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Abbeville County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report*

Summary

Numbers Served:

321 children; 68 adults/families; 2 child care facilities, with 168 children total at those facilities; 62 health assessments and screenings; 697 home visits; 69 staff trained; 120 4-K slots and 10,166 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$426,713

Abbeville School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	1,965 / 8 %
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)*	63 %
Average Per Capita Personal Income	21,000
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5) ***	18 %
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	19 %
Children in Third Grade Performing Below Basic on PACT Reading **	10 %
Children in Third Grade Performing Below Basic on PACT Math**	16 %
Low Birth Weight Infants	11 %
Births to Mothers With Less Than High School Education	22 %
Less Than Adequate Prenatal Care	28 %

*Note: Data is for 2003 except where noted (*2005, **2004, ***1999).*

Profile Comments: In 1999, 18% of children birth to six years old in Abbeville County lived in poverty. 18.7% of teen mothers did not have a high school education. In 2003 and 2004, there was a gap of 19 slots need to reach all the children in the county with full day 4K services. In 2000, there were 1,175 children under age six, in child care facilities. Abbeville County First Steps will work to fill these gaps in the community and promote school readiness.

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES

Early Education

Statewide Goal: South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness will leverage state, local and private resources to increase the quality of, and number of children participating in, developmentally appropriate pre-kindergarten programs in both the public and private sectors. Particular emphasis will be placed on *fidelity* to research-based instructional models and *targeting* of students at-risk of early school failure.

FY 2007 Results

Partnership Goal: Increase number of children attending high quality early childhood programs by establishing full day programs at each elementary school in the county. Abbeville County First Steps established one full day 4K program at Westwood Elementary School, Long Cane Elementary School, and John C. Calhoun Elementary School. First Steps also expanded programs at Long Cane Elementary School, Cherokee Trail Elementary, and Diamond Hill Elementary School.

- 120 children received quality full day 4K programs.
- 100% of programs were taught by certified teachers.
- 100% of classroom teachers had completed Creative Curriculum training
- 100% of participants were targeted for participation based school readiness risk factors, such as low scores on the DIAL-3.
- 100% of Abbeville County First Steps funded programs met South Carolina 4K requirements for curriculum, pupil-teacher ratios, materials, and class size.
- With First Steps funding, 100% of 4K programs offered by the school district were full day programs.

Family Strengthening

Statewide Goal: South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness will work collaboratively with its agency partners, the faith community and private sector to support parents and families in their own efforts to maximize the school readiness, well-being and long-term academic success of the state's young children.

FY 2007 Results

Partnership Goal: Increase the capacity of parents to be their child's first and most important teacher with home visitation services.

- 100% of all parent educators were trained with the *Born to Learn Curriculum* to serve children from 0-5 years.
- 100% of parent educators were trained with developmental screening tools such as the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire*, and the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test* to ensure school readiness with all participants.
- 100% of parent educators were trained with family observational tools such as the *Parent Education Profile* to have data on the families' home environment and how this affects school readiness.
- 100% of all families received an extra literacy component in their home visit with the *Read Together Talk Together Curriculum*
- 100% of all participants in family meetings received incentives such as gift cards, and transportation cost through a federal grant.

- *Eighty-four children received at least one personal visit by a parent educator, and sixty-eight families.*
- *73% of families attended a monthly family meeting, with receiving home visits.*
- *100% of families participating in home visits and monthly family meetings could each receive up to three books a month.*

Child Care

Statewide Goal South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness recognizes quality child care as a research-based determinant of school readiness. As such, First Steps will collaborate with parents, the child-care community and its agency and community partners to maximize child care quality throughout the state. Particular emphasis will be placed on assisting parents in their efforts to identify those settings most likely to maximize developmental outcomes, and assisting providers in their own efforts to maximize the learning environments they provide for young children.

FY 2007 Results

Partnership Goal: Improve the quality of child care by offering quality enhancement grants, technical assistance, and quality trainings to child care providers. Quality Child Care Trainings are offered and collaborated with neighboring counties such as Greenwood County.

- *50 hours of technical assistance has been provided to Kids Under Construction and Higher Heights Academy by the First Steps Technical Assistant with topics such as setting up early learning centers and promoting a quality environment.*
- *100% of trainers were certified through the Child Care Center of Career and Development*
- *69 child care staff participated in ongoing trainings and received up to 25 hours of DSS credit*
- *100% of child care trainings were free of cost to child care providers in Abbeville, Greenwood, and McCormick Counties*
- *An annual early childhood conference was offered to all providers.*

School Transition

Statewide Goal: South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness recognizes school entry as a pivotal transition point in each child's educational career. In an effort to ensure strong collaborative relationships between the state's families and schools, the initiative will develop strategies to maximize parents' understandings of state and local expectations and ensure a smooth and beneficial school transition for each child.

