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**Total children in county under
age 6: 12,336**

**Children under age 6 living in
poverty: 567**

**Beaufort County
Highlights**

- Children served: 578
- Childcare Facilities Served: 8
- DSS Certified Training Hours Awarded: 5,475

“The First Steps Parents as Teachers program taught me more about teaching than four years of college, and more about parenting than any internet source could provide.”
Angela Stewart, Testimonial Speaker
Vision 2013 Summit

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

Beaufort County First Steps Partnership began the year with renewed focus and dedication to continue its advocacy efforts on behalf of Beaufort’s neediest children and families. This included continued plans for enhancing the learning environments of child care facilities to promote developmentally appropriate practice. Additionally, we continued strengthening parenting skills through our Parents as Teachers program.

In partnership with local child care providers, businesses, various organizations, governmental agencies, and individuals, Beaufort County First Steps served 578 children in 8 child care centers and the parent education program. Through the Federal Program, Reading is Fundamental, and other local literacy efforts, 14,418 age-appropriate books were distributed to families. Also 44 families and 55 children participated in the Parents as Teachers program. Each family’s overall assessment or progress was above average.

On behalf of our Partnership Board and staff, we thank all of you for sharing your time, resources, and expertise. We applaud child care staff across the county who, each day, make a positive difference in the lives of our neediest children.

We look forward to another year as we strive, with your support, to ensure that every child in Beaufort County arrives to school ready to learn.

Dorothy J. Davis
Executive Director
Beaufort 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: A parent education and family support program serving families throughout pregnancy until their child enters kindergarten, usually age 5. During FY08, families received a minimum of two home visits per month, with additional visits as family needs dictated.

Program results:

- 44 families and 55 children were served in FY 08. A total of 361 home visits were conducted and 93% of families served were identified as possessing one or more of the State Board of Trustees' risk factors.
- Parent assessments are conducted using the Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS). Parent educators utilize this tool to observe and assess parenting skills. KIPS assesses the quality of 12 parenting behaviors that research has linked to children's healthy development. The 12 items are set on 5-point scales with behavioral anchors at the odd points and 5 as the most favorable rating. During FY 08, 13 families were assessed. On average, participants with both pre and post scores showed a 6.3% increase on the KIPS assessment.
- Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) is an interactive reading inventory for parents and children ages 2.5 years old to 5 years old. It is a literacy-specific evaluation based on observation of a parent and child reading together and is scored on a 3-point scale using pre and post scores. It evaluates the interactions between parents and children relating to literacy acquisition. During FY 08, 4 families were pre-scored utilizing the ACIRI assessment tool. The average pre-score for adults was 2.23, and children's pre-score was 2.19. Post scoring for these families will be conducted during FY09.
- 43 screenings were conducted including developmental, dental, hearing, and vision.
- 311 referrals were made to community resources.
- 2 car seats were provided for enrolled families.
- A total of 541 books were given to families during home visits and during the 3 Reading is Fundamental (RIF) Events.
- 5 families received New Parent Baby Kits.
- 2 families received emergency supplies.
- Parents attended the Beaufort County First Steps Mommy & Me Center and took advantage of the Book and Toy Lending Library.

Parent Group Meetings

Parent group meetings are held once a month. The meetings provide opportunities to share information about parenting issues and child development. Parents can support each other, observe their children and practice parenting skills. Guest speakers' presentations

have focused on Nutrition, Health and Dental, Early Childhood Development, Fire Safety, and Literacy.

Parent Satisfaction Survey

- 100% of families who responded (86% return rate) to PAT Evaluation said that they had personal home visits and found them to be very helpful.
- 100% of parents who responded to PAT Program Parent Evaluation said they were very satisfied with the PAT program and would recommend it to a friend.
- 95% of parents responding to the PAT Program Evaluation had child screenings and found the information helpful to their understanding of their child's growth.

QUALITY CHILD CARE.

Quality Enhancement

Program description: Assist child care providers to improve program quality by funding targeted upgrades to meet DSS licensing or ABC-enhanced requirements (health and safety, educational curricula, equipment and supplies), and to further enhance learning environments for young children. Qualified staff provided technical assistance and mentoring to assist providers with improvements.

