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R), the Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS-R), or the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS-R)), technical assistance and funding for age-appropriate curriculum materials and supplies as indicated by the quality enhancement plan. To participate in the program, child care providers must work toward licensure, upgrade to ABC Enhanced status or become accredited. Technical assistance this year was focused on curriculum (Creative Curriculum) and quality workshops.

**Program Results:**

- 2 centers were served. Budget cuts were taken from this program.
- Average ITERS-R pre-score was 6.13; average ITERS-R post-score was 6.67.
- Average ECERS-R pre-score was 4.00; average ECERS-R score was 4.75.
- 40.5 hours of technical assistance provided.
- 432 books were given to child care centers.
- One facility increased the number of infant slots because of First Steps' funding for expansion.
- One center is working toward NAEYC accreditation.
- 82% of the goals set by the quality enhancement plan were met.

## **Child Care Quality Training**

**Program Description:** In conjunction with the Quality Enhancement program, this strategy increased the availability of quality, local workshops for child care providers to enhance the provider's knowledge of early childhood growth and development as well as create stimulating learning environments for children birth to five. Workshops may address but are not limited to the areas required by DSS and ABC such as topics such as safety, health, nutrition, child growth and development, special needs, child guidance and family/staff support and communication.

### **Program Results:**

- 13 workshops were offered; equaling 40 hours of training.
- 207 child care workers attended the trainings.
- 74% of the child care workers who attended the workshops were providers who participating in our Quality Enhancement program.

## **EARLY EDUCATION**

### **S.C. Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP)**

**Program Description:** CDEPP offers tuition assistance for 4-year-old kindergarten classes to eligible students living in the 37 Trial and Plaintiff school districts involved in the school funding equity lawsuit, *Abbeville et al. vs. South Carolina*. First Steps oversees CDEPP 4K classes offered in non-public school environments. To qualify for tuition, a child's family must qualify for TANF or free/reduced-price lunch, be 4 years old by Sept. 1, and live in an eligible school district.

### **Program Results:**

- 28 students served.
- 2 private child care providers offered CDEPP 4K classes.
- Because every public elementary school in Berkeley County has at least one CDEPP class available, most of the four-year-olds are served in the public school setting which makes it difficult for the CDEPP private providers to enroll children in their program.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<b>Expenditures By Funding Source</b>	
State Appropriation ( <i>Fund 10</i> )	\$425,659.65
E.I.A. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 55</i> )	\$40,101.79
Lottery Appropriation ( <i>Fund 35</i> )	\$0
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 60</i> )	\$82,139.10
C.O.E. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 65</i> )	\$0
N.F.P. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 70</i> )	In Chas. Account
State Private ( <i>Fund 15</i> )	\$1,480.00
Local Private ( <i>Fund 20</i> )	\$5,690.72
Federal ( <i>Fund 30</i> )	\$47,185.00
In-Kind ( <i>Fund 25</i> )	\$75,810.42
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$678,066.68</b>

<b>Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name</b>	
Parents As Teachers (2011)	\$355,978.53
Imagination Library (2122)	\$12,980.72
Child Care Quality Enhancement Grants (6012)	\$37,722.61
Child Care Training (6050)	\$7,103.08
Scholarship Initiative (7031)	\$20,400.00
DHEC Home-Based Services (9051)	\$42,082.46
Full-Day CDEPP 4K (3140)	\$82,139.10
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$79,430.34
Administrative Functions	\$40,229.84
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$678,066.68</b>

### NOTABLE DONORS

<i><b>DONOR'S NAME</b></i>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Blackbaud	\$1,000
Bi-Lo Charities	\$4,533
Community Foundation	\$4,800
Kiwanis Club of Moncks Corner	\$1,000
Daniel Island Pharmacy	\$100
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$11,433</b>

*Local Match Percentage for FY 2009: 28%*  
*(At least 15% Legislative requirement)*

## **COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Angela Thomas**, Board Chair

**Betty Pressley**, Head Start appointee

**Sandy Moore**, DHEC appointee

**Luci Carter**, Principal; Early childhood education

**Sharon Fashion**, County Library appointee;

**Jean Gooch**, Infant Toddler Specialist/TTC Faculty Early Care and Education; Child care and early childhood development/education provider

**Susan Gehlmann**, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction BCSD; Education training and support provider

**Betty Smalls**, Director of Betty's Day Care, Early childhood development /education

**Richard Meister**, County Legislative appointee

**Cynthia Curry**, County Legislative appointee

**Lillie Caldwell**, BCSD Adult Education; Family education, training, and support provider

**Amy Sprague**, Family Literacy Specialist; Family education, training, and support provider

**Eleanora Ellington**, Extended Learning Coordinator; School district representative

**Samone Johnson**, DSS appointee;

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## **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.

