



Board Chair:
Sue Schneider
Executive Director:
Carolyn Brooks
Contact Information:
900 South Pine St.
Spartanburg, SC 29302
Phone: 864.327.4900
E-mail: cbrooks@1steps.org
Web site: www.1steps.org

Total children in county under age 6: 21,777

Total Children in county under 6 living in 100% poverty : 4051

Spartanburg County Highlights

- Leveraged over **\$22 million** for sole purpose of school readiness (10 Years)
- **Local Match Percentage FY 2010: 669%**
- **2700** Child Development Center Staff attended quality training. FY2010
- Early Head Start parents: 1 graduated college, 3 GEDs, 2 graduated HS FY 2010
- Staff development in over **200 childcare facilities** served **1569 children in 2010**
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library/FS partnering with United Way of the Piedmont distributes over **8000** books each month

Spartanburg County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Report*

Executive Director's Message

Think about the relationships in your personal and professional life. How do you make things happen? I believe the most important factor to making things happen is the quality of the *relationship*. Relationships that are successful for individuals and agencies are built on respect, responsibility, communication and accountability. Measurable outcomes and successes for children have happened through our relationships with the board, partnerships, families and the community we serve....

Listed here are a few results of our successful 10 year relationships ...

- **Over \$22,000,000** leveraged & invested in the past 10 years in Spartanburg County for the sole purpose of equipping our children to succeed in school.
- Over **500 participants** received quality training at the ninth Annual 2009 Early Learning Conference and over **2700 participants** over past 9 years.
- **1331 children at 100% of poverty were served** since 2003, **98 pregnant women, 709 total families & 145 children with disabilities** in First Steps **Early Head Start**
- **Seventeen childcare centers** served **1,072 children** through the Childcare Quality Institute
- Over **200 childcare facilities** served **1569 children in 2010** in training and staff development.
- **Over 500,000 free books were provided to children under the age of five**, delivered monthly by mail from the Dolly Parton Imagination Library in collaboration with First Steps & the United Way of the Piedmont for two counties.
- **100 first time mothers** were served through the **Nurse Family Partnership** in collaboration with Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System and other community leaders filling a gap of service to pregnant teens.
- **420 4K** children moved into 5K with an improved ability to learn filling a gap for 4K waiting lists in each of the seven school districts during 2001- 2004 supported with 49% of Spartanburg First Steps state funding.
- **1298 families** were participants with **Parents as Teachers** Educators
- **840 families/ 499 children** were served at three (3) **Family Literacy** Programs in the county:

The economic impact alone has made a difference. But most importantly, we have achieved measurable outcomes in the quality of life in our county. Relationships beget community, our relationships are important on every level. As a community, we have worked together for real life changes with infants, young children, families and organizations.

Thank you for ten years of successful relationships,

Carolyn Brooks
Spartanburg County First Steps
Executive Director

Numbers Served by COUNTY Partnership in 2009-10

VISION 2013 Action Plan:

How Spartanburg County First Steps connects high-risk children 0-5 to the services they need to improve their educational and developmental outcomes.

Connecting High-Risk Children to coordinated, individualized interventions is a priority for Spartanburg through work on the Vision 2013 Toolkit. We identified the following services and target areas of unmet needs in Spartanburg.

Spartanburg plans to increase access to quality child development programs and provide training opportunities for caregivers with focus on risk factors

- Plans are to provide screening and assessment opportunities to identify children earlier working through BabyNet in Child Find as well as school districts, child development centers and community agencies.
- Spartanburg is in the process of the development of a Quality Rating System (QRS) that will support access to and public knowledge of quality care programs.

Making broader connections and expanding partnerships to homeless children

- Through this process, we recognize the need to broaden our relationship with the local homeless coalition and the relationship will open additional program opportunities to serve homeless children as well as children exposed to substance abuse by caregivers. Early Head Start and Babynet services will be explained and offered. Ideas of better program access will be explored and implemented.

