



RICHLAND COUNTY

First Steps Partnership

Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report

Board Chair:
Penelope Tolson
Executive Director: Rick Noble
Contact Information:
2008 Marion Street, Ste F
Columbia, SC 29201
Phone: (803) 212-4200
Fax: (803) 212-4205
E-mail:
rnbole@rcfirststeps.org
Web site:
www.rcfirststeps.org

Total children in county under age 6: 27,313

Children under age 6 living in poverty: 11.0%

...from A to Z!

AAmazing! That is the best way to describe what Richland County First Steps has done this year. In order to make sure that you know everything, we (the staff) have compiled a short listing. You already know we're amazing - let's start from there...

- **B**irth through age three is the focus of RCFS.
- We work in **c**ollaboration with local and state agencies to ensure the best possible services for our community.
- Our Board of **D**irectors leads the County Partnership by looking at the road ahead and evaluating our services to families and care providers.
- Measurement of our impact in child care centers is done through **E**nvironment Rating Scales...ITERS, ECERS, FDCERS and more.
- **F**irst Steps to the Library works with child care centers to create permanent collections (about 300) of age appropriate books.
- Looking ahead – RCFS, in collaboration with others, has received a **g**rant for the Nurse Family Partnership initiative. For more information, visit our website at www.rcfirststeps.org!
- **H**ealth and safety is a major focus of all that we do throughout our program. This is only one of several trainings offered to Parents and Care Providers.
- **I**magination Library is an outreach tool we use that puts a book a month in the hands of (enrolled) children up to age 5 in our county. Right now we have about 900 children enrolled!
- There are many ways and many programs that work with children. We are hoping that with a **j**oint effort of local organizations, parents and other care providers, we can make a positive impact on the needs of school readiness.
- While we focus on birth through age 3, we are constantly making sure our message is on target for local school districts and their **4**K-12th grade population.
- We are always looking for the best way to communicate what

Richland County Highlights

- The staff of RCFS has more than **155 YEARS** of service to education!
- Our staff is involved in the community as both “experts” and board members.
- “For the Good of the Cause” are things we do that can’t be evaluated. These things may be ensuring that parents have transportation to doctors appointments for their child or it may be a technical assistant volunteering her time to help set up a classroom on a weekend!
- RCFS is collaborating with several local groups to create a “Community of Readers.” The goals include daily access to books and the printed word; improving skills through reading and sharing reading as a community.
- Our Board of Directors contributed 200 hours to our organization this past year!
- Texas Roadhouse Grill on Two Notch Road has been our “training lunch sponsor” for more than 2 years. THANK YOU!

we are doing in our community—**let** us know the best way to communicate with YOU!

- RCFS received the majority of its funding through state appropriations; however, **monetary** gifts to support our many programs are always appreciated!
- In collaboration with SC DHEC, we are able to provide a **Nurse** Consultant to the Parents and Care Providers involved in our program(s).
- **Observations** are a measurement tool we use in each of the programs of RCFS.
- It is our goal that each **parent** will understand and accept their role as their child’s first and best teacher.
- **Quality** training...please look at some of the trainings we have offered over the past year.
- Building **relationships** with parents and care providers is the way we reach the children of Richland County.
- The number one question of parents...”what does my child need to know to start school?” RCFS has worked with local school districts to create the **School** Readiness Declaration. This Declaration shows that readiness should focus on the emotional, social, cognitive and motor skills.
- Next to relationships, **training** is the best way to promote school readiness to Parents and Care Providers.
- Go RCFS! This year we became a **United** Way of the Midlands Partner Agency.
- As part of the relationship with RCFS, referrals are made for screenings such as **vision**, speech, development, and behavioral items.
- Think you recognize the name of Rick Noble? You do, he’s a local **Weather** Net Reporter!
- **ExCEL**: Excellence in Care and Early Learning is the name we use for working with child care centers. You will find a listing of the different “teams” in this approach below.
- How do we measure what we do? **Yearly** assessments through observation! In the following pages you will find mention of several of the “tools” used for this.

I think this list about covers a lot of what we are, a lot of what we do, and a glimpse of our coming year. I guess you can say...from A to **Z**!

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

RCFS actively works with families through home visitation, parent meetings, and resource referral. The goal is for parents to understand that they are their child's first and best teacher. It is our goal to provide support, encouragement, and information for these parents.

