



York County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Report*

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**Total children in county under
age 6: 15,346**

**Total Children in county
under 6 living in poverty :
16.3%**

York County Highlights

- 350 Childcare Professionals attended our Early Childhood Educational Conference.
- 47 Children received childcare assistance scholarships.
- 40 Children participated in Countdown to Kindergarten

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This past year has been especially demanding for York County First Steps. With the economic meltdown and the resultant budget reductions, it was increasingly difficult to meet the higher demand for services across the county. There were reductions to all programs/strategies but the experience did offer us an opportunity to reflect on how and what we were doing and determining how best to proceed given the current economic environment that exists and will exist for some time.

In FY 2009, there is much to celebrate from the labors of many. The Parents as Teachers program continues to be a cornerstone strategy in our partnership with school districts to house four Resource Centers. Medical services are also offered in each Resource Center. Countdown to Kindergarten served 40 children across the county this summer with very positive results and a cook-out celebration attended by over 130 children and their families.

One of the key success stories in York County is our partnerships with the child care center and family child care homes. We have several primary efforts to leverage in-house expertise to elevate the overall quality of teachers through our Quality Enhancement strategy. These child care providers offer one of the most economical means to impact children in years to come as the assistance and resources provided by York County First Steps continues to pay dividends for years to come.

We look with anticipation to 2010. With renewed enthusiasm, York County First Steps looks to expand our existing early education partnerships and develop new ones to make our impact greater in our efforts to prepare children for success in their educational endeavors.

Looking forward to our future!

David W. Lisk, Sr
Executive Director
York 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

Parents as Teachers (PAT)

Program Description: York County First Steps has formed collaborative relationships with each of the four school districts within the county, (Clover, Fort Mill, Rock Hill and York), to support the Parents as Teachers programs offered through the Family Resource Centers. The PAT model is used to provide in-home parent education services designed to assist parents in preparing their children for school success.

Program Results:

- Served 86 children with weekly home visits from PAT parent educators.
- Conducted bi-weekly home visits, group meetings with children and families participating in the program.
- Provided access to family resource center and medical services to families.



HEALTHY START

Health and Human Services Coordination

Program Description: The York County Partnership Board partners with the Early Learning Partnership to provide healthcare access and human services coordination, for at-risk families with children birth to six years old (who are non-Medicaid/non-insured)

at each of the Family Resource Centers in the four school districts. This strategy is carried out through collaboration between the Clover, Fort Mill, Rock Hill and York School Districts and Rock Hill Pediatrics. Healthcare, counseling services, translation assistance, transportation and social services support are all made available to eligible families.

Program Results:

- Served 528 adults and 500 children who received medical, educational, social, and/or emergency assistance at one of the four Resource Centers located in the county.
- 100% of parents reported an increase of knowledge regarding healthcare preventive practices.
- 100% of parent report satisfaction with medical care for their children.
- The number of well child visits for the current year was 376, a .8% increase over the number seen the previous year.
- 90% of school nurses responded positively to the effectiveness of the resource centers in meeting identified health needs of children annually.
- 100% of non-English speaking parents of children receiving services rated their comfort level with the health care provider as being satisfied or very satisfied.

QUALITY CHILD CARE

Childcare Quality Enhancement/Childcare Staff Training/Childcare Scholarships

Program Description: To improve the quality of childcare services throughout the county, York County First Steps Partnership Board provides technical assistance through two highly skilled and professional Early Childhood Specialists (ECS). The ECS staff offers on-site training, provides pre- and post- Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R) assessments, quarterly trainings, age-appropriate learning materials and an annual county-wide conference for child care workers to improve their knowledge and skills in the area of early education. YCFS Partnership Board also makes available child care scholarships for partial payment of child care fees to qualifying families of children ages birth to five.