*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:*

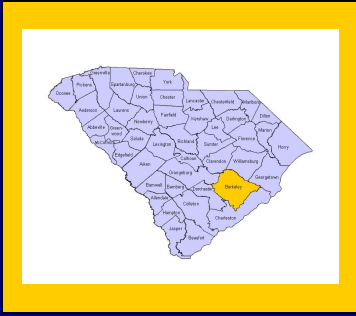
In the year 2001-2002, our funding from the state was \$1,613,841. In the year 2008-2009, our funding from the state was \$547,877. First Steps has continued to strive to achieve our mission in Berkeley County, despite severe budget reductions. We have retained the quality of our programs, even if the numbers served are lower. The BCFS Partnership Board maintained all of the programs that the county needs assessment deemed necessary to meet the needs of its youngest children and their families. The program staff are highly qualified and dedicated to the mission of preparing our children for school and success in life. Berkeley First Steps has retained most of its staff since the beginning. They are the driving force behind our success.

First Steps Strategy Areas	Notable Moments
Family Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents as Teachers has always been the largest program, serving 1170 families since 2002. Keep in mind that there can be multiple children in one family.</li> <li>• Highlights of 2007 show the impact this program makes. 1,154 home visits were made. 187 families were served. 10 of these families were teen moms. 11 families had children with disabilities. 60 mothers had not completed high school. 59 families spoke only Spanish in their home. 39 were single parent homes. 18 of the children had low birth weight. 23 families were involved in mental health or social services. 116 of these families were low income families and had other criteria eligible factors.</li> </ul>
Quality Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 2002, 54 total child care providers were served; we have provided assistance to 40% of all providers in the county.</li> <li>• 26 day care centers we served became licensed; 23 improved their ABC status; One became NAEYC accredited (Acres of Discovery).</li> <li>• Over 300 hours of technical assistance has been provided.</li> <li>• All 5 group homes in the county achieved licensure utilizing First Steps funding.</li> <li>• We have provided over 60 hours of workshop training to over 500 providers.</li> <li>• 100% of the providers served have made improvements on their ECERS-R scores; indicating improvement in the quality of child care.</li> </ul>
Early Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From 2002-2007 we served 587 children in 4K programs in the BCSD.</li> </ul>
School Transition Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2002 and 2003 BCFS served 531 four-year</li> </ul>

	<p>olds in a summer enhancement program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The program was held in 9 elementary schools and 3 Head Start locations.</li> <li>• From 2005-2007 we served 80 rising kindergarteners in the Countdown to Kindergarten Program.</li> </ul>
Home Health Services (DHEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since 2001 we have served over 750 children.</li> </ul>

**Other notable moments:**

- *Throughout the years Berkeley County First Steps has collaborated with the Berkeley County School District; DHEC; DSS; Head Start; Trident United Way; the Berkeley County Public Library; Charleston and Dorchester First Steps; and 54 child care centers and homes.*
- *Donations received: Blue Cross Blue Shield (\$3,900); Bank of America (\$3,000); Alcoa (\$3,300); Coastal Community Foundation (\$4,800); First Union (\$1,950); Bi-Lo Charities (\$4,533); Blackbaud (\$1,000); Trident United Way (\$1600); Kiwanis Club of Moncks Corner (\$1,000); Berkeley Electric Cooperative (\$800); Berkeley Oral Maxillofacial Surgery (\$200); Moncks Corner Dry Cleaners (\$100); Daniel Island Pharmacy (\$100); Gethers Funeral Home (\$50); Pine Ridge Fire Department (\$50); G-1 Mechanical (\$50); La Caretta (\$30); Carson's Catering (\$30).*
- *First Book has contributed over \$9,000 worth of books to the children of Berkeley County.*
- *Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation awarded Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester First Steps \$1,455,238 to implement the Nurse Family Partnership Program.*



# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Berkeley County

Total Children Under Six: 13,093

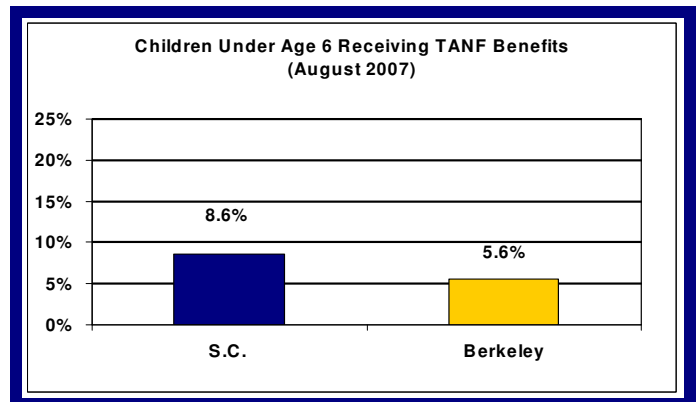
## CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%

Berkeley County (2007): 5.6%

***Fast Fact:*** Roughly 1 in 18 Berkeley 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.
- 731 of Berkeley County’s 13,093 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.



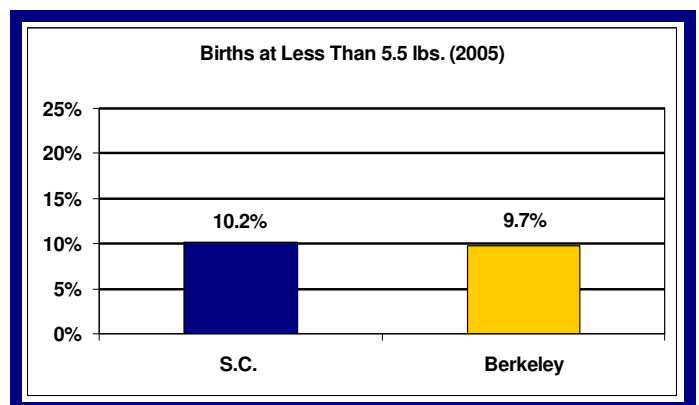
## CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

Berkeley County (2005): 9.7%

***Fast Fact:*** Roughly 1 in 10 Berkeley 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.
- 212 of the 2,196 children born in Berkeley County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



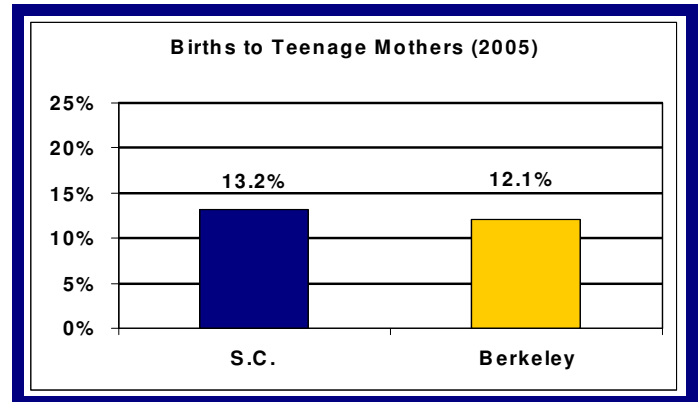
## BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Berkeley County (2005): 12.1%

**Fast Fact:** Just over 1 in 10 Berkeley 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.
- 265 of the 2,196 children born in Berkeley County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



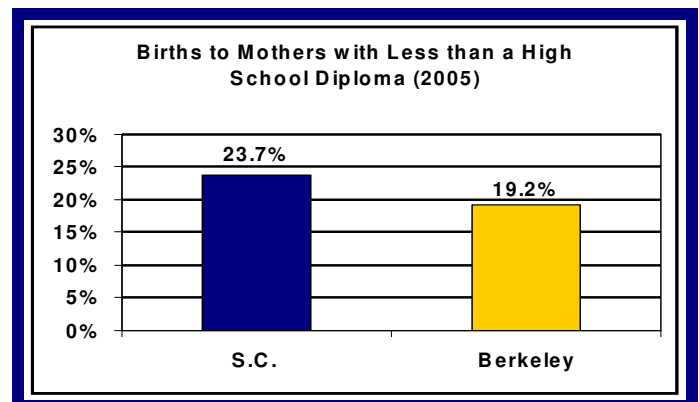
## BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%

Berkeley County (2005): 19.2%

**Fast Fact:** Nearly 1 in 5 children in Berkeley 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.
- 421 of the 2,196 children born in Berkeley County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.



All data provided by the SC Budget and Control Board’s Office of Research and Statistics