



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

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Total children in county under age 6: 1,985

Total Children in county under 6 living in poverty %: 27.2%

Jasper County Highlights

- *PAT – 223 home visits were made in FY09.*
- *Dolly Parton's Imagination Library – 394 children were served in FY09.*
- *Countdown To Kindergarten – 100% families were completely satisfied with the program.*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Jasper County First Steps continues to be proud of the strategies that were funded this fiscal year. Our first is **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**. We had 394 children involved in this program in FY09. We continue to integrate this program into our other strategies and have been quite successful. Our next strategy is **Child Care Quality Enhancement**. We provided Pre-ECERS assessments for centers that needed to be evaluated to determine their level of need. The scores reflected the need for First Steps to have a viable presence in the centers. We served 3 centers in FY09. Our next strategy was **Parents As Teachers**. We were able to make an impact in the lives of these "at risk" families. 13 families and 21 children were served in FY09. We had 223 successful home visits. **Childcare Training and Professional Development** was another area that we felt was significant for our child care providers and teachers in our community. We offered 8 trainings and a total of 132 participants. They were able to receive their necessary DSS credit hours to meet their recertification needs. Finally, I am elated that Jasper was one of the counties chosen to be the recipient of the **(COE) Center of Excellence Grant**. This grant has positively impacted my community. These 14 families receive scholarships, parenting support for 14 families and children by a certified Parent Educator, and also received health and dental screenings. This program focuses on the well being of the entire family.

Sincerely,
Cathy Gardner
Executive Director
Jasper 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.

2008-09 County Partnership Programs by Strategy

FAMILY STRENGTHENING.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Program description: This program continues to be a favorite of our community. We provide age-appropriate books to Jasper County children under the age of 5. The books cost approximately \$30 a year per child. We live in a very rural county and our library hours are not conducive with the work hours of parents. This program alleviates cost of transportation to the library, and yet allows families to have books in the home. This program was well integrated into our other strategies.

Program results:

- 394 children were served in FY09.
- 90% of funding goes toward procurement of books.
- 10% of funding goes into Dollywood Reading Nights.
- Dollywood is well integrated into our other strategies.

Parents As Teachers/2012

Program Description:

Jasper County First Steps used the National Parents As Teachers Curriculum "Born To Learn" for ages 0-3, and PAT Curriculum for ages 3-5. Families received at least two home visits per month. Monthly PAT meetings are held to discuss a variety of parenting topics such as health education and parenting skills. The PAT vision health, and dental screenings were used. This program is monitored by the Executive Director, Cathy Gardner. This program will help all children learn, grow, develop to realize their full potential.

Program results:

- 13 families (21 children) participated with the Parents As Teachers home visitation program.
- 223 home visits were made in FY09.
- 100% of the children are enrolled in the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.
- 1.79 average visits per month (1.5 required). 100% met visitation requirements.
- Parent Educator delivered 248.33 hours in home visits using PAT Curriculum.
- 100% met duration requirements.
- 62% of families had one or more priority risk factors.
- 60% attended one or more group meetings.

QUALITY CHILD CARE.

Child Care Training and Professional Development

Program description:

The childcare Staff Training and Development strategy provides DSS trainings for the childcare facilities that participate in the FQE program. Providers from all Jasper County facilities are given the opportunity to attend the trainings. The trainings include areas of Curriculum, Growth and Development and all others needed for the DSS credits. However, other topics are included based on the ITERS/ECERS assessment results and any suggestions made by providers. All trainings are conducted by South Carolina certified trainers and occur in Jasper County to address long distance transportation issues.

Program results:

- 8 trainings total in FY09.
- 132 participants in FY09.
- 17.5 hours in workshop trainings.

Facility Quality Enhancement

Program Description:

The Facility Quality Enhancement provides training and education to our child care providers in the area. We determine what the needs of the facilities are by doing a Pre-ECERS assessment. This assessment reveals the problems areas, and allows us to provide the necessary materials to help correct the problem.

Program results:

- 3 facilities were served in FY09.
- 100% of child care centers served were pleased with our services.
- 100% of directors surveyed believed the materials will be increased interest and enrollment in their center.
- \$1,844 was spent in this program.
- A total of 98 hours of TA was provided.

Centers of Excellence

Program description: Center of Excellence is designed to offer low-income and/or high risk children and their families' variety of resources such as parenting support and quality childcare services at no cost.

Program results:

- 14 children received scholarships to attend the COE site.
- All 14 families participated with the Parents As Teachers home visitation program.
- 78 home visits were made in FY09.
- All of the children in the COE are signed up to receive Dolly Parton's Imagination Library books.
- The strategy's target population includes single parents, parents with low level incomes, parents who have low weight births, and parents with no high school diploma.

SCHOOL TRANSITION.