Program results:

- 8 Childcare facilities serving 523 children participated in FY 08 as partners; all received some continued funding to help increase the quality of care for children. A total of 13 classrooms were assessed using ERS (Environmental Rating Scale); 12 classroom received pre and post assessments. Of the participating classrooms (10 of 12) which were assessed with both pre and post ERS, 84% increased their scores by an average of 1.18.
- Beaufort County First Steps staff delivered 432 hours of technical assistance as a means of planning for improvement within the 8 continued facilities.
- Three (3) participating providers received a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship and completed ECD 101 to earn their SC Early Childhood Credential. To date, 37 childcare providers working in facilities receiving TA from BCFS staff, earned their SC Early Childhood Credential. Eight (8) are currently enrolled and expected to receive their credentials by November 2008.
- The Reading is Fundamental (RIF) program in its 5th year held 96 literacy events for at-risk pre-school children and their families through 32 partner distribution sites in Beaufort County. A total of 13,877 books were given to approximately 4,000 children.
- Fourteen students enrolled in the Early Childhood Program at the Technical College of the Lowcountry visited the BCFS model classroom to do ERS assessments under the supervision of their college instructor.
- The literacy program, Mommy and Me, in its 5th year provided a total of 91 group sessions for community stay-at-home mothers and their pre-

school age children. These sessions were held in BCFS two model classrooms which are located in Beaufort and Hilton Head.

- The Beaufort County First Steps Lending Library in its 5th year of operation loaned 175 resource books, 69 age-appropriate toys, and other literacy materials to childcare providers and parents.

Child Care Quality Training

Program description: Provides ongoing staff development and mentoring to assist child care providers in meeting DSS training requirements, increasing the knowledge of child care workers and improving the quality of programs offered in participating child care facilities.

- 28 certified workshops were held for regional child care providers and directors giving a total of 2,015 DSS training hours.
- 819 childcare providers/directors (623 unduplicated) received high-quality training to meet SC child care licensing requirements.
- 15 training sessions of First Aid, CPR, and Blood-borne Pathogens were taught by BCFS staff, awarding 161 child care providers Red Cross Certification.
- BCFS staff conducted 2 training sessions at the Academy for Career Excellence for 20 area high school students pursuing careers in Early Care and Education.
- 109 workshop sessions were offered at the Third annual TEAM conference which was expanded to a two-day event serving childcare providers/directors in Region I (Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper Counties). Total number of participants for the two days: 439. Also, a total of 2,195 DSS certified training hours were awarded during the two-day event.
- Sixth Annual Directors Retreat was attended by 32 Child Care Directors representing Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper Counties. A total of 6 workshop sessions were offered and 256 DSS certified training hours were awarded. A total of 1,265 curriculum and children's books were distributed to participants.

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 trail 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:

- One student served. Note: Family resided in trail/plaintiff district but chose, for convenience, to have child enrolled in a Beaufort County State Approved private Child Care Center.
- One provider offered CDEPP 4K classes in Beaufort County during FY 08.

SCHOOL TRANSITION.

Countdown to Kindergarten

Program description: Assist pre-kindergarten children in making successful transition in school by providing educational opportunities, encouragement, and support services.

Program results:

- 10 children served; 100% participation (each child received all 8 required visits)
- According to pre- and post programs, parents reported:
 - 42% increase in having conversation with their child
 - 57% increase in listening to and reading with their child
 - 54% increase in visiting library with child
 - 50% increase in talking about letters, words, and numbers with their child
 - 75% decrease in number of hours children spend watching television

Overall average after percent change for program year was 44%.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<u>Expenditures</u> By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$ 405,896
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$ 23,292
Lottery Appropriation (<i>Fund 35</i>)	\$ 11,111
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 60</i>)	\$ 4,923
C.O.E. Appropriation (<i>Fund 65</i>)	\$ -0-
N.F.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 70</i>)	\$ 276
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$ 32
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$ 28,498
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$ 9,622
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$ 52,872
TOTAL:	\$ 536,522

<u>Expenditures</u> By Program / Strategy Name	
Administrative Functions	\$ 69,640
Programmatic Functions	\$ 74,210
Parents as Teachers	\$ 111,878
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$ 197,636
Child Care Training & Professional Development	\$ 76,913
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$ 1,046
Full Day 4K (Private)	\$ 4,923
Nurse Family Partnership	\$ 276
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$ -0-
Administrative Functions	\$ -0-
TOTAL:	\$ 536,522

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.

