Beaufort-Jasper
Economic Opportunity
Commission Inc.
Our Business is Helping People

Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start and Early Head Start

2023 Community Assessment

community Action
PARTNERSHIP
Helping People. Changing Lives.

Table of Contents

"Helping People. Changing Lives."

Vision

Our vision at Beaufort-Jasper EOC is to provide quality services to the community through the empowerment of children, families, and staff.
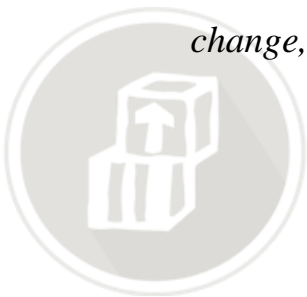
Mission

The mission of the Beaufort-Jasper EOC is to plan and implement human service programs for socially and economically challenged individuals. The agency will advocate on behalf of our customers in such a manner that their quality of life will be enhanced and less dependent upon government subsidies. The ultimate goal is for them to become self-sufficient and productive citizens.

Philosophy

The program is child-focused and has the overall goal of increasing the social competence of young children in low-income families. Social competence takes into account the interrelatedness of culture, social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development.
Program services are family-centered, following the tenets that children develop in the context of their family and culture, and that parents are respected as the primary educators and nurturers of their children, Head Start offers family members opportunities and support for growth and change, believing that people can identify their own strengths, needs, interests, and are capable of finding solutions.

Introduction

History of Beaufort-Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc.,

"Our Business is Helping People"

Figure 1 Congressman James Clyburn

Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc., a non-profit agency began as a Youth Corps Program. The program was directed by James Clyburn, who is now a U.S. Congressman. The Corporation's Charter date is March 11, 1966; hence the agency has been operating within the state of South Carolina since 1966. Over the past fifty-seven (57) years, the agency has brought billions of dollars into the local area. This money is primarily for the purpose of implementing innovative and creative approaches to combat poverty in geographically designated areas. Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission seeks to involve the community, including public officials, private sector representatives, and local residents living on limited incomes, in assessing local resources that fight the causes and conditions of poverty.

Beaufort-Jasper EOC, Inc., currently, is primarily funded by Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Community Service Block Grant. The agency operates in both Beaufort and Jasper counties incorporating innovation, forward thinking and addressing the needs within the community. The Head Start program has been in operation in both counties since 1966 and the Early Head Start program since 2000. The agency has written memorandums of agreements with other community organizations and departments that provide supportive service for children and families; examples include the Department of Social Services, Local School Districts, Health Departments, First Steps, Pediatricians, Mental Health Providers and Dentist.

Helping people. Changing lives. Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission serves as a pillar in the community which has provided countless individuals and families an enhanced quality of life through its many programs, services, resources and employment. The agency boasts the community as its greatest asset and the human capital who contribute to the welfare of community. Development of human potential through investment in its citizens is an honor the agency does not take for granted.

In changing times, the agency has proven through great leadership and community support its ability to keep up with the ebbs and flows of social, political, and economic tides including sequestration. The agency remains on the cutting edge of its social programs through strategic alignment and implementation of outstanding social and educational services that are recognized throughout Beaufort and Jasper Counties.

> ➢ The agency boasts a stellar fiscal history which to date has had no findings per any fiscal audits.
> ➢ Strong and streamlined early childhood curriculum alignment between national, state, and international standards to include STEM/STEAM programming in Early and Pre School Head Start.
> ➢ Statewide Part C partnership agreement
> ➢ Dedicated staff, supporters, and partnerships

The agency's commitment towards a shared vision, mission, and philosophy for that of the community and stakeholders, remains a legacy of Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc.

