



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

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**Executive Director:**  
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- \*Total children in county under age 6: 21,777 - 7.9% of total county population
- \*Children under age 6 living in poverty: 15.2%
- \*Children not consistently demonstrating readiness for 1<sup>st</sup> grade. 18%

## Spartanburg County Highlights

- Served:**
- \*194 Adults Direct Intensive Service
  - \*514 Children Direct Intensive Service
  - \*3000 childcare teachers & directors attended 88 training opportunities
  - \* Early Head Start
    - 1 Parent became a Chiropractor
    - 2 parents became Nurses
    - 1 family received Habitat Humanity House
  - \* 350 attendees at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Early Education Conference

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Spartanburg County First Steps works every day to close the gap between “what we know and what we do” to support the success of Spartanburg’s youngest learners.

**We know that...** *the future of any society depends on its ability to foster the health and well-being of the next generation. Stated simply, today’s children will become tomorrow’s citizens, workers, and parents. When we invest wisely in children and families, the next generation will pay that back through a lifetime of productivity and responsible citizenship. The Science of Early Childhood Development. (2007)*

**We know that ...** “36 Kindergarten Classrooms” in Spartanburg County are filled with these statistics annually.

- **920+** children living in poverty (\$21,200 household of 4)

**What we do...**work to reduce the # **920 +** by educating & enrolling parents to adult education & workforce resources

- **100+** children having founded cases of child abuse/neglect

**What we do...**work to reduce the # **100+** by supporting parents in parent education through case management , workforce resources and intervention

- **500+** children that were born to teen mothers

**What we do...**work to reduce the #**500+** by case management offering cohesion through service integration and guidance of first time teen young parents with the objective of no repeat pregnancies

- **325+** children born weighing less than 2500 grams

**What we do...**work to reduce the # **325+** by offering parent health education and case management to families.

- **900+** children born to mothers with less than a high school diploma

**What we do...**work to reduce the # **900+** by supporting parents with health education, social support, knowledge about child development, childcare and training in effective parenting skills

*Sincerely,*

*Carolyn Brooks  
Executive Director  
Spartanburg 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**

#### **Family Literacy**

Partner with Spartanburg County Adult Education for four family literacy sites serving in strategic geographical locations in Spartanburg County, Danny Burns, Director of Spartanburg Adult Education, has been awarded two consecutive recognitions for excellence in programs from the State with the "Go Getters Award"

#### **Program results:**

- *1 of the 4 Family Literacy sites became NAEYC Accredited*
- *89 adults were served in GED classes and diploma classes.*
- *95 children were served in childcare*
- *11 prenatal served*
- *66 children on average per month participated in Interactive Family Literacy*
- *121 family referrals were made to DSS, DHEC, BabyNet, and employment counseling.*
- *333 completed home visits of 1 ½ hours per month using the Parents as Teachers programs (includes four (4) parent educators)*
- *Attendance in childcare: 172 average # of days opened at each site,*

25 average enrollment at each site  
19 average daily attendance at each site

## QUALITY CHILD CARE.

### **Early Education and Care Project Program Results**

Spartanburg County First Steps Early Education project continued to grow during the fifth year of the strategy. In addition to the **Quality Institute (QI)**, the **Early Education Network (EEN)**, and the **Early Education Conference**, the project added a fourth component, the **Quality Continuation Academy (QCA)**; all of which serve the intent of the Mary Black Foundation Grant.

The **Quality Institute** is designed to strengthen and educate center *directors* by providing specialized training, technical assistance, mentoring, and professional development. The QI program works with eight centers; representing 38 classrooms, 514 children, and 86 staff members. Eight model classrooms were designed and constructed in QI centers, which allowed teachers to implement their knowledge in an age-appropriate environment. The centers serve over 200 children whose families qualify for vouchers. The QI centers continue to raise the quality of care and education as evidenced by: 1) Five centers raised their ABC ranking and 2) Classrooms that raised quality had an average of +.79 on the ERS.