Program results:

- RCFS worked actively with 35 families (total of 56 children) during the program year. Active participation included semi-monthly home visits by a certified Parent Educator; family attendance at monthly parent meetings; and access to several community referral organizations.
- All families involved with the RCFS Parents As Teachers program received several different assessments during the program year. One 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. The KIPS is used to evaluate parents of children ages 2 months old up to 5 years of age. (KIPS is an evaluation based on a 5-point scoring scale.)
- Another assessment used by the Parent Educators is ACIRI. This is an interactive reading inventory for parents and children ages 2.5 years old to 5 years old. The ACIRI is a literacy-specific evaluation based on the observation of a parent and child reading together and is scored on a 3-point scale. It evaluates the interactions between parents and children relating to literacy acquisition.
- Using the "pre" assessment as a guide, Parent Educators worked with families on "keys" such as encouragement, language experiences and expectations. "Post" assessments found that while parent-child interactions were improved in many families, some families will require additional visits by their Parent Educator.
- By the Numbers:
 - Active Families (July 2007-June 2008): 35
 - 80% of families had one or more priority risk factors
 - 533 successful home visits
 - Average score for Pre-Assessments:
 - KIPS – 3.4 *
 - ACIRI – 1.99 (parent)/1.82 (child)
 - Average score for Post-Assessments:
 - KIPS – 3.08 *
 - ACIRI – 1.87 (parent)/1.81 (child)

** Note: According to Comfort Consults, the creators of KIPS, average scores ranging from:
4 to 5 reflect high-quality parenting
3 to 4 reflect moderate-quality parenting
0 to 3 reflect low-quality parenting*

Our Parent Educators are always looking for the “change of behavior” in both parents and children. A few examples (note: names changed to protect confidentiality):

...and Mouth is to Speak

Cocaine use during “Jane’s” gestation had caused some delays during the baby’s birth. When “Jane” entered the program (PAT) at 20 months, she was still mouthing each object she put her hands on. The development of her fine motor skills was not encouraged, and she would use her teeth to open containers. One such incident left her with a chipped tooth. The Parent Educator emphasized to her caregiver the need for “Jane” to become more manipulative, encouraging use of her hands and fingers to take apart and put together locking blocks, plastic eggs, and unscrewing lids to small jars. Two months later, “Jane” opened the rubber lid of a tennis ball container by pushing up on the rim with her thumb and forefinger, rather than using her teeth to pry it open as she tried at the first observation. Using her fingers has appeared to give way to better verbal communication, as well, because she does not have the oral fixation.

Who’s the Boss?

As with many families, there is a grandmother present in the home of the PAT client. This particular extended family member at times would override the advice given to the mother for “Sam” by the Parent Educator. Despite “subtleties” mentioned in the presence of the grandmother that the mother is the ‘designer, authority, and consultant’ for the child’s development, the grandmother continued to indulge the 22-month-old in his hitting. She urged him with open arms (literally) to leave the ‘time-out’ chair to which his mother had him assigned (at this period of development where imitating adult behavior is so common, the child would strike back at the mother after she had spanked him for misbehaving. The Parent Educator suggested use of the time-out chair would be more effective in teaching the child that there are consequences to his actions).

It became necessary for the Parent Educator to ‘share’ with both caregivers the importance of being on the ‘same page’, otherwise it would give mixed messages to the child. The Parent Educator also projected that if the child were allowed to hit another person without knowing the consequences of his actions, he would think that type of behavior was acceptable in adolescence.

Furthermore, when the Parent Educator suggested that such behavior would not be tolerated by a school principal, the grandmother concurred. On a subsequent home visit, the Parent Educator was pleased to witness the mother of the child had remanded the child to ‘the chair’ for a similar action. He was crying, but stayed put in the chair at the insistence of the mother, while the grandmother looked on in silence.

HEALTHY START

Nurse Consultant

The Nurse Consultant, provided under contract with SCDHEC, worked in partnership with RCFS staff working in child care programs to assure that the programs are receiving the services that they need and that they are making progress toward the goals of safe and healthy children. The Nurse Consultant worked closely with the PAT parent educators to assure that they receive the support they need to assure their children are adequately screened and their families are referred for any necessary services.