Community Assessment Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Community Assessment is to gather information, to pinpoint relevant economic, social, and logistical problems and to identify community resources that may be helpful in meeting community needs. Further, information provided by the Community Assessment enables Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission Head Start/Early Head Start, referred to as BJEOC Head Start, to refine its philosophy and goals, set short and long term program objectives, strategically plan for the location of future centers, and respond to the changing needs of their children and families within the context of the broader community. The goal of the BJEOC Head Start program is to conceive, formulate, and implement an optimally designed program, with centers strategically located to promote school readiness in children who bear the burden of economic adversity in Beaufort and Jasper Counties. The BJEOC Head Start recognizes the importance of developing relationships with other social agencies in order to collaborate on strategies to alleviate poverty across these communities.

The program relies on these relationships to help stay abreast of new and latest trends and services, and to share information and referrals in order to close the gaps that exist in community services for Head Start/Early Head Start eligible families. As specified in the Head Start Performance Standards, BJEOC Head Start will use this assessment as the foundation for the implementation of strategies to help serve and support our targeted population. The data provided is broken down by each county served includes:

- A demographic analysis of the makeup of Head Start eligible children, families, and expectant mothers, including the geographic location, racial and ethnic composition, and languages spoken.
- The available data regarding children experiencing homelessness and children in foster care.
- The available data regarding education, health, nutrition and social service needs of eligible children and families. Including typical work, school, and training schedules of parents with eligible children.
- An estimated number of children with disabilities between the ages of 0-5, including the types of disabilities, services, and resources available.
- Child development and child care programs, family child care programs, and publicly funded state and local preschools, and the approximate number of Head Start eligible children served by each.
- A summary of community resources that can be utilized to address the needs of eligible children and families; including the assessment of their availability and accessibility.

This analysis and collection of data will assist in determining the overall strengths of the community, assist in the evaluation of our philosophy, long-range and short-range program objectives, determination of recruitment and the program's scope of work, and set the criteria that define the eligible children and families who will be given priority for recruitment and selection.

Methodology, Data Collection, and Sources

The Community Assessment is a compilation of information related to the trends, available resources and challenges facing Head Start eligible children and their families in Beaufort and Jasper Counties, particularly those in areas served by the program. Staff files and the program data systems were used to collect information about services to children and their families as well as to capture the demographics and profiles of current families. Needs assessments and surveys were completed by parents during the 2021-2022 school year. Data was reviewed and analyzed from a variety of sources: state agency reports, census data and correspondence from varying community agencies. Program data reviewed included the Head Start/Early Head Start Program Information Reports (PIR), content area reports and tracking systems for services provided. Family Assessments were taken of all families currently enrolled in the program, as well as parent training assessments. All available tools were utilized to gain a better understanding of child and family needs. Sources are listed in the reports.

Finally, small and brief conversations at local businesses (such as "Together for Beaufort", The Lowcountry Early Childhood Coalition, and the Beaufort and Jasper County Chamber of Commerce) were useful for gathering a broader picture of the community during the assessment period. Information collected will assist the Administrator, governing bodies, and staff in developing strategic plans with long and short term goals over the next five years. Both quantitative and qualitative data have been integrated throughout this assessment to provide diverse perspectives on the communities served by the BJEOC Head Start/Early Head Start program.

Beaufort and Jasper Economic Issues

Beaufort County and Jasper County are located in the southern part of South Carolina, with Beaufort County being the more populous of the two. Both counties have experienced economic growth in recent years, but they also face several persistent economic issues:

Demographics: According to the US Census Bureau, the estimated population of Beaufort County in 2021 was 198,541, with a median age of 43.8 years. Jasper County, on the other hand, had an estimated population of 30,169, with a median age of 40.9 years. In both counties, the population is predominantly white, with African Americans comprising the largest minority group. The Hispanic/Latino population has also been growing in recent years.

Economic Growth: Beaufort County has experienced steady economic growth in recent years, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of $9.1 billion in 2019, up from $8.1 billion in 2015, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The county's largest industries are healthcare and social assistance, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. However, Jasper County has struggled to attract investment and has seen a decline in its economy in recent years. Its GDP was $663 million in 2019, down from $782 million in 2015.

