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

Summary

Numbers Served:

1,490 children; 67 adults/families; 24 child care facilities, with 883 children total at those facilities; 5 child care centers achieved a higher quality status; 50 child care staff trained; 6,557 books distributed.

Total Budget:

\$351,382 (includes all funding sources)

Chesterfield County School Readiness Profile

Population Characteristics	Figure
Population of Young Children (Ages 0-5)	3,360 / 8 %
Children Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch (5K)	63 %
Average Per Capita Personal Income**	21,705
Children in Poverty (Ages 0-5) ***	28 %
Children Who Are Over Age in Third Grade**	15 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Reading *	19 %
Children in Third Grade Performing below Basic on PACT Math*	31 %
Low Birth Weight Infants	13 %
Births to Mothers with Less than High School Education	29 %
Less than Adequate Prenatal Care	27 %

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

Profile Comments:

Increasingly, parents must divide their time between children and employers. In order to meet family financial needs, most parents must work and thus have less time for family life. In 2000, 67.5% of mothers with children under 6 and 73.5% with children 6 - 17 were in the labor force. This has increased substantially from 1960 when 35.6% of mothers with children under 6 were in the labor force. Most fathers also work: 63.1% of children under 6 are in families where both parents or the single parent work; 37.8% of children under 6 have both their parents or their single parent working 35 hours or more. Caring for children is a

problem for parents unable to obtain quality, affordable daycare while they are at work 35+ hours per week.

Overall, there are 844 spaces in state-regulated child care facilities in the county; 84.2% of these are in licensed programs and 15.8% are in registered programs. Of the spaces, 70.6% are in licensed child care centers serving more than 12 children, 12.8% are in registered or licensed family child care homes serving six or fewer children, 1.4% are in licensed group child care homes serving 7-12 children, and 15.2% are in registered or licensed church programs.

The homes and centers are severely constrained by the limited ability of parents to pay. In the county during 2002, the average weekly charge was \$60.47 for centers and \$52.22 for homes. Consequently, center wages were low: 0% of centers with pre-school staff and 66.7% of centers with assistant pre-school staff reported paying these staff under \$6 per hour. Paying \$6-\$8 per hour were 71.4% of centers with pre-school staff and 33.3% of centers with assistants. Low wages attract workers with limited education. In 28.6% of centers, most pre-school staff and in 66.7% of centers most assistants had only a high school degree. In 42.9% of centers, few to none of the pre-school staff had early childhood credentials. In child care homes, 75% of lead providers had no more education than a high school degree or GED; 25% had less than a high school degree.

The task of meeting the needs of our children is far beyond what any one agency or organization can do. We recognize the need for on-going collaboration with community partners and strive to build partnerships that will leverage the resources needed to expand quality services to the most at-risk children. Everything we do is with one goal in mind: healthy, happy children whose first five years give them the chance to develop their full potential. In the 2006-2007 fiscal year, Chesterfield County First Steps helped:

- **Early childhood education programs continually learn and improve;**
- **Parents excel in their vital role as first teachers;**
- **Professionals in the field get training and education about early education;**
- **Child care directors join a strong supportive network with their own forum;**
- **Implement a community-wide parent and early care and education resource center;**
- **The whole community understand and support early learning;**
- **Bring together many different groups serving our children, making all stronger.**

Each of these is a targeted strategy, based on the latest information about our county, its families, children, and early education resources. Where we see a need, we look for a solution, either boosting something already being done, or looking for a partner to get it done.

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES

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: Provide quality, age-appropriate books in the homes each month of all new-born Medicaid children until their fifth birthday. Children are identified by the Health Department's Newborn Home Visit Nurse. Parents are responsible for enrolling their newborn using the registration form they receive from the nurse. Appropriately, 350 children in Chesterfield are born each year receiving Medicaid benefits (indicator of poverty). United Way, businesses, and individuals together with state funds support the program. Chesterfield County First Steps pays The Dolly Parton's Foundation-*Dolly Parton's Imagination Library* for the books and mailings.