The **Quality Continuation Academy** provides support for six directors who have completed the QI program with at least a 4.0 center wide score on the Environmental Rating Scale. The QCA worked together to offer specialized staff trainings on developmentally appropriate practices for young children. Two of the six directors have been accepted for *candidacy* by the National Association for the Education of Young Children as they work towards national accreditation. The QCA represents 30 classrooms, 339 children, and 68 staff members.

The **Early Education Network** continues to be the largest outreach of early childhood care and education training in Spartanburg County. Over 3000 participants attended 88 training opportunities. Topics on best practice and highly trained presenters were the backbone of the EEN. *Master Trainers*, Linda Lawson and Kelly Pfeiffer, as well as Stacy Burr, PhD conducted over 25 percent of the EEN trainings.

The two day, 8<sup>th</sup> annual **Early Education Conference**, “Step Into Success”, saw a record breaking attendance with over 350 participants. The attendees represented more than 60 child development centers from across the upstate.

## EARLY EDUCATION.

### **First Steps Early Head Start Program description:**

Spartanburg County First Steps Early Head Start (FS EHS) supports three program options based on the federal Early Head Start program model. They are: Services to Pregnant Women (SPW), Home-Based (HB) and Center-Based (CB). Each family in the program has a Family Service Specialist (FSS) who works directly with that family. The FSS are supported by Program Specialists with expertise in Social Work, Early Child Development, Special Needs, Mental Health and Family Literacy and who provide Reflective Supervision regularly. The Health/Nutrition Specialist is an LPN who oversees and supports services in the areas of health and nutrition. All FS EHS services are individualized to meet the needs of the children and their families.

**Home-based**

Parents as Teachers *Birth to Three* bi-monthly curriculum model is used in home visits with two other visits each month for case management activities. Family Service Specialists are monitored by Program Specialists who are also trained in the Parents as Teachers curriculum.

**Center-based**

Each FS EHS Center Based site has a Program Specialist assigned to the site to provide ongoing technical assistance. Center directors and teachers/caregivers are trained in the Early Head Start standards of quality. Each site has had specific training as the standards relate to curriculum. Directors and teacher/caregivers receive ongoing training in best practices for infants and toddlers. Program Specialists, Family Service Specialists, Directors and Teacher/caregivers have been trained in the ITERS (Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale) an assessment tool to help measure indicators of quality. Each center developed its own curriculum based on Creative Curriculum with parent and teacher input and technical assistance from the Program Specialists.

**Services to Pregnant Women**

- Partners for a Healthy Baby /Parents as Teachers *Birth to Three* (supplement)

**Program results:**

**Section I ERSEA-**

**Eligibility/Recruitment/Selection/Enrollment/Attendance**

*Eligibility, Recruitment and Selection criteria are  
Established by the First Steps Board and Policy Council*

**Section II Families**

**Section III Health**

**Section IV Fiscal**

**Section V Staff**

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**Section I ERSEA**

**Eligible Children in Spartanburg County Served**

- 1,887 eligible children-(based on 2000 census tracks of EHS service areas)
- 11% of eligible children served by FS EHS

**Enrollment**

**Total Cumulative: 234**

- 207 children
- 27 pregnant women
- 169 families
- 203 children and/or pregnant women were on the waitlist

## **Section II Family**

### **Family Resource Scale**

A scale that measures a family's assessment on adequate resources of time, money, energy to meet the needs of the family as a whole as well as the needs of the individual family members

- 48% of families increased their family resource scale scores

### **Family Partnership Agreements**

Families enter into a family partnership agreement that outlines family goals, steps to achieve the goals and progress towards goals

- 100% families with agreements

### **Family Services**

- 100% of families received services through FS EHS or referrals for the following:

### **Home Visits**

Five Family Service Specialists completed 1,557 home visits using the Parents as Teachers curriculum. The visits average 1 ½ hours in length with caseloads varying from ten-sixteen children

**Cumulative Visits- 1,557**

### **Parent Trainings**

Six (6) Parent Training events were held at Roy C. Henderson during the year. All parents are invited to the events where childcare and food are provided.

