

South Carolina First Steps e-Spotlight

April 8, 2016



SC First Steps Local Partnerships Look Forward to Celebrating the Week of the Young Child™

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WEEK of the YOUNG CHILD

2016
Celebrating Our
Youngest Learners!

The Week of the Young Child™ is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) celebrating early learning, young children, their teachers and families. The purpose of the WOYC™ is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs. This year, the WOYC™ will take place next week from Sunday, April 10th through Friday, April 16th with the theme of “Celebrating Our Youngest Learners.”

NAEYC first established the WOYC™ in 1971, recognizing that the early childhood years lay the foundation for children's success in school and later life. According to NAEYC's website, “the Week of the Young Child™ is a time to plan how we—as citizens of a community, of a state, and of a nation—will better meet the needs of all young children and their families.”

During the WOYC™, many local First Steps partnerships hold community events to bring awareness to the needs of young children and celebrate the adults involved in their education and

- **Aiken County First Steps** (ACFS) celebrates, “Aiken County’s Month of the Young Child,” and has planned activities throughout the month of April to provide fun, learning experiences for children and bring awareness to the needs of early learners and their families. Events include ACFS’ “2016 Read Across Aiken Readers Workshop”, several ACFS Family Enrichment sessions, childcare trainings, and Aiken County Public School District’s Early Childhood Forum, which will take place on April 20th.
- The theme of **Bamberg County First Steps’** WOYC™ will be “*Jump into Reading - Empowering our Youngest Learners.*” They will feature the book, “Uncle Nacho’s Hat / El Sombrero Del Tio Nacho,” and interactive Read Alouds will take place at all local First Steps funded programs and Head Start 4-K classes in Bamberg, including First Baptist Church Daycare, Denmark Head Start Center, Progressive Family Life Daycare Center, Little Precious Angels Daycare, Bamberg Head Start Center, and at the Family Connection Meeting for Parents as Teachers (PAT) families. Literacy activities will be developed around the theme and book to reinforce the children’s love of reading.
- On April 7th, **Barnwell First Steps** hosted a WOYC™ Kick-off Celebration in partnership with AXIS I Center, DHEC, and the Aiken Center. The celebration began with an opening address by Representative Lonnie Hosey, followed by a large group Zumba exercise led by the YMCA. Approximately 180 children attended from Head Start, childcare centers, two Kindergarten classes, and individual families, and 17 volunteers from the local career center helped to make the event a success. Children participated in a variety of fun, interactive activities including coloring, playing with “sand slime” and rainbow rice, singing and dancing to music, creating “bubble art”, and various other games. Children were given the opportunity to touch and learn about a police car and a fire truck, play with a parachute, and pet a chicken. Each child who attended also received a book to take home. The community’s collaboration on this event led to a fun, hands-on learning experience for Barnwell County’s children.



Children from Barnwell county participate in the community's WOYC™ Kick-Off Celebration held on April 7th.

(Partnerships’ WOYC™ plans are continued on the next page)

- On Thurs., April 14th from 9—10:30 am **Charleston County First Steps** will host a Literacy Fair and has invited all of their partner childcare centers as well as the families participating in their PAT program to attend. The event will feature a guest author Read Aloud, three local librarians leading music and motion activities based on popular children’s books, “Pete the Cat” themed arts and crafts projects, and gift bags for each centers with books to add to their “lending libraries.” PAT families who attend will also receive books to take home.

- During the WOYC™, **Cherokee County First Steps** will be launching their Talk to Me Early Language and Literacy initiative. This launch will take place on Friday, April 15th from 10:00am - 11:00am and be held at Limestone College in the Stephenson Dining Hall Banquet Room. The launch of this initiative will emphasize the importance of early language and literacy to a child’s development and eventual success in life. Visit <http://talktomecherokee.com/> for more information.



Children, childcare providers, and volunteers participate in a parachute activity as part of Barnwell county's WOYC™ Kick-Off Celebration on April 7th.

