



Calhoun County First Steps Partnership

Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report

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**Total children in county under
age 6: 1,002**

**Children under age 6 living in
poverty: 7.8%**

Calhoun County Highlights

- Enrolled 20 three, four and five year olds in Montessori Program at Guinyard Elementary
- Montessori students earned six of the top ten Math scores for all third grade classes at Guinyard.
- 4200 books were distributed through Imagination Library.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I take this opportunity to affectionately offer gratitude to our partners. Without collaborative efforts, our mission to help families to help their children be ready for school could not have been met. This year's success is the result of joint efforts. The School District of Calhoun County and the Calhoun Department of Social Services partnered with us in executing an early education program and a school transition program. The Calhoun County Library and Calhoun First Steps partnered to bring Story Exploring to St. Matthews Head Start and the Word of Faith Child Development Center. The Calhoun County Department of Health and Environmental Control registered newborns for our Dolly Parton Imagination Library program at the time they registered newborns for Medicaid. Calhoun County Council provides office and meeting space for our organization.

The Regional Medical Center Foundation, United Way of the Midlands, Eastman Chemical Foundation, Target, Wal-Mart, (Orangeburg) Tri-County Electric and Calhoun County First Steps Partnership provided cash donations and grant awards to register 350 preschoolers in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and to enroll 30 rising kindergarteners in Countdown to Kindergarten.

For your unwavering support and cooperation, THANK YOU.

Respectfully,

*Virginia L. Newman
Executive Director
Calhoun 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 Calhoun County Partnership Programs by Strategy

FAMILY STRENGTHENING.

Parents As Teachers

Program description: A home-visitation program providing parents with child development knowledge, parenting support, and encouragement parents need to help their children develop optimally during the crucial early years of life.

Program results:

- Number served: 46 adults; 50 children
- Served 90% of projected families to be served
- 70% of families met the minimum 2 home visits per month
- Average duration of home visits: 1 hour
- 80% of clients were identified as possessing one or more priority risk factors

- 11 families assessed with Pre-KIPS. Post-KIPS assessments not administered due to program termination in 3rd quarter.

Dolly Parton Imagination Library Program

Program description: An early literacy program designed to increase the number of books in homes and to encourage parents to spend more time reading to their children. All children born or residing in the county under age 5 are eligible to participate in this program. Participants receive one age-appropriate book each month via U.S. Postal Service. Calhoun County DHEC registers children for the program upon enrolling them for Medicaid.

Program results:

- **Pre-survey results show an average 20 DPIL books in the homes of Calhoun County families**
- **An average 350 preschoolers served monthly**
- **58 participants exited program as the result of relocation or aged out**
- **4,200 age-appropriate books were distributed**

EARLY EDUCATION

Public 3K/4K Montessori Program

Program description: Full day school-based program enrolling three, four and five year olds. The certified teacher and teacher assistant are highly trained in the Montessori curriculum. The classroom environment accommodates the following areas: practical life, sensorial, language, math, history, geography, science and art/music. The Dial 3 Instrument and teacher observation are used in identifying program participants.

Program results:

- Number Served: 20 (9 three-year olds, 3 four-year olds; 8 five-year olds)
- Three-year-old students made significant improvements in DIAL-3 test scores. The average score gain from pre-test to post-test was 21 points.
- Four-year-old students made significant improvement in DIAL-3 test scores. The average score gain from pre-test to post test was 44 points.

SCHOOL TRANSITION

Countdown to Kindergarten

Program description: A school transition strategy designed to successfully bridge at-risk students into the K-12 school environment. Three certified kindergarten teachers make 8 home visits to families and students during the summer prior to the student beginning kindergarten. During home visits, children and families are introduced to actual materials used in kindergarten classrooms, and are give a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit to keep. The strategy targets at-risk families identified by the two county elementary schools, county Department of Social Services, and St. Matthews Head Start. A Determination of Eligibility form is the screening tool used for program participation. Parent participation is required.