Program results:

- Referrals:
 - Speech – 27
 - Developmental – 15
 - Medical – 39
 - Behavioral - 5
- Center visits – 171
- Presentations to Care Providers and Parents - 44
- Screenings Conducted:
 - Vision – 6
 - Hearing – 6
 - Dental – 41 (in collaboration with Small Smiles)
 - More than 500 toothbrushes distributed!
- Flu shots given – 119
- Tdap and Pneumonia Shots given– 64
- Health Resource Manuals available for distribution by RCFS staff – 50
- Health Resource Manuals distributed to Midlands Tech students – 25
- Posted health information each month in 8 centers - 96
- Health activity for children each month in 8 centers - 96
- Centers compliant with annual DHEC immunization inspections – 8 (of 8)
- Emergency Preparedness Trainings – 6

QUALITY CHILD CARE

ExCEL (Excellence in Care and Early Learning) PROGRAM

FY 08 was the second year that RCFS adapted the Quality Child Care Enhancement program into a team approach. The Excellence in Care and Early Learning (ExCEL) program divided the centers we worked with into four “teams” that focused on areas that benefit child care teachers and directors in Richland County in order to have a positive impact on our county’s youngest children. Through technical assistance, training for teachers and directors, lunch meetings for directors, “Open Houses”, assessments and funding through Plans of Action, or a combination thereof, the ExCEL program branched out to meet the differing needs of the child care centers in Richland County. All child care centers were invited to apply for any of the following “teams” in the ExCEL program. Group home and Home care providers could apply for the Training Team only. Centers applying for the Self-Study Team were required to be familiar with the National

Association for the Education of Young Children standards and have investigated the commitment necessary for NAEYC accreditation.

Training Team

RCFS offered a program of teacher training only. Realizing that some child care centers do not want technical assistance, we offered this team to try to influence the care of children by offering free quality training for directors and teachers. Centers or home/group homes selected for the Training Team had the opportunity to attend four DSS certified trainings per year focused on essential quality child care issues. One on-site visit was used to foster positive working relationships and to supply the center with a set of multicultural posters to use in classrooms. It is our hope that some of these centers would apply for the Enhancement Team in FY 09. We had 23 centers and homes participate on the Training Team.

► The training classes for the Training Team included:

- 2 hours in Creative Arts in the Early Childhood Classroom
- 2 hours in Free Play
- 2 hours in Emergency Preparedness
- 2 hours in Reporting Abuse and Neglect

Enhancement Team

This team of licensed child care programs received the most extensive outreach from RCFS. The Enhancement Team is essentially the program that RCFS has been doing since its beginning, just with a few additional features. Centers not selected to be on the Enhancement Team were eligible for the Training Team. We had 22 centers who participated on the Enhancement Team.

The Enhancement Team program included:

- A Child Care Technical Assistant who visited weekly to work with the center's director and classroom teachers by modeling developmentally appropriate teaching strategies and quality child care skills.
- Six DSS certified trainings per year for teachers and directors.
- An ITERS and an ECERS assessment was done at the beginning and end of the year to determine each center's level of quality in order to define goals and a plan of action that the center director, staff and technical assistant would work to achieve.
- Based on the individual needs of each center and its ITERS and ECERS assessments, quality educational materials were funded in order to meet the goals of the plan of action to improve a center's quality.
- Networking with other center directors on the Enhancement Team was coordinated by inviting the directors to a free lunch every other month at the RCFS office. Speakers were brought in and/or time given for the directors to talk about issues going on in their centers with RCFS staff.
- Six "Open Houses" at NAEYC accredited centers were provided in order to show directors and teachers from Enhancement Centers what "quality" looks like.
- At the end of the program year, we treated the Enhancement Team directors and teachers who had attended at least three training programs to a catered dinner at the EdVenture Children's Museum.

► *The Enhancement Team's trainings included:*

- 2 hours in Ages and Stages assessments
- 2 hours in Creative Arts in the Classroom
- 2 hours in Special Needs
- 2 hours in Math and Nurturing in the Early Childhood Classroom
- 1.5 hours in the problems with marketing to children
- 2 hours in Reporting Abuse and Neglect

Accreditation Team

Child care programs already accredited by NAEYC were provided with information and support from an early childhood specialist on a monthly or as-needed basis. Funds were given to accredited centers for their NAEYC annual report fees. Networking of other center directors on the Accreditation Team was coordinated to foster collaboration and assistance related to accreditation issues through free bi-monthly director's lunches at the RCFS office. Accreditation Team centers had the opportunity to attend the four trainings on selected topics specific to NAEYC Accreditation. We had eight centers on the Accreditation Team. The trainings for this team included:

- 1.5 hours in Brain Development
- 2 hours in Family Engagement
- 2 hours in Anti-bias Curriculum and Diversity
- 2 hours in Reporting Abuse and Neglect

Self-Study Team

This year the ExCEL program added a new team, the Self-Study Team, made up of child care programs seeking to be accredited by NAEYC. They were provided with information and support from an early childhood specialist on a monthly or as-needed basis. Funds were given to pay for their Self-Study Kit. Networking of other center directors on the Self-Study Team was coordinated to foster collaboration and assistance related to accreditation issues through free bi-monthly director's lunches at the RCFS office. Self-Study Team centers had the opportunity to attend the six trainings on selected topics specific to NAEYC Accreditation. We had four centers on the Self-Study Team.