- *6,577 age-appropriate books were distributed*
- *On average, 527 children received a book each month*
- *All Child Care Quality Enhancement centers participated in the program*
- *Collaborated with the local health department to identify eligible children*
- *Collaborated with the county post offices to identify address changes of participants ensuring children receive their books. This collaborative effort safeguards the resources utilized to purchase and mail the books by identifying invalid or changes in addresses*
- *A random survey indicates that 97% of participants are extremely satisfied with the program*

Partnership Goal –Provide parents and professionals, who work with parents of young children, access to information and materials they need to enhance early learning opportunities through the First Steps Resource Center. The resources and services of the First Steps Resource Center (FSRC) will affect the daily lives of young children directly by providing equipment such as a laminator, Ellison die cut machine, copy machine, paper cutter, along with space to create inexpensive materials to be used by and with young children and their families; by offering materials and props (multi-cultural toys, dolls, prop boxes) as well as resources (books, math and science materials, and puppets) to be checked out by the early childhood professionals (child care center and homes and part day preschools), early childhood students, early interventionists and parents.

- *Partner secured for the project. Northeastern Technical College partnered with First Steps to provide space and other in-kind support of this project*
- *Received in-kind training and consultation on operation from North Carolina Smart Start-Union County Partnership for Children*
- *Resource Center opened November 2006*
- *Partnership with the county library system developed to reduce geographic barrier of accessing the Resource Center. Resource Center items may be returned to any county library*
- *54 parents using the Resource Center*
- *73 children impacted by those 54 parents using the Resource Center*
- *15 child care teachers and directors using the Resource Center*
- *188 children impacted within those centers*
- *7 workshops held*
- *Average of 42 (unduplicated) parents and teachers impacted by those 7 workshops*

- 100% of child care teachers and directors using materials provided by FSRC in fiscal year 2006-2007 report gaining and using new knowledge.
- 82% of child care teachers and directors attending FSRC resource utilization classes during fiscal year 2006-07 report gaining and using new knowledge.
- 86% of child care centers that are engaged in a quality improvement program or expansion with CCFS used the FSRC resources during fiscal year 2006-2007.
- 78% of families using materials provided by FSRC in fiscal year 2006-07 and completing a feedback survey report increasing the number of times a week they spend with their children on reading and learning activities.

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: Increase the providers' and educators' understanding of core knowledge and competencies that will help to improve their ability to administer and provide quality early care and education;

1. Enhance the overall quality of early care and education provided to infants, toddlers, and preschool children;
2. Enhance the overall program administration of early care and education facilities; and,
3. Ensure accountability in the use of child care grant materials, and project evaluation.

Through the first quarter of the fiscal year, the B.A.S.I.C.S (Building, Academic Success in Childhood Spaces) Region II Lottery Project continued from the previous fiscal year. After the first quarter, the county's Steady Steps program was implemented. Both programs included technical assistance and training as well as classroom products. Combined, the two programs served six child care providers, serving 371 children. These facilities represent 22% of the child care community for Chesterfield County. Through intensive technical assistance the following program outcomes were achieved: (Outputs Web Site):

- *Secured Child Care Quality Specialist, through Thompson's Child and Family Focus, with established results in providing quality child care outreach services*
- *Technical assistance provided was based on best practice that is outlined in the Environment Rating Scales, NAEYC standards, and SC Child Care Laws and Regulations in targeted classrooms*
- *Provided 350 hours of technical assistance services to six child care centers*
- *Participated in the regional technical assistance network meetings and activities, as applicable. Participated in the process of meeting the newly implemented requirements of South Carolina Early Care and Education Technical Assistance Protocol and SC First Steps Quality Program Standards*
- *In the BASICS Region II Lottery project: The combined ECERS scores for BASICS centers increased by 20.6%*

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- *In the Steady Steps program: The combined ECERS scores for these child care facilities increased by 16% (county records)*
- *In the Steady Steps program: 40% (2/5) of the classrooms receiving technical assistance obtained an ECERS-R score of greater than 4.0*
- *45 child care staff received an average of 60 hours per center in support and assistance around setting up quality learning areas and how to maximize use of new materials*

Partnership Goal- Assist child care directors in the implementation and facilitation of a county-wide Child Care Directors Networking Forum.

- *Conveners Meeting held in October 2005, with meetings held monthly since inception*
- *Purpose, goals and the Chesterfield County Child Care Directors Networking Forum Mission Statement was developed*
- *“The Visionary Director” was used as a guide in helping the Forum develop their vision statement and to guide each Forum meeting*
- *10 networking opportunities for child care directors*
- *13.5 hours training in Program Administration offered*
- *9 unduplicated number of center directors have participated in the Forum*
- *An average of 4 directors in each Forum*

Partnership Goal – Improve access to child care training hours and increase knowledge base related to best child care practices.