### **Socialization Activities**

The purpose of socialization experiences for infants and toddlers is to support child development by strengthening the parent-child relationship. This is in contrast to socializations for preschoolers where the goals are to support and develop peer group socializations.

- 27 socialization activities were offered with 62 families attending

## **Section III Health**

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### **Immunization**

- 89% of children had immunizations either up to date or completed

### **Disabilities**

The target is more than 12 children or 10% of funded enrollment

- # of Part C children served- **36**
- **FS EHS exceeded the 10% requirement by 200%**

### **Percentage of Children who have medical homes**

- 98% of children have medical homes

### **Percentage of Children that received medical and dental exams**

- 73% of children were up-to date on Well-baby Checks (151 of 207)
- 35% of children were up-to-date on dental schedule (72 of 207)

**Health Services Advisory Meetings**

- 58 community, family and staff members present at 3 meetings.

***Section IV Fiscal***

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- FS Early Head Start (Federal Funds) - **\$1,369,852**

**Total Amount of Funds received by Spartanburg County First Steps EHS in 2008-2009**

- Federal- EHS- \$1,369,852
- Federal-ABC-\$7,862
- Federal- CACFP-\$20,703
- Private Donations-\$8,219
- State Dollars-\$1,946

**2008-2009 Spartanburg County First Steps Budget Expenditures**

- First Steps (State Funds) - **\$804,353**
- FS Early Head Start (Federal Funds) - **\$1,369,852**
- Childcare Initiative (Private & State Funds) - **\$123,565**  
First Steps administers the following flow-through funds.
  - Nurse Family Partnership (Private Funds) -**\$222,669**
  - Children’s Service Alliance (Private Funds) - **\$67,011**

**2009-2010 First Steps Proposed Funding**

- First Steps (State Funds) - **\$656,943**
- FS Early Head Start (Federal Funds) - **\$1,501,912**  
Operating, Technical Assistance, COLA, COLA ARRA, and ARRA Quality (Federal Funds)
- Childcare Initiative (Private & State Funds) - **\$217,152**  
First Steps administers the following flow-through funds.
  - Nurse Family Partnership (Private Funds) -**\$445,340**
  - Children’s Service Alliance (Private Funds) - **\$180,000**

**ABC (Advocates for Better Care) Vouchers- 2008-2009**

The **ABC Child Care Program** is the statewide system designed by South Carolina to deliver child care services under a federally-funded grant program. ABC makes payments to providers to care for low-income children so their parents can work.

- 7 children received part-day EHS vouchers
- **\$5,862** was received from ABC for partial-day vouchers
- **\$2,000** was received as quality improvement money for Roy C. Henderson CDC

**Volunteers- 2008-2009**

- **90 volunteers** donated service to FS EHS worth **\$342,874** including \$135,336 of donated rental value for child care centers
- **26 volunteers** were parents who donated volunteer service worth **\$9,768**

**Results of Audit** – The A133 Single Audit of 2007-2008 was completed with no material findings.

**Section V      Staff**

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**Staff Training Opportunities-**

- 100% of staff had ongoing quality training programs **totaling over 1,600 hours.**

**SCHOOL TRANSITION.**

**Countdown to Kindergarten**

**Program description:** To create awareness and knowledge for parents about the importance of home activities relating to literacy and hands-on learning up to kindergarten. This teacher home visitation program teaches parents how to advocate for their children within the education system.