Program results:

- 29 of 30 rising kindergarteners completed the 8-week program
- 66% of the families participated in the classroom visit (8th visit)
- 100% of the participants received 7 home visits
- 44% of the children had never participated in 4K, Head Start, or other structured early childhood programs.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Expenditures By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$ 92,010
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$ 96,332
State Private (<i>Fund 15</i>)	\$ 399
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$ 6,158
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$ 27,961
State Appropriation (Carry Forward) (<i>Fund 11</i>)	\$ 1,875
TOTAL:	\$224,735

Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name	
Parents As Teachers	\$ 52,321
Other Family Literacy	\$ 839
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library	\$ 9,629
Full Day 3K/4K (Public)	\$ 89,072
Countdown To Kindergarten	\$ 7,812
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$ 38,781
Administrative Functions	\$ 26,281
TOTAL:	\$224,735

NOTABLE DONORS

DONOR'S NAME	AMOUNT
Eastman Chemical	\$ 1,030
Target	\$ 2,000
The Regional Medical Center for Orangeburg and Calhoun Counties	\$ 3,000
Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Inc.	\$ 2,280
United Way of the Midlands	\$ 3,200

UW Special District Acct (UPS)	\$ 438
Calhoun County First Steps Partnership	\$ 753
TOTAL: \$12,701	

Local Match Percentage for FY 2008: 15%

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Ms. Okereta Watson, Board Chair, Retired pre-K Educator
 - Mr. James Amaker, Transportation Provider
 - Mr. Vivian Bodrick, Early Childhood Educator
 - Ms. Susan Chavis, Healthcare Provider
 - Ms. Janice Crosland, Non-profit Organization for Families and Children
 - Ms. Treda East, Early Childhood Educator
 - Ms. Gloria Frazier, OCAB/Head Start Appointee
 - Ms. Amanda Jenkins, Retired Childcare and Early Childhood Development Educator
 - Ms. Cynthia Keller, Legislative Appointee
 - Ms. Debi Kizer, Department of Health and Environmental Control Appointee
 - Dr. Jacqueline Mayo, School District Appointee
 - Ms. Kim Miller, County Department of Social Services Appointee
 - Ms. Retana Reed, Non-profit Organization for Families and Children
 - Rev. Stanley Rivers, Faith Community
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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

Calhoun County

Total Children Under Six: 1,002

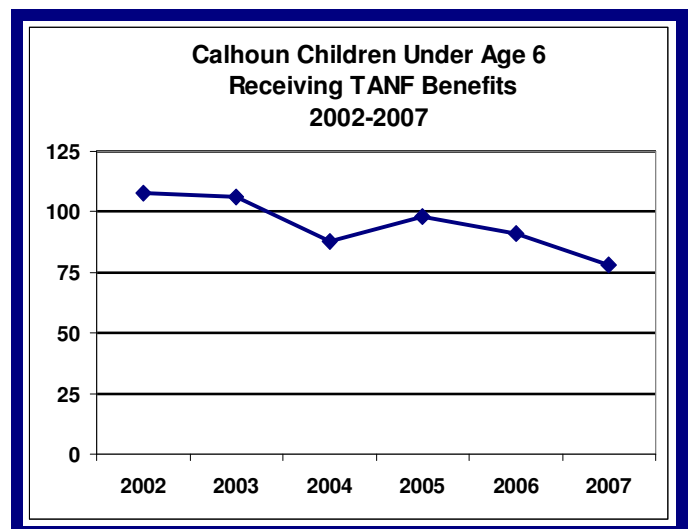
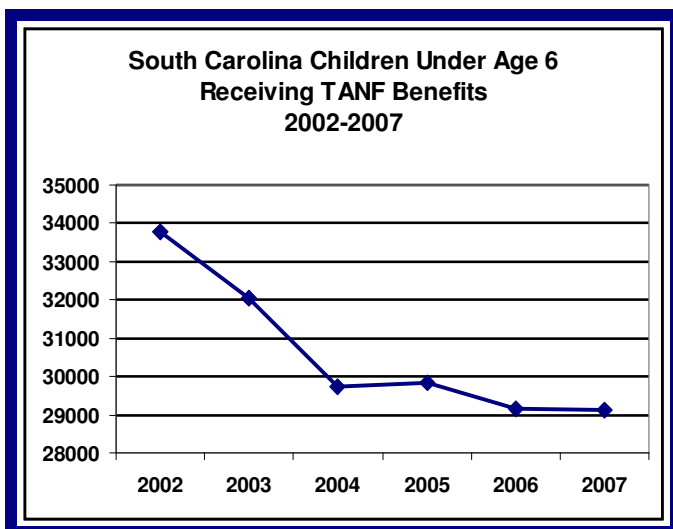
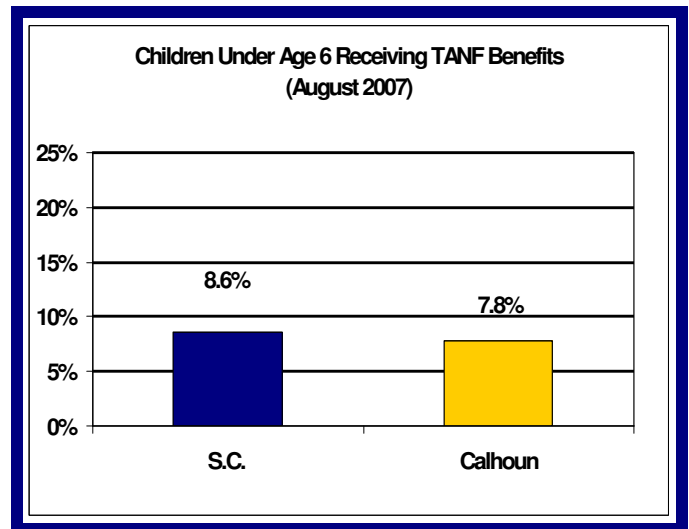
CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4% Calhoun County (2007): 7.8%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 13 Calhoun 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.

