



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

Board Chair:
Patricia Henegan
Executive Director:
Randall Johnson
Contact Information:
701 Cheraw Highway-
Room 126, P.O. Box 249,
Bennettsville, SC 29512
Phone: (843) 479-4200
Fax: (843) 479-4227
E-mail:
Rjohnson@scfirststeps.org

**Total children in county under
age 6: 2,039**

**Total Children in county
under 6 living in poverty %:
31.7**

Marlboro County Highlights

- Over 50 families attended the 1st Annual MCFS Family Institute
- 21 Children received childcare scholarships
- 53 adults received quality childcare training

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Marlboro County First Steps Partnership had a successful campaign in FY 09. The partnership continued successful work for the families of young children in Marlboro County. The most exciting thing we did this year was host the First Annual Marlboro County First Steps Partnership Family Institute. Over 50 families attended various workshops throughout the day. One of the best programs MCFS had in FY 09 was that of the childcare scholarship program. MCFS gave 21 children a chance to attend quality childcare centers and family home daycares. We were also pleased to provide PAT parenting services for some families in Marlboro County. Marlboro County First Steps did over 325 visits for 25 families. Marlboro also enjoyed its collaborations with Chesterfield-Marlboro EOC Head Start and the School District. We worked together to put on group meetings for the families in our parenting programs. We also used their facilities for various types of trainings. Marlboro County First Steps will continue to strive for excellence in providing services for the families of our youngest learners in the community.

Randall Johnson
Executive Director
Marlboro 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.

Marlboro County First Steps Parents As Teachers

Program description: – Increase the capacity of parents to be their child's best and most important teacher by expanding home visitation services, increasing parent involvement with their children, enhancing the learning environment in the home and increasing the family's awareness of community resources through the Parents As Teachers parenting program.

Program results:

- Served Twenty-Five (25) Families totaling 27 children received home visits.
- Three (3) families exited the program before the end of the fiscal year
- 83% of the families received KIPS visits that averaged 3.02 for pre and 3.98 on post.
- Forty-four (25) families received (257) visits.
- There were 22 health, 3 dental, 2 hearing and 5 vision screenings.
- 90% of families eligible for ACIRI visits were completed.

Other Family Literacy/Learning – MCFS Family Resource Center/Lending Library

Program description Research states that the key to a child succeeding in school is the development of proficient reading skills; therefore, the most important thing a parent can do to develop these skills is to read with their child as much as possible. Therefore, the MCFS Family Resource Center/Lending Library will provide parents the opportunity to check out materials that will enhance the learning skills of their young children. Based on the Marlboro County needs and resources assessments, it is important to empower parents with materials and other resources that will help strengthen their relationship with their children in reference to literacy

Program Results:

- Served 140 adults & 154 children
- Marlboro County First Steps literacy lending library made available literacy bags and books to be checked out by parents with children ages 2 – 7. Over 100 parents checked out materials.
- Staff did 72 total reading hours in early childhood facilities and community functions
- Fifty (50) literacy kits were lent over the course of the year.
- 186 books were given to children throughout the community

QUALITY CHILD CARE.**Center Staff Training & Development**

Program description: To ensure that child care providers of Marlboro County receive quality child care training at a reasonable cost. Training will address identified areas of interest and need that child care providers have identified as needed areas. In order to ensure that the training is affordable, Marlboro County First Steps has continued to provided local trainings with collaborations from the Marlboro County School District and Chesterfield-Marlboro EOC.

Program results:

- Fifty-three (53) adults received quality childcare training during FY 09.
- Provided quality child care trainings for county providers. Based on post training surveys, providers enjoyed the fact that the more quality trainings were offered at the local level.
- Provided 16 hours of training for providers in various genres.