COMMENTS

Parents as Teachers:

- This program has helped me to understand that reading helps the growth of my child's brain, and it helps me to understand and to bond with my child. There is nothing that I would do to improve anything because this program is wonderful.
Keandra Jackson
- This program is most helpful to me and my child. I have enjoyed my parent educator teaching me the many different ways that I can communicate and play with my child.
Shandela Simmons
- Yes, this program has been very helpful. In fact, wonderful and convenient for the both of us. My parent educator is wonderful and loving.
Teera' Johnson
- I really enjoyed the home visits. It creates a very comfortable environment for me and the baby. The handouts are great resources. I love them. Keep up the good work! I love first Steps!
Greta Newcomb
- I learned to deal with certain behaviors in a better way.
Countess Fripp
- I have learned that if I play games and read to my child, my child will learn much better and will want to do more. Everyone that works at First Steps is just sweet and kind. I love them all.
Claudia Mitchell
- I believe this program has given me insightful information regarding my child's development. All of the material given to me by my parent educator has given me a better understanding of the process of being an effective parent. In addition to the useful information provided by my parent educator, I found the group meetings most helpful because I am able to interact with other parents and the topics are very interesting and useful. I enjoy the level of comfort and the fact that I am treated like a person. I believe this program is excellent.
Christina Jefferson

Quality Enhancement

- This was one of the best training conferences I've attended in my 20+ years of teaching; I enjoyed everything and was well taken care of. The volunteers and the first Steps staff were wonderful. I had a great time and all the workshops were wonderful and very informative. I will apply all resources in my classroom.
- Thank you so much for the opportunity to attain the knowledge/experience to better myself. I wish we could attend these types of conferences more often. Good job First Steps staff. I can't wait until next year.
- What a wonderful privilege we have by participating in the First Steps Childcare Initiative. You all continue to do a wonderful job changing the quality of childcare for our children.
Jan Smith, Executive Director
Children's Center, Inc.

- Every year our family look forward to the RIF (Reading is Fundamental) book distribution events in the fall. It has meant a lot to them and has been a huge success!!
- The Reading is fundamental program each year improves the interaction between the children and their families. Parents are more aware of different things we do with the children. They also like to help out with the distribution events. The children enjoy the books they receive. Thank you first steps.
- I like this program (Count Down to Kindergarten); it's helping my daughter tremendously. It also creates more time for the family to interact. (CDTK Parent)

- I would love for my son to have one-on-one with the teacher each year. This has helped to enhance his school work and prepare him for when school begins. I really enjoyed watching him work. He is definitely improving. (CDTK Parent)

2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Beaufort County

Total Children Under Six: 12,336

CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

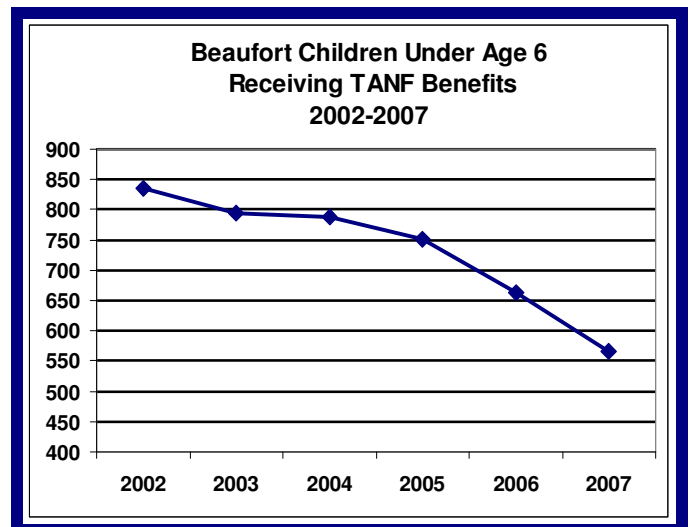
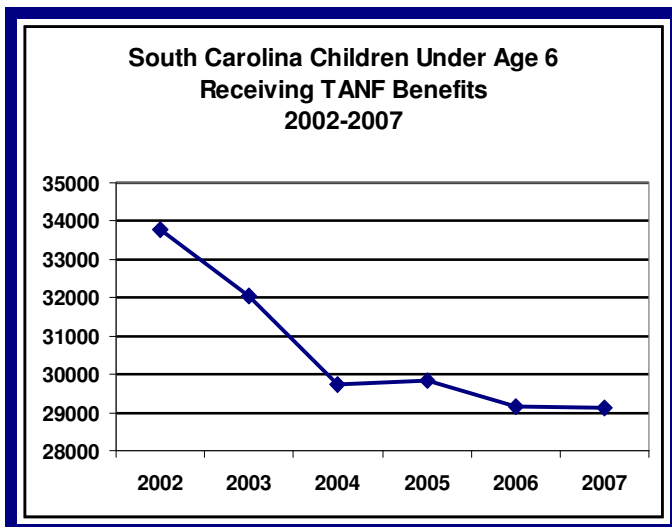
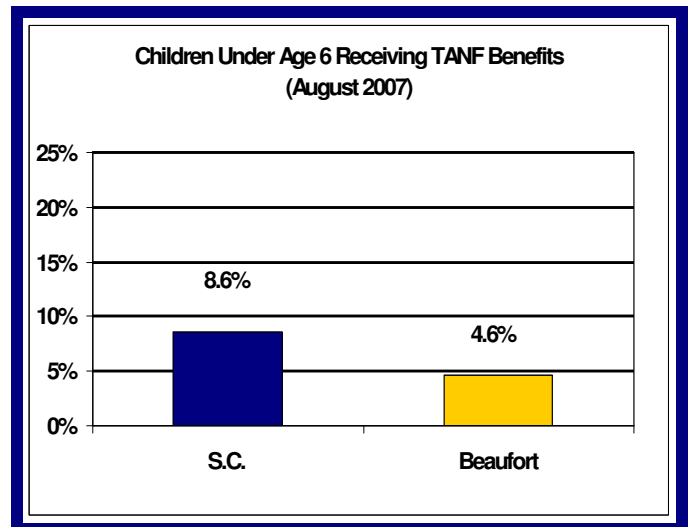
Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%