Countdown To Kindergarten

Program description: The Countdown To Kindergarten strategy helps our most at-risk kindergartens move successfully into the K-12 school systems. We serve 20 children in our county, 10 in the Ridgeland, area and 10 in the Hardeeville area. This program is designed to make their transition from home to school a smooth one. This program has helped parents and communities realize the significance of preparing children for school. Partnerships use a variety of at-risk indicators to identify eligible participants.

Program results:

- 20 children served.
- 100% completely satisfied with the program.
- JCFS collaborated with the Jasper County School District.
- JCSD provided half of the funding for the children served.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<u>Expenditures</u> By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$102,045.45
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$39,107.28
Lottery Appropriation (<i>Fund 35</i>)	\$0
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 60</i>)	\$0
C.O.E. Appropriation (<i>Fund 65</i>)	\$144,763.44
N.F.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 70</i>)	\$0
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$566.00
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$23,349.83
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$26,483.99
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$0
State Allocation (Carry Fwd) (<i>Fund 11</i>)	\$5,086.24
TOTAL:	\$341,402.23

<u>Expenditures</u> By Program / Strategy Name	
Parents As Teachers (2012)	\$98,076.14
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (2122)	\$9,404.99
Countdown To Kindergarten (4062)	\$7,142.18
Childcare Quality Enhancement (6012)	\$31,734.79
Scholarship Initiatives COE (7032)	\$73,054.84
Childcare Training Professional Dev. (6052)	\$33,740.23
Public Health Based Services (9012)	\$9,732.60
	\$
	\$
	\$
Indirect Programmatic Functions (1502)	\$47,725.81
Administrative Functions (1012)	\$30,790.65
TOTAL:	\$341,402.23

NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	AMOUNT
Jasper County Council	\$25,000
TOTAL:	\$25,000

Local Match Percentage for FY 2009: 34.4%
(at least 15% Legislative requirement)

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Reverend Calvin Washington, Board Chair/Faith Community
Ronnie Malphrus, Vice Chair/Non-profit Organization
Priscilla Drake-Jenkins, Secretary/DSS Representative
Velvet Bostick, Childcare/Educational Provider
Darryl Owens, Transportation
Shawana Green, Childcare/Educational Provider
Swanetta Hall, Pre-K/Primary Educator
Taffeny McFadden, Parent
Betty Hamilton, Early Childhood Educator
Ozell Richardson, Head Start Representative
Reverend J.C. Roberts, Faith Community
Delacy Sanford, School District Representative
Rodney Stiney, Business
Anne Walker, Early Childhood Educator
Sheila White, Pre-K/Primary Educator
Janie Williams, Non-profit Organization
Janis Woods, Early Childhood Educator
Saundra Woods, Family Educator/Support
Mary WRIGHTEN, Family Educator/Support

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.

Amanda Switzer, Jasper County parent receiving parenting services:

"I am a single mother, very shy raising a child. Ms. Polite has been a great influence in my life. She has shown me how to interact with my child and develop his learning skills as well as my parenting skills. The activities that Ms. Polite shares make us very excited and eager to learn. My son Sammy knows Ms. Polite's car when it's coming down the road. He jumps up with excitement! I want the First Steps family to know that I am much more outgoing and Sammy wants to learn more and more. We have our favorite Parent Educator to thank for that.

Betty Mitchell-Hamilton and Staff, Blessed One Learning Daycare, (COE)

Let me please express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for what you have done through your Center of Excellence Program. My families have been able to secure work, and attend school successfully because of this program. They have felt very comfortable leaving their child in the Blessed One Daycare environment. My staff has been eager to learn and made great strides in accomplishing their educational and training goals. My only regret is that funding has run out. But rest assure, working with Jasper County First Steps has instilled in each of us to obtain excellence in all aspects of our lives.

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"> • Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library has been a great success in our community. • From July 08 – June 09, 135 children were enrolled. • Since becoming Executive Director in 2001, every year we have been able to secure \$25,000 in funding from Jasper County Government to help implement this program as well as, other strategies. • We have created reading nights where we bring families together to read to their children and form relationships with each other. We try to hold these reading nights at least 3 times a year.
Quality Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Center of Excellence model, originated by Georgetown County First Steps, is a comprehensive, multi-component strategy designed to connect low income children (ages 0-4) and their families was a great success in Jasper. The general assemblies decided to expand this program and Jasper was one of the counties to receive funding to open our site. We had to move our initial site but was able to relocate nearby and secure the families we previously served.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 children received scholarships to attend the COE site. They also received the home visitation through the Parent As Teachers program. • During FY09 132 child care providers received Child Care Training and Professional Development through First Steps. • Jasper and Hampton County First Steps are sharing personnel across county lines to continue to improve quality but also to make better use of our limited financial resources.
Early Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to provide high quality early childhood education programs, Jasper County First Steps funded four (4) full day 4K classes in 2002 and 2003 in the Jasper County School District. All students were targeted for participation on the basis of school readiness risk factors. The programs met SC 4K requirements for curriculum, pupil-teacher ratios, materials, and class size.
School Transition Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are especially pleased with this program in FY09 because of the partnership and collaboration with the Jasper County School District. We served 20 children and they funded services for half of those children. They also expressed a desire to continue to partner together and serve more children in FY10. • Two teachers served 10 children each. Teachers made 100% of visits and 90% of parents surveyed believed

	their children were more prepared for school.
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2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Jasper County