Program Results:

- Served 12 child development centers throughout the county with intensive technical assessment and grants to raise the overall quality of services provided by each child development center. Weekly visits, classroom observations, and mentoring are provided to each center. This strategy benefits the children in the current classrooms as well as children enrolling in the center in the future.
- Three hundred twenty-four (324) childcare workers (51 of these are employed in ABC Child Care Enhanced facilities) attended the annual York County Early Education Conference. Topics ranged from Classroom Visual Arts, Gardening with Children and Play Therapy. These childcare workers have the ultimate ability to impact over 9500 children in York County.

- Fifty-three (53) childcare center staff/workers attended training provided by our staff. The topic was “Families Eating Smart and Moving More”, which potentially impacted 839 children.
- Served 47 children with partial scholarships to attend approved child development centers. This program is administered by the County Partnership.
- Partnerships with the child care providers offer one of the best leveraging strategies for First Steps. By continuing to enhance child care services through technical assistance, grants for age-appropriate materials/supplies and training/professional development opportunities, York County First Steps can ensure children receive quality early learning experiences..

SCHOOL TRANSITION

Countdown to Kindergarten (CTK)

Program Description: York County First Steps expanded its collaborative partnership with the four county school districts, (Rock Hill, Fort Mill, York and Clover), to include an educationally beneficial school transition program for 40 students. Countdown to Kindergarten is an 8-week home visitation program from June to July. Weekly home visits by certified teachers helped to transition students and their parents to five-year-old kindergarten.

Program Results:

- Served 40 children in our CTK Program (10 in each of the four school districts).
- Forty (40) children and their parents received quality literacy materials and activities to enrich their learning experiences during the summer.
- One hundred fifty (150) children and their families attended CTK Cookout at Manchester Meadows. Key partners that made this event a wonderful success were the York County Library and their Bookmobile; area grocery stores (donation of food and drinks) and the local school districts.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Expenditures By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$ 364,256
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$ 61,299
Lottery Appropriation (<i>Fund 35</i>)	\$
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 60</i>)	\$
C.O.E. Appropriation (<i>Fund 65</i>)	\$
N.F.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 70</i>)	\$
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$ 42,599
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$ 16,098
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$ 90,480
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$ 119,823
TOTAL:	\$ 694,555

Expenditures by Program / Strategy Name	
Parents as Teachers York SD #1	\$ 35,604
Parents as Teachers Clover SD #2	\$ 33,811
Parents as Teachers Rock Hill SD #3	\$ 33,811
Parents as Teachers Fort Mill SD #4	\$ 31,811
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$ 17,835
Childcare Quality Enhancements	\$ 145,501
Childcare Training and Professional Development	\$ 32,892
Scholarship Initiatives	\$ 76,722
Health and Human Services Coordination	\$ 148,138
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$ 71,494
Administrative Functions	\$ 66,936
TOTAL:	\$ 694,555

NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	<i>AMOUNT</i>
United Way of York County	\$ 15,660
Early Learning Partnership	\$ 72,000
York School District #1	\$ 8,293
Clover School District #2	\$ 6,500
Rock Hill School District #3	\$ 19,700
Fort Mill School District #4	\$ 4,500
	\$
TOTAL:	\$ 126,653

Local Match Percentage for FY 2009: 22%
(At least 15% Legislative requirement)

