



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

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**Total children in county under
age 6: 1,829**

**Total Children in county
under 6 living in poverty %:
29%**

Fairfield County Highlights

- 100% of the families participating in the child care scholarship program attended parent workshops hosted by FCFS.
- Twenty one children were served in a early education setting in the rural, Kelly Miller, area of the county.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The Fairfield County First Steps Partnership Board continues to provide quality programs to children, birth to five and their families in the areas of Family Strengthening, Healthy Start, Quality Child Care, and Early Education. In the area of Family Strengthening, we implemented the Parents as Teachers program ten years ago. This program is now more intense and our families see the benefit of having someone come into their home twice a month to demonstrate age-appropriate activities to do with their child and to make sure the child is developmentally on track. Due to budget reductions, we will continue to serve ten families using a part-time home visitor.

The Imagination Library strategy proved to once again be a great awareness tool for First Steps. Over \$4,200 of private funds were raised for this program. Seventy-four (74) new children were enrolled during FY 2009. The largest number of families served in this program monthly is 271.

To give our newborns a healthy start, we collaborate with the Fairfield County Health Department and John A. Martin Primary Health Care Center to provide infant car seats to mothers upon successful completion of a ten-hour prenatal class. Sixteen mothers received an infant car seat.

Fairfield County First Steps provided technical assistance, based on a quality environmental rating scale, to five early education classrooms in an effort to enhance the quality of child care in Fairfield County. In addition, the child care providers participated in workshops hosted by Fairfield County First Steps. There was no cost to the providers and all trainings were certified through CCCCD. Child care scholarships (\$70 per week) were provided to 18 children during FY 2009. 100% of the families receiving scholarships attended the required number of parent workshops during the year.

In the area of early education, Fairfield County First Steps expands early education services by partnering with Head Start to provide a 3 & 4 year old classroom in the Kelly Miller area of the county. Twenty-one children were served in this class. In addition, the volunteer rate of parents increased by 23%.

During the past ten years, Fairfield County First Steps has worked to expand and offer high quality opportunities for very young children and their families in both public and private settings. It is our goal to continue this very important effort over the next ten years! Happy Tenth Anniversary to Fairfield County First Steps!

Yours very truly,

Cheryl C. Caldwell

Executive Director

Fairfield 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 childcare to families and to enhance the level of quality in existing childcare 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

Parents as Teachers

Program Description: Using the Parents As Teachers model to differentiate intensity according to need, we continue to serve a minimum of ten families providing a minimum of two home visits per month.

Program Results:

- A total of 14 families were served during the year.
- Based on need, families are seen a minimum of two times per month, with some having weekly visits.

Imagination Library

Program Description: The Imagination Library may be used as a tool to educate the community about the importance of early literacy and introduces participating families to all FCFS programs. The books are delivered monthly directly to the families' homes which promotes reading between the parent(s) and child.

Program Results: An average of 241 children received books. All children who participate in Parents As Teachers, Tuition Assistance Program and Head Start.

- Over \$ 4,200 private dollars were received for this program n FY 2009.
- 74 new children were enrolled into the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program.
- 91 children 'graduated' from the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Two children moved out of our area.
- 271 children actually received books.
- 2,836 books were mailed to children.

HEALTHY START

Non-Home Based Services

Program Description: Partner with the Fairfield County Health Department and John A. Martin Primary Health Care Center to provide infant car seats for the successful completion of the ten hour prenatal classes.

Program Results:

- Sixteen mothers successfully completed prenatal classes and received an infant car seat.
- 100% of these mothers fell below the 150% poverty level.
- \$200 in private dollars was received towards the purchase of the car seats.
- \$400 of in-kind services was provided as teachers for the prenatal classes

QUALITY CHILD CARE**Child Care Scholarships**

Program Description: Provide subsidy to eligible children and their families for quality child care.

Program Results:

- A total of 18 children were served during FY 2009.
- 100% of the children attended child care in a facility that was working towards increased quality through our Quality Enhancement program.
- 100% of families receiving child care scholarships completed a minimum of four parenting workshops.
- 100% of the families receiving child care scholarships had at least one of the risk factors as identified and approved by the State Board in the Program, Standards for FY 2010.

Childcare Quality Enhancement

Program Description: Provide technical assistance for child care facilities participating in the program to provide quality classroom materials and age-appropriate activities that prepare children for school.

Program Results:

- Provided quality child care activities to three child care facilities for a total of five classrooms.
- An average of 100 children benefited from the technical assistance provided to these classrooms.
- Staff from the child care centers participated in local workshops hosted by First Steps.

Childcare Training and Professional Development

Program Description: Provide workshops to local child providers using trainers certified through the Center for Child Care Center Career Development.

Program Results:

- 100% of the local trainings were provided at no cost to the local providers.
- 100% of the QE participants participated in these local trainings.
- 100% of all trainings were certified through the Center for Child Care Center Career Development.