► *The trainings for this team included:*

- 2 hours in Brain Development
- 2 hours in Ages and Stages assessment
- 1.5 hours in Child Files and Assessment
- 2 hours in Special Needs
- 2 hours in Math and Nurturing in the Classroom
- 2 hours in Reporting Abuse and Neglect

Six "Open Houses" at NAEYC accredited centers were provided in order to show directors and teachers from Self-Study centers what NAEYC accredited centers look like.

At the end of the program year, we treated the Self-Study Team directors and teachers who had attended at least three training programs to a catered dinner at the EdVenture Children's Museum with the Enhancement Team.

Outreach

The ExCEL staff visited every child care center in Richland County for the second time, with FY 07 being the first year. We brought greetings from RCFS and a set of multicultural posters. The goal was to build relationships and let the providers know who we are and what we offer. It was always surprising how many do not know what we do or who have misconceptions about our programs. This is the second time we have visited them, and it is always a very worthwhile endeavor.

Program results:

- 23 child care centers were served on the Enhancement Team. They were the only group that had pre and post ERS assessments done, received weekly technical assistance and received funds according to needs outlined on their assessment. All of the teams received Child Care Training certified by the SC Center for Child Care Career Development (CCCCD).
- The Pre-ERS average for Enhancement centers was 3.58 and the Post-ERS average was 4.15, with two centers dropping out during the year, and 4 classrooms not completing all post assessments. Where one classroom had a pre and post score, those scores are used as the averages.
- A summary of the scores for ExCEL FY 08:

ENHANCEMENT TEAM (22)	ITERS Pre	ECERS Pre	Ave Pre-ERS	ITERS Post	ECERS Post	Ave Post-ERS
Conyers Early Learning Ct.	2.08	1.55		broke contract	broke contract	
Dreams and Destiny Academy	4.35	4.63	4.49	3.05	3.26	3.16
Dutch Fork Kit Den	5.42	no 3s	5.42	5.28	no 3s	5.28
Incarnation CDC - Byron Rd.	3.82	5.02	4.42	5.24	5.93	5.59
It's a Small World CDC	2.91	2.43	2.43	no score	3.52	3.52
Kathwood Baptist Preschool	2.42	2.92	2.67	4.76	4.41	4.59
Kids Caboose Childcare Ct.	3.36	2.19	2.78	4.46	3.62	4.04
La Petit Academy/Garner's Ferry	2.51	3.29	2.51	3.38	no score	3.38
Little Peoples Daycare	4.3	3.41	4.30	5.27	no score	5.27
Myers Nursery	2.53	2.05	2.29	4.72	4.02	4.37
Northminster Pres. CDC	2.46	2.4	2.43	3.46	3.52	3.49
Play 2 Learn CDC	3.76	4.68	4.22	3.67	3.29	3.48
Ridgewood Miss. Baptist CDC	3.54	3.38	3.46	4.76	3.37	4.07
Smiling Faces Academy	2.57	2.36		dropped out	dropped out	
Southeast CDC	4.77	4.7	4.74	5.06	3.46	4.26
St. John Baptist Preschool	no infants	1.86	1.86	no infants	3.93	3.93
St. Michaels and All Angels CDC	4.18	6	5.09	4.43	3.95	4.19
St. Naomi's CDC	3.42	2.67	2.67	no score	2.75	2.75
Trinity Child Care Center	3.21	2.73	2.97	4.74	3.59	4.17
Trenholm Rd. UMC Preschool	5.26	5.17	5.22	5.86	5.12	5.49
Wee Care CDC	2.87	2.05	2.46	3.59	3.29	3.44
Westminster CDC	5.06	5.23	5.15	4	5.24	4.62
AVERAGE			3.58			4.15

FIRST STEPS TO THE LIBRARY (FSTL)

RCFS contracts with Richland County Public Library to provide First Steps to the Library (FSTL) in an effort to increase and promote literacy activities for pre-kindergarten children in Richland County. To achieve this First Steps to the Library employs two professional librarians who work with 45 licensed childcare centers. Each center receives approximately 300 library quality books which become the core of their permanent FSTL collection. Books are added each year to the collection to keep it current and balanced. By visiting each center monthly the FSTL librarians model reading aloud to children and encourage good literacy habits. They also conduct a workshop during the year for all childcare center staff. The subjects of previous workshops have been using music with young children, puppetry, craft ideas and Mother Goose rhymes.

