

## Parents as Teachers South Carolina

### **Summary**

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) evidence-based home visiting model is designed to ensure young children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. The model has demonstrated successful results in increasing parent knowledge of early childhood development, improving parenting practices, providing early detection of developmental delays and health issues, preventing child abuse and neglect, and promoting young children's healthy development and school readiness, including social-emotional and early literacy skills. Services to families are delivered by certified parent educators who emphasize parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting and family well-being in their work with families. PAT services include four interrelated and integrated components of the model: personal visits, group connections, screening and resource networks. Together these form a dynamic package of services. South Carolina Parents as Teachers Affiliate Programs served 2,900 children and 2,549 families in 2013 and is currently the largest home visiting model implemented in the state. South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness is the state lead for PAT and provides technical assistance, training and support to each of the states' 54 affiliate programs.

### **Demographics**

- *Target Settings:* Rural, urban, suburban; In 2013 there were 54 PAT programs in 37 counties in SC.
- *Target Groups Served:* Families of children prenatal to kindergarten entry with identified school readiness risk factors. Most common are low income, low educational attainment and teen parents.
- *Districts Served:* PAT affiliate Programs are in multiple districts in the state in Abbeville, Aiken, Allendale, Anderson (3), Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort (2), Berkeley, Calhoun, Charleston, Cherokee, Chester, Clarendon (2), Darlington, Dillon, Dorchester, Fairfield, Florence, Greenwood (3), Hampton, Horry, Jasper, Kershaw, Laurens (2), Lee, Lexington (5), McCormick, Marion, Marlboro (2), Newberry, Oconee, Pickens, Richland (3), Saluda, Spartanburg (3), Sumter, and York (4).

### **Research and Evaluation**

*What national or other research was considered during the development of this program/initiative?  
Describe the evidence that shows the program/initiative works.*

Independent evaluations have been integral to the success of the Parents as Teachers model. A range of research studies conducted by external researchers and supported by state governments, independent school districts, private foundations, universities and research organizations, and outcome data have been collected from more than 16,000 children and parents. These studies demonstrate that Parents as Teachers makes a real difference in the lives of parents and their children. The evidence that implementation of the Parents as Teachers model leads to statistically significant, positive effects for parents and children comes from rigorous research designs, including both randomized controlled trials and quasi-experimental studies. The results from these studies have resulted in 7 peer-reviewed professional journal publications. For more information go to [www.parentsasteachers.org](http://www.parentsasteachers.org) or <http://www.parentsasteachers.org/results/research>.

An outside independent evaluation of South Carolina First Steps home visitation programs conducted by High Scope Educational Research Foundation in 2009, showed that Home Visitation Programs improve parenting skills among the states most at risk families with children under 5. Programs saw significant increases in their pre-and post-assessments. Overall, 54% of participants who scored at a low quality of parenting improved to a moderate quality of parenting, 44% who had moderate parenting skills moved to high quality, and 11.9% who had low quality parenting at pre-test increased their skills to high quality. For more information go to the full evaluation report at <http://www.scfirststeps.org/evaluations.htm>

PAT SC's Annual report for 2013 showed that immunizations in SC exceeded the PAT national rate of 86% and was up from SC's 2012 rate of 87.58% to 92% (2013). SC served a greater number of families with two or more high needs characteristics (70%), than the National rate of 48%. SC also served a greater percentage of teens (22% vs. 11% national) and parents with low educational attainment (33% vs. 23% national). Overall, SC served low income families in greater numbers (85%) as compared to the national rate of 59%. Twenty percent (20%) of the current home visiting workforce in SC has a Master's degree or beyond as compared to the National rate of 15%. Additionally, 91% of all of SC's certified parent educators have a degree. Thus, using high quality staff, Parents as Teachers South Carolina has served families with more risk factors than the national average and achieved positive results from these efforts. South Carolina's commitment to implementation with fidelity and accountability has served as a model for other states' efforts.

## Resources

- *Annual Cost:* The annual cost for a PAT program varies according to size and scope of the program. In SC the cost is currently at approximately \$2400 per family served. This has increased in 2013 as new affiliate fees have come into play.
- *Funding Sources:* Funds in SC primarily come from state and local public funds with some private and federal funds blended in.
- *Staffing Needs:* There is a need for more affordable and targeted professional development opportunities designed specifically for those who work with highly challenged families. Two of SC's PAT goals for 2014 is to provide more training on early literacy and language and to provide a deeper level of understanding about how poverty affects brain development.
- *Infrastructure/Equipment Needs:* Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) instruments for hearing screening (for the birth to age 3 child) is needed to detect the earliest possible hearing problems. More Resources to help provide the experiences that we know can change the brain in those earliest years.
- *Partner Organizations:* South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness, South Carolina Department of Education, Local County First Steps Partnerships, Local School Districts, DSS, Part C of IDEA, Early Head Start and many other local partners that vary by location and county.

## Contact Information

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**Parents as Teachers**