Strategy Name	Children 0-5 Served	Parents/ Other Adult Family Members Served	Early Childhood Staff Served	Child Care/Early Education Providers Served	Number of Training Hours Provided	FTEs Supported Within First Steps*	FTE's Supported Within Partner Organizations*
Early Head Start	185	151	27	5	1040	0.98	29.02
Quality Institute	433		94	8	10	2.00	0.50
Family Child Care	15		3	3	4	0.00	
Early Education Network			2,747	60	70	1.38	0.12
Pride		1172	143	76	57	1.00	
Case Managers	30	30				2.00	
Countdown to Kindergarten	30						
First Steps						2.00	
TOTAL	693	1353	3014	152	1081	9.36	29.64

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.

2009-10 County Partnership Programs by Strategy

QUALITY CHILD CARE

Early Education Project

Program Results

Spartanburg County First Steps Early Education project continued to grow during the sixth year of the strategy. In addition to the **Quality Institute (QI)**, the **Early Education Network (EEN)**, the **Early Education Conference**, and the **Quality Continuation Academy (QCA)**, the project added a fifth component, the **Family Child Care Initiative (FCC)**.

Quality Institute

The **Quality Institute** is designed to strengthen and educate center *directors* by providing specialized training, technical assistance, mentoring, and professional development. The QI program works with eight centers; representing 38 classrooms, 514 children, and 86 staff members. Six model classrooms were designed and constructed in QI centers, which allowed teachers to implement their knowledge in an age-appropriate environment. The QI centers serve approximately 130 children whose families qualify for ABC vouchers. The QI centers continue to raise the quality of care and education as evidenced by: 1) Four centers raised their ABC ranking and 2) Classrooms that raised quality had an average of +1.89 on the ERS.

Quality Continuation Academy

The **Quality Continuation Academy** provides support for six directors who have completed the QI program with at least a 4.0 center wide score on the Environment Rating Scale. This group meets quarterly to work on continuing to raise quality in their centers. The **QCA** represents 30 classrooms, 339 children, and 68 staff members. Three directors are now participating in a mentoring program providing leadership and guidance to current QI directors.

Early Education Network

The **Early Education Network** continues to be the largest outreach of early childhood care and education training in Spartanburg County. Participants attended 33 training opportunities for fifty-four hours of certified training and sixteen hours of registered training. Training participants represented almost half of all child care facilities in Spartanburg County. Topics on best practice and highly trained presenters were the backbone of the EEN.

Early Education Conference

The two day, 9th annual **Early Education Conference**, had a record breaking attendance with over 500 participants and eleven hours of training. The attendees represented more than 60 child development centers from across the Upstate.

Family Child Care Initiative

The **Family Child Care Initiative** worked to build relationships with home child care providers in Spartanburg County. Providers were educated on meeting the health and safety needs of children in their care through technical assistance visits and new furniture and materials.

EARLY EDUCATION

Early Head Start Program

Program description:

120 children birth to three years of age and/or pregnant women served

- 68 children in the center-based option in five child care centers with 17 teachers
 - 32 children year round
 - 36 children summer service delivery (10 weeks home-based and 190 days in center-based)
- 52 children and/or pregnant women in the home-based and/or services to pregnant women program option with 4 family services specialists

Program results:

The statistics listed in this document are a result of data collected by First Steps Early Head Start

***ERSEA- Eligibility/Recruitment/Selection/Enrollment/Attendance** - Eligibility, Recruitment & Selection criteria are established by First Steps Board & Policy Council

Section I	*ERSEA
Section II	Families
Section III	Health
Section IV	Fiscal
Section V	Staff

Section I ERSEA

Eligible Children in Spartanburg County Served

- **1,887** eligible children-(based on 2000 census tracks of EHS service areas)
- **10.3%** of eligible children served by FS EHS

Enrollment

Total Cumulative: 205

- **185** children
- **20** pregnant women
- **151** families
- **167** children and/or pregnant women were on the waitlist

Over Income (The target is 10% or less)

- **3%**

Roy C. Henderson Child Development Center, Spartanburg Housing /Operated by FS EHS

Of **35 children** served ...