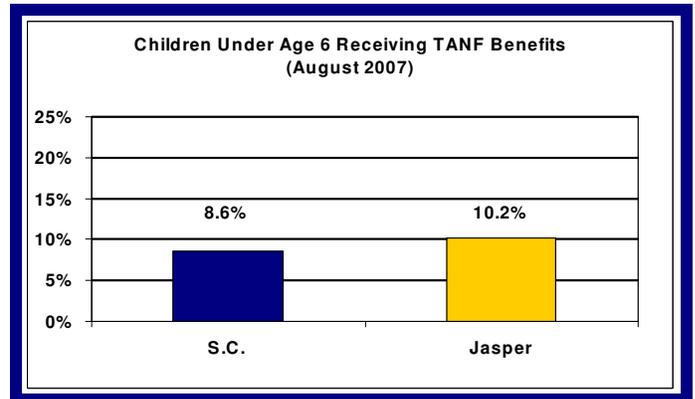
Total Children Under Six: 1,850

CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4% Jasper County (2007): 10.2%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 10 Jasper 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.
- 188 of Jasper County’s 1,850 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.

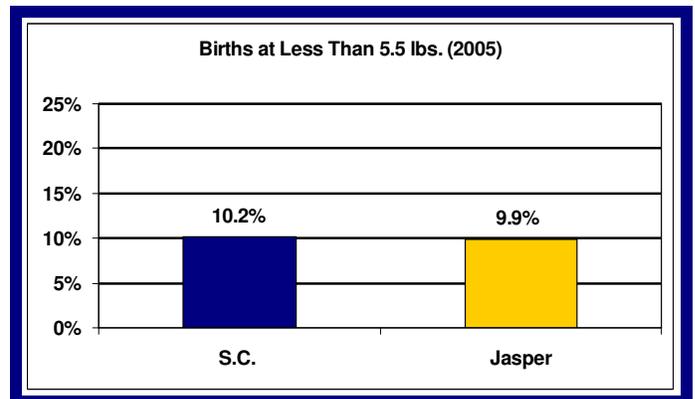


CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2% Jasper County (2005): 9.9%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 10 Jasper 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.
- 37 of the 375 children born in Jasper County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



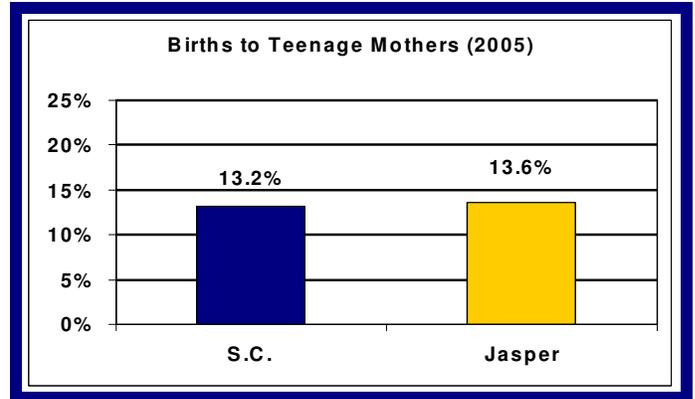
BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Jasper County (2005): 13.6%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 7 Jasper 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.
- 51 of the 375 children born in Jasper County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



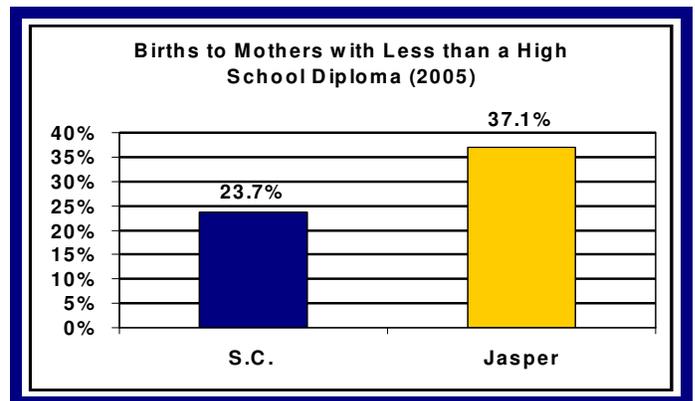
BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%

Jasper County (2005): 37.1%

Fast Fact: Just over 1 in 3 children in Jasper 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.
- 139 of the 375 children born in Jasper 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