**Program results:**

- 100% of clients received 8 home visits.
- Exceeded the risk factor requirement of 3.5 , Spartanburg Score 4.3
- 30 children were served

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

<b>Expenditures By Funding Source</b>	
State Appropriation (Fund 10)	\$615,885
E.I.A. Appropriation (Fund 55)	\$61,479
Lottery Appropriation (Fund 35)	\$0
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation (Fund 60)	\$0
C.O.E. Appropriation (Fund 65)	\$0
State Appropriation (Fund 11)	\$41,437
State Private (Fund 15)	\$9,824
Local Private (Fund 20)	\$494,014
Federal (Fund 30)	\$1,471,520
In-Kind (Fund 25)	\$
<b>State Appropriation (Fund 10)</b>	<b>,2,694,159</b>

<b>Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name</b>	
2011 - Parent As Teachers (Public)	\$138,446
3210 - Head Start Programming (Private)	\$220,948
3211 - Head Start Programming (Public)	\$155,547
3212 - Head Start Programming (In-House)	\$1,001,910
4062 - Countdown to Kindergarten (In-House)	\$9,742
6012 - Childcare Quality Enhance (In-House)	\$308,636

6052 - Childcare Training and Devel. (In-House)	\$140,808
7031 - Scholarship Initiatives (Public)	\$74,800
9080 - Nurse Family Partnership (Private)	\$222,669
1502 - Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$173,389
1012 - Administrative Functions	\$247,264
<b>TOTAL: \$2,694,159</b>	

**CLARIFICATION(s)**

1. Expenditures listed above are not considered final until the annual audit is completed

**NOTABLE DONORS**

<i><b>DONOR'S NAME</b></i>	<i><b>AMOUNT</b></i>
Duke Endowment (Nurse Family Partnership)	\$222,669
Mary Black Foundation ( Childcare Initiative)	\$80,500
CACFP Reimbursement	\$19,196
First Steps Annual Early Education Conference Fees	\$12,435
Early Education Network Training Fees	\$11,140
Parent Co-Pay Fees	\$8,219
ABC Voucher Program	\$7,862
T.E.A.C.H. Program	\$868
<b>TOTAL: \$362,889</b>	

*Local Match Percentage for FY 2009: 373.4%*

# **COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

## **Member /Category I Elected**

Joy Ballenger

Angela Williams

Raymond Davis

Bernerdine Feemster

Mary Mathes

Bob Page

Ava Hughes

Monique Watson

Dr. Kelly Harrison-McGuire

Tom Reed

Reverend Kevin Harrison

## **Member Category II /Agency Appointed**

Jane Hammett           DHEC

Ray Trail               DSS

Daylan Stephens       Spartanburg County Public Library

Philipa Sellars         Head Start

Joan Dudgeon          South Carolina School Deaf Blind

Ann Greene            Spartanburg County School \District One

Barbara Mills         Spartanburg County School \District Two

Connie Mc Clain       Spartanburg County School \District Four

Wanda Fowler         Spartanburg County School \District Five

Susan Hendrix         Spartanburg County School \District Six

Brenda Story          Spartanburg County School \District Seven

## **Category III/Legislative Appointee**

Kay Phillips

Sue Schneider

## **Counsel**

Patrick Cont

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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.

*Attached*

*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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Danny Burns, Director of Adult Education received two consecutive recognitions for excellence in programs from the State with the “Go Getters Award”</li> <li>• 1 Childcare Center became NAEYC Accredited</li> <li>• Collaborates with seven School Districts</li> </ul>
Quality Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2,813,052 funds leveraged</li> <li>• 8<sup>th</sup> Year of holding a successful Early Education Conference with over 350 participants each year.</li> <li>• 1 Childcare Director accepted in to the Masters Cohort for Early Childhood sponsored by DSS &amp; USC</li> <li>• 1 Director earned Associates Degree in Early Childhood</li> <li>• 2 Childcare Centers have been accepted into candidacy for NAEYC</li> <li>• Kids Konnection was voted “Best Child Development Center” in Spartanburg County in 2008 by the Spartanburg Magazine</li> <li>• Childcare Director selected to serve on the state advisory committee for childcare licensing</li> </ul>
Early Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$8,706,383 funds leveraged with Early Head Start Program</li> <li>• One family received Habitat for Humanity House</li> <li>• One father returned safely from Iraq</li> </ul>