Beaufort County (2007): 4.6%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 22 Beaufort 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.

567 of Beaufort County's 12,336 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

Beaufort County

Total Children Under Six: 12,336

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

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

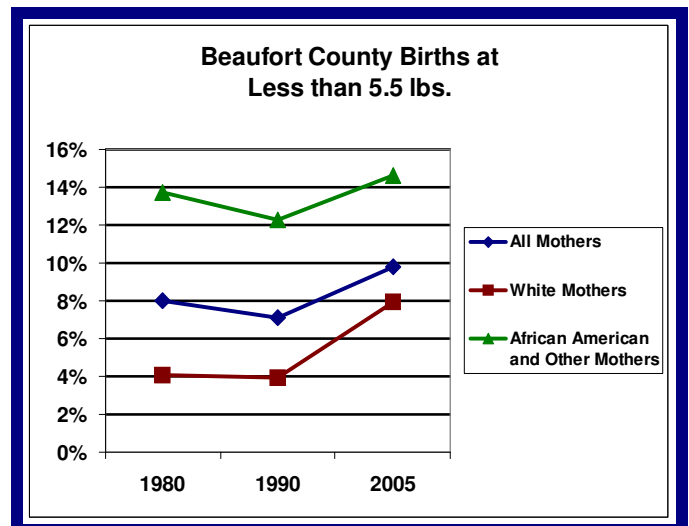
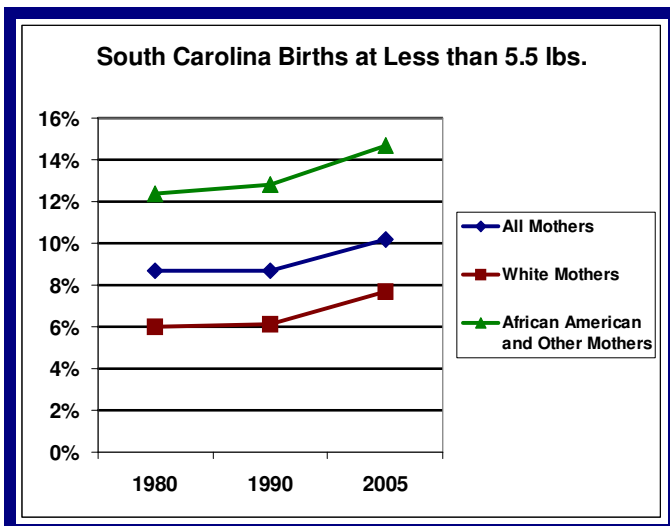
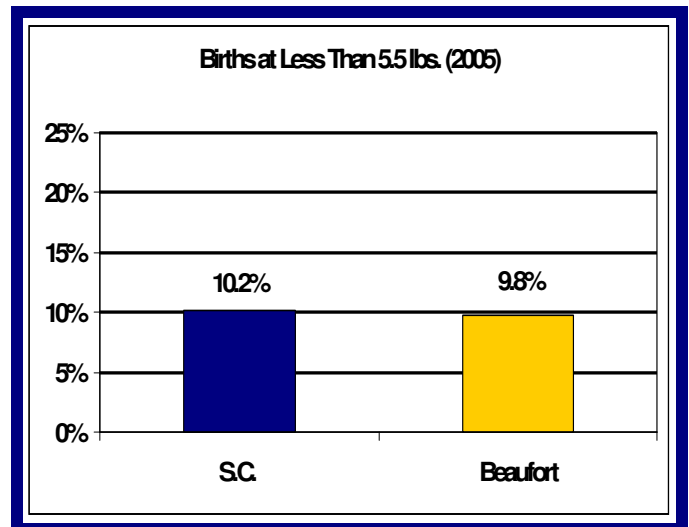
Beaufort County (2005): 9.8%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 10 Beaufort 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.

