



Bamberg County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report*

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**Total children in county under
age 6: 1,097**

**Children under age 6 living in
poverty: 14.3%**

Bamberg County Highlights

- 77 families participated in the Parents as Teachers Program.
- 416 Certified Parenting Home visits conducted.
- 18 Families participated in the ABC Childcare Scholarship Program.
- 3 daycare centers participated in Quality Facility Enhancements.
- 275 Childcare Teachers received Certified DSS Training.
- 2000 books distributed.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Bamberg County First Steps recognizes the importance and significance of quality childcare and early education as a research based determinant of school readiness. As such Bamberg County First Steps continues to focus its efforts in *empowering* 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 obstacles include:

(1) Child poverty. (14.3%) 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.

(2) Children born at a low birth weight. (11.0%). 1 in 10 of the county's children is born at a weight less than 5.5 lbs. Recent analysis suggests that at least 1/3 of these children will be retained by the third grade.

(3) Children born to Teenage Mother. (17.3%) Nearly 1 in 5 of the county's births is to mothers under age 20 years. Teenage mothers often lack the maturity and knowledge required to fulfill parental responsibilities and often fail to advance their own educational requirements to overcome solutions to poverty. Recent analysis suggests that 43% of these children will be retained by third grade.

(4) Birth to Mothers with less than a high school diploma. Children's success is strongly influenced by the education of their parent, recent data identifies that approximately 25.7% of all babies in the county were born to mothers with less than a high school education. Recent analysis suggests that 48% of these children will be retained by third grade.

Recent parental 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, the Bamberg County First Steps Board has directed its resources toward the following strategies: *Parents as Teachers, DSS Childcare Scholarships, Childcare Center Staff Training & Development and Facility Quality Enhancements for local daycare providers and private full day 4k services.*

In partnership with many community agencies and organizations, Bamberg County First Steps will continue its crusade and advocacy to ensure that every child arrive at the first grade healthy and academically prepared for the first grade!



Professionally Yours,
Pauletta Plowden, Executive Director
Bamberg County 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.

2007-08 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:

- *77 adults and 82 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 416 home visitations were delivered, providing parents with information and resources to strengthen their role as their child's most important teacher.*
- *85% of parents and children participated in monthly group meetings.*
- *Quality Assessment tools were utilized to enhance parenting services.*
- *95% of participants received Pre/Post KIPS Assessments with an average score of (Pre)3.81 (Post)4.32*
- *95% of adult participants received Pre/Post ACIRI Assessments with an average score of (Pre) 1.74 (Post) 1.96.*
- *95% of child participants received Pre/Post ACIRI Assessments with an average score of (Pre) 1 .64 (Post) 1.89.*
- *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 4.95satisfaction 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 number of early education programs in Bamberg County meeting 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 are ABC enhanced.*
- *1 program participated in the state's 4k Expansion Program.*
- *All programs received quality developmentally appropriate materials and supplies per the ITERS/ECERS assessment.*
- *All childcare programs received quality ITERS/ECERS pre assessments with an average ITERS (Pre) score of 3.89 and an average ECERS (Pre)score of 5.21.*
- *25 First Steps funded childcare program staff participated in on-going DSS certified training offered by the county in conjunction with the QE strategy.*
- *140 children were directly affected by this strategy.*
- *Families and staff reported a satisfaction rating of 4.00 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.*
- *25 First Steps funded childcare program staff participated in on-going DSS certified training offered by the county.*
- *250 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 4.95 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 18 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/ conducted intake to eligible families.
- This strategy assisted with removing barriers that prevented children from receiving quality childcare in Bamberg County. These barriers include, but are not limited to 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 will receive 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).

EARLY EDUCATION

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

Program description: CDEPP offers state-paid tuition of 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 state-paid tuition, a student's family must qualify for TANF or free/reduced-price lunch, be 4 years old by Sept. 1, 2007, and live in an eligible school district.

Program results:

- 1 childcare program offered a CDEPP 4K class.
- A total of 5 students were served in this quality program.
- This classroom scored (Pre) 5.71 and 5.77 (Post) on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (ECERS). An increase of .06%.
- All participating students were targeted based on a series of school readiness risk factors.
- The classroom teacher is a S.C. Department of Education certified ECE teacher.