Directors of each center attend a meeting in September, the beginning of the project year, to sign a contract. By signing the contract they agree to read to the children every day and to check books out to parents. FSTL also wants to encourage parents to read to their children in the home.

SCHOOL TRANSITION

Countdown to Kindergarten

Countdown to Kindergarten is a school transition strategy, designed to successfully bridge at-risk students into the K-12 school environment. There are three components to the strategy:

- 1) PUBLIC AWARENESS: Practical tools and articles distributed through South Carolina media and other community locations to help parents and communities prepare children for kindergarten
- 2) KINDERGARTEN HOME VISITATION: (See detailed description below)
- 3) COUNTDOWN CELEBRATION: Rising kindergarten students, their families and teachers will celebrate this important summer milestone at EdVenture Children's Museum marking the end of home visits and the start of school

Implementing (2) above, Kindergarten Home Visitation is the responsibility of local First Steps Partnerships. Certified Kindergarten teachers make 8 home visits to identified families with rising kindergarten students during the summer prior to the student beginning Kindergarten. Students are screened for participation, and parent participation is required. Schools are strongly encouraged to keep participating students together with their home visitor when the school year begins.

Program results:

- 149 children served, receiving a minimum of 6 visits, with the majority receiving all 8 visits.
- 64% of students were placed with their home visitor as their kindergarten teacher for the 2007-2008 school year. 19% were placed with other teachers at the same participating school. 17% of students moved to another school or district before the school year began. *Note: one teacher was reassigned from kindergarten to first grade during the summer program period.*

- Collaborated with previous Countdown to Kindergarten home visitors to rework the home visitor guide to provide additional resources, including information about children’s social and emotional school readiness needs.
- Through a partnership with Richland County Health Department, created a parent health tip to be included in each lesson. Also provided health referral information for families.
- Created a new home visit record that sought to meet three goals:
 - Provide teachers with a simple tool to record children’s skill levels
 - Provide proof of the lesson’s completion through time, date, and teacher and parent signatures
 - Increase accountability for parents in regard to assigned activities between visits
- For the first time, Richland County First Steps has a snapshot of the school readiness of children participating in Countdown to Kindergarten. This picture yields some statistics worth noting.

Home Visit Record Statistics, By Need for Improvement

	Demonstrates Mastery	Needs Improvement
Can Differentiate Upper and Lower Case Letters	32.24%	64.47%
Can Print First Name	54.61%	42.11%
Can Identify Letters In Name	61.18%	35.53%
Can Sort By Color and Shape	78.29%	19.08%
Understands Book Use Concepts	80.54%	18.42%
Can Name Animals in Pictures	87.50%	9.87%

* Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding and/or incomplete lessons

This level of assessment provides kindergarten teachers a starting point from which to develop individual learning plans for their students. A full list of the indicators and children’s mastery levels is included in Appendix E.

A pre- and post-survey focused on parent behaviors was conducted with parents to determine any change in behavior during the program period. Results show a **23% increase in parents reading to their children**, and a **41% increase in library usage**.

Following the program’s completion, a telephone survey was conducted with a random sample of participating parents. A Likert scale was used to gauge parent responses to a set of statements about the program. The results from this survey were overwhelmingly positive, with **95% of parents** responding that they “**strongly agree**” with such statements as:

- **My child is better prepared for kindergarten because of the program**
- **I would recommend this program to other parents**

Parent comments on the survey were extremely positive:

“(She) is a great teacher. The bond the three of us (parent, child, teacher) have is the best part.”

