



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

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**Total children in county under
age 6: 19,006**

**Total Children in county
living in poverty %: 23.2**

Horry County Highlights

- Implementation of Early Start to Healthy Living and Nurse Family Partnership Program
- Expanded capacity in the Child Care Scholarship program

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Oprah Winfrey once said, "Challenges are gifts that force us to search for a new center of gravity. Don't fight them. Just find a different way to stand." Most would agree that FY09 presented many challenges. The state faced budget challenges, families faced the challenges of caring for children, and HCFS faced the challenges of meeting the needs of families with shrinking resources. Through it all Horry County First Steps continually returned to its center of gravity: empowering children and families, therefore improving school readiness.

As our agency was facing challenges, our community partners were also facing similar obstacles. Through continued and renewed collaborative efforts we were able to come together as a community to determine the best ways to work together on behalf of our youngest citizens.

We will continue to be the voice for our youngest citizens and strive to improve school readiness outcomes so that our whole community can reap the harvest of our labor.

With warmest regards,
Amy Breault
Executive Director
Horry 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.

Parent Child Home (PCH)

Program description: The PCH program is a home visitation program that prepares young children for school success by increasing language and literacy skills, enhancing social-emotional development, and strengthening the parent-child relationship.

Program results:

- 49 Families received services including 51 children.
- Families showed a .15 increase on KIPS assessments. Adults showed a .49 increase and children showed a .55 increase on the ACIRI assessment.
- All families received the required number of visits per month, and the visits met the required length per visit as required by the Office of First Steps to School Readiness standards.

Parents As Teachers (PAT)

Program description: The PAT program is a home visitation program that provides parents with child development knowledge and parenting support. One of the core values of the PAT program is that parents are their children's first and most influential teachers.

Program results:

- 39 families received services including 47 children.
- Families showed a .05 increase on KIPS assessments.
- All families received the required number of visits per month, and the visits met the required length per visit as required by the Office of First Steps to School Readiness standards.

Nurse Family Partnership Program (NFP)

Program description: The NFP program is a home visitation program that assists first time, low-income mothers succeed. Clients must enroll by the 28th week of pregnancy and can remain in the program through the child's 2nd birthday. The NFP program utilizes the services of RN's and will impact 100 families throughout Horry County. This program was in the implementation phase in FY09 and we anticipate program results in FY10.

HEALTHY START.

Early Start to Healthy Living

Program description: The Early Start to Healthy Living is a collaborative program implemented to address the rising obesity epidemic among young children. The three program components are: Nutritional education using the Color Me Healthy curriculum, daily physical fitness activities using Move More Bags, and school/family connections through newsletters and Move More journals.

Program results:

- An average of 100 children attending 5 child care facilities participated
- All children had the opportunity to taste a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Children spent an average of 30 minutes per week in structured physical fitness activities

QUALITY CHILD CARE.

Child Care Scholarships

Program description: Child care scholarships are made available to families so that low-income parents are able to access high-quality child care therefore, promoting the healthy development and school readiness of their children.

Program results:

- 24 children received child care scholarship

Facility Quality Enhancement (FQE)

Program description: The FQE program is intended to produce measurable improvements in the quality of care provided young children.

Program results:

- 3 child care facilities participated in the FQE program
- A total of 152 Technical assistance visits were completed totaling 198.5 hours
- An increase of 1.11 points was made on the ITERS assessment.

Child Care Training and Staff Development

Program description: Training sessions were conducted for the staff participating in the Facility Quality Enhancement program. The sessions were designed to enhance the knowledge of the staff in areas related to the ITERS and PAS. The Director's Network was also offered to area child care directors to give them an opportunity to become an agent of change in their respective facilities.

Program results:

- Seven training sessions were conducted for a total of 33 hours
- Participants saw an increase in the level of quality as demonstrated on the ITERS and PAS

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

| Expenditures By Funding Source | |
|---|---------------------|
| State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>) | \$ 402,221 |
| E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>) | \$ 40,674 |
| State Appropriation Carry Forward (<i>Fund11</i>) | \$ 84,996 |
| E.I.A. Appropriation Carry Forward (<i>Fund 56</i>) | \$ 8,072 |
| C.O.E. Appropriation (<i>Fund 65</i>) | \$ |
| N.F.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 70</i>) | \$ |
| State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>) | \$ 6,139 |
| Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>) | \$258,481 |
| Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>) | \$119,903 |
| In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>) | \$124,594 |
| TOTAL: | \$ 1,045,080 |

| Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name | |
|--|---------------------|
| Parent As Teachers | \$155,714 |
| Parent Child Home | \$221,680 |
| Facility Quality Enhancement | \$107,632 |
| Child Care Training and Development | \$ 36,477 |
| Child Care Scholarships | \$ 93,965 |
| Early Start to Healthy Living | \$ 8,536 |
| Nurse Family Partnership | \$276,591 |
| Indirect Programmatic Functions | \$ 99,150 |
| Administrative Functions | \$ 45,335 |
| TOTAL: | \$ 1,045,080 |