- The classroom teacher received training in Creative Curriculum and the Work Sampling System through the SC Department of Education.
- This program met the 4K requirements for curriculum, teacher-pupil ratios, classroom materials and class size.
- Families reported an average of 4.50 satisfaction with this program (based on a 1(poor) to 5 (excellent) point scale).

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Expenditures By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$137,547
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$58,930
Lottery Appropriation (<i>Fund 35</i>)	\$-0-
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 60</i>)	\$25,031
C.O.E. Appropriation (<i>Fund 65</i>)	\$-0-
N.F.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 70</i>)	\$ -0-
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$1,463
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$15,770
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$-0-
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$102,961
TOTAL:	\$341,702.

Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name	
Parents As Teachers	\$118,709
Childcare Quality Enhancements	\$31,535
Childcare Training and Professional Development	\$ 13,500
Scholarship Initiatives	\$ 54,000
Full Day 4K	\$ 24,014
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$ 53,343
Administrative Functions	\$ 46,601
TOTAL:	\$ 341,702

NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	<i>AMOUNT</i>
Bamberg Mental Health	\$20
Bamberg School District 1	\$800
Brookers Family Partnership	\$20
Cynthia Hurst	\$120
Genrose Braye	\$20

Gwen Folk	\$20
Jennifer Naimzadeh	\$25
John Bamberg	\$20
Lisa Peay	\$15
Madge Fleming	\$20
Mary Jane School of Dance	\$20
Dr. Michael Watson	\$20
Ricky Kears	\$55
Rome Baptist Church	\$100
Sharon L. Pate	\$100
Superior Cleaners	\$25
Wilson Law Firm	\$25
Yvonne Singleton	\$25
TOTAL: \$1450	

Local Match Percentage for FY 2008: 81.30

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Name	Category
1. Gwendolyn Folk	Pre through Primary Educator
2. Madge Fleming	Pre through Primary Educator
3. Genrose Braye	Family Education and Training
4. Barbara Turner	Childcare/Early Child Development
5. Nannette Davis	Childcare/Early Child Development
6. Dr. Michael Watson	Healthcare Provider
7. Joann Stroman	Healthcare Provider
8. Dr. Gloria James	Transportation Provider
9. John Bamberg	Non-Profit Organization Family Services

10. Barbara Tyler	Non-Profit Organization Family Services
11. Edward Mintz, Sr	Faith Community
12. Min. Yvonne Singleton	Faith Community
13. James Barnwell	Business Community
14. Contrilla Gainyard	Parent of a Preschool Child
15. Lisa Peay	Parent of a Preschool Child
16. Becky Brunson	Early Childhood Education
17. Shirley Bell	Early Childhood Education
18. Ricky A. Kearse	Early Childhood Education
19. Cindy Hurst	Early Childhood Education
20. Cynthia Williams	DSS Appointee
21. Jennifer Naimzadeh	Library Appointee
22. Mabel Frazier	School District Appointee
23. Christine Patrick	Legislative Appointee
24. Toni O'Cain	DHEC Appointee
25. Shontae' Chisolm	Head Start Appointee

BAMBERG COUNTY DATA SNAPSHOT

In FY08, 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.

SUCCESS STORIES

As a certified parent educator, you get to meet many different types of people; some may require intensive guidance and counseling. Others may require someone to light a fire up under them to get them motivated.

Some may just **need a helping hand**, because, they know what they want to do and what it takes to get there, but they just **need a helping hand** to accomplish and achieve their goals as a quality parent.

My success story will focus on the achievements of Ms. Juanita Jamison, a 35 year old single mother of three children who manages to overcome life's many challenges by actively participating in Bamberg County First Steps' Parenting and Scholarship Strategies.

As a result of her First Steps participation, Ms. Jamison was able to incorporate lessons learned into enhancing her position as a quality mother and teacher.

Ms. Juanita Jamison resides with her three children, Terry age 19, Jordyn age 7 and Jade age 4.

She really needed a helping hand. And we can all agree that at some point in life, we all need a helping hand in order to develop as a quality human being.

Ms. Jamison came to our First Steps office because she heard that we had a program that **REALLY** helps parents with childcare and other services.

She decided she wanted to return to school, but she needed a strong helping hand, in acquiring quality childcare for her daughter Jade.

- **The first helping hand** from First Steps was the approval of a childcare scholarship for Jade to attend Progressive Family Life Daycare Center, a First Steps funded program.
- **The second helping hand** was a referral to our PAT parenting program.