220 of the 2,244 children born in Beaufort County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Beaufort County

Total Children Under Six: 12,336

BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

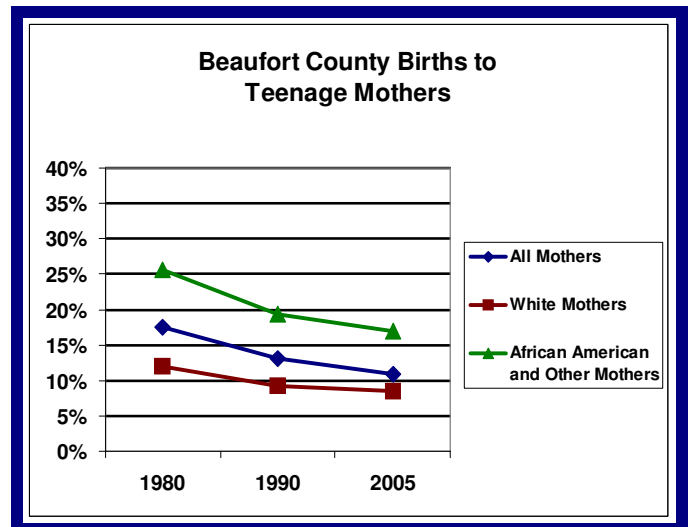
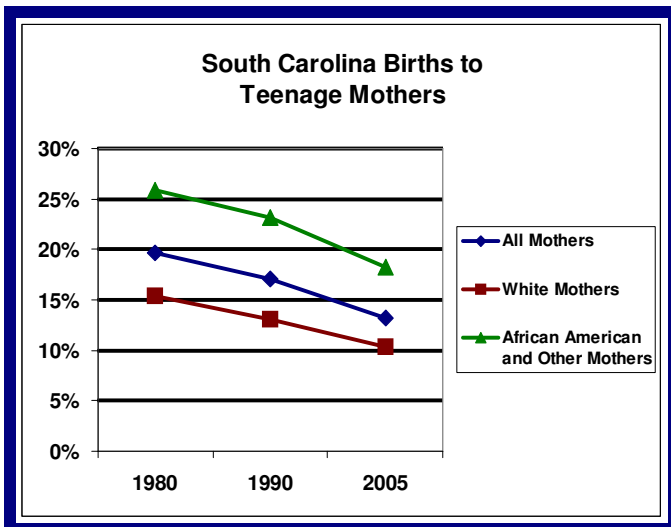
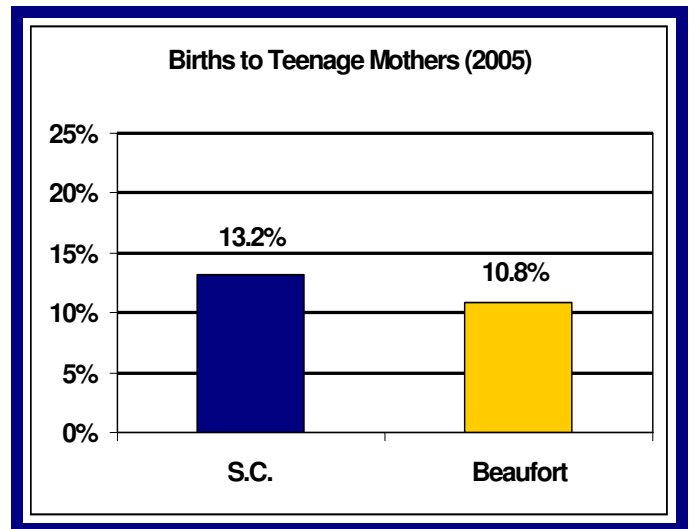
Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Beaufort County (2005): 10.8%

Fast Fact: 1 in 10 Beaufort 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.

243 of the 2,244 children born in Beaufort County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Beaufort County

Total Children Under Six: 12,336

BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7% Beaufort County (2005): 21.7%

Fast Fact: 1 in 5 children in Beaufort 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.

486 of the 2,244 children born in Beaufort County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