- As part of its annual Week of the Young Child observance, **Chesterfield County First Steps (CCFS)** sponsored its first social media contest which began on March 14, 2016 at 7:00am and ended on March 31 at 2:00 pm The contest was another component of First Steps’ public awareness campaign to better inform the public how every person can have a significant impact on the health, well-being and school readiness of all Chesterfield County’s young children. The winner will be announced during the Week of the Young Child.
- **Dillon County First Steps (DCFS)** will incorporate fun WOYC™ activities into their Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visits for the week. On Monday, all home visits will have age-appropriate music activities, Tuesday’s visits will include children and families completing cooking activities and receiving healthy eating tips, “Building Together” will be the theme on Wednesday and home visits will include math and science activities, and “Problem Solving” be Thursday’s theme and children will work on developing appropriate social and fine motor skills with their home visitor. On Friday, April 15th DCFS will have a Family Day at their local Wellness Center from 10:30am – 12:00pm celebrating the WOYC™ and specifically highlighting parents as their child’s first and most important teachers. Local vendors with services targeted to families of children from 0-5 years will attend to provide them resources. An interactive story time is also scheduled where parents will share family stories with their children. Door prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be served at the event.
- On April 9th, **Dorchester County First Steps**, in partnership with the Dorchester County Library, will hold a Literacy Awareness Day after the Grit Festival Parade at the St. George Library Branch. The event will showcase the “Every Child Ready to Read” literacy kits, include interactive, early literacy activities for children, and participating children will be given a book to take home. From April 10th – 16th DCFS will join together with the Summerville Friends of the Library and Eat-Sleep-Play to host the “Every Child Ready to Read StoryWalk Kick-off” at Saul Alexander Playground in Summerville. Activities will include interactive literacy stations promoting reading, writing, talking, singing and playing. The StoryWalk book will be the 2016 Children’s Book of the Year, “Pete the Cat I Love My White Shoes” and will remain up at the playground for the WOYC™. Another “Every Child Read to Read” Storywalk will take place on April 23th at the Harleyville Community Park.
- **Florence and Marion County First Steps** will recognized a “Provider of the Year” from their network association of family and group child care home providers during the WOYC™ .
- **Georgetown County First Steps** is inviting children and their families to participate in a different event for each day of the WOYC™ including “Music Monday”, “Taco Tuesday”, “Work Together Wednesday” (where they will be taking a field trip to Brookgreen Gardens), “Artsy Thursday”, and “Family Friday.”

(Partnerships’ WOYC™ plans are continued on the next page)

- **Greenville County First Steps** celebrates the WOYC™ in collaboration with community organizations, child care centers, churches, and families to create a city-wide Greenville WOYC™. Kids Fest at Heritage Green, presented by Primrose School of Greenville, will take place this Saturday, April 9th from 10am – 12 pm, and is an annual celebration to kick off the WOYC™. This festival is geared towards young learners and is filled with age appropriate activities for children 1-5 years old. Each Heritage Green entity will have a booth on the lawn with opportunities for families to experience what the museum or entity provides the community every day. Heritage Green entities include Greenville County Library System, Bob Jones University Museum & Gallery, Upcountry History Museum, The Children's Museum of the Upstate, Greenville Little Theatre, and Greenville County Museum of Art. Kids Fest at Heritage Green is sponsored by Primrose School of Greenville and supported by SCAEYC and Greenville First Steps. Greenville WOYC™ also includes restaurant nights with deals and fun especially for families with young children. The eight participating restaurants will have a special coloring placemat and crayons to help families celebrate the community's youngest learners. Visit www.facebook.com/GreenvilleWOYC™ for more information about participating restaurants and the WOYC™ in Greenville.
- To notify the community of the Week of the Young Child, **McCormick County First Steps** has an announcement posted on the Community Marque. They also sent an article and picture to the local newspaper featuring their child care center and the [I CAN] campaign. The partnership's childcare center is hosting a variety of events for the children during the WOYC™ including a volunteer teaching music on Tues., April 12th, special art projects on Wednesday April 13th, and Sign Language lessons on Fri., April 15th.
- **Newberry County First Steps (NCFS)** will hold a friendly competition between their county's public and private 4K programs consisting of participating in and recording daily events in their classrooms during the WOYC™. A winner from both the private and the public sector will be chosen and given a Walmart gift card. Each day of the week will include new activities for children with the WOYC™ themes of "Music Monday", "Taco Tuesday", "Work Together Wednesday", "Artsy Thursday", and "Family Friday." NCFS is also celebrating the WOYC™ with other community partners and on April 12th at 6:30 pm, will participate in Newberry County's "Big Read" at the Hal Kohn Memorial featuring children's book illustrator Cecile Martin. "Media Day" will take place on April 14th and will feature a proclamation signed by the Mayor officially designating April 10-14 as the "Week of the Young Child in Newberry County."
- **Oconee County First Steps** will kick off the WOYC™ with the 2nd Annual Oconee County Community Baby Shower scheduled for 10:00 am to 1:00 pm on Sat., April 9th at the Shaver Recreation Center in Seneca.
- The theme for **Pickens County First Steps (PCFS)**' WOYC™ celebration is "[I CAN] be a Superhero!" On Fri. April 8th, PCFS will host a "Partners for Prevention Lunch & Learn" followed by the planting of a pinwheel garden to raise awareness for child abuse prevention. Different events for children and families will take place each day from Mon., April 11th—Fri., April 17th at various locations in Pickens county. On Monday, April 11th, the grand opening of