Housing: Both Beaufort and Jasper Counties have seen an increase in the cost of housing, making it difficult for many residents to afford homes. In Beaufort County, the median home value was $330,000 in 2021, up from $250,000 in 2010, according to Zillow. In Jasper County, the median home

value was $133,000 in 2021, up from $99,000 in 2010. This increase in housing costs has made it challenging for low-income families to find affordable housing.

Chamber of Commerce Data: According to the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce, the county's largest industries are healthcare and social assistance, retail trade, and tourism. The tourism industry has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, with many businesses struggling to stay afloat. However, the county has seen an increase in remote workers and entrepreneurs, which could lead to new economic opportunities. Jasper County's chamber of commerce reports that the county's largest industry is manufacturing, with transportation and logistics also playing a significant role.

Child Birthrate Data: According to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the birth rate in Beaufort County has been declining steadily over the past few years. In 2020, there were 1,629 births, down from 1,803 in 2015. In Jasper County, the birth rate has remained relatively stable, with 361 births in 2020, up from 329 in 2015. This decline in the birth rate could lead to an aging population and a potential labor shortage in the future.

Overall, while Beaufort County has seen steady economic growth in recent years, there are still challenges related to affordable housing and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry. Jasper County faces more significant economic challenges, with a declining GDP and difficulty attracting investment. Both counties will need to address these issues to ensure continued economic growth and prosperity for their residents.

In addition to the above-mentioned challenges, there are several other economic issues that both Beaufort and Jasper Counties face. These include:

Income Inequality: According to the US Census Bureau, the median household income in Beaufort County was $72,392 in 2020, which is higher than the state median of $54,765. However, there is significant income inequality in the county, with many residents living in poverty. In Jasper County, the median household income was $44,046 in 2020, which is lower than the state median.

Unemployment: While the unemployment rate in Beaufort County has improved since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains higher than pre-pandemic levels. In January 2022, the unemployment rate was 4.2%, down from a high of 12.3% in April 2020, but still higher than the 2.5% unemployment rate in January 2020. In Jasper County, the unemployment rate was 6.1% in January 2022, down from a high of 17.9% in April 2020.

Education: Both Beaufort and Jasper Counties have lower educational attainment rates than the state average. According to the US Census Bureau, 30.5% of Beaufort County residents aged 25 and over have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to the state average of 31.6%. In Jasper County, only 12.7% of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Infrastructure: Infrastructure, including roads and bridges, is an ongoing issue in both Beaufort and Jasper Counties. Many roads and bridges are in need of repair or replacement, which can be costly and time-consuming.

In conclusion, Beaufort County and Jasper County face several economic challenges that require attention. While Beaufort County has experienced economic growth, there are still issues related to affordable housing and

income inequality. Jasper County faces more significant economic challenges, with a declining GDP and difficulty attracting investment. Addressing these issues will require a concerted effort from local government, businesses, and community leaders to ensure continued economic growth and prosperity for the residents of these counties.

Beaufort & Jasper Counties: Family Strengths, Challenges and Health

Research articles, state government reports, and census data between 2020-2023 have identified several core issues, barriers, and challenges that impact low-income and at-risk families in Beaufort County and Jasper County, South Carolina. These challenges have negative consequences for children who live in these families, as they may face a range of developmental, educational, and health issues as a result of their parents' struggles.

One key issue that affects low-income and at-risk families in these counties is the lack of access to affordable housing. According to a report by the South Carolina State Housing Finance and Development Authority, Beaufort County has a significant shortage of affordable rental units, with a deficit of over 2,000 units as of 2020. This means that many low-income families struggle to find affordable and safe housing, which can lead to overcrowding, homelessness, and other negative consequences for children. Jasper County also faces similar challenges, with a shortage of affordable housing options that disproportionately affect low-income families.