-Parent, Carver-Lyon Elementary student

Financial Summary

<u>Expenditures By Funding Source</u>	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$ 964,498
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$ 59,093
Lottery Appropriation (<i>Fund 35</i>)	\$ 8,429
N.F.P. Appropriation (<i>Fund 70</i>)	\$ 600
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$ 152
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$ 104
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$ 368,635
TOTAL:	\$ 1,401,511

<u>Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name</u>	
Parents as Teachers	\$ 463,142
Library Based/First Steps to the Library	\$ 93,811
Imagination Library	\$ 17,981
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$ 21,964
Childcare Quality Enhancement (ExCEL)	\$ 435,168
Childcare Training and Professional Development	\$ 30,750
Non Home Based Service/Nurse Consultant	\$ 51,751
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$ 148,410
Administrative Functions	\$ 138,534
TOTAL:	\$ 1,401,511

NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	<i>AMOUNT</i>
Book Mark Book Club	\$ 350
Board Donations	\$ 1,175
(Interest Income)	\$ 8261
LRADAC	\$ 250
Richland County (for Eastover PAT)	\$ 200
Sisters of Charity	\$ 500
Staff Donations/Contributions	\$ 980

Support of Imagination Library	\$ 27
United Way	\$ 200
TOTAL: \$ 11,944	

Local Match Percentage for FY 2008: 38.25%
(at least 15% Legislative requirement)

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Allen Carter, RC DSS
Mahalie Davies, Legislative Appointee
Richelynn Douglas, Early Childhood Education
Gracie House, Child Care/Early Childhood Education
Melissa Klosterman, Pre-K/Primary
Dolores Long, Parent
Marsha Moseley, Richland School District Two
Buddy Price, School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties
Ginger Riddle, Richland School District One
Tia Stewart, Faith
Peg Stover, Pre-K/Primary
Odell Stuckey, Legislative Appointee
Janet Tapp, DHEC
Leslie Tetreault, RC Public Library
Penny Tolson, Early Childhood Education
Donald Tudor, Transportation
Harry Ward, Legislative Appointee
Jane Wyatt, Family Education

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.

2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Richland County

Total Children Under Six: 27,313

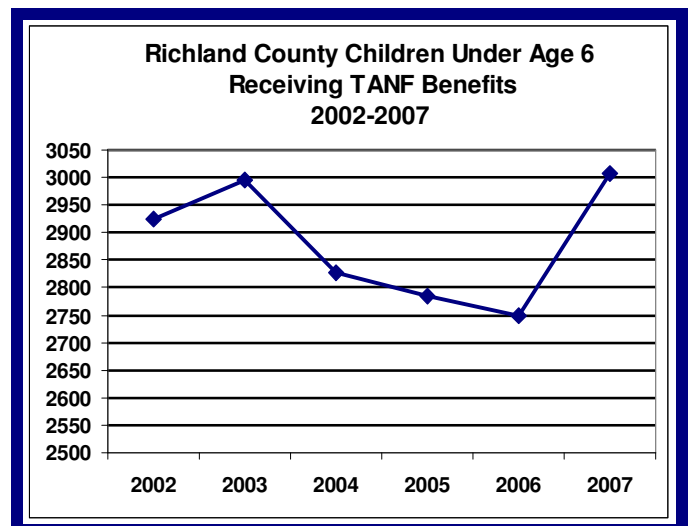
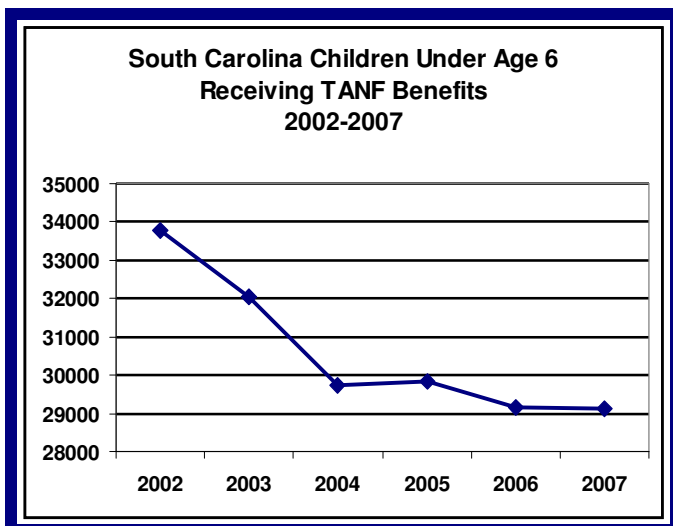
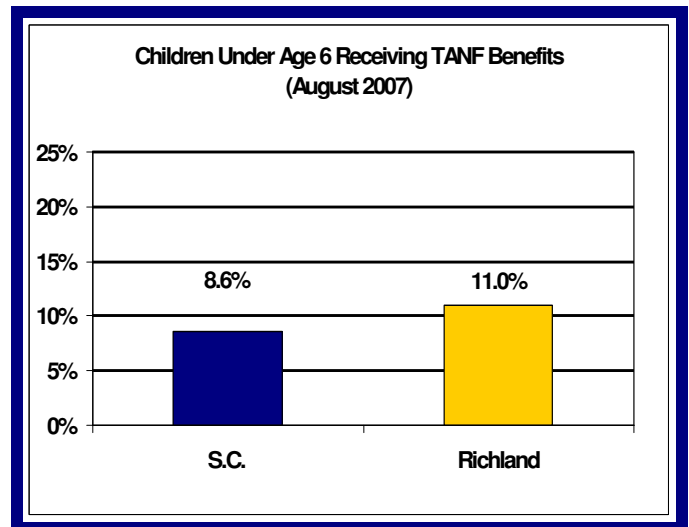
CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4% Richland County (2007): 11.0%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 9 Richland 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.

