



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

## Board Chair:

Rev. Eric T. Butler

## Executive Director:

Ruth Detrick

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Total children in county under  
age 6: 472

Children under age 6 living in  
poverty: 12.1%

## McCormick County Highlights

- In our child care center 85% of children under 2.5 years old and 90% of children over 2.5 years old demonstrated annual progress in language development
- During FY08 over 5400 books were given to the children in our programs and in the community.
- We served 126 Adults and 391 Children
- "Since I go to school full-time, your child care center has been extremely helpful while I'm trying to finish school." .. First Step Parent

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This has been a busy and exciting year for McCormick County First Steps. Through a \$2500 DSS grant, our child care center has been equipped with exactly what we need to ensure that the children we serve receive an early education that will allow them to develop and reach their full potential. Our yearly center evaluation by DSS showed an overall score of 98% for the child care center and an overall improvement of 17.5%.

With the help of our partners, McCormick School District and McCormick Head Start, and groups and individuals in the community, we have established a children's library and equipped it with books, rugs, bookcases, and rocking chairs. It is located at the McCormick Learning Center and was started in September, 2007 with only 500 books. We now have over 1200 books available for the children, teachers and care givers on our campus. This library is also used as the location of our very successful literacy program, which we offer through a partnership with the McCormick County Library.

A grant from the LEGO Children's Foundation was used to buy art supplies; and a partnership with the MACK has allow us to bring art projects monthly to the children we serve.

Another highlight of this year was the receipt of a grant of over 8000 books from First Book and Cheerios. We have been able to give hundreds of books to the children in our programs. In addition, we have given books to many other groups and organizations who serve children in our county.

Our priority to become increasingly data-driven and the use of new assessments have allowed us to measure and track the outcomes of our families. We can now easily see strengths and weaknesses and focus our energy and money where it will do the most good for the young children in McCormick.

We are proud of the children we serve and how they are progressing. We will continue to dedicate our resources and energy to ensure that these children will be ready for school success.

Sincerely,  
Ruth Detrick, Executive Director  
McCormick 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**

### **FAMILY STRENGTHENING.**

#### **Parents as Teachers**

**Program description:** We provide home-based literacy and parenting services to families challenged by poverty and poor education. At-risk families receiving these services have children ages birth to five. This program helps parents understand their children's stages of development. The parent educators offer practical guidance to encourage learning, manage challenging behaviors, and promote a strong parent-child relationship. Parent Educators provide age appropriate materials and activities for parents to use with their children. Parent Educators also stress the importance of reading and ensure that parents are able to become the first and most influential teacher in the development of their child.

**Program results:**

- Served 71 Adults and 79 Children
- Families averaged 2.1 visits per month, with a total of 1144 successful visits made.
- 51 Families, with children ages 2 months old to 5 years, received a KIPS assessment. KIPS is an evaluation of parenting behaviors related to interactions between parents and children. It involves an observation of a parent playing with his or her child for 20 minutes to examine 12 different behaviors. Results Pre-to-Post indicated improvement in skills and behaviors by 9.8%
- 18 Families, with children 2.5 to 5 years old, received an ACIRI assessment. ACIRI is an interactive reading inventory for parents and children. It is a literacy-specific evaluation based on the observation of a parent and child reading together. Results Pre-to-Post indicated improvement in skills and behaviors for adults by 13% and children by 20.7%.
- Family Satisfaction Surveys indicate that 100% agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the services they received from this program. In addition, 96.2% said their family had benefited from the services we provided.

**Library Based Literacy Program**

**Program description:** A library has been established at our campus where we serve approximately 100 children, between the ages of birth and five, in either the First Steps/Even Start child care center or the Head Start classrooms. A Public Library representative reads to each group of children in our library twice each month. At each session the children receive a copy of one of the books read, to take home and keep. With this program we enhance listening skills through storytelling and improve children's pre-reading literacy skills.

**Program results:**

- Served 96 Children
- Surveys completed by Head Start teachers and care givers indicated that 100% felt the library program was very valuable and that the children benefited from the program. 100% also agreed that the librarian did very well at introducing new words to increase children's vocabularies and at engaging the children's interest.
- The librarian noticed a significant improvement in the children's listening skills throughout this year.
- During the 9 months of this program, 225 stories were read; 91 activities were done, such as songs, finger play, rhymes, etc.; and 698 books were given to children to take home and keep.
- Because of the partnership with the McCormick Public Library and a large grant of books received, we operated this program at a cost of \$15.99 per child served.
- Having the library right here on our campus provided quality literacy materials for the children, their families, care givers and teachers. Parents checked out 40 books which they read 87 times. Teachers and care givers checked out 71 books, which they read to children 145 times.