During my first visit with Ms. Jamison and her daughter Jade on Dec.6, 2006 at 8:30 in the morning, my initial observation was on how she talked and explained things to Jade. Ms. Jamison had a very calm and loving demeanor with her daughter. I knew then that Ms. Jamison was **already** a good parent who only required **a helping hand** through our program services.

- **A third helping hand** provided by First Steps is the monthly books and other enrichment materials given to our families.

Ms. Jamison indicated that Jade looks forward to "*her new favorite books*" each and every month. Adding that First Steps has helped her family to develop a love of books, reading and learning.

- **A fourth helping hand** derived during another visit where I had an exciting math lesson planned for Ms. Jamison and Jade. After completion of the math activity, Ms. Jamison shared with me that she needed a math lesson plan for her Early Childhood Education course at Denmark Technical College. Because of her participation in First Step's Parenting, she was better equipped to manage the responsibilities and requirements of her college coursework utilizing lessons learned through our parenting services.
- A fifth **helping hand** derived from Ms. Jamison's *increased confidence* in herself. This is evident in her active participation at Denmark Technical College and her children schools.

Ms. Jamison graduated with honors from Denmark Technical College in May 2008 with an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education and with a GPA of 3.86. She will be returning to college in the spring to focus on her BA in ECE.

Her additional achievements include:

- *Miss 2007-2008 Early Childhood Education*
- *President of the Early Childhood Education/Child Development Club*
- *Membership in PHI THETA KAPPA*
- *She is gainfully employed at her child's school as a Teacher- (Progressive Family Life Daycare Center a First Steps funded program.)*

In closing, it brings me joy to know that BC First Steps has strengthened the lives of the Jamisons and many other families by offering a helping hand.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Linda Nimmons, Certified PAT Home Visitor
Bamberg School District One/Bamberg County First Steps



CHILDREN are OUR FUTURE, teach them Well!!

2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Bamberg County

Total Children Under Six: 1,097

CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

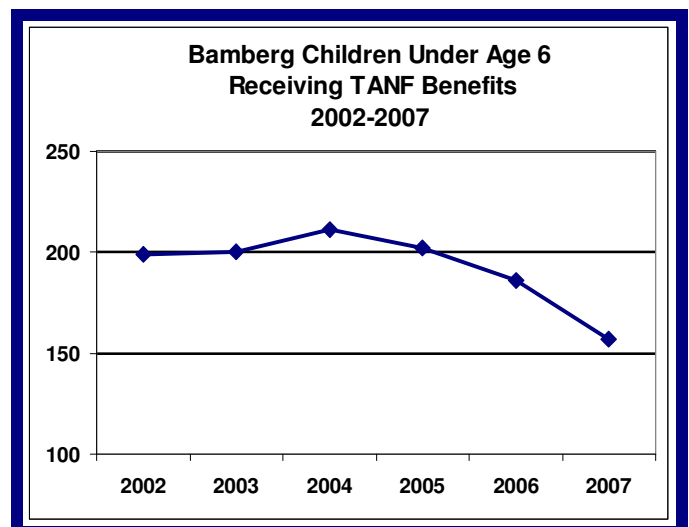
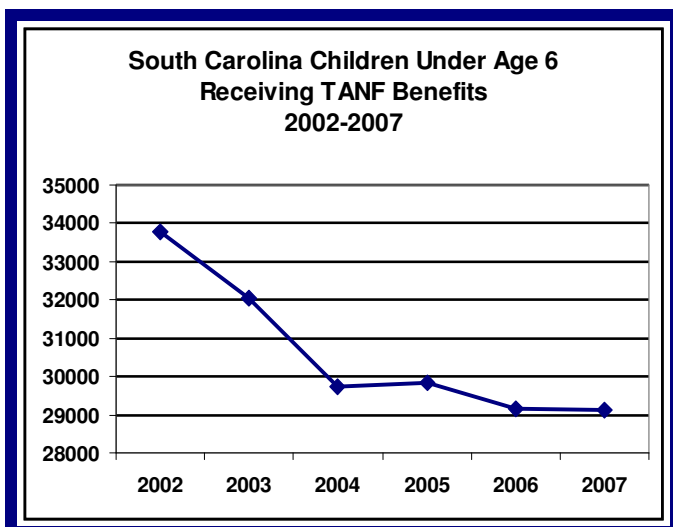
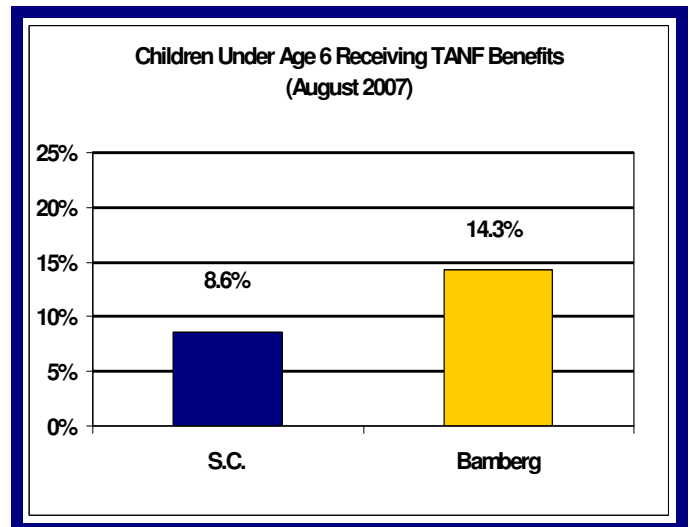
Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%