78 of Calhoun County’s 1,002 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

Calhoun County

Total Children Under Six: 1,002

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

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

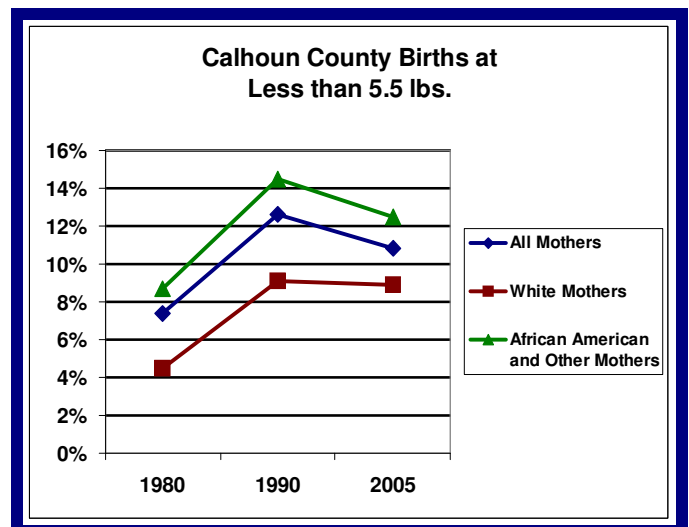
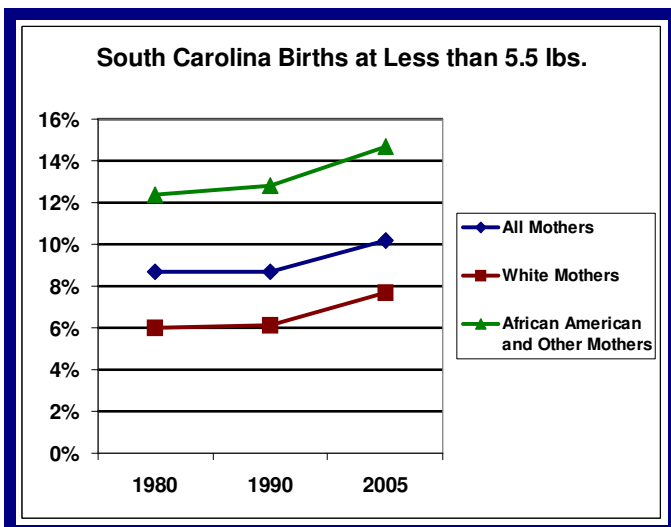
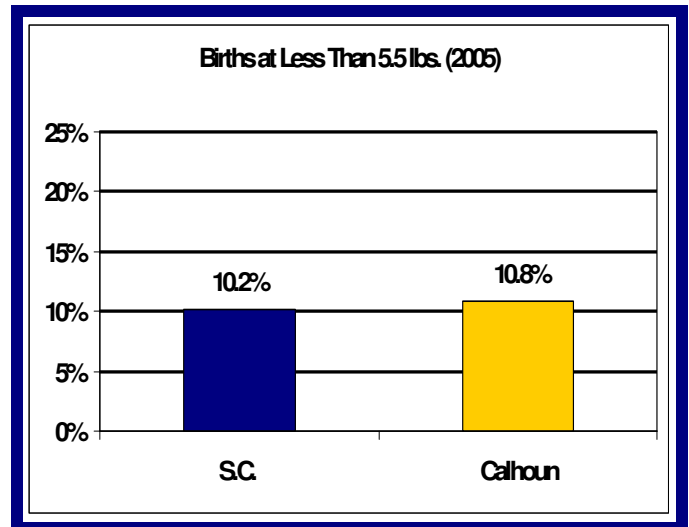
Calhoun County (2005): 10.8%

Fast Fact: 1 in 10 Calhoun 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.