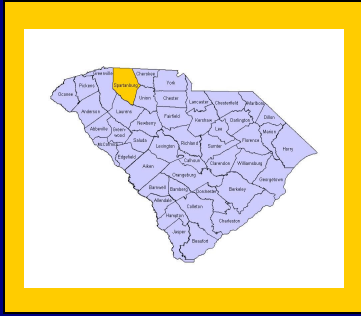
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 teacher received BA degree</li> <li>• 4 received Associates Degree</li> <li>• Collaborate with faith community ( Jack Bee’s Little Flock),Spartanburg Housing Authority, Middle Tyger (School District Five)Community Center, SC School for the Deaf &amp; Blind &amp; School District Four</li> </ul>
<p>Non-Standard Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborated with Spartanburg Regional Hospital to bring the Nurse Family Partnership to the county. Spartanburg First Steps acts as fiscal agent and Chairs the NFP Leadership Council.</li> <li>• Commissioned in 2007”Blueprint for Quality Care” A feasibility Study for an Early Education Learning Lab resulting in the Children’s Service Alliance Board The Children’s Service Alliance (CSA) represents a unique collaboration of strong community leaders in Spartanburg, South Carolina, who share a vested interest in the education, health and wellness of the area’s youth between the ages of birth and 21 years. This collaborative effort has now been formalized through the implementation of a new non-profit group which was officially approved by the state of South Carolina on January 1, 2008. Member organizations of CSA are: Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System, Spartanburg County First Steps, United Way of the Piedmont, Department of Health and Environmental Control, Spartanburg School District Six, Department of Mental Health,</li> </ul>

	<p>University of South Carolina Upstate, Wofford College, Converse College, Spartanburg Community College, and Sherman College. The formation of the CSA is a direct result of the Early Education Learning Lab Feasibility Study, funded by the Mary Black Foundation of Spartanburg and conducted by Spartanburg County First Steps. This study focused on the possibility of creating a center that would provide best education practices in instruction and learning for children birth to age six and the professionals who serve them, particularly local early childhood education providers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>40/30 Challenge</u></b> Spartanburg community leaders have now set a goal of enhanced educational accomplishment through the establishment of <b><i>“The 40/30 Challenge;”</i></b> that is, 40% of its population aged 25 and above will hold bachelor’s degrees by the year 2030. That number presently stands at 19.6%, far below regional, state and national averages, and even further below those communities that are highly competitive with Spartanburg in terms of family income and economic development.</li> </ul>
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Other notable moments:

- Carolyn Brooks, Spartanburg First Steps Executive Director received Mary Black Foundation’s Champion for Children Award for \$25,000

- Initiated county-wide Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library in collaboration with United Way of the Piedmont now distributing over 7000 books to children under 6 years of age in the county.
- 2001-2009 Spartanburg First Steps deposited [\\$21,323,607.01](#) toward the mission of “getting kids ready for school” in Spartanburg County.



# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Spartanburg County

Total Children Under Six: 20,960

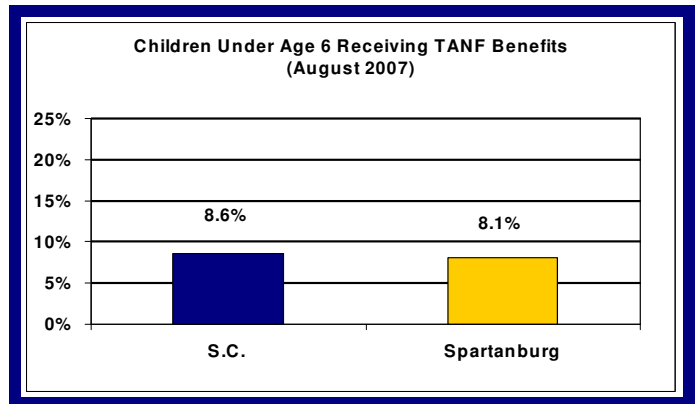
## CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%

Spartanburg County (2007): 8.1%

**Fast Fact:** Roughly 1 in 12 Spartanburg 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.
- 1,705 of Spartanburg County’s 20,960 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.