Another significant issue that affects low-income and at-risk families in these counties is access to healthcare. According to the US Census Bureau, as of 2020, nearly 15% of residents in Beaufort County and over 20% of residents in Jasper County lacked health insurance coverage. This lack of coverage can

limit families' ability to access necessary medical care, which can have negative health outcomes for both children and adults. Children from low-income families are more likely to experience poor health outcomes, such as asthma, obesity, and mental health issues, due to a lack of access to healthcare.

Additionally, low-income and at-risk families in these counties often face challenges related to employment and income. The unemployment rate in both counties increased significantly in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with low-wage workers being disproportionately affected. Many families struggle to find stable and well-paying jobs, which can make it difficult to afford basic needs such as food, clothing, and transportation. Children from low-income families are more likely to experience food insecurity and may have limited access to resources that support their educational and developmental needs.

Other barriers that impact low-income and at-risk families in these counties include limited access to quality early childhood education, limited access to transportation, and inadequate support for mental health and substance abuse issues. These barriers can exacerbate the challenges that families already face and may have negative impacts on children's development, academic success, and overall well-being.

Low-income and at-risk families in Beaufort County and Jasper County, South Carolina face a range of barriers and challenges that impact their well-being and the well-being of their children. These barriers include limited access to affordable housing, healthcare, employment, and education, as well as inadequate support for mental health and substance abuse issues. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that involves government, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders working together to promote economic mobility, access to healthcare, and other supports for families in need.

COVID-19 Impact:

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on low-income and at-risk families in Beaufort County and Jasper County, South Carolina. Research articles, state government reports, and census data between 2020-2023 have identified several ways in which the pandemic has exacerbated existing challenges and created new barriers for these families.

One significant impact of the pandemic on low-income families in these counties has been the economic disruption caused by job loss and reduced work hours. According to the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, the unemployment rate in Beaufort County reached 12.9% in April 2020, up from just 2.5% in February 2020. Similarly, the unemployment rate in Jasper County reached 16.5% in April 2020, up from 4.8% in February 2020. Low-wage workers were disproportionately affected by job loss and reduced hours, which has made it even more difficult for families to afford basic needs such as food, housing, and healthcare.

The pandemic has also exacerbated housing insecurity for low-income families in these counties. According to a report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, the pandemic has led to an increase in evictions and a decrease in affordable housing options. Families who were already struggling to make ends meet before the pandemic have found it even more challenging to access safe and stable housing. This has negative consequences for children, who may experience homelessness, frequent moves, or overcrowding.

The pandemic has also had a significant impact on children's education. According to the South Carolina Department of Education, school closures in the spring of 2020 led to widespread disruptions in learning, with many

children from low-income families experiencing significant learning loss. The shift to remote learning also created barriers for families without access to high-speed internet or technology, which made it difficult for children to participate in online classes and complete assignments. The pandemic has highlighted existing educational inequities and created new barriers for low-income families.

Additionally, the pandemic has had negative impacts on families' mental health and well-being. According to a survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation, 53% of adults in South Carolina reported negative mental health impacts due to the pandemic. Families who were already struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues have found it even more challenging to access necessary supports and services during the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on low-income and at-risk families in Beaufort County and Jasper County, South Carolina. The pandemic has exacerbated existing challenges related to employment, housing, education, and healthcare and has created new barriers for families. Addressing these challenges will require a comprehensive approach that includes targeted economic relief, access to affordable housing, and support for education and mental health services.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on childcare and school enrollment in Beaufort County and Jasper County, South Carolina. Research articles, state government reports, and census data between 2020-2023 have identified several ways in which the pandemic has disrupted childcare and school enrollment.

One significant impact of the pandemic on childcare in these counties has been the closure of childcare centers and the decrease in available childcare options. According to a report by the South Carolina Department of Social Services, the number of licensed childcare providers in the state decreased by 18% between March 2020 and March 2021. This has created significant challenges for families who rely on childcare to be able to work or attend school. In addition, the pandemic has led to increased costs for childcare, as providers have had to implement additional health and safety protocols.