- *Quality child care trainings were offered to all child care providers serving 6 centers/ 45 child care staff. These centers represent 21% of all centers in the county. All trainings were certified through the SC Center for Childcare Career Development.*
- *Six participating centers received early educational materials related to the topic of the trainings and on-site technical assistance.*
- *45 child care staff received an average of 23 hours of early childhood best practices training.*
- *Trainings were provided by experts in the related field.*
- *Participants expressed 100% satisfaction with the trainings.*

Quality Child Care Expansion Project

Partnership Goal – To create access to quality, model child care in the county where services are most needed thus will allowing more children to start school ready to learn and be successful in school.

- *Issued a Request for Proposal for Child Care Quality Expansion project; awarded and entered into contract with First Presbyterian Child Development Center in February 2007*
- *Provided 33 hours of technical assistance by a qualified program quality specialist*
- *Technical assistance provided in child care environment-room arrangement, selection of early care and education product and licensing process*
- *Center scheduled to open August, 2007 (Center received license and opened in August)*
- *Center working toward Advocates for Better Child Care (ABC) status*

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.

Partnership Goal: Ensure an educationally beneficial school transition by serving 20 at-risk children in the Countdown to Kindergarten program.

FY 2007 Results

- 20 identified children completed the Countdown program during summer 2006.
- 90% of the children received five or more home visits.
- 10% of children were placed in their Countdown home visitor’s kindergarten class.
- 95% of the children qualified for free lunch.
- Countdown to Kindergarten resulted in improvements in parent-child interactions; including:
 - 27% improvement in playing with toys, games or sports with child
 - 23% improvement in involving child in household chores like cooking, cleaning, setting the table, or caring for pets
 - 17% improvement in families talking about letters, words or numbers with child
 - 69% improvement in families visiting a library with their children
 - 31% improvement in families reading to their children
 - 18 % improvement in families drawing, painting or other arts and crafts with their children

SCHOOL READINESS STRATEGIES FOR 2007-2008

During FY 08, the county plans to intensively serve six child care facilities and expand private early education to 10 at-risk children through a high quality 4K program with a qualified private provider. Chesterfield County First Steps is moving into Phase II of the Child Care Quality Enhancement and Child Care Quality Expansion projects.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

D O L L A R S (budget only)							
State Appropriation	State-Private	In-kind	Local-Private	Lottery Appropriation	Federal	EIA Appropriation	TOTAL
\$228,525	\$1720	\$32,816	\$38,341	\$0	\$34,595	\$15,385	\$351,382

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

READINESS STRATEGIES	EXPENSES
2122 Imagination Library	\$14,900
0406 Countdown to Kindergarten	\$3,578
0601 Facility Quality Enhancement	\$59,818
0602 Center Staff Training	\$66,187
7020 Quality Facility Expansion	\$40,400
County Programmatic	\$96,168

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County Administrative	\$38,816
TOTAL	\$319,867

NOTABLE DONORS

DONOR'S NAME	AMOUNT
1420-WCRE Radio	Playschool Pal
Adult Daycare- Bennettsville Carolyn E. Scott	Playschool Pal
Alltel	\$50.00
Anne W. Hardee	Playschool Pal
Anonymous	\$189.00
Avery S. and Barbara C. Dickson	Playschool Pal
Betsy N. McLeod	Playschool Pal
Betty Hurst	Playschool Pal
BGF Industries, Inc.	\$100.00
Bojangles	Playschool Pal
Camilla Pitman	Preschool Friend
Carolyn Beck Addison	Playschool Pal
Cathy & Mike Pelfrey	Preschool Friend
Cedar Creek Baptist Church	Playschool Pal
Charles M. Clark, DMD	Playschool Pal
Chesterfield Co. Education Association Retired	\$81.00
Chesterfield General Hospital	\$500.00
Christy & C. Heath Ruffner	Playschool Pal
Conbraco Industries, Inc.	\$50.00
Crystal & Tony Miller	Playschool Pal
David Matthews	Preschool Friend
Dawn Leach	Playschool Pal
Dayna Gladden	Playschool Pal
Deborah Holloway	Playschool Pal
Douglass Two-Way Radio	Playschool Pal
Emsley A. Freeman	Playschool Pal
Fit For A King	Playschool Pal
Forrest White	Playschool Pal
Founders Federal Credit Union	\$1,000.00
Fredrick Harris	Playschool Pal