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

2008/2009 Listing of Board Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Board Position</u>	<u>Place of Employment</u>
Boatwright, Christine	Early Childhood Education	Fort Mill Prep School
Bridges, Robert	Appointee – Legislative	ISWA Children & Families
Britton, Tammy	Pre-K through Primary Ed	York School District I
Castillo, Dr. Sara	Healthcare	Fort Mill School District IV
Dawkins, Austin	Business	Duke Power Company
Dunnemann, Ronald	Family Ed., Training & Support	Keystone
Durham, Julie	Appointee – Fort Mill Sch.	Fort Mill School Dist. IV
Feemster, Nina	Appointee – Clover School	Clover School Distinct II
Fincher, Arleen	Appointee – DHEC	York County DHEC
Funderburk, Melissa	Early Childhood Dev.	Catawba Indian Nation Head Start
Gill, Bernard	Transportation	Fort Mill School District IV
Green, Ellen	Appointee – Legislative	York School District I
Gupton, Tricia	Early Childhood Education	York School District I
Hayes, John	Nonprofit	York Technical CDC
Hoynacki, Sally	Pre-K through Primary Ed	Fort Mill School District IV
Hunt, Cindy	Appointee – Rock Hill Sch.	Rock Hill School Dist. III
Koss, Twila	Early Childhood Dev.	Little Fox CDC
Lisk, David	Business	Pleasant Road CDC
Lyon, David	Appointee – Library	York County Library
Mann, Carol	Appointee – Legislative	Retired from Clover Sch. Dist. II
Marin, Constance	Appointee – Head Start	Catawba Public Health Dist.
Martin, Margaret	Healthcare	Rock Hill School Dist. III
McIntyre, Pam	Family Ed., Training & Support	Fort Mill School Dist. IV
Miller, Debby	Appointee – DSS	York County DSS
Miller, Linnie	Nonprofit	Carolina Community Actions
Root, Renee	Early Childhood Education	York School District I
Sanders, Penny	Appointee – Legislative	York School District I
Spangler, Lisa	Appointee – York School	York School District I
Washington, Ralph	Faith	Rock Grove AME Zion Church
Wilson, Hugh	Early Childhood Education	York School District I
Wilson, Mary Ann	Parent	Clover School District II

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:

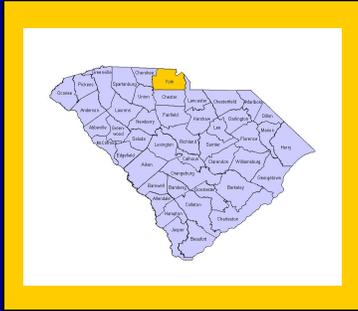
York County First Steps worked diligently during our "first" 10 years to establish a baseline of partnerships throughout the county to serve our most vulnerable children. Key partnerships include the Family Resource Centers located in each of the four School Districts in York County, The Early Learning Partnership, the local colleges, York County United Way, and local child providers throughout the county.

The "first" 10 years were positive in establishing an infrastructure to offer the needed services; however, there is still much work left to do. The foundation is set and solid, and our collective challenge is to enhance our network of early education partners to serve the children of York County and prepare them for a successful future.

Notable Moments:

First Steps Strategy Areas	Notable Moments
Family Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with four Family Resource Centers in the County is a key example of partnership in "action." These centers operate as a "one stop shop" for families in need of additional resources. • Collaboration with the local school districts to implement the Parents as Teachers program offered through the resource centers.
Healthy Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with the Early Learning Partnership to offer a medical clinic for children and adults who do not have insurance or qualify for Medicaid. • Provision of medical services to over 1,000 families in 2009.
Quality Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of an annual conference of quality workshops for childcare professionals attended by over 300 workers around the county that is a much anticipated event. One of the primary goals is to honor child care workers as well as provide appropriate workshops to enhance the knowledge-base of child staff in child development and/or early childhood education. • The investment in 2 full-time Early Learning Specialist to provide technical assistance and additional resources to child care providers (participating in our Quality

	<p>Enhancement Program) that will improve the quality of child care for children in York County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child care scholarships are offered to eligible parents for their children to attend quality child care centers or homes.
<p>School Transition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countdown to Kindergarten is a very positive program for York County. We conducted this program for the last several years with the positive results from the four local school districts. We anticipate increase the number of children served in this program in the future.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile York County