FY 2007 Results

Partnership Goal: Ensure an educationally beneficial school transition by serving 55 at-risk children in the Countdown to Kindergarten program.

- *53 identified children completed the Countdown program during summer 2006.*
- *39 % percent of the children received seven home visits.*
- *70% percent of the children qualified for free lunch.*
- *3.64% percent of the children qualified for reduced lunch.*
- *Countdown to Kindergarten resulted in improvements in parent-child interactions, including:*
 - *21% playing with games and toys with their children*
 - *23% reading or listening to their child reading a book*
 - *22% talking about letters and numbers with their child*
 - *39% drawing or painting with their child*
 - *27% visiting a library with their child*

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

**With the private 4K Initiative, the school year ended early, due to participants dropping out of the program, and transportation. Also money was received from a federal grant was extended into the next fiscal year.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

State Appropriation	State-Private	In-kind	Local-Private	Federal	EIA Appropriation	4K COC Initiative	TOTAL
\$149,140	\$2,371	\$120,076	\$16,430	\$28,837	\$69,089	\$40,770	\$426,713

NOTE: The above State and EIA appropriation amounts leveraged all state-private, in-kind, local-private, lottery and federal dollars.

READINESS STRATEGIES	EXPENSES
Parents As Teachers Program	\$112,188
Full Day 4K	\$1500
Private 4K	\$11,655
Expanded Day 4K	\$52,987
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$19,319
Child Care Trainings and Professional Development	\$16,128
Countdown to Kindergarten	\$15,100
County Programmatic	\$18,604
County Administrative	\$20,694
TOTAL	\$268,175

Local Match Percentage for 2007: 16%

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Abbeville County First Steps partnership board members volunteered 1,005 hours, this includes meetings and community activities.

Value of Volunteer Time¹: \$18.77 X 1,005 = \$ 18,663.85

ABBEVILLE COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Dr. Randall T. Ruble, Board Chair, Faith Community
Charles Costner, Pre-Kindergarten through primary education
Lynette Cobb, Parent of a Preschool child
Dr. Bobby Crosby, Business Community
Brad Evans, Business Community
Santana D. Freeman, Head Start Appointee
Dr. Tiffany Freese, Parent of a Preschool Child
Montee Gary, County Department of Social Services Appointee
Henry Green, Legislative Appointee
Tracey Jackson, Non-profit organization that provides services to families and children
Mary Elizabeth Land, County Library Appointee
Frances Lewis, Member from early childhood education
Susan McIntyre, Childcare and early childhood development education provider
Zelda Oates, Legislative Appointee
Heather Osborne, Parent of a Preschool Child
Jean Smith, Member from early childhood education
Sherri Smith, School District Appointee
Marie South, Member from early childhood education
Mary Stackhouse, County Department of Health & Environmental Control
Michelle Stancil, Healthcare provider
MalJean Thomas, Family education training and support provider

SUCCESS STORIES

The week before school started this year, one of my students read his first book by himself! His aunt called his mother at work and told her to hurry home for a surprise. She said she was so glad that we had him in our class last year, and hopes that her daughter (3) can attend too! - 4K Teacher

Greenwood and Abbeville Counties has been working together the last three years providing childcare trainings for Abbeville, Greenwood, and McCormick Counties. We have collaborated to the point of reaching tremendous outcomes in our childcare strategies; moreover, our joint initiative has allowed us to build a strong rapport with our boards, clients, counties, and staff by rendering our talents across county lines when necessary that display a partnership that is second to none in the State of South Carolina. Our Board members have conducted joint board training and socials to show mutual support and gratitude. Also, we use our personal expertise to provide joint administrative and programmatic trainings to our staff. Our County Partnerships' Executive Directors has created is an instrumental model for like programs to follow. We work together to get any child ready for first-grade despite their county residence.

¹ http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html

Abbeville County First Steps Partnership

Angela Pruitt-Executive Director, Abbeville County
Michael K. Gaskin-Executive Director, Greenwood County

My child has enjoyed the sessions with Mrs. Ware very much. She looks forward to Mrs. Ware coming to help her. –Parent in Countdown to Kindergarten.

This is a very good program. We are very thankful for having the opportunity to have participated. May God continue to bless you to keep the program going. Again Thanks.- Parent in Countdown to Kindergarten