3,007 of Richland County’s 27,313 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

Richland County

Total Children Under Six: 27,313

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

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

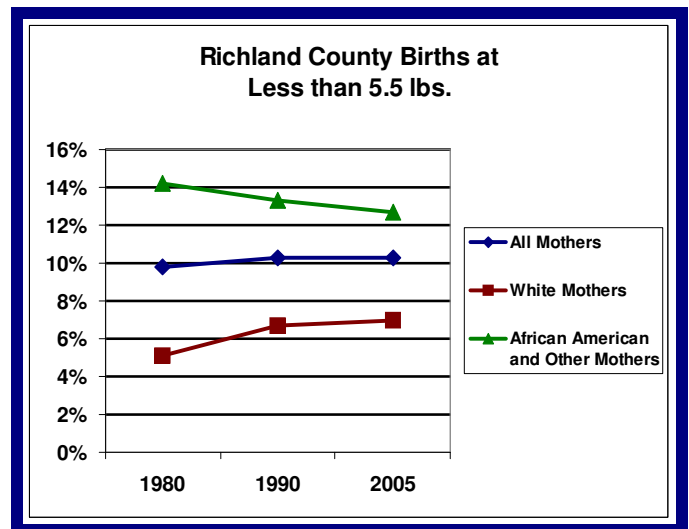
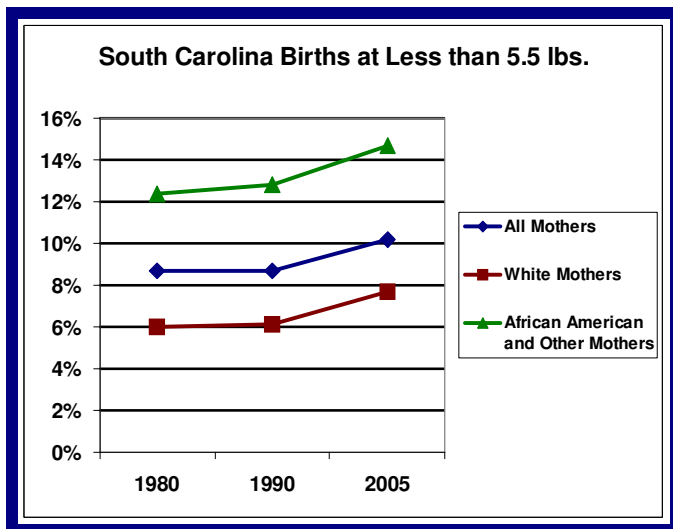
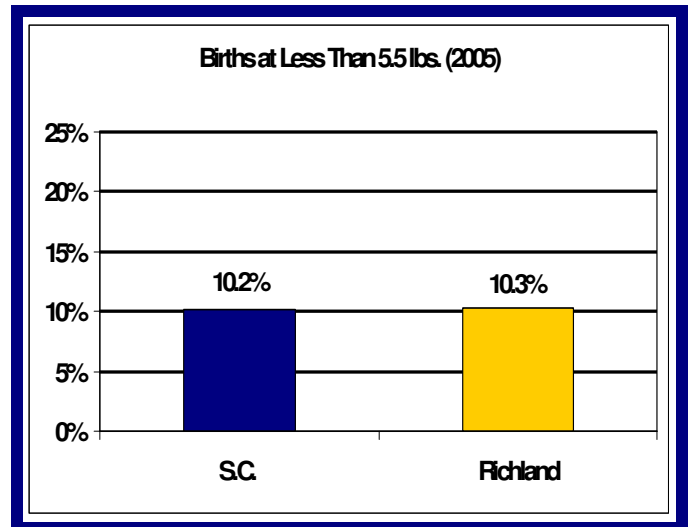
Richland County (2005): 10.3%

Fast Fact: 1 in 10 Richland 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.

