



# Greenwood County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report*

**Board Chair:**  
Carolyn O. Robinson

**Executive Director:**  
Michael K. Gaskin

**Contact Information:**  
323 Main Street Suite #300  
Greenwood SC 29646  
**Phone:** 864-388-4102  
**Fax:** 864-388-4103  
**E-mail:**  
[mkgaskin@scfirststeps.org](mailto:mkgaskin@scfirststeps.org)

---

**Total children in county under age 6: 5,216**

**Children under age 6 living in poverty: 8.7%**

---

## Greenwood County Highlights

- 94 facilities, 400 staff members, and over 2,454 children served from trainings.
- Greenwood and Abbeville Joint County First Steps Joint Child Care Training- over 200 participants attended.
- Four Child Care Facilities average scores improved 1.27 points in the first year.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Our County Partnership started Fiscal Year 2008 as the first year of conducting a parenting program "in-house" and the service provided to our clients continued to be the highest of quality! We battled through personnel dismissal, relocating, and major health issues of parent educators to continue quality services to our county's families and their children.

We have been collaborating with Abbeville County First Steps for five years, orchestrating joint child care trainings, and last year we were able to provide quality child care trainings to 94 facilities, 400 staff members, and over 2,454 children in three counties-Greenwood, Abbeville, and McCormick! We created these results providing 19 training sessions for child care staff with over 25 DSS child care training credit hours earned, thus serving our future-the children! This strategy was highlighted by a Joint County Child Care Conference at Lander University with over 200 participants. Greenwood County First Steps full partnership board will continue to be innovative and resourceful to make a difference in the lives of young children.

Respectfully,

Michael K. Gaskin  
Executive Director,  
Greenwood 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**

## **EARLY EDUCATION**

### **Countdown to Kindergarten**

**Program description:** Count Down to Kindergarten provided an education focused service supporting children's school readiness as well as supporting parent interactions and child development. It helped ensure an educationally beneficial school transition by serving 20 at-risk children.

#### ***Results:***

- 20 identified children completed the Countdown program during summer 2007.
- 94.44% of teachers (statewide) participating in Countdown to Kindergarten reported that the program made a positive difference in students' readiness for school. 100% of these same respondents agreed that the program strengthened their abilities to help participating students meet state curriculum standards.
- 100% of the families being served received the maximum of eight visits.
- 100% of the children qualified for free or reduced lunch.

## **FAMILY STRENGTHENING**

### **Parents As Teachers Home Visitation Program**

**Program description:** The Parents As Teachers model is a researched based program, and parent educators in Greenwood County use this curriculum with consistency. The First Steps Director/Parents As Teachers Supervisor ensures that the parent educators keep up their yearly certification hours with trainings which aid in implementing the program. All parent educators and the Parents As Teachers Supervisor have attended the Birth to Three and Three to Five Training with the Born to Learn Curriculum. All staff will be trained with the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Parent Education Profile and Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, as well as the KIPS and ACIRI assessment tools. Because the program is being operated in-house, the First Steps Director can ensure that the model is being implemented with fidelity. The Partnership will continue to recruit families within our county's high risk inner-city housing areas (previously, we recruited over 57 families within an eight day period).

#### **Program results:**

- 70 families were targeted to be served in FY08
- After experiencing problems that were not within our control, we were able to serve 78 families and 93 children. A total of 639 home visits were delivered, providing parents with information and resources to strengthen their role as their child's most important teachers.
- 78 families received referrals for other resources.
- All PAT educators completed training in the Born to Learn Curriculum.

- All PAT educators have, at minimum, a Bachelor's level education (OFS Benchmarks)
- Families reported an average of 4.87 satisfaction with this program (based on a 1 [poor] to 5 [excellent] point scale).

## **HEALTHY START**

### **Post Partum New Born**

**Program description:** This program is funded by a local grant. New mothers receive 1 post partum visit per month, through the local health department, by a certified nurse. Nurses ensure that all parents receive adequate information on health care, safety, nutrition, and sleep positioning for their baby. In addition, all new mothers are connected with a medical home and the local Parents As Teachers program to ensure health, safety, and school success for their new baby.