NOTABLE DONORS

| DONOR'S NAME | AMOUNT |
|---|-------------------|
| Blue Cross Blue Shield of SC Foundation | \$ 276,595 |
| General Mills Foundation | \$ 10,000 |
| United Way of Horry County | \$ 10,000 |
| | \$ |
| TOTAL: | \$ 296,595 |

Local Match Percentage for FY 2009: 48.7%
(at least 15% Legislative requirement)

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Cynthia Goodrich, Pre-Kindergarten through Primary Educator
Pamela McAlpine, Family Education, Training, and Support Provider
Sarah Lane Norton, Childcare and Early Childhood Development/Education Provider
Willie Ann Hucks, Healthcare Provider
Sue Ellen Wilson, Non Profit Organization That Provides Services to Families and Children
Geri Gaskill, Non Profit Organization That Provides Services to Families and Children
Nettie Eaddy, Business Community
Sheila Freeman, Persons from Early Childhood Education
Melissa Duncan, Persons from Early Childhood Education
Phillip Brown, Appointed by the County Department of Social Services
Sarah Moorman, Appointed by the County Department of Health and Environmental Control
Rosa Knox, Appointed by the County Head Start Program
Elizabeth Shuping, Appointed by the County Library
Sharon Timmerman, Appointed by the School District in the County

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.

Your 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile will be inserted by OFS after this section. For your reference, a PDF of this risk profile was sent to you along with your Annual Report Template

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:

| First Steps Strategy Areas | Notable Moments |
|----------------------------|--|
| Family Strengthening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began PAT program in 2005 |
| Healthy Start | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received funding from General Mills Foundation to implement Early Start to Healthy Living in 2008 |
| Quality Child Care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began using TA in FQE program in 2003, began intensive TA in 2005 • Instituted Director’s Network in 2005 |

Other notable moments:

Met quorums for monthly board meetings for at least 90% of scheduled meetings from 2002-2009.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Horry County

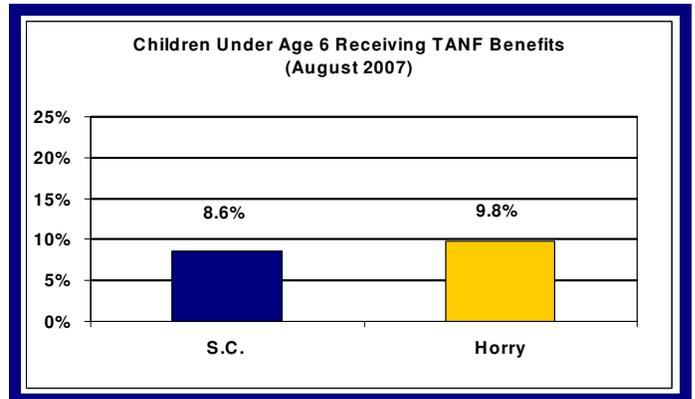
Total Children Under Six: 16,992

CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4% Horry County (2007): 9.8%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 10 Horry 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.
- 1,576 of Horry County’s 16,992 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.

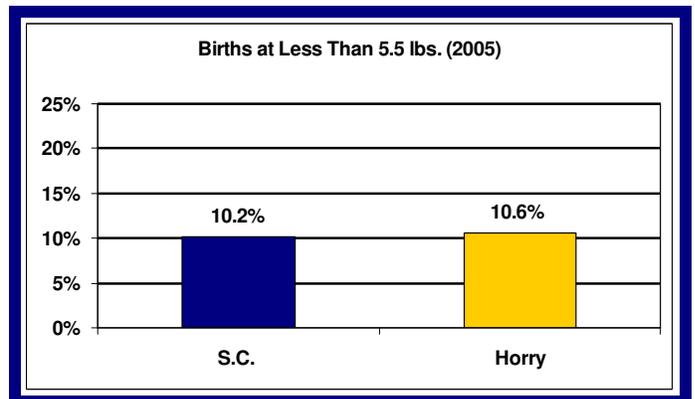


CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2% Horry County (2005): 10.6%

Fast Fact: 1 in 10 Horry 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.
- 309 of the 2,903 children born in Horry County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.

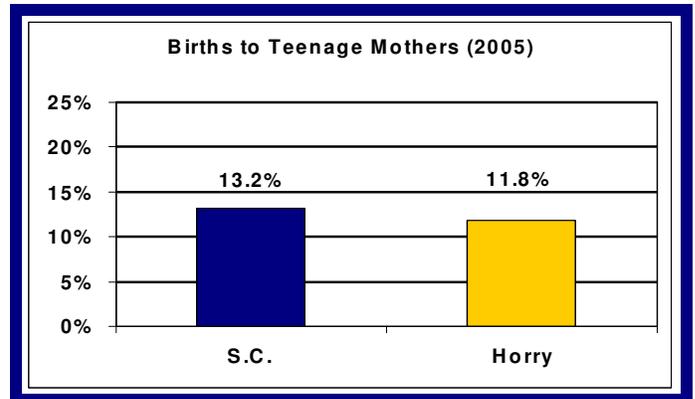


BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2% Horry County (2005): 11.8%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 9 Horry 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.
- 343 of the 2,903 children born in Horry County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7% Horry County (2005): 25.7%

Fast Fact: 1 in 4 children in Horry 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.
- 745 of the 2,903 children born in Horry County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