- **20 or 57%** were residents at Tobias Hartwell
- **9 or 26%** lived in other Public Housing sites
- **4 or 11%** received Section 8 Vouchers
- **6 teachers and 2 assistant teachers** were employed

Other Child Development Centers funded by FS EHS:

- This Is My Child- 2 classes, 4 teachers and 16 children
- Woodruff Primary- 1 class, 2 teachers and 8 children
- Jack Bee's Little Flock- 2 classes, 3 teachers and 12 children
- Kelly's Kids- 2 classes, 3 teachers and 12 children

Attendance

Attendance % of children in centers (The target is more than 85%)

Cumulative for Year- 84.66%

Section II Family

Family Resource Scale

A scale that measures a family's assessment on adequate resources of time, money, energy to meet the needs of the family as a whole as well as the needs of the individual family members

- **51%** of families increased their family resource scale scores

Family Partnership Agreements

Families enter into a family partnership agreement that outlines family goals, steps to achieve the goals and progress towards goals

- **100%** families with agreements

Family Services

- **121** families received 434 referrals.

Home Visits

Four Family Service Specialists completed, 1,639 home visits using the Parents as Teachers curriculum. The visits average 1 ½ hours in length with caseloads varying from twelve to thirty-two children

Cumulative Visits-1,639

Parent Trainings

Six (6) Parent Training events were held at Roy C. Henderson. All parents are invited to the events where childcare and food are provided to attendees. 100% of attendees reported they learned something new, found the training interesting, thought the training would help them. Training titles included Career Link, the ties that bind Us and Health and Nutrition.

Socialization Activities

The purpose of socialization experiences for infants and toddlers is to support child development by strengthening the parent-child relationship. This is in contrast to

socializations for preschoolers where the goals are to support and develop peer group socializations.

- **22** socialization activities were offered with 84 families attending quality events supporting child development.

Section III Health

Immunization

- 96.63% of children had immunizations either up to date or completed

Disabilities

The target is more than 12 children or 10% of funded enrollment

- # of Part C children served- **34**
- **FS EHS exceeded the 10% by serving 28.3% children with disabilities**

Percentage of Children who have been assessed for health and nutritional needs

- **100%** of children have been assessed

Percentage of Children who have met Developmental and Sensory Screening Requirements

- **98%** of children have met developmental and sensory screening requirements

Services to Pregnant Women

- 17 babies have been born into the program
- 100% received the required post-natal visit within 14 days

Health Services Advisory Meeting

- November 12, 2009 with three health care professionals in attendance
- February 11, 2010 with seven health care professionals in attendance
- April 22, 2010 with nine health care professionals in attendance
- June 10, 2010 with seven health care professionals in attendance

Section IV Fiscal

June 1, 2009-June 30, 2010

ABC (Advocates for Better Care) Vouchers- 2009-2010

The **ABC Child Care Program** is the statewide system designed by South Carolina to deliver child care services under a federally-funded grant program. ABC makes payments to providers to care for low-income children so their parents can work.

- **10** children received part-day EHS vouchers
- **\$19,671** was received from ABC for partial-day vouchers
- **\$2,000** was received as quality improvement money for Roy C. Henderson CDC

Volunteers- 2009-2010

- **65 volunteers** donated service to FS EHS worth **\$13,349**
- **10 volunteers** were parents who donated volunteer service worth **\$728.70**

CACFP – 2009-2010

USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program plays a vital role in improving the quality of day care and making it more affordable for many low-income families by supplying food to low income families.

CACFP Report for Roy C. Henderson (RCH) Child Development Center

- **\$19,660** received from CACFP for Roy C. Henderson for children's food
- **\$25,662** expended at RCH for children's food

Results of Audit – The A133 Single Audit of 2008-2009 completed with no material findings.

Section V ***Staff***

Staff Training Opportunities-

- **100%** of staff had ongoing training programs totaling over 1,404 hours

Results of Short-term Early Head Start Program Objectives

Child Development

Children's development will be enhanced in a supportive environment as evidenced by monitoring:

- 100% of children whose Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) or Denver II screening scores indicate an area of concern are followed up with a referral opportunity for further evaluation
 - *100% of children whose screening score indicated an area of concern were offered follow up referral opportunities to Baby Net*
- Child Development Plan (CDP) goals are established within 90 days of enrollment and goals are monitored regularly
 - *100% of children's child development plan goals were established within 90 days of enrollment*
- Classrooms are evaluated yearly using the Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS) and any deficits are addressed in ongoing improvement plans
 - *The ITERS R is facilitated yearly as a resource for monitoring and providing technical assistance in the Infant/Toddler classroom environment. 100% of all the classrooms were observed. The overall combined score was 6.4. This was an improvement from last year's overall combined score of 6.3. The lowest scores continue to be in the area of Personal Care Routines.*

- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation updates for the year are:
 - *1 center has received NAEYC accreditation*
 - *1 center is in the application process*
 - *2 centers are in the process of Self-Study*
 - *1 center completed State ABC Enhanced status*

Health & Safety

Comprehensive Health Services will be provided to FS EHS families as evidenced by monitoring:

- Monitoring of Up to Date EPSDTs and immunizations
 - *72% of EPSDT exams were up to date*
 - *85% of children's immunizations were either up to date or completed*
{Center-Based 95% Home-Based 72%}

Family Development

All families will receive services/referrals as indicated by their needs.

- 100% of families will receive a Family Resource Scale (needs assessment) which will be administered and scored at enrollment and re-administered and scored annually.
 - 100% of families received initial or annual Family Resource Scale scores
- 100% of families will have a Family Partnership Agreement at enrollment and will receive follow up services and support for goal achievement
 - 100% of families entered into a Family Partnership Agreement and have received follow up services for goal achievement

Community Building

- Active community partners will serve as members of the Policy Council and the Health Advisory
 - *Active community partners as members of Policy Council*
Department of Social Services
Spartanburg Housing Authority
Piedmont Community Actions
DHEC
 - *Active community partners as members of the Health Advisory*
Department of Health and Environmental Control /WIC
Pediatrician/ Pediatric Evening Clinic
ReGenesis Community Health
Chartwell's Food Service
Small Smiles Dental
Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation
Department of Social Services
Spartanburg Regional Health Care System

Staff Development

Staff will be provided with professional development and a rewarding workplace as evidenced by monitoring:

- *100% of the staff was involved in ongoing training programs totaling 1,404 hours. Of those hours, 700 earned professional development credit and 42 earned continuing education units*

Health & Human Services

Middle Tyger Community Center Case Management

Spartanburg County School District 5, Case Managers for the CARE Adolescent Family Life Demonstration Project at Middle Tyger Community Center which provides support for adolescent parents in school Districts 5 and 2 in Spartanburg County

Case Managers offer cohesion through service integration and case management to an adolescent parenting program and guidance to the young parents so that they, in turn, can offer support to their children, an effort to continue to produce positive outcomes, within the context of a comprehensive service program.

Thirty (30) teen mothers and their babies were served with the following outstanding & positive results:

- **100% of babies of participating mothers were born healthy**
- **100% of babies of participating parents had appropriate immunizations.**
- **82% of children participating demonstrated target development based on Ages & Stages Questionnaire.**
- **80% participation rate in parenting classes for the year**
- **97% participation rate in home visitation/case management**
- **100% of participants graduated, remained in school, or received a GED**

Parent Training

PRIDE

PRIDE (Promoting Resources in Developmental Education) is a collaborative program dedicated to the healthy development of children from birth to age 5, with a special emphasis on earlier identification of those at risk for developmental and behavioral delays. Led by the Greenville Hospital System Children's Hospital Division of Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics, PRIDE also works closely with many public and private organizations in the Upstate of South Carolina serving children and families.

PRIDE served in four strategy areas for Spartanburg:

PRIDE Continued;

1. To increase awareness among parents regarding developmental milestones for children birth to 5, activities that promotes healthy child development and warning signs of developmental delays.
Goal: To enroll 2400 Spartanburg County parents; Enrollment: 1,172 families enrolled.
Based on 171 completed surveys 75% had increased knowledge of developmental milestones, not meeting the goal.

2. To educate parents regarding typical developmental milestones in all domains, activities to promote the healthy development of children in their care and available community resources to which to refer parents.
Goal: Participants in training can name two or three new tools/techniques related to course material with a mean 1.0 score increase per assessment item.
Of the 80 participants in training 80% met the goal

3. To educate child care providers regarding typical developmental milestones in all domains, activities to promote the healthy development of children in their care and available community resources to which to refer parents.
Goal: 100 participants will score a mean 1.0 increase per assessment item.
143 participants attended 5 five-hour training sessions approved by SC Center of Child Care Career Development.