EARLY EDUCATION

Head Start

Program Description: Partnership with Head Start to provide preschool classes in a rural area that was underserved prior to the involvement of First Steps.

Program Results:

- 20 were projected to be served, 21 were served.
- 100% of the children received dental screenings.
- 100% of the children received speech and hearing screenings.
- 100% of the families received a minimum of two home visits during the year.
- 100% of the children were immunized.
- 90% of the children attended class daily.
- 23% more parents volunteered in the classroom activities.
- 2 parent/teacher conferences were conducted with each family during the school year.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Expenditures By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (<i>Fund 10</i>)	\$ 100,946
E.I.A. Appropriation (<i>Fund 55</i>)	\$ 34,764
State Allocation (Carry Forward) (<i>Fund 11</i>)	\$ 9,788
E.I.A. Allocation (Carry Forward) (<i>Fund 56</i>)	\$ 2,010
Local Private (<i>Fund 20</i>)	\$ 8,609
Federal (<i>Fund 30</i>)	\$ 23,618
In-Kind (<i>Fund 25</i>)	\$ 49,163
TOTAL:	\$ 228,898

Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name	
2012 Parents As Teachers	\$ 25,271
2122 Imagination Library	\$ 5,803
3211 Head Start	\$ 59,162
6012 Childcare Quality Enhancement	\$ 16,319
6050 Childcare Training & Professional Development	\$ 660
7032 Scholarship Initiatives	\$ 55,533
9021 Non Home-Based Services	\$ 589
	\$
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$ 45,041
Administrative Functions	\$ 20,520
TOTAL:	\$228,898

NOTABLE DONORS

<i>DONOR'S NAME</i>	AMOUNT
Provident Community Bank	\$ 150.00
Stephenson	\$ 10.00
Watford	\$ 10.00
Livings	\$ 10.00
Douglas	\$ 10.00
Bullard	\$ 10.00
Bi-Lo	\$ 1,218.00
Downs	\$ 30.00
Caldwell	\$ 90.00
Johnson	\$ 30.00
Baughman	\$ 30.00
Perez	\$ 120.00
Miller	\$ 31.00
Caulder	\$ 30.00
Wolff	\$ 10.00
O'Neal	\$ 300.00
Mattox	\$ 30.00
Harden	\$ 30.00
Inquirendo Book Club	\$ 30.00
Garris	\$ 30.00
Lacey	\$ 30.00
Winnsboro Woman's Club	\$ 150.00
Gerhardt	\$ 30.00
Walmart	\$ 1,000.00
Gordon Memorial	\$ 510.00
Sheriff Herman Young	\$ 50.00
Harrison	\$ 60.00
Dove	\$ 30.00
Cash	\$ 60.00
Gordon Memorial	\$ 30.00
Sabine Lang	\$ 85.25
BiLo	\$ 47.01
TOTAL: \$ 4,291.26	

Local Match Percentage for FY 2009: 54%

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

William P. Frick, Chair, Legislative Appointee
Lillian R. P. Arnold, Early Childhood Education
Beverlyann Austin, Healthcare Provider
Raye O. Boyd, School District representative
Ellen Cooper, DHEC representative
Sarah Forseth, Pre-kindergarten through Primary
Gwen Harden, Business
Jena B. Johnson, Legislative Appointee
Dee B. Mattox, Healthcare Provider
Karen D. Mattox, Childcare and Early Development
Sarah McMaster, Library representative
Yolande Montgomery, Family Education
Mac R. Russell, parent of a preschool child
James Nichols, DSS representative
Becky Swearingen, Transportation
Mary Urias, Nonprofit Organization

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"> • The local board is dedicated to the Parents As Teachers program. We maintained ten families this past year despite two losses of Parent Educators. • The Imagination Library program received several grants through the years. Our local Rotary club supported this program since its inception. We received a \$1,218 grant from Bi-Lo in FY 2009.
Healthy Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This program has continued to see an increase in participants each year. We received private dollars earmarked for this program in FY 09.
Quality Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since moving to an in-house childcare scholarship program, we developed strong relationships with the families. • 100% of the parents participated in the Parent Workshops held at the First Steps office. • 100% of the participants in QE participated in the CCCC training held locally, at no cost to participants. In collaboration with CCR & R, through United Way, we continue to offer Quality Enhancement TA to child care providers, although there were no funds available. • Since the inception of First Steps, one of our Childcare Directors grew

	<p>from a Home facility, serving six children, to an enhanced childcare center, serving 56 children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With our help, one local childcare center received NAEYC accreditation.
Early Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the help of First Steps, a Head Start class began in a rural, previously underserved area of Fairfield County. This afforded 20 students an opportunity to participate in preschool classes. • There has been a 32% increase in parent volunteers in the classroom since the inception of this program.