### **Program results:**

- 56 clients to be served
- Increase parent knowledge of child health care practices (including nutrition, safety, sleeping position, etc.).
- Increase the number of children with adequate primary care provision through a medical home.
- Increase the number of new mothers who receive postpartum visits, specifically those without Medicaid or those who are uninsured.

## **QUALITY CHILD CARE**

### **Scholarship Initiatives**

Program description: Child Care Scholarships are distributed out of the Greenwood County First Steps office to parents who are working, in a training program, and/or going back to school. All scholarship applicants are a part of the Parents as Teachers program. Children attend centers receiving quality enhancement and technical assistance from the local First Steps office. All applicants receive comprehensive services through this program. Comprehensive service is the key to school success.

### **Program results:**

- Eight ABC Vouchers provided to families connected with our PAT Program

## **Child Care Quality Enhancements**

**Program description:** First Steps will collaborate with parents, the childcare community and community partners to maximize childcare quality throughout the state. Particular emphasis will be placed on assisting parents in their efforts to identify those settings most likely to maximize developmental outcomes, and assisting providers in their own efforts to improve the quality of the learning environments they provide for young children.

Program results:

- Environment Rating Scale scores at four Child Care Facilities improved (pre and post scores indicated):

|   | <u>Pre</u>  | <u>Post</u> | <u>Difference</u> |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| ○ | <b>3.40</b> | <b>5.34</b> | <b>1.94</b>       |
| ○ | <b>3.90</b> | <b>5.28</b> | <b>1.38</b>       |
| ○ | <b>4.21</b> | <b>5.14</b> | <b>.93</b>        |
| ○ | <b>5.29</b> | <b>6.11</b> | <b>.82</b>        |

- All participating facilities attended 100% of quality child care trainings provided by the county partnership.

### **Child Care Training and Professional Development**

Program description: Improve the quality of child care by offering free child care training hours from certified trainers. Greenwood County First Steps worked collaboratively with Abbeville and McCormick First Steps to facilitate certified child care trainings for providers in all 3 counties.

Program results:

- 2,454 children, 400 staff, and 94 facilities
- 19 quality child care training sessions
- Over 25 hours of certified training hours earned
- Joint Child Care Conference with Abbeville County First Steps attended by 200 participants.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

| <b>Expenditures By Funding Source</b>   |                  |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------|
| State Appropriation ( <i>Fund 10</i> )  | \$282,522        |
| E.I.A. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 55</i> ) | \$19,661         |
| Local Private ( <i>Fund 20</i> )        | \$9,725          |
| In-Kind ( <i>Fund 25</i> )              | \$71,274         |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                           | <b>\$383,182</b> |

| <b>Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name</b>        |                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 2102- Parents as Teachers                             | \$124,905        |
| 4062-Countdown to Kindergarten                        | \$2,570          |
| 6012-Child Care Quality Enhancements                  | \$51,639         |
| 6052-Child Care Training and Professional Development | \$19,232         |
| 7031-Scholarships Initiatives                         | \$24,000         |
| 9051-Post Partum Newborn                              | \$97             |
| Indirect Programmatic Functions                       | \$112,713        |
| Administrative Functions                              | \$48,026         |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                                         | <b>\$383,182</b> |

### NOTABLE DONORS

| <b><i>DONOR'S NAME</i></b> | <b>AMOUNT</b>  |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Self Family Foundation     | \$5,500        |
| United Way                 | \$85           |
| Belk's Fund Raiser         | \$325          |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>              | <b>\$5,910</b> |

*Local Match Percentage for FY 2008: 23%*  
*(at least 15% Legislative requirement)*

## COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

| <b>Category</b>                  | <b>Committees</b>               | <b>Name</b>                                           |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Appointed<br>(Senator Drummond)  | Budget Committee                | Carolyn Robinson<br>(Board Chair)                     |
| School District #52              | Early Childhood Committee (4-6) | Doris Louden                                          |
| Appointed<br>(Rep Gene Pinson)   | Legislative Committee           | Donald Burton<br>(Legislative Chair)                  |
| Appointed<br>(Rep. Ann Parks)    | Budget Committee                | Bobby Ligon<br>(Budget chair)                         |
| Business                         | Legislative Committee           | Sandra Anderson                                       |
| Child Care                       | Early Childhood Committee (0-3) | Ruth Boyd                                             |
| Child Care                       | Early Childhood Committee (4-6) | Willie Mae Caldwell                                   |
| Department of Social<br>Services | Legislative Committee           | Janice Norman                                         |
| DHEC                             | Legislative Committee           | Sara Light                                            |
| District 50                      | Budget Committee                | Roger Richburg                                        |
| Early Childhood Education        | Early Childhood Committee (0-3) | Rebecca Brown<br>(Committee Chair 0-3)<br>(Secretary) |
| Early Childhood Education        | Early Childhood Committee (4-6) | Sheila Marino<br>(Board Vice Chair)                   |
| Faith                            | Early Childhood Committee (0-3) | Darlene Saxon                                         |
| Family Education                 | Budget Committee                | Willie Williams                                       |
| Family Education                 | Early Childhood Committee (0-3) | Cathey Chapman                                        |
| Health                           | Early Childhood Committee (0-3) | Lillian Thomas<br>(Asst Secretary)                    |
| Non-Profit                       | Early Childhood Committee (4-6) | Michelle Barksdale                                    |
| Non-Profit                       | Budget Committee                | Venise L. Bolden                                      |
| Parent                           | Early Childhood Committee (0-3) | Tita M. James                                         |
| Parent                           | Early Childhood Committee (0-3) | Sierra Martin                                         |
| Pre-K-Primary Educator           | Early Childhood Committee (4-6) | Loretta Parker<br>(Committee Chair 4-6)               |
| Transportation                   | Legislative Committee           | David E. Roatch                                       |
| Transportation                   | Legislative Committee           | Louis Smith                                           |

---

## 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.

The Greenwood County First Steps Partnership reevaluated our needs and resources assessment conducted in FY04 by undertaking a highly disciplined process (Steering Committees, Board Surveys, Parent Surveys, Child Care Provider Surveys, Statistical Trends Research, and Board Adoption of Priorities). This assessment provided us the information to obtain a clear understanding of the needs and resources required to prepare every child to succeed in school from our board and county experts. Moreover, the Partnership Board Members conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis to provide a snapshot of individual concerns of the Partnership, and to expand concerns about board development.

The Greenwood County Partnership plans to offer quality enhancement grants for center accreditation, thus reducing the amount of money spent on this initiative in previous years and again focus primarily on a tri-county training initiative (Greenwood, Abbeville, and McCormick Counties) by offering quality childcare trainings and development to centers and family childcare providers and continue a full-time technical assistant. Also, child care trainings will be conducted twice monthly and participants will receive Department of Social Services Child Care credit and a yearly Child Care Training Conference will be conducted.

The County Partnership will re-implement the ABC Child Care Voucher Scholarship initiative. This program is linked to parents that are currently in our Parents-As-Teachers program, in which, we will provide full and partial child care vouchers.



## SUCCESS STORIES

It was a pleasure having the opportunity at the 2013 Summit to express the need for First Steps. I am writing this letter to say thank you-again- for all you do and for the help you have given to me, my staff, and our Center. Since we are a fairly new Center, having your expertise and the grants we have received has really made a difference in our program. If it had not been for First Steps our children would not have many of the learning tools we now utilize. Because of the help you and First Steps have contributed to our center we now have a successful child development center, which has been recognized by others as being one of the best in Greenwood. We have not only benefited from the grants we received, but we have also greatly benefited from the training we were able to get through First Steps. My staff and I have been able to say that we have gain useful knowledge at each training session we have attended. Again we say thank you and may God bless and keep you and your staff. Katherina W. Bowyer, Director

Mr. Gaskin, I would like to thank you for taking the time to allow me to learn skills to better my chance of getting a job! My time working with the ladies at First Steps ready helped me. Your program {workforce development} allows ladies like me to better ourselves and help our children learn. Thank you! Amanda Gambrell.