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.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Bamberg County

Total Children Under Six: 1,097

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

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

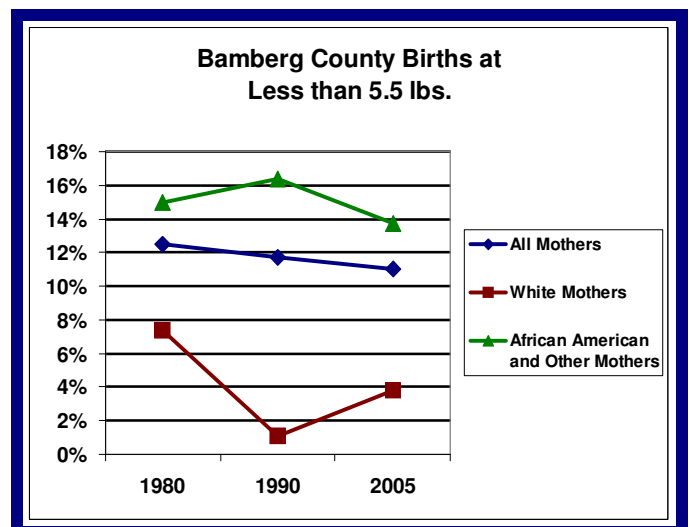
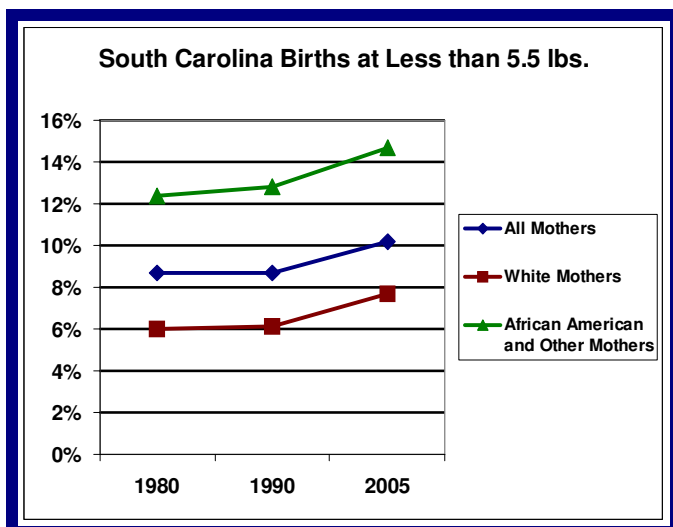
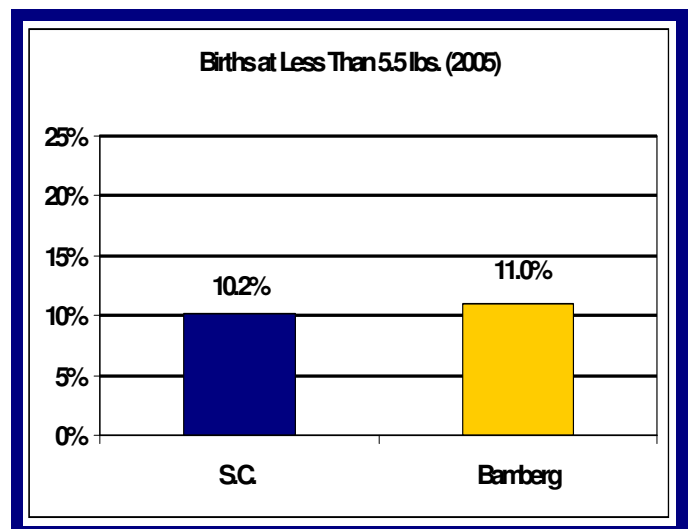
Bamberg County (2005): 11.0%

