

South Carolina First Steps e-Spotlight

April 1, 2016



Opportunities:

You are invited to
Read-In 2016!



Read-In 2016, a statewide celebration of reading, will be held at the State House in Columbia on Thursday, **April 14, 2016**. This exciting event provides an opportunity for children, parents, and all literacy supporters to demonstrate the importance of reading. Currently 640 children from 27 First Steps 4K centers are registered to participate!

The theme for 2016 is "The Magic of Books". Participants are encouraged to bring their favorite book to read on the State House grounds after the event. Banners and signs are also encouraged to help celebrate books and reading.

Participants will gather at the State Library at 1500 Senate Street between 9:15 am and 9:30 am. The parade to the State House begins promptly at 10 am. At the State House there will be a program followed by special entertainment and reading in small groups. First Steps will have a table set up at the event with literacy-based games and activities for children.

To register for the event, [click here](#).

Berkeley County First Steps Holds 2nd Annual Diaper Derby/ Youth Dash and Family Wellness Festival

On Saturday, March 19, Berkeley County First Steps (BCFS) and Berkeley-Dorchester Head Start hosted their 2nd Annual Diaper Derby/Youth Dash and Family Wellness Festival. The goal of this event was to encourage parents of young children to increase their amount of physical activity and to promote family health and wellness by connecting parents to local resources in their community.



A volunteer helps a baby participate in the "Diaper Derby."

To encourage participation in the event from volunteers, vendors, performers, and attendees, BCFS sent out media releases, put up flyers, and made postings on social media. Over sixty young children enjoyed activities designed to promote physical activity including crawling and running in a non-competitive diaper derby and youth dash. For the second year in a row, volunteers from the military cheered on children running in the dash. Participants of all ages danced together during free family Zumba. Cheerleaders from two local high schools invited preschoolers to cheer and dance while the local high school football teams provided volunteer support.

In addition to having 29 community health and wellness vendors provide educational information and local health and wellness resources to families, the event was supported by local first responders from the Sheriff, Fire and local EMS (including the EMS helicopter and crew) from Berkeley County. The annual event was made possible by a generous grant from the Cooper River Bridge Run Fund and Walmart Community Fund and in-kind from Berkeley County School District.

The Annual Diaper Derby/Youth Dash and Family Wellness Festival connected all of Berkeley County First Steps strategies. This event exemplifies how local First Steps partnerships serve as community conveners and portals for early childhood education and care. It also created awareness for funders and other stakeholders in the Tri-County area of the children and families living in rural Berkeley County, who are often under-resourced and overlooked by health initiatives. In closing, not only did BCFS and Berkeley Dorchester Head Start engage the community in a fun, active event, but also succeeded in promoting good health and well-being in young children and connecting families to other organizations who could provide them affordable programming for their health needs.

For more information on Berkeley County First Steps' 2nd Annual Diaper Derby/Youth Dash and Family Wellness Festival please contact Executive Director Adrienne Troy-Frazier at adriennetroyberkeleyfirststeps@aol.com. To view more pictures of the event, please visit BCFS' Facebook page by [clicking here](#).