Other notable moments:

Fairfield County First Steps board members volunteer for community awareness activities such as : Library Summer Kick-off, Rock Around the Clock, Arts on the Ridge, and for Literary programs at the elementary and private schools.

Community volunteers joined board members and First Steps staff for the Bi-Lo fundraiser, helping to prepare food for the public for several Saturdays at the local Bi-Lo.



2008 School Readiness Risk Profile Fairfield County

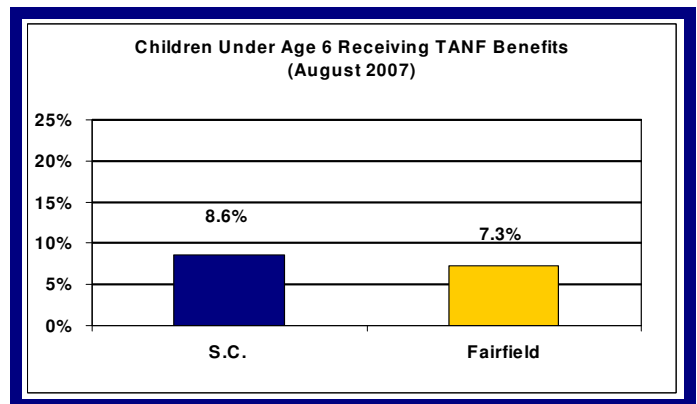
Total Children Under Six: 1,829

CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4% Fairfield County (2007): 7.3%

Fast Fact: Roughly 1 in 13 Fairfield 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.
- 133 of Fairfield County’s 1,829 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.

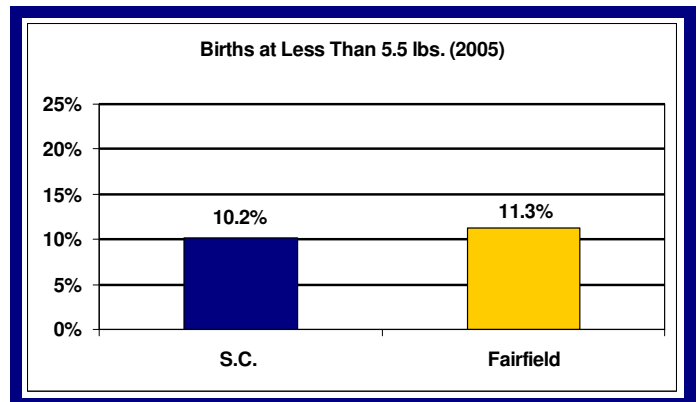


CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2% Fairfield County (2005): 11.3%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 9 Fairfield 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.
- 35 of the 309 children born in Fairfield County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.



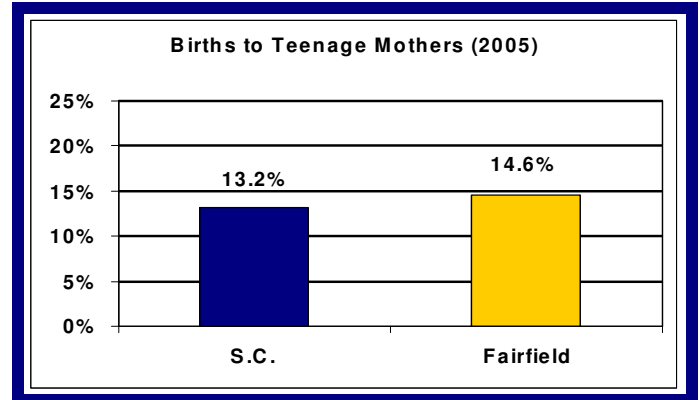
BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%

Fairfield County (2005): 14.6%

Fast Fact: Nearly 1 in 7 Fairfield 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.
- 45 of the 309 children born in Fairfield County during 2005 had teenage mothers.



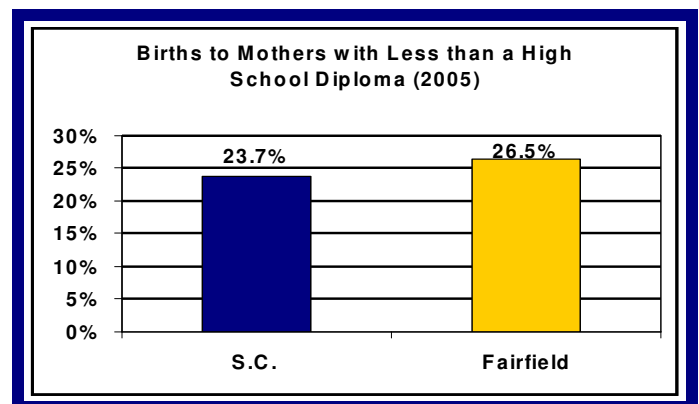
BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%

Fairfield County (2005): 26.5%

Fast Fact: Just over 1 in 4 children in Fairfield 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.
- 82 of the 309 children born in Fairfield 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