Childcare Scholarships

Program description: This program provided financial assistance to qualified parents to aide with the cost of child care. The Department of Social Services (DSS) administered this program following the guidelines of the ABC Voucher Program. This program was open to all families in Marlboro County who met the eligibility requirements. Marlboro County First Steps distributed the applications on a first come first serve bases. The applications were sent to ABC to process. Clients were notified whether their application was approved, denied or incomplete. The slots were filled by the approved applicants in the order in which their application was processed. All slots were filled.

Program results:

- Twenty-one (21) childcare scholarships have been awarded to children to attend full day child care.
- Twenty-one (21) scholarship recipients attended a quality child care facility or family home daycare, which are all working with Marlboro County First Steps.
- Parents participated in summer reading day in the park where they read with and to their kids.
- Ninety (90) books were given to the participated in the Childcare scholarship program.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Expenditures By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$143,569
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$13,000
Carry Forward (<i>Fund 11</i>)	\$11,032
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>)	\$30
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$4,809
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$20,452
TOTAL:	\$192,892

Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name	
Parents As Teachers 2011	\$68,827
Other Family Literacy 2042	\$8,187
Childcare Training & Development 6052	\$15,572
Scholarship Initiative 7031	\$33,000
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$44,949
Administrative Functions	\$22,357
TOTAL:	\$192,892

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MARLBORO COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Board Member's Name	Category
1. Teresa Curtis-Barnes	Healthcare
2. Samuel D. Bass	Agency Designee
3. Colonel Justin Blum	Family, Education, Training & Support
4. Pam Burns	Agency Designee
5. Tammy Elliott	Non-Profit
6. Hazel Ellison	School District Designee
7. Brenda Foster	Healthcare
8. Faye Green	Childcare & Early Childhood Development Provider
9. Patricia Henegan	Legislative Appointee
10. Claudette Hooker	Early Childhood Education
11. Jannise Jones	Agency Designee
12. Shirley Jones	Transportation
13. Jennifer Liles	Early Childhood Education
14. Brenda McRae	Faith
15. James Myers	Pre-K through Primary Educator
16. Sharon Rowe	Agency Designee
17. Helena Thomas	Non-Profit
18. Margaret Victor	Pre-K through Primary Educator
19. Tama Westbury	Faith

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:

First Steps Strategy Areas	Notable Moments
Family Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Parent Training and PAT programs since 2001, we have been able to help serve over 500 families • Home visitation services to all families during this period • Great collaboration effort with USC School of Medicine Bennettsville Project and Care South Carolina for parenting programs • 1st Annual MCFS Family Institute attracted over 50 families. Gullah storytellers Vermelle “Bunny” Rodrigues and Andrew Rodrigues served as the guest speakers.
Healthy Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided Home-Health Visitation to 10 families with newborns who were without healthcare services.
Quality Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCFS helped establish 3 new family home daycares and 1 center. • On a yearly basis continue to provide in house trainings for Child care providers to help them reach there hours. • Awarded over \$400,000 in Childcare Scholarships for over 250 children • Provided over 35 Quality Enhancement Grants to Family Day Care, Group, Faith Based

	<p>and Child Care Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through quality enhancement helped establish HATCH kids computer centers in 1 family daycare and 1 child care center • Helped Child care Center become the first to apply for NAEYC accreditation • Provided CPR, First Aid & Blood borne Pathogen training for Marlboro County Child Care workers • Along with other Pee Dee First Steps counties established the first in a series of video-childcare trainings in collaboration with the state Technical College system
Early Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 280 children served through expansion of full-day 4k Programs • Created a new 4k classroom in McColl which helped increase the number of 4 year olds served in the Marlboro County School District • Collaborated with the Marlboro County School District to provide High Scope Training by Julie Wigton for over 40 Early Childhood teachers and Childcare providers
School Transition Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Summer Readiness program helped over 111 at risk Kindergartners get ready for 1st Grade • Over 35 at risk students involved in the Countdown to Kindergarten program.
Non-Standard Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lending Library over 500 books given to children

--	--

Other notable moments:

- Marlboro County First Steps Partnership served as a Pilot county for the PSARAS First Steps Non-Traditional Grant program for rural counties. Provided over \$50,000 in mini grants for various unique types of programs which have included: Backpacks for Summer K-3, Healthy Kids, Growing and Enriching Minds through Science, Project Read, Learn & Connect, Project Imagination and others.
- Began the Reading in the Park Day for Marlboro County First Steps families and the rest of the community.
- On January 30, 2002, Marlboro County First Steps Partnership received an Honorable Mention award for Best Community Engagement as recognized by the State Office of First Steps to School Readiness.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Marlboro County

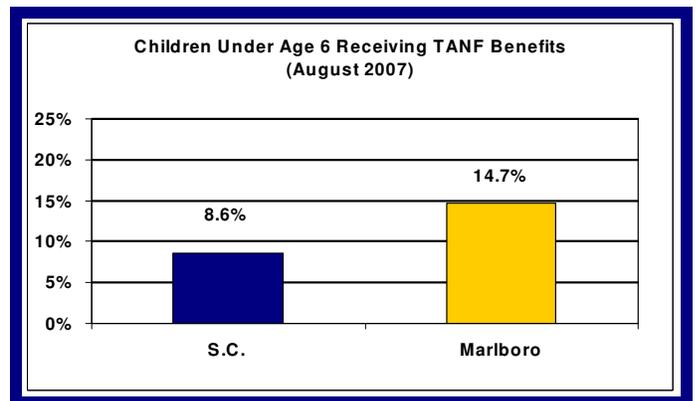
Total Children Under Six: 2,134

CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4% Marlboro County (2007): 14.7%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 7 Marlboro 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.
- 313 of Marlboro County’s 2,134 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.

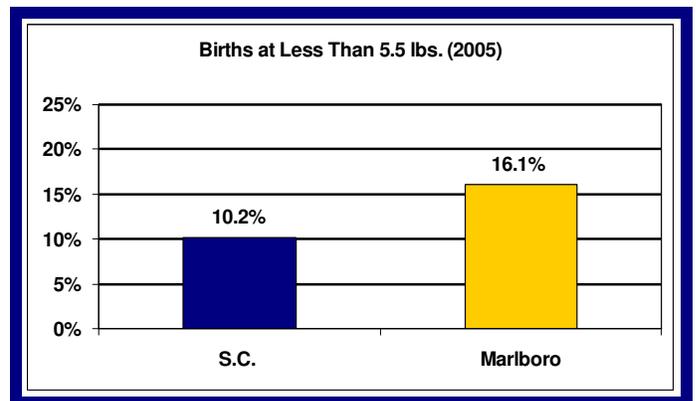


CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2% Marlboro County (2005): 16.1%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 6 Marlboro 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.
- 59 of the 366 children born in Marlboro County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.

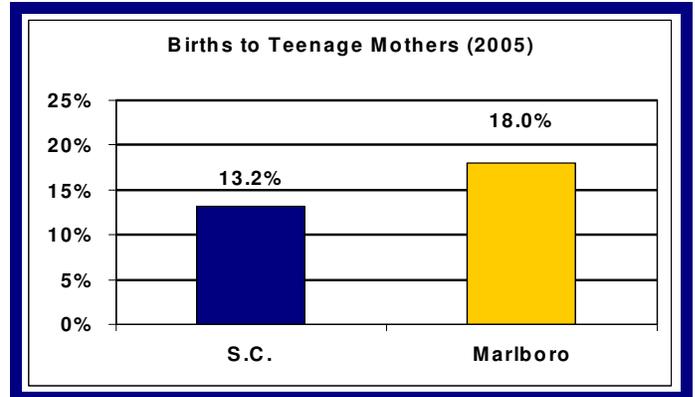


BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2% Marlboro County (2005): 18.0%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 5 Marlboro 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.
- 66 of the 366 children born in Marlboro County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7% Marlboro County (2005): 35.8%

Fast Fact: 1 in 3 children in Marlboro 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.
- 131 of the 366 children born in Marlboro County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