## 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

# Greenwood County

Total Children Under Six: 5,216

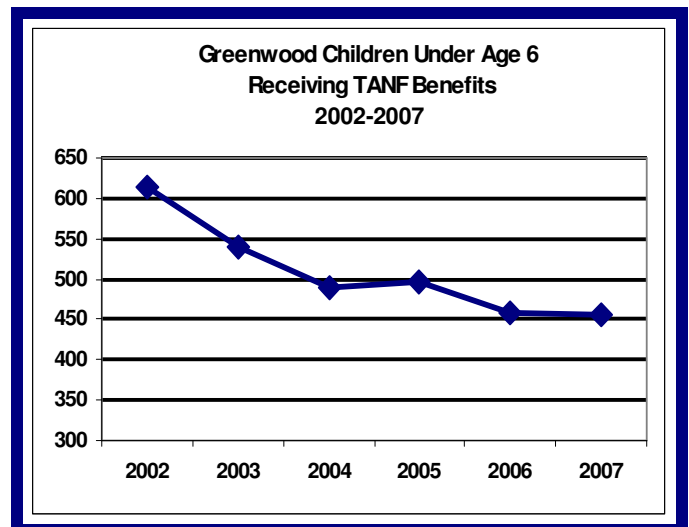
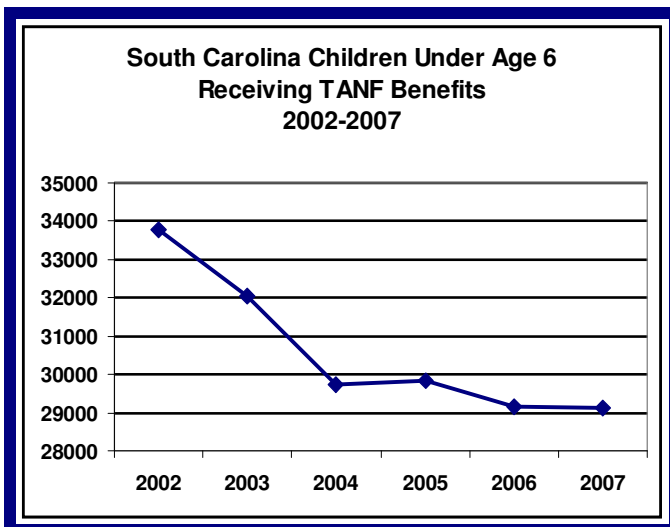
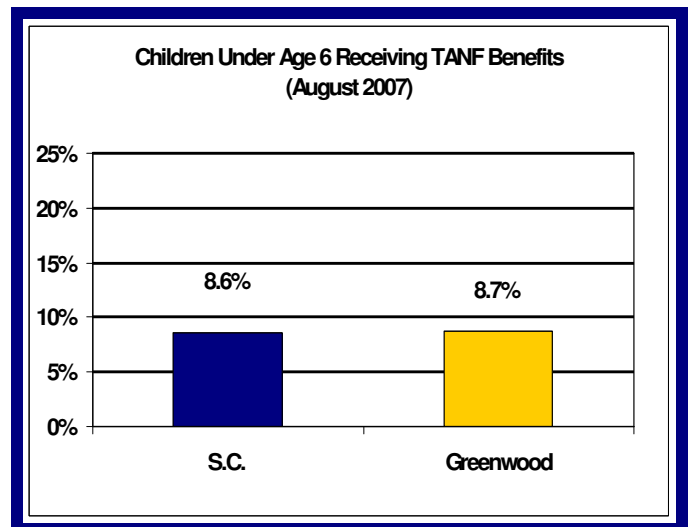
### CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%      Greenwood County (2007): 8.7%