Children from Spartanburg county participate in last year's Week of the Young Child celebrations .

the Born Learning Trail will take place at Jaycee Park in Pickens and storyteller, Judy Seeley, will be featured. Tuesday's event will feature the Liberty Fire Department at Freedom Park in Liberty, on Wednesday there will be story-times held at three library locations in Pickens county, Buddy's Safe House will be featured on Thursday's event at JB "Red" Owens Park in Easley, and on Friday, the grand opening of the Born Learning Trail will take place at Tottie's Place in Clemson and include storyteller Lisa Eister. At all of these events children will be able to join their "favorite superhero friends" for games, crafts, and more activities. In addition, the towns of Pickens, Easley, and Clemson will each host restaurant nights from Mon. April, 11th—Thurs., April 14th at different locations. For more information, [click here.](#)

- **Spartanburg County First Steps**, United Way of the Piedmont Young Leaders, and the City of Spartanburg are joining together for children during the Week of the Young Child™. As part of the WOYC™, their community is honoring young children and all those who make a difference in children's lives by celebrating with their annual Play in the Park event on Tues. April 12th from 10am – 12pm at Barnet Park (rain date Tues., April, 19th). Community organizations will provide free hands-on activities for three and four year-olds from local child care centers. There will even be a few celebrities making appearances!

- Williamsburg County First Steps (WCFS)** will collaborate with Williamsburg County School district, Williamsburg Technical College, Williamsburg County Public Library, and DSS to host a variety of activities and events for the WOYC™. “Pass the Pan” will take place on Sunday, April 10th where faith-based donations will be accepted for Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library. On Friday, April 15th an “Awards Banquet” will be held at the Williamsburg County School District Annex Cafeteria at 6pm to celebrate young children and honor parents, childcare providers, teachers, paraprofessionals, and elected officials who have made a difference in the lives of young children. A Kids’ Jam-boree, the Taste of the Pee Dee and a conference for childcare providers, parents, and teachers will take place concurrently on Sat., April 16th at Williamsburg Technical College. A variety of activities for children will be offered, including face painting, an art table, movement games, a jump castle, and various games. Community vendors and agencies will be present with resources for families of young children. The Taste of Pee Dee will occur between 12pm and 3pm where attendees can sample food from restaurants and cooks in the area. In addition, as part of the WOYC™ for Williamsburg County, Williamsburg Technical College Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Early Childhood Program have been collecting gently used children’s books to donate to WCFS on Sat., April 16th.
- York County First Steps** will hold their WOYC celebrations the week of April 18th—April 22nd to coincide with Rock Hill’s Annual “Come See Me Festival.” The mascot of the weeklong festival is “Glen the Frog” and many of the events feature a frog theme. ParentSmart, the Early Learning Partnership of York County, and York County First Steps will be joining together to host activities for children and families during the WOYC. On Mon., April 18th, parents with preschool children are invited to the WOYC kick off event at St. John’s United Methodist Church at 10:30 am. Rock Hill’s Mayor Echols will help kick off the celebration followed by fun, interactive activities. All children who attend will receive a free book. On Fri., April 22nd, parents and children aged 2-6 are invited to the ParentSmart Family Resource Center from 10 am—2 pm to create some exciting crafts, have their face painted, exercise and more.