493 of the 4,791 children born in Richland County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Richland County

Total Children Under Six: 27,313

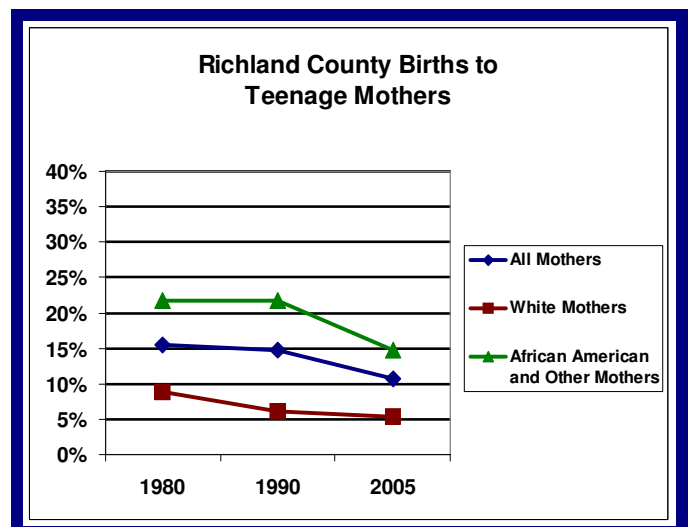
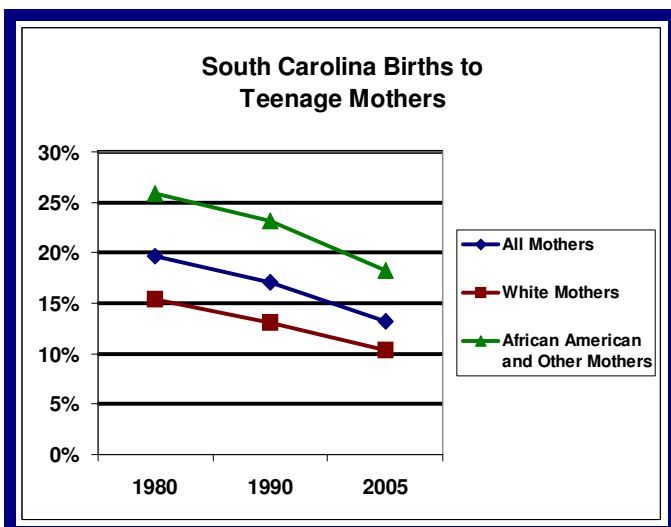
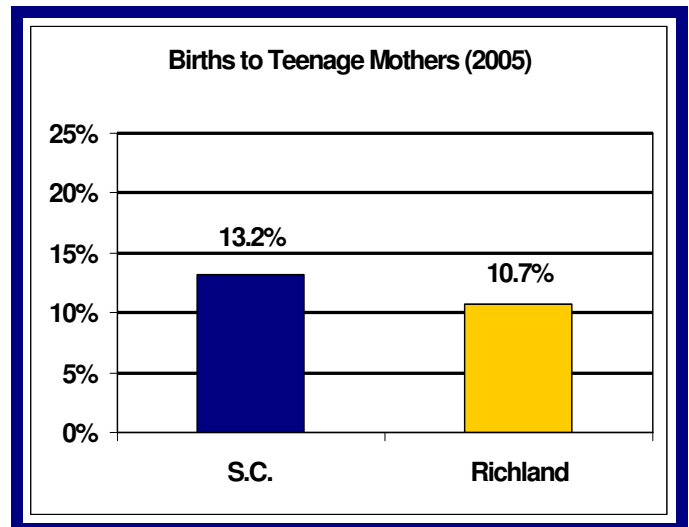
BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2% Richland County (2005): 10.7%

Fast Fact: 1 in 10 Richland 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.

514 of the 4,791 children born in Richland County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Richland County

Total Children Under Six: 27,313

BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7% Richland County (2005): 16.1%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 6 children in Richland 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.

773 of the 4,791 children born in Richland County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