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Gail Yancey	Playschool Pal
Griffin Enterprises	Playschool Pal
Helen Stroud	Playschool Pal
Heritage Community Bank	Preschool Friend
J. Matthew Rivers	Playschool Pal
J. L. Anderson Co. (Palmetto Brick)	Preschool Friend
James Sweeney	Preschool Friend
James Taylor	Playschool Pal
Janice Sowell	Playschool Pal
Jerry King	Preschool Friend
Joette Barnhill	Playschool Pal
John A. Jones	Playschool Pal
Joshua Boan	Playschool Pal
Karin & Robert Taylor	Playschool Pal
Katherine and Atticus Simpson	Playschool Pal
Katherine W. Griggs	Playschool Pal
Lanier	Preschool Friend
Larrie J. Foster	Playschool Pal
Linda H. Rowell	Preschool Friend
Lindy Watson	Playschool Pal
Lyn Bethea	Playschool Pal
Lynches River Electric Cooperative, Inc.	Playschool Pal
Margery & Bill Stubbs	Playschool Pal
Mary Beth Freeman	Playschool Pal
Mary Moore Batson	Playschool Pal
Mary S. Cutchin	Playschool Pal
Melinda Oakley	Playschool Pal
Mike Knight	Playschool Pal
Mimi Quick	Playschool Pal
Mody A. Clark	Playschool Pal
Northeastern Technical College	Playschool Pal
Palmetto Family Medicine	Playschool Pal
Pam Stancil	Playschool Pal
Pamela Toole	Playschool Pal
Patricia Hendley	Playschool Pal
Paul Burch	Playschool Friend
Penny Angle	Preschool Friend
Rose Etta Schumacher	Playschool Pal
Rotary Club of Cheraw	\$270.00

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Sandra Barbour	Playschool Pal
Sandra Coker	Playschool Pal
Sarah Jane & Roger Henderson	Playschool Pal
Shiloh UMC	Playschool Pal
Shirley Spencer	Preschool Friend
St. Paul Daycare	Playschool Pal
Stephen C. Wallace	Preschool Friend
Sue Griggs	Playschool Pal
Susanne M. Davis	Playschool Pal
The Malloy Foundation	\$600.00
Tommy & Mona Sellers	Playschool Pay
Town of Jefferson	Playschool Pay
Triangle United Way	\$297.58
United Way Chesterfield	\$1,622.04
United Way Jefferson/Pageland Area	\$1,000.00
Wanda & Kenny Douglas	Preschool Friend
Westfield Baptist Church	Playschool Pal
CCFS Board	Champion of Children
CCFS Staff	Bookworm Buddy
TOTAL	\$11,136.82

The gift amount of individual donors is not disclosed; however, the level of the gift is noted. Chesterfield County First Steps gift levels are as follows:

\$25-\$99

Playschool Pal

\$100-\$499

Preschool Friend

\$500-\$999

Bookworm Buddy

\$1,000-\$4,999

Champion of Children

\$5,000 and more

Hero

Local Match Percentage for 2007: *188.17% (at least 15% required)

*The percentage represents additional match that wasn't budgeted at the beginning of the year. Match from the Quality Child Care Expansion project far exceeded anticipated in-kind budget.

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

BOARD INFORMATION

During FY 07, the Chesterfield County First Steps Partnership board members volunteered 341 hours. Others volunteered a total of 243 hours for special projects such as the national Week of the Young Child in April. Volunteers assisted in planning and manning week long events for the week that included four Children's Book Festivals to celebrate reading at the local community libraries throughout the county and two "character-building" magic shows at child care centers.

Value of Volunteer Time¹: \$18.77 X 584 total hours = \$10,962



Children from Ruby Head Start and St. Paul Methodist centers participate with Fish The Magish at events in recognition of the national **Week of the Young Child** organized by volunteers, board members, the county library system, and staff.