- During National Library Week, we held a reading challenge and 35 parents read to their child at least one hour that week.

## **Other Family Literacy/Learning—Reach Out and Read**

**Program description:** We contribute 75% of the funds required to serve 160 children in McCormick’s Reach Out and Read Program. At every well-child check-up, doctors and nurses encourage parents to read aloud to their young children and offer age-appropriate tips. Parents, who may have difficulty reading, are encouraged to invent their own stories to go with picture books and to spend time naming objects with their children. At each well-child visit, providers give every child, between the ages of six months and five years, a new, developmentally appropriate book to keep.

### **Program results:**

- Served 160 children/families
- 100% of the parents, who received the intervention and completed the survey stated that they read to their child every week and that reading was one of their child’s preferred activities..
- We supported this program with \$658 or a unit cost of only \$4.11 per family.
- Semi-annual progress reports and an observation tool used by the Reach Out and Read State Office indicate that this program is implemented with quality and fidelity to the research-based Reach Out and Read model.
- This program has allowed us to develop a collaborative relationship with the medical community in McCormick.

## **EARLY EDUCATION.**

### **Early Education for Children Under 4**

**Program description:** Quality child care for infants and toddlers is provided. We serve 25 children with an emphasis on the most at-risk children. Certified child care providers increase their knowledge of early childhood development through at least 20 hours of training each year. Creative Curriculum for infants and toddlers is used to aid in children’s development and improve their vocabulary. We hold monthly family activities nights with an emphasis on opportunities for parents and children to interact and on providing parents with information necessary to support their child’s successful development.

### **Program results:**

- Served 24 families and 26 children
- We achieved an ITERS assessment result of 4.38 for the Infant Room and 5.17 for the Toddler Room.
- DSS ABC Enhanced score was 98% for the child care center and an overall increased of 17.5%.

- 85% of participating children birth to 2.5 years demonstrated annual progress in language development as evidenced by Ages and Stages.
- 90% of participating children 2.5 years old to 5 demonstrated annual progress in receptive language development as evidenced by Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test.
- Observation by the McCormick School District’s Family Literacy Coordinator ensures that this program is implemented with quality and fidelity to the Creative Curriculum model.
- Family Satisfaction results indicate that 100% of the families agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the services they received and felt that their family had benefited from the services we provide.
- One parent stated: “My child became friendlier by being around and interacting with other children.” Another stated “Since I go to school full-time, your child care center has been extremely helpful while I’m trying to finish school.”

## **SCHOOL TRANSITION.**

### **Countdown to Kindergarten**

**Program description:** Three qualified kindergarten teachers serve a total of 30 at-risk children, over an 8-week period. They visit the families each week, with learning activities designed to prepare children and their families for classroom success. Teachers focus on improving the quality of parent-child learning interactions and the parent’s involvement in the child’s education. They help parents realize the importance of preparing children for school. Participating families receive a “Kindergarten Tool Kit”. This kit helps parents assist children with activities which will develop skills necessary for kindergarten success. The final visit is a field trip to the school where the child will attend class in the fall. At the conclusion of the program, families are invited to come to the EdVenture Children’s Museum in Columbia to celebrate their hard work. Students enjoy fun, educational activities at the museum.

#### **Program results:**

- Served 30 Children/Families
- 100% of the required visits were made.
- Our Risk targeting score was 3.50/12 (greater than the state average of 3.38/12)
- Comparisons in pre and post parent surveys showed improvement in 9 of 13 categories, with significant improvement in: played toys, games or sports with child—14% improvement; involved child in household chores—16% improvement; drew, painted, or did other arts and crafts with child—27% improvement; praised child for accomplishments—7% improvement; visited a library with child—45% improvement.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<b><u>Expenditures</u> By Funding Source</b>	
State Appropriation <i>(Fund 10)</i>	\$ 100,172
E.I.A. Appropriation <i>(Fund 55)</i>	\$ 92,157
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>	\$ 0
N.F.P. Appropriation <i>(Fund 70)</i>	\$ 0
State Private <i>(Fund 15)</i>	\$ 3,417
Local Private <i>(Fund 20)</i>	\$ 2,047
Federal <i>(Fund 30)</i>	\$ 0
State Appropriation Carry Forward <i>(Fund 11)</i>	\$ 1,968
In-Kind <i>(Fund 25)</i>	\$ 170,106
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 369,867</b>

<b><u>Expenditures</u> By Program / Strategy Name</b>	
Parents as Teachers	\$ 89,559
Other Family Literacy/Reach Out and Read	\$ 8,906
Library Based Literacy	\$ 38,438
Early Education for Children Under 4	\$ 174,520
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$ 4,848
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$ 36,558
Administrative Functions	\$ 17,038
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 369,867</b>

<b>NOTE(s)</b>	
1.	Administrative Percentage equals only 4.6% of Grand Total.
2.	Grand Total of Expenditures by Program includes actual funds spent (\$199,761) and In-Kind donations (\$170,106).

## NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	AMOUNT
Friend of First Steps	\$ 150
Kennametal	\$ 200
LEGO Children's Foundation	\$ 900
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 1250</b>

**In addition to financial donations we received two book grants:**

First Book/Random House	144 Books	Value \$ 720
First Book/Cheerios	8,148 Books	Value \$ 69,490

**Local Match Percentage for FY 2008:** 222.60%  
*(compared to 15% Legislative requirement)*

## COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ms. Edwina Austin, DHEC Appointee  
 Ms. Tracy Baldwin, Parent pre-school child  
 Rev. Eric Butler, Chair, Faith Community  
 Ms. Brenda Collins, Primary educator  
 Mrs. Luella Crosby, School District Appointee  
     and Family Education, training and support  
 Mrs. Victoria H. Durant, Childcare provider  
 Ms. Johnnie P. Ingram, Early childhood educator  
 Ms. Jenifer Jennings, Primary educator  
 Ms. Daisy Johnson, Head Start Appointee  
 Ms. Andrea Mann, Parent pre-school child  
 Ms. Kathie Marathon, Library Appointee  
 Mr. Samuel Marshall, Business Owner  
 Ms. Robbie Seigler, DSS Appointee  
 Mrs. Mary Thompson, Legislative Appointee  
 Ms. Corliss Wideman, Legislative Appointee  
 Ms. Sheila Whittington, Non-Profit Organization  
 Ms. Jewell Williams, Primary Educator

During FY08, the McCormick board members and other volunteers donated 147 hours of their time. Based on Independent Sector research, the value of volunteer time for 2007 was \$19.51 per hour. ( 147 hours x \$19.51 = \$2868)

## 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.



**Children with Necklaces They Made at Art Lesson**



**Children with Book at Library Literacy Program**



## 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

# McCormick County

Total Children Under Six: 472

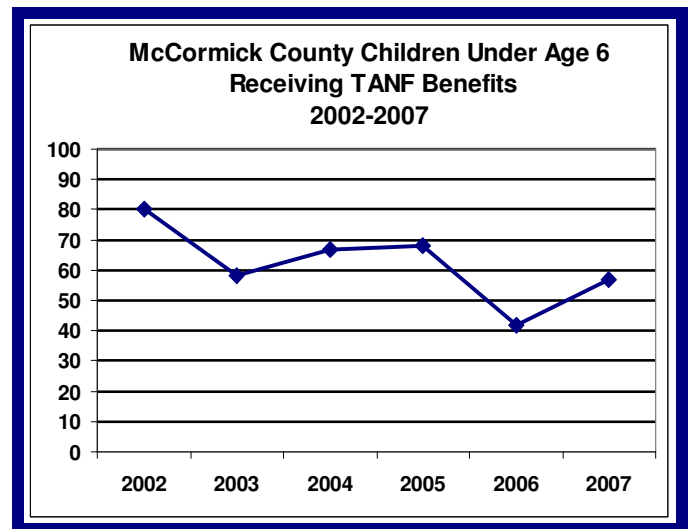
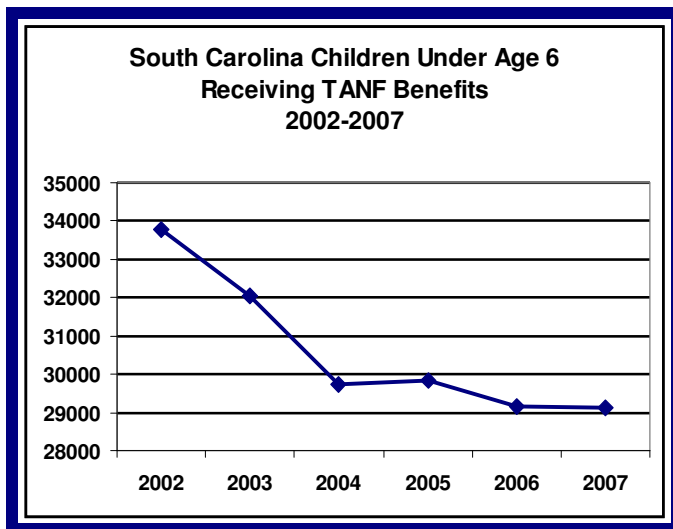
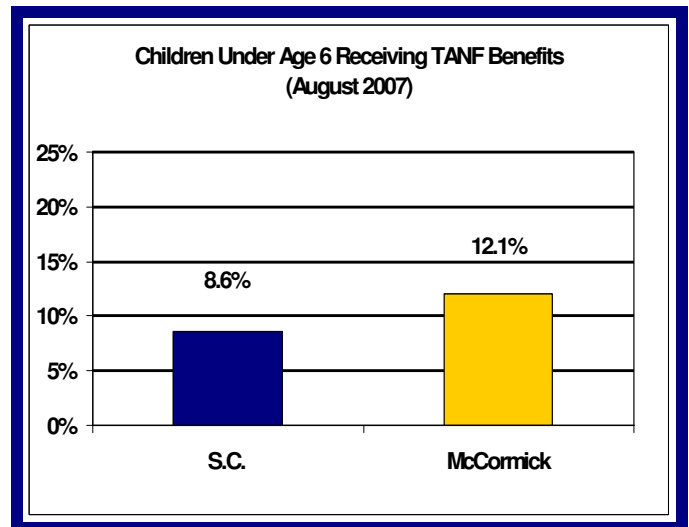
### CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%      McCormick County (2007): 12.1%

