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DARLINGTON COUNTY FIRST STEPS RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION AS A BLUE RIBBON AFFILIATE

Darlington County First Steps' Parents as Teachers program successfully completes the Quality Endorsement and Improvement process with the Parents as Teachers national office.

Hartsville—November 9, 2017 – Darlington County First Steps (DCFS) earned a prestigious endorsement by Parents as Teachers national center as a Blue Ribbon Affiliate, making it one of the top performing early education and home visiting affiliates within the international Parents as Teachers network. The official designation was made on October 1, 2017.

Being named a Blue Ribbon Affiliate affirms that DCFS is a high-quality member of the home visitation and parent education field, implementing the evidence-based Parents as Teachers model with fidelity. Families in the Darlington County community are positively impacted by the services delivered by this program, which include home visits, group connections, child screening and connections to community resources, equipping parents with knowledge and resources to prepare their children for a stronger start in life and greater success in school.

To earn this recognition, over the past year staff at DCFS completed the intensive Quality Endorsement and Improvement process through the Parents as Teachers national center. The organization's program demonstrated that it meets all of the Parents as Teachers Essential Requirements and at least 75 percent of the Parents as Teachers Quality Standards. The designation as a Blue Ribbon Affiliate is good for five years, until September 30, 2022 as long as the program continues to meet the Essential Requirements.

The Quality Endorsement and Improvement Process is designed to help ensure and recognize quality implementation of the Parents as Teachers model, which is used in more than 1,300 organizations including schools, family resource centers, social service agencies, housing authorities, churches, and healthcare systems.

"Working with and supporting parents are foundational aspects of our vision for Darlington County. A huge thank you to Mrs. Linda Bright-Edwards, our recently retired Parent Educator, for her commitment to excellence which led to this designation. A special thank you to the many parents who were served and continue to be engaged in the programs and services we offer under the leadership of our new Parent Educator, Britney Brisbon. All the work we do at Darlington County First Steps is to ensure families are strong and communities are healthy" said Darlington County First Steps executive director, Darnell Byrd McPherson.



About Parents as Teachers

Parents as Teachers is an international, non-profit organization that promotes optimal early development, learning and health of young children. Parents as Teachers provides an evidence-based home visiting model and is a center for innovation in promising practices. Parents as Teachers designs and develops quality research-based and evidence-informed curricula and trainings for early childhood family support professionals.

We support evidence based model implementation by our local partners through professional development, implementation support, continuous quality improvement and a quality endorsement process. We facilitate data collection, analysis, evaluation and research to deepen and demonstrate our impact in communities. Lastly, we advocate for children and families at the state and federal level through community engagement.

For more information, visit www.ParentsAsTeachers.org.