The pandemic has also had a significant impact on school enrollment in these counties. According to the South Carolina Department of Education, the number of students enrolled in public schools in the state decreased by 2.6% between the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. This decrease was even more significant for younger students, with enrollment in kindergarten and first grade decreasing by 9.2% and 5.2%, respectively. The pandemic has made it difficult for families to navigate the uncertainty and disruption caused by school closures, remote learning, and changes in school schedules.

The pandemic has also highlighted existing educational inequities and created new barriers for families. According to a report by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, children from low-income families and children of color have been disproportionately affected by school closures and the shift to remote learning. These children are more likely to lack access to high-speed internet, technology, and other resources necessary to participate in remote learning. In addition, the pandemic has created significant learning loss for many students, particularly those from low-income families, who may not have had access to the same educational opportunities during remote learning.

Furthermore, the pandemic has created significant challenges for families who are juggling work, childcare, and remote learning. According to a survey by the Census Bureau, 17% of households in South Carolina with children reported that it was difficult for children to complete schoolwork because of a lack of a computer or internet access. Parents who have had to balance work and childcare responsibilities while also supervising remote learning have reported increased stress and decreased work productivity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on childcare and school enrollment in Beaufort County and Jasper County, South Carolina. The pandemic has disrupted childcare options and created significant challenges for families navigating school closures and remote learning. Addressing these challenges will require a comprehensive approach that includes targeted economic relief, access to affordable and high-quality childcare, and support for education and technology access.

Beyond COVID-19, other data points highlight family strengths, family challenges, and other areas of need:

Family Strengths:

The family strengths in both Beaufort and Jasper Counties include high birth rates and a relatively low rate of founded cases of child abuse. According to data from the South Carolina Department of Social Services, in Beaufort County, there were 96 founded cases of child abuse in 2020, which is a decrease from the 111 cases in 2019. Similarly, in Jasper County, there were 20 founded cases of child abuse in 2020, which is a decrease from the 24 cases in 2019. Additionally, both counties have relatively high birth rates, which can indicate a strong desire for families to have children and start or expand their families.

Family Challenges:

One of the primary challenges facing families in both Beaufort and Jasper Counties is affordable childcare for families with children ranging from 0-3 years old. According to data from Child Care Aware of America, the average cost of infant care in South Carolina is $8,436 per year, which is higher than the average cost of in-state tuition at a public four-year university. Many families struggle to afford high-quality childcare, which can impact their ability to work and provide for their families.

Family Health Issues:

In terms of family health issues, there are several trends to note in both Beaufort and Jasper Counties. According to data from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the percentage of women receiving prenatal care in Beaufort County has remained steady at around 80% between 2020-2023. In Jasper County, the percentage of women receiving prenatal care has fluctuated between 75% and 82% during the same period. While these rates are relatively high, there is still room for improvement to ensure that all pregnant women have access to prenatal care.

At-Risk Children:

According to data from the South Carolina Department of Education, in Beaufort County, 33.7% of children aged 0-5 are considered at-risk, which is higher than the state average of 28.7%. Similarly, in Jasper County, 41.5% of children aged 0-5 are considered at-risk, which is significantly higher than the state average. This can be attributed to factors such as poverty, limited access to high-quality early childhood education, and a lack of resources for families.

Head Start Services:

In terms of families eligible for Head Start services, there is a significant gap between those with a high school diploma and those with a bachelor's degree. According to data from the US Department of Health and Human Services, in Beaufort County, 65% of families with a high school diploma or less are eligible for Head Start services, compared to only 20% of families with a bachelor's degree. Similarly, in Jasper County, 77% of families with a high school diploma or less are eligible for Head Start services, compared to only 11% of families with a bachelor's degree. This indicates a need for greater access to early childhood education and resources for families with higher levels of education.