**Fast Fact:** Roughly 1 in 9 McCormick 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.

57 of McCormick County’s 472 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

# McCormick County

Total Children Under Six: 472

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

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

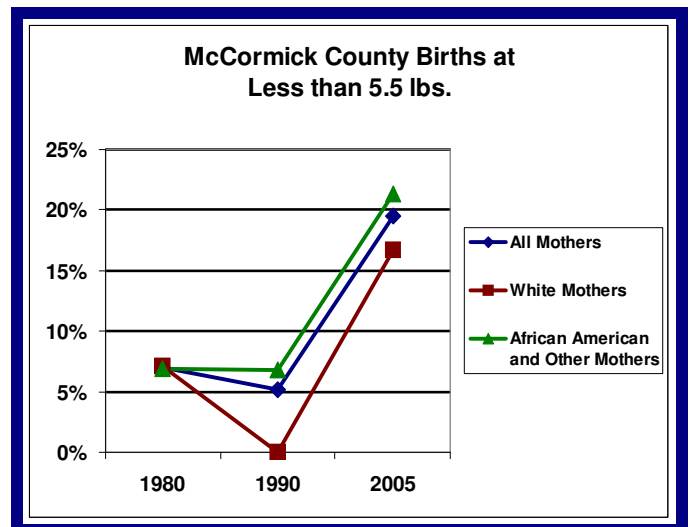
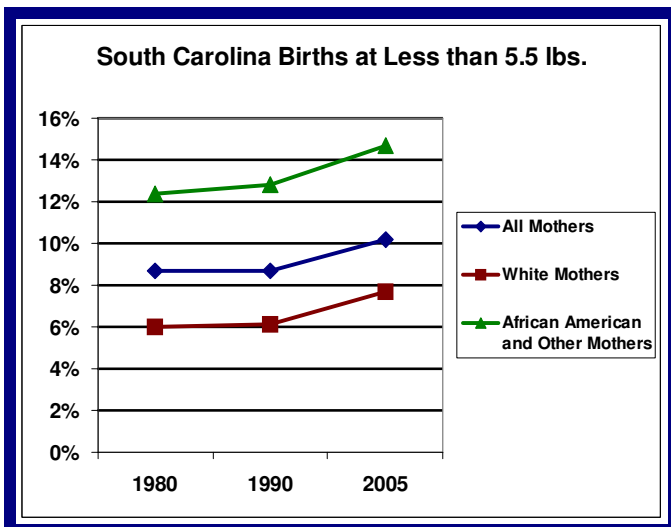
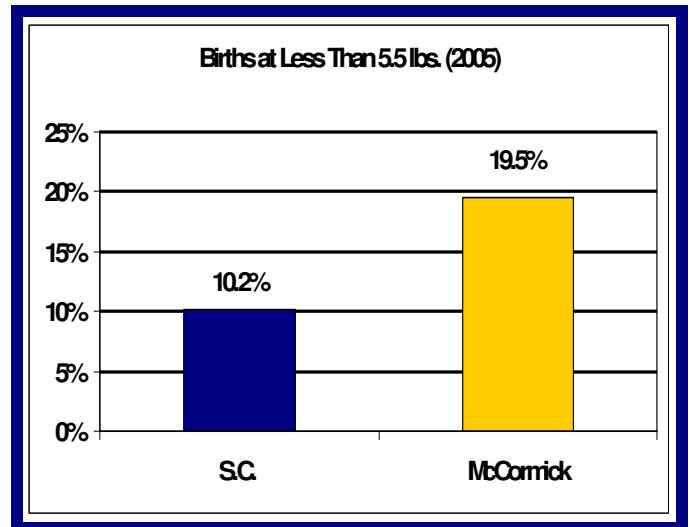
McCormick County (2005): 19.5%