4. To increase awareness of primary care pediatricians and family physicians
20 pediatricians, 52 related medial office staff attended 9 practice based trainings. 30% of the pediatricians indicate implementing PEDS or other appropriate standardized developmental screening at key well-child visits.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Expenditures By Funding Source	
State Appropriation (Fund 10 and Fund 11)	326,518
Federal TANF Appropriation (Fund 30S)	276,390
Education Improvement Act Appropriation (Fund 55 and Fund 56)	42,890
State Private (Fund 15)	173
Local Private (Fund 20)	584,285
Federal (Fund 30)	1,412,442
Federal (Fund 30C = ARRA)	24,620
Federal (Fund 30D = Quality)	54,673
Other Federal (Fund 30A = ABC)	2,292
Other Federal (Fund 30B = CACFP)	23,000
In-Kind (Fund 25)	353,111
TOTAL:	\$3,100,394

Expenditures By Program / Strategy Name	
Administrative Functions (1012)	246,324
Programmatic Functions (1502)	92,977
Parent Training - Pride Program (2030)	53,261
Head Start Programming - JB and TIMC (3210)	231,160
Head Start Programming - SCSDB and WP (3211)	149,281
Head Start Programming (3212)	1,076,950
Countdown to Kindergarten (4062)	2,908
Child Care Quality Enhancement (6012)	272,145
Children's Service Alliance (6012)	26,217
Child Care Training and Prof Development (6052)	130,627
MTCC Case Managers (9071)	75,000
Nurse Family Practice (9080)	390,433
In-Kind (Various)	353,111
TOTAL:	\$3,100,394

NOTABLE COLLABORATIONS

COLLABORATORS	Description of Collaboration
Duke Endowment	Nurse Family Partnership
Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System	Implementation Agency/ Nurse Family Partnership
Mary Black Foundation	Supports Childcare Initiative
CACFP Reimbursement	Federal Food for Children
First Steps Annual Early Education Conference	Quality Training & Professional relationship building for over 400 Childcare & 4 &5 K Teachers and Directors
Early Education Network Training	Monthly Quality Training for over 50 childcare teachers and directors each class.
Spartanburg Housing Authority	Space for NAEYC First Steps Early Head Start Child Development Center
BasicSpaces	Renovation of 10 child development center classrooms
Spartanburg Community College	Space for Trainings

Notable Collaborator

The Mary Black Foundation (MBF): The Foundation set clear parameters of investment for early education funding stating that the grantee must “*demonstrate how an investment in planning or capacity building will strengthen the ability of the organization to improve early childhood development or reduce adolescent pregnancy.*” The MBF provides key support to First Steps that allows us to learn and grow in the knowledge of developing quality services in improving early education. Because of the funding from Mary Black Foundation childcare providers in our community are more aware of what they don’t know and more willing to make changes for quality child development. Mary Black Foundation continues to support quality education in the very crucial early years as *Zero to Three, a national, nonprofit organization that informs, trains, and supports professionals, policymakers, and parents in their efforts to improve the lives of infants*

and toddlers, states; “All babies and toddlers need positive early learning experiences to foster their intellectual, social and emotional development and **lay the foundation for later school success.**” Mary Black Foundation, with their expert staff, has supported efforts in our community to “lay the foundation for later school success.” Evidences of their support are reflected in this report as in previous First Steps reports. We thank Mary Black Foundation for their informed visions and strategic collaborative efforts in our community.

NOTABLE GRANTS AND DONATIONS

CONTRIBUTION	Type of Contribution (grant, individual, corporation, foundation, church, etc.)	AMOUNT
Federal Grant: EHS Grants	Grant	1,501,912
Local/Private Grant: Nurse Family Partnership	Grant	445,340
Local/Private Grant: Mary Black Grant	Grant	145,498
TOTAL:		\$2,092,750

Local Match Percentage for FY 2010: 669%
(at least 15% Legislative requirement – Use eThORITY Report)

COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Member /Category I Elected