CHESTERFIELD COUNTY FIRST STEPS BOARD MEMBERSHIP

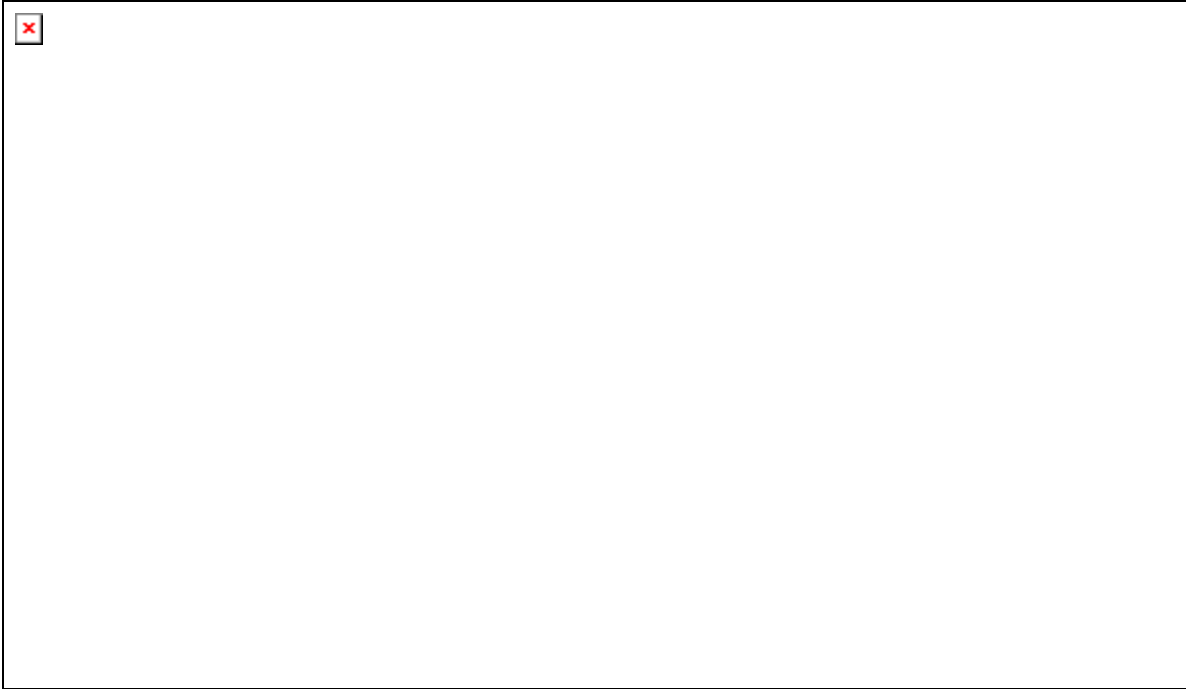
- Rev. John Gerstenmier, Chair, *faith*
- Mrs. Missy Brown, *transportation*
- Ms. Drusilla Carter, *County Library Designee*
- Mrs. Sherrie Chapman, Vice Chair, *early childhood education*
- Rev. Lee Coyle, *faith*
- Mrs. Teresa Gaskins, *Transportation provider*
- Mr. Charlie Gray, Treasurer, *legislative appointee*
- Mr. Calvin Hancock, *healthcare provider*
- Ms. Charlotte Henderson, *primary educator*
- Ms. Ann Huntley, *Chesterfield County School District designee*
- Ms. Bernice Linton, *family education*
- Mrs. Pamela Mills, *non-profit*
- Mrs. Mary B. Redfearn, *early childhood education*
- Mr. Jack Rhyne, *S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control designee*
- Ms. Joni Roberts, *business*
- Ms. Renay Sellers, *S.C. Department of Social Services designee*
- Mr. Todd Shifflet, *healthcare provider*
- Mrs. Billie Stoudemire, *early childhood education*
- Mrs. Carrie Turner, Secretary, *Head Start designee*
- Mrs. Bernadine White, *early childhood development provider*

SUCCESS STORIES



Resource Center: Children at Harvest Community Daycare enjoy puzzles and other educational items from the First Steps Resource Center Located on the campus of Northeastern Technical College. “We are so grateful for this resource center. Our children and staff love the materials available. This has been such a blessing for our daycare. Thank you!!” -*Kathryn Odom, Harvest Director*





Giggles and Wiggles Academy recognized during **Steady Steps Child Care Quality Enhancement** Celebration Dinner July 24, 2007 for most improved ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised) score. Pictured above from right to left: Back row, Beatrice Geiger, Program Quality Specialist; Connie Spencer, Program Coordinator. Front row, John Gerstenmier, Board Chair; Giggles and Wiggles staff- Patricia Seegars, Deanna McManus, Tammy Bittle, Director and LyQuita Nicholson. Also pictured are Karen Odom, Chesterfield County First Steps Executive Director and Susan Devenny, SC First Steps Executive Director.



IMAGINATION LIBRARY PHOTO: Joshua Lee Little and his mother, Genevieve C. Little.

"Joshua is 22 months. He loves the books that we receive. He and I read together, look at pictures together. We discuss the books' illustrations, the characters and the plot. These books have definitely increased Joshua's language skills and motor skills. Joshua talks very good. He sits on the floor and turns the page. He always wants me to read to him. Best of all, we read these books over and over again." -*Genevieve Little, parent who participates with her child in the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library program.*