**Fast Fact:** Roughly 1 in 10 McCormick 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.

15 of the 77 children born in McCormick County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

# McCormick County

Total Children Under Six: 472

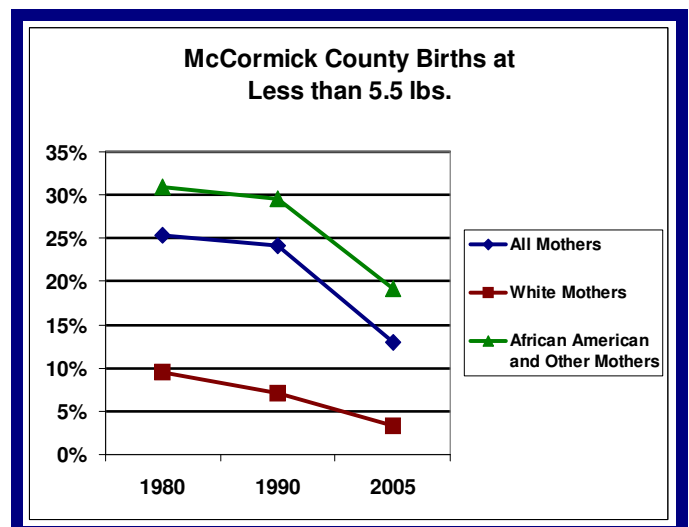
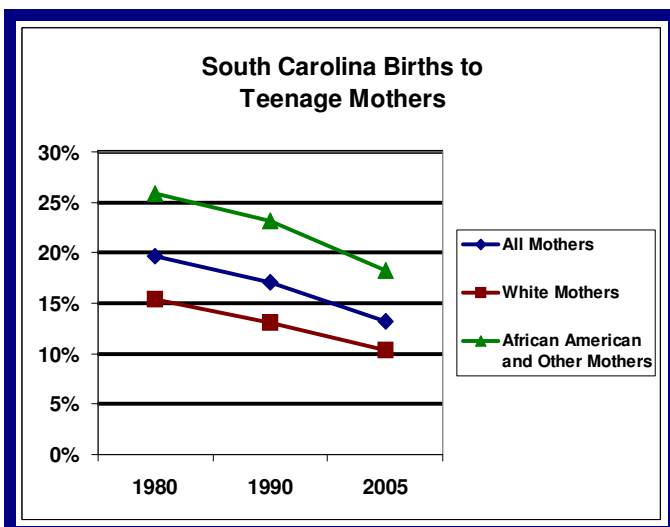
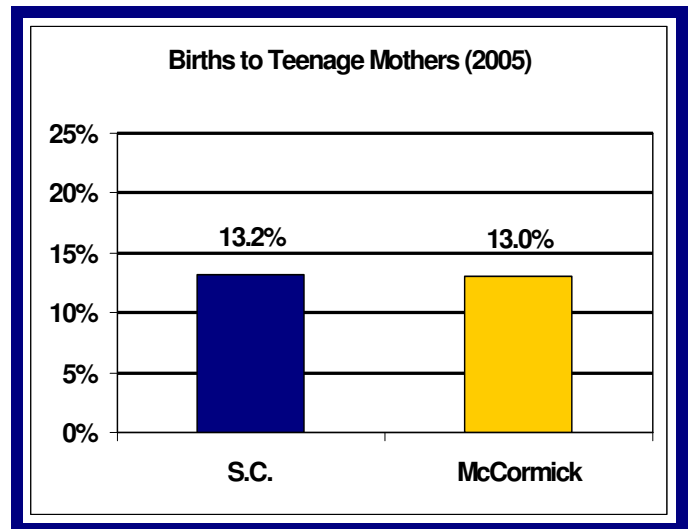
## BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2% McCormick County (2005): 13.0%

**Fast Fact:** Roughly 1 in 8 McCormick 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.

10 of the 77 children born in McCormick County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile McCormick County

Total Children Under Six: 472

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

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%      McCormick County (2005): 18.2%

**Fast Fact:** Nearly 1 in 5 children in McCormick 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.

14 of the 77 children born in McCormick County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