18 of the 167 children born in Calhoun County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Calhoun County

Total Children Under Six: 1,002

BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

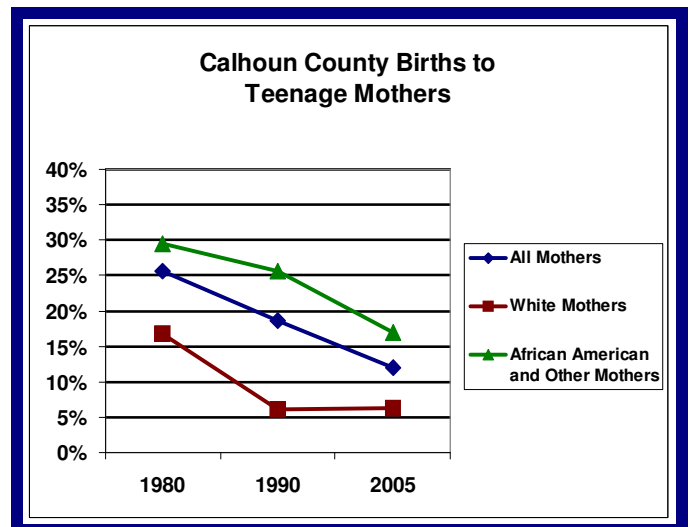
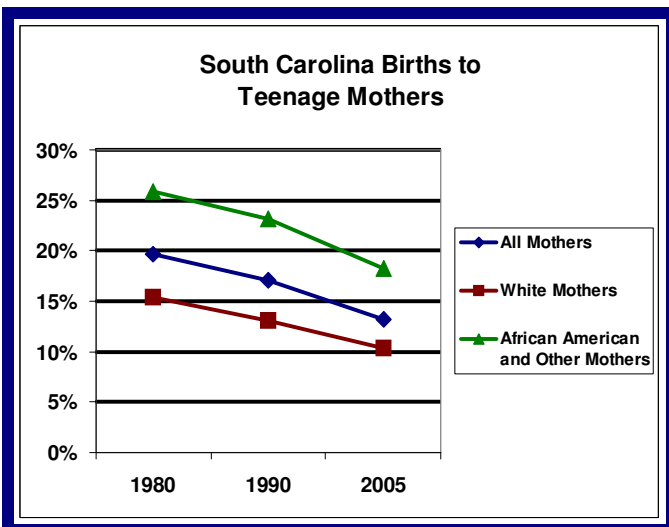
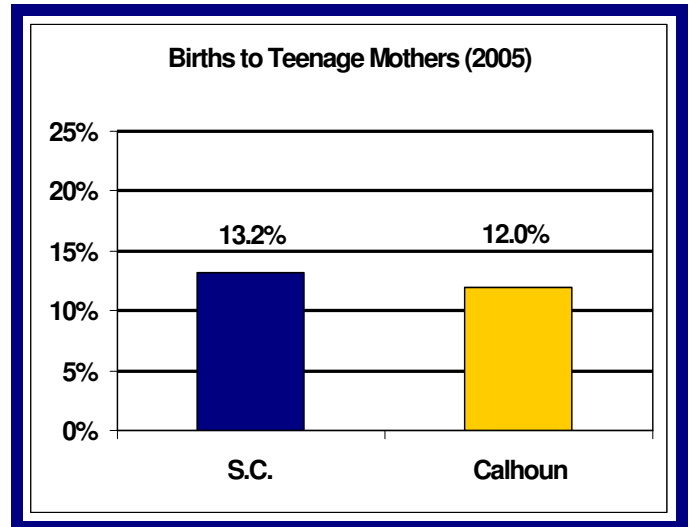
Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Calhoun County (2005): 12.0%

Fast Fact: Just over 1 in 10 Calhoun 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.

20 of the 167 children born in Calhoun County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

Calhoun County

Total Children Under Six: 1,002

BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7% Calhoun County (2005): 15.0%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 7 children in Calhoun 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.

25 of the 167 children born in Calhoun County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