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.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Bamberg County

Total Children Under Six: 1,097

BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

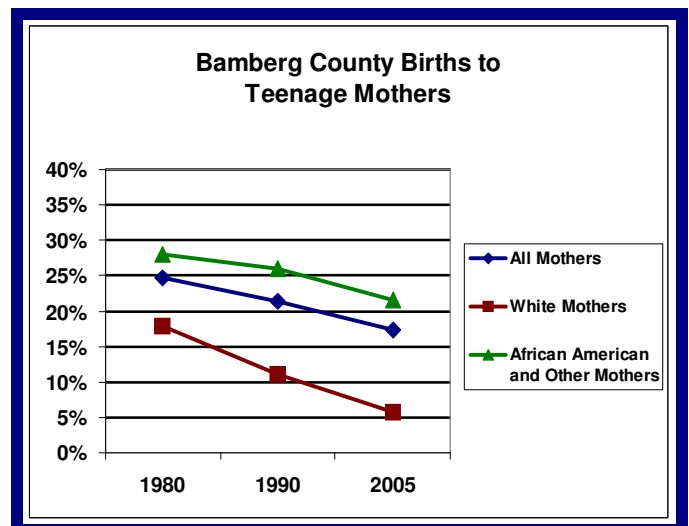
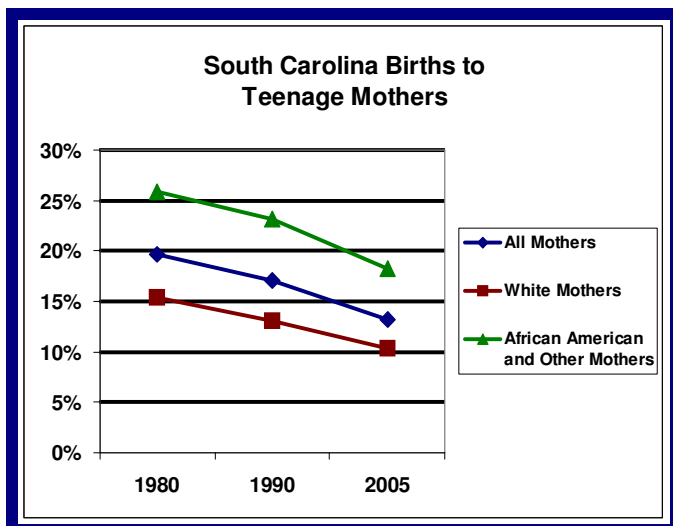
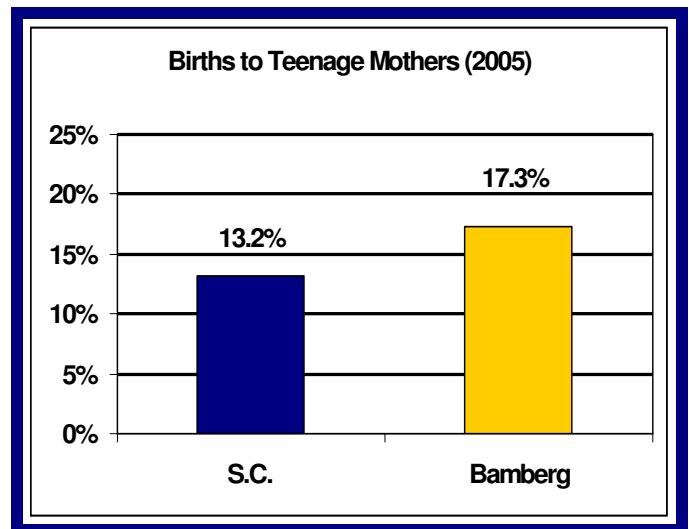
Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

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.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Bamberg County

Total Children Under Six: 1,097

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.