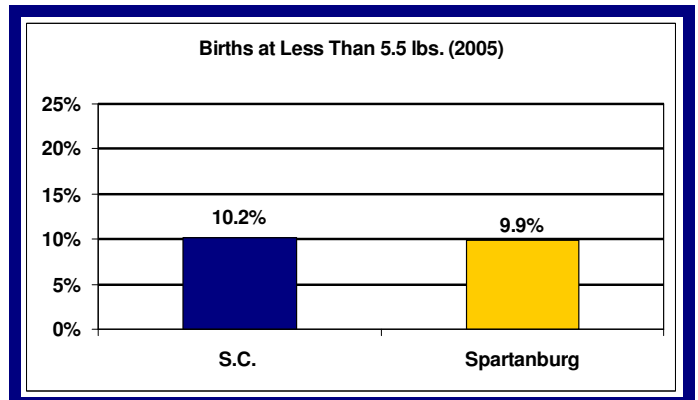
## CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

Spartanburg County (2005): 9.9%

**Fast Fact:** 1 in 10 Spartanburg 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.
- 336 of the 3,411 children born in Spartanburg County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.

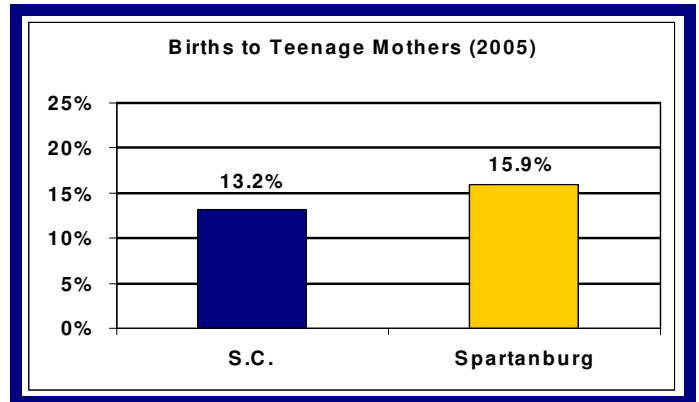


## BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%      Spartanburg County (2005): 15.9%

**Fast Fact:** Nearly 1 in 6 Spartanburg 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.
- 544 of the 3,411 children born in Spartanburg County during 2005 had teenage mothers.

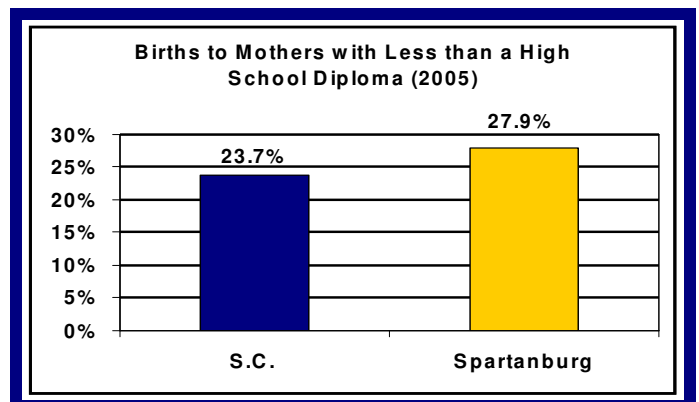


## BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%      Spartanburg County (2005): 27.9%

**Fast Fact:** Just over 1 in 4 children in Spartanburg 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.
- 950 of the 3,411 children born in Spartanburg 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