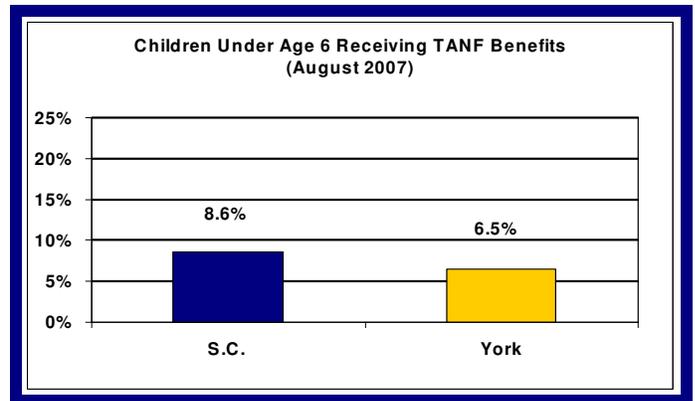
Total Children Under Six: 15,346

CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4% York County (2007): 6.5%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 15 York 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.
- 998 of York County’s 15,346 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.

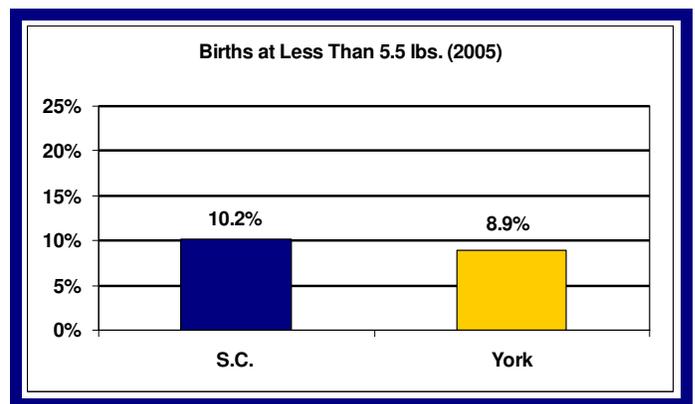


CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2% York County (2005): 8.9%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 11 York 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.
- 241 of the 2,701 children born in York County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.

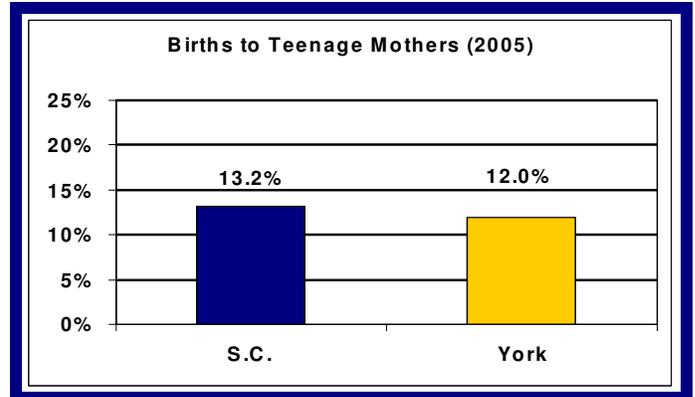


BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2% York County (2005): 12.0%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 8 York 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.
- 325 of the 2,701 children born in York County during 2005 had teenage mothers.

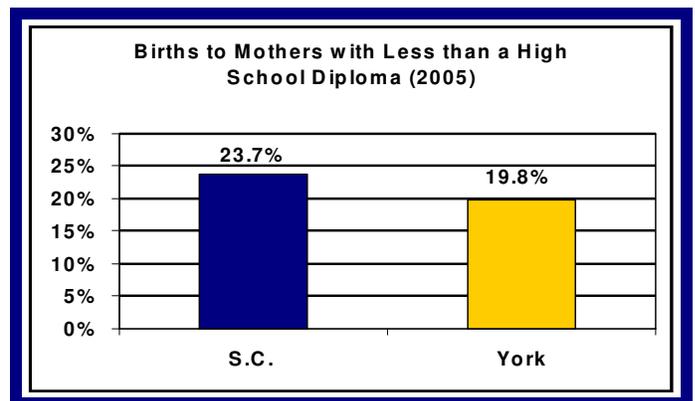


BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7% York Sumter County (2005): 19.8%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 5 children in York 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.
- 534 of the 2,701 children born in York 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