**Fast Fact:** 1 in 12 Greenwood 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.

456 of Greenwood County's 5,216 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 Greenwood County

Total Children Under Six: 5,216

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

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

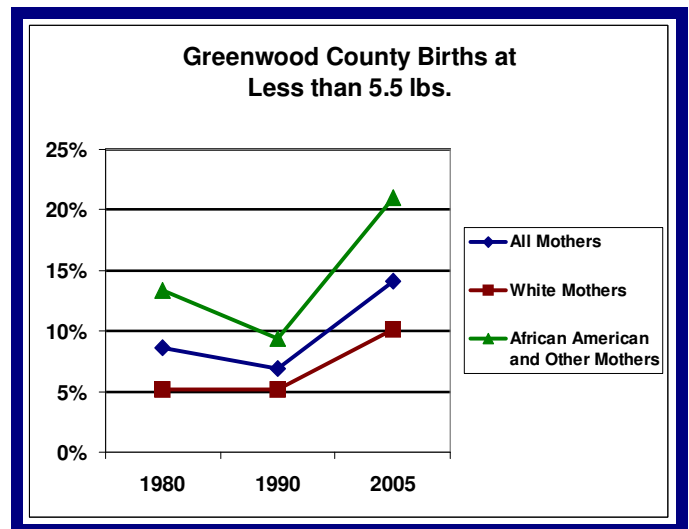
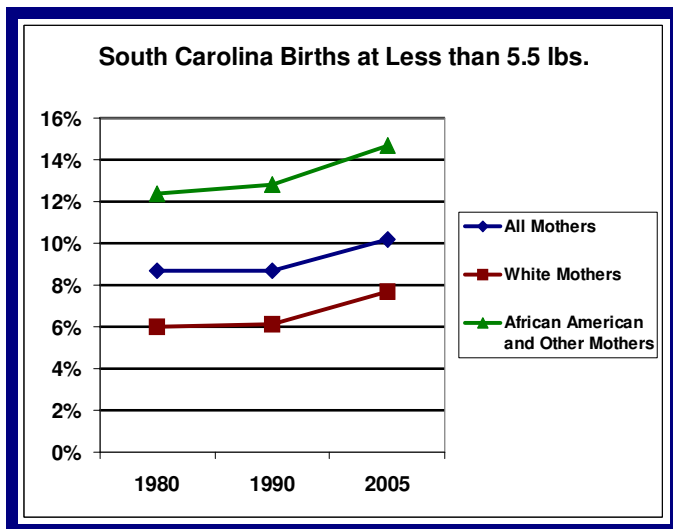
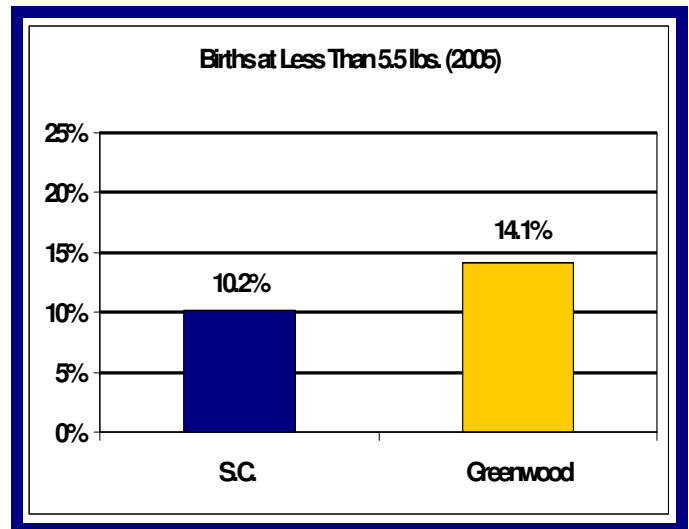
Greenwood County (2005): 14.1%

**Fast Fact:** 1 in 7 Greenwood 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.

128 of the 907 children born in Greenwood County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Greenwood County

