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SC FIRST STEPS ANNUAL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Report reveals agency's focus on the state's youngest learners

Columbia, SC – Today, SC First Steps released its 2005 Annual Report to the General Assembly, public and private partners, and the general public. The report focuses on First Steps' widespread ability to reach South Carolina's children from birth to first grade, and assist families as they prepare their children for school.

The report notes the cumulative efforts of First Steps' 46 county partnerships to serve their communities, specifically seeking out those at greatest risk of school failure. This year, First Steps reached more than 55,000 children and nearly 13,000 families through family strengthening, healthy start, child care quality, early education, and school transition programs.

"In developing this report, we asked ourselves some difficult questions," First Steps director Susan DeVenny said. "Are we giving our children the tools they need for long-term success in school? Are we focusing on the whole child, ensuring program quality and accountability, and leveraging our limited resources to their fullest extent? By answering these questions, we can determine our effectiveness."

The report is available on the SC First Steps website at: www.scfirststeps.org/annualreport.htm. In addition, a link can also be found on this web page to all 46 First Steps County Partnership annual reports.

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South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness ('First Steps') is a comprehensive, results-oriented statewide education initiative to help prepare children to reach school healthy and ready to succeed. Public and private support are combined through county partnerships to enable individual communities to address the unmet needs of young children and their families.

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