Joy Ballenger

Mary Mathes

Dr. Kelly Harrison-McGuire

Bob Page

Tom Reed

Daniel Sulton

Reverend Kevin Harrison

Krystal Burrell

Member Category II /Agency Appointed

Jane Hammett DHEC

Steve Strom DSS

Rebecca Mack Spartanburg County Public Library

Philipa Sellars Head Start

Elaine Sveen South Carolina School Deaf Blind

Ann Greene Spartanburg County School \District One

Barbara Mills Spartanburg County School \District Two

Karen Grimm Spartanburg County School \District Three

Karen Deal Spartanburg County School \District Four

Wanda Fowler Spartanburg County School \District Five

Susan Hendrix Spartanburg County School \District Six

Meg Walker Spartanburg County School \District Seven

Category III/Legislative Appointee

Brantlee Fulmer

Kay Phillips

Sue Schneider

Counsel

Patrick Cont

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Spartanburg County First Steps Board

- Developed a password protected website for board members only for reports, announcements, committee work and communication
- Added an attorney as a board member, Daniel Sulton with Ford Harrison, in January 2010 as recommended by federal guidelines
- 5 members volunteered to help at the annual Early Education Conference
- “Launch Something” with Sims Hammond conducted a three day Strategic planning session resulting in stronger committee work within the board,
- “Mission Minute” featuring families, childcare providers and partnering agencies speaking at each meeting support the awareness & the relationships of the “why” of First Steps.

Spartanburg First Steps ...Telling the Story

Putting it All Together – A Story of Quality Childcare & Relationships

Joye Guyton, owner and director of Precious Little Angels in Pacolet, has been working very hard to raise the quality of care in her center since she joined the Quality Institute (QI) two years ago. During the first year of her participation in QI we spent many hours observing and assessing the classrooms at Precious Little Angels. It was not uncommon at 10:30 in the morning to see twenty-two 2, 3, and 4 year olds all seated in chairs watching a video, while they were waiting for their lunch to be prepared. The classrooms were piled high with plastic toys, and large tables and chairs dominated the space. The room was very loud and noisy. The overall impression of the center was a blur of children mixed with inappropriate toys and large, dark furniture. Our first Environment Rating Scale (ERS) assessment of the center confirmed our initial observation. The two year old room scored a 2.7 and the three/four year old room scored a 2.12. These scores did not even meet the minimal level on the ERS. Upon learning of her scores Joye commented, “I am mad! We can do better this. I am *determined* that we are going to understand what this means and we will do better.”

Joye spent the first two years of the project working very hard with a determined spirit that was evident in many elements that create quality change. One of those elements is the education of best practice and core knowledge of early childhood development. Joye was always in attendance at the monthly director meetings and trainings. She required her staff to attend specialized trainings that were developed for Quality Institute centers.

And all of Joye's staff completed *Early Child Development 101* through Spartanburg Community College. After a QI meeting where Debra Nodine from TEACH attended to explain the different certificates and educational opportunities available in the state, Joye decided to further her education by going back to school. She enrolled at Spartanburg Community College and began taking classes towards her Associate's Degree in early childhood. In the first year she earned her Director's Certificate and received a \$300.00 bonus from TEACH.

Another area that Joye addressed was the assessment results that she received from First Steps long with her ERS scores. The assessment reports are detailed and give specific information regarding indicators that were not met. Joye worked with her staff to study and understand the reports. Together, we discussed and designed new learning environments for the two year old and three/four year old classrooms. With the help of First Steps staff and Joye's leadership the staff studied and learned how to set-up appropriate learning environments and how to create quality interactions between a child and a teacher.

Another strong component in Joye's journey was her participation in the mentoring program. Joye's mentor, Edna Smith, had completed the Quality Institute program in 2007 and has continued to work with First Steps in the Quality Continuation Academy. Edna supported Joye by providing additional TA; Edna visited Joye's center and Joye spent time in Edna's center as well. Joye and Edna have developed a very strong mentor-mentee relationship. According to Joye, "Edna is wonderful. She has helped me with so many day to day problems. We are located in different parts of the county so there is no competition between us. She shares everything with me."