Total Children Under Six: 5,216

## BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

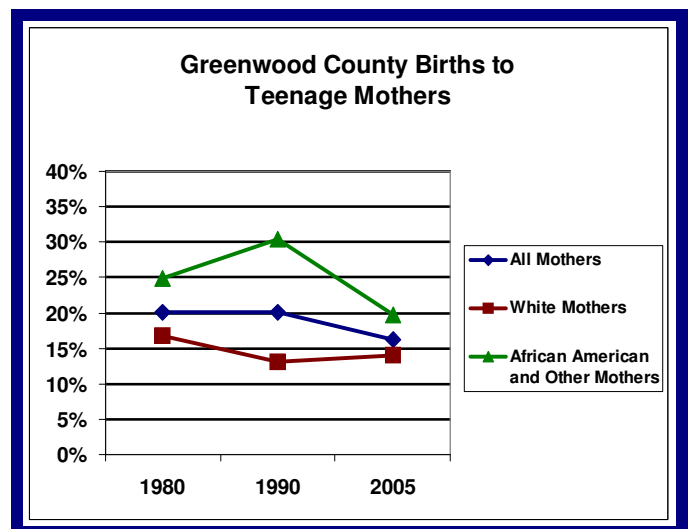
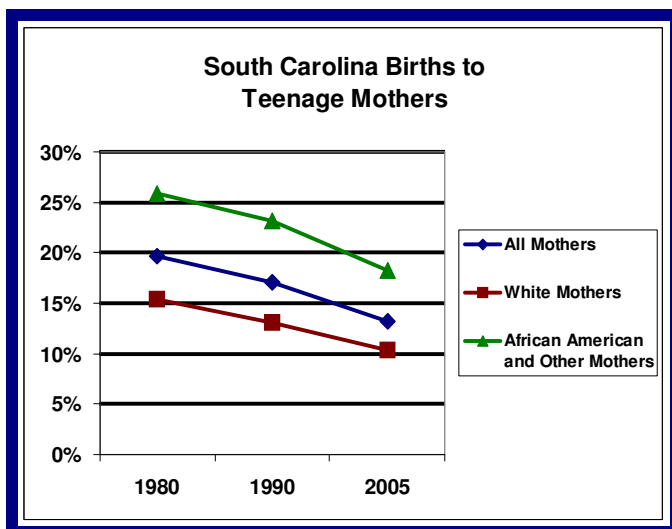
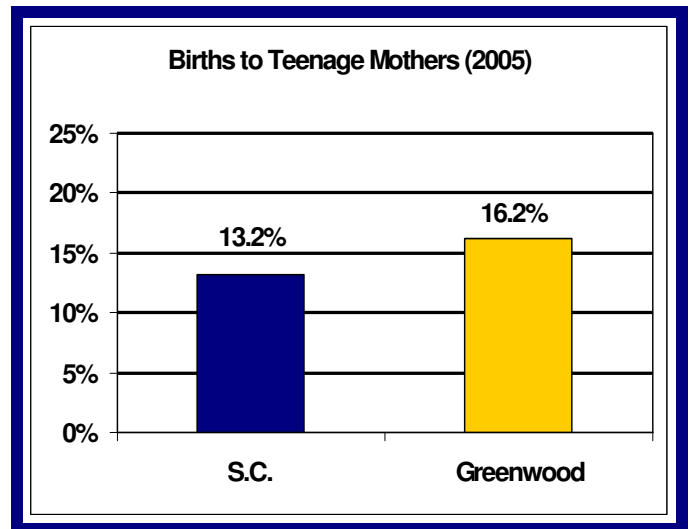
Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Greenwood County (2005): 16.2%

**Fast Fact:** Roughly 1 in 6 Greenwood 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.

147 of the 907 children born in Greenwood County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Greenwood County

Total Children Under Six: 5,216

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

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%      Greenwood County (2005): 29.3%

**Fast Fact:** Nearly 3 in 10 children in Greenwood County are born to mothers 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.

266 of the 907 children born in Greenwood County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