After two years of concentrated effort and hard work, Joye's determination paid off. Post-assessments were completed approximately two years after the first assessments. The scores illustrated a dramatic increase; the two year old room score increased from 2.7 to 4.7 and the three/four year old room score increased from 2.12 to 5.16. The three/four year old room scored above *good* on the scale and the two year old room was .3 from scoring *good* on the scale. Precious Little Angels now has well-defined learning centers, age-appropriate furniture and materials, and teachers who are developing a knowledge base of how young children develop and how caregivers engage with the children.

**WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT & PRAISE FROM
FIRST STEPS EARLY HEAD START
PARENTS ON RELATIONSHIPS
WITH THEIR CHILDREN**

“Good job, Elijah” □ “When my child cleans up after herself, I reward her with stickers” □ “Si nesecita algo me diga.” □ “I give Braden prizes for doing good things at home. I let him know when he does good things by telling him, “He has done a good job.” I let him know when he does good with his sister by saying that’s nice to share.” □ “Good girl □ “Le digo te amo. todos los dias.” □ “I say the sky’s the limit, you can do anything if you put your mind to it. I let him know he’s a good boy and I always encourage him to be independent; try new things. As praise for good behavior I sometimes let them pick out a toy or candy at the Dollar Tree. During Easter, Evan got a ribbon that said, “I’m special.” □ “I tell her every day you are special Shamy. You are a blessing to us.” □ “Give a dollar for the good your child(ren) do. Also, you can take a child places that is good that’s fun. Take a child to the zoo, movies, park, etc.” □ “Dando besos, abrazandolos.” □ “Besos. Abrazos. Palabras de carinos.” □ “I will show them something new then let them try it. I praise them for getting it right or at least trying something new.” □ “When I desire Colby to do, see or try something new I say “Look at this Colby.” Please do/try this like Mommy/whomever, then if he looks or tries, I praise him with either, “See what you can do” or “that’s a big boy.” □ “Recompensas si hacen algo bueno” □ “The things I say to encourage & praise my child are yeah?? When she does something in addition I clap my hands & smile to let her know she has done a good thing and that’s acceptable. I also tell my daughter good job & most importantly I tell her I love her.” □ “Que es muy bella y bonita.” □ “I encourage them in all day activities in life that they accomplish for the first time or even if they already have. I let them know that they are big boys and they can do anything they put their mind to and loving, respecting & caring can take you far in life.” □ “LLevarlos al parque si hacen algo bueno.” □ “ I encourage Shamy to eat more table food than to want the bottle.” □ “Encourage her to try to say what she wants then to point at what she wants.” □ “Que vaya a la escuela para que sea inteligente.” □ “Tell her I am proud of her. She is such a big girl. You can do it. Clap when she

goes to the potty.” □ “Diciendo que los quiero mucho.” □ “I love you!” □ “You are doing good!” □ “Good boy” □ Cuando se porta bien se lo hago saber.” □ “Good job.” □ “I praise my children by living them special things and hugs, kisses and I encourage them by saying do your best in anything that you do and keep your head up high and that I love them and will always be by their side.” □ “Le digo cosas muy bonitas para motivarlo; aplaudo cuando el hace las cosas que yo le enseno y le gusta que lo besen que lo abrazen y le digan cosas muy bonitas.” □ “You are getting sooo big!” □ “Play around with him to encourage laughter.” □ “Que coma bien para estar saludable.” □ “Reward him trips to chucky cheese.” □ “Mommy/Daddy’s very proud of you.” □ “Jugando con ellos, compartiendo much tiempo con ellos.” □ “Give a lot of hugs & kisses.” □ “Encourage him to do new things & use his imagination.” □ “Si nesesita algo me diga.” □ “We praise her when she picks up different things on the floor or on the table.” □ “We encourage her not to want her pacifier and give her things instead. Example toys, food, and doing family activities. We love you mommy & daddy and the family.” □ Leer libros con ellos.” □ I always tell her that she is a very special child.” □ “I’m so proud of you.” □ “Good girl.” □ “Les canto canciones y les cuento cuentos y los llevamos al parque.” □ “Great job!” □ “Way to go.” □ “Le digo te amo, todos los dias.” □ “Wow look at how smart you are.” □ “I reward him with things that he likes pizza, toys, hugs, candy or take him places.” □ That’s the best job ever.”

“The art of parenting is to teach the art of living to children.”