Families in Beaufort and Jasper Counties face several challenges related to affordable childcare, family health, and early childhood education. While both counties have relatively high birth rates and low rates of founded child abuse, there is a significant need for greater resources and support for families with young children. Addressing these challenges will require a multi-faceted approach involving local government, community organizations, and businesses to ensure that families have access to the resources and support they need to thrive.

Through effective programming, partnerships, collaborations, and awareness, Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission, Inc., is dedicated to assisting and empowering families to overcome social, economic, and health challenges.

The Beaufort-Jasper service areas are part of the culturally significant "Heritage Corridor. The cultural heritage corridor extends from Wilmington, North Carolina to Jacksonville, Florida, from the coast to 30 miles inland. The areas serve as historical and cultural landmarks that trace history and contributions of African Americans to the development of the United States. This corridor is a representation of the journey of African Americans from involuntary servitude to freedom, and it encompasses sites of historical and cultural significance, such as museums, historic sites, and cultural institutions.

The cultural heritage corridor was established in 2008 through the Cultural Heritage Corridor Act, which aimed to promote tourism and economic development along the corridor. The act designated the cultural heritage corridor as a National Heritage Area, which provided funding and resources to support the preservation and promotion of the corridor's historical and cultural significance.

The cultural heritage corridor has played an important role in the economic stability of Beaufort and Jasper Counties, as well as other counties along the corridor. The promotion of tourism and economic development has created

jobs and opportunities for businesses in the area, and the preservation of historical and cultural landmarks has attracted visitors from around the world. In addition, the cultural heritage corridor has provided educational opportunities for children and adults alike, offering a unique perspective on the history of African Americans in the United States.

The cultural heritage corridor has also impacted early childhood education in these areas along the corridor. By highlighting the contributions of African Americans to the development of the United States, the corridor has provided a platform for educators to teach children about the importance of diversity and cultural heritage. However, there have been challenges in the past regarding the representation and recognition of African American history in early childhood education. Some of these challenges include a lack of resources and training for educators and a lack of recognition of the contributions of African Americans in history books and curricula.

In modern times, the cultural heritage corridor has impacted economics by providing a model for community-based initiatives that focus on preserving cultural heritage and promoting economic development. The corridor serves as an example of how community-based efforts can promote economic growth and social stability by highlighting the contributions of diverse communities.

It is important to recognize that the cultural heritage corridor has faced challenges in the past related to the unequal treatment of African Americans, particularly in the education system. Despite the landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954, which declared segregation in public schools to be unconstitutional, many schools along the corridor continued to practice segregation and discrimination well into the 1960s and beyond.

These challenges serve as a reminder that the impact of the cultural heritage corridor on early childhood education and at-risk communities is not only about promoting diversity and cultural heritage, but also about addressing systemic inequities that continue to impact these communities. Hence, the cultural heritage corridor can play a vital role in shaping future decision-making regarding at-risk communities by serving as a model for inclusive and equitable development. By promoting community partnerships, providing educational resources and opportunities, and advocating for policies that support economic growth and social stability, the corridor can help to address the unique needs of at-risk communities and promote greater equity and inclusion throughout the region. The corridor has also brought together different communities, businesses, organizations, and individuals to work towards a common goal of preserving and promoting cultural heritage. Through community engagement and collaboration, the corridor has fostered a sense of belonging and unity among residents of Beaufort and Jasper Counties and other communities along the corridor.

However, there is still room for improvement in terms of enhancing the impact of the cultural heritage corridor on early childhood education and at-risk communities. Some of the ways in which the corridor can enhance its efforts include:

➢ Developing more educational resources and curricula that recognize and promote the contributions of African Americans to the development of the United States, including those related to early childhood education.

- Partnering with local schools and organizations to provide opportunities for children and families to learn about the history and culture of the corridor.

- Ensuring that the corridor is accessible and inclusive to all communities, including those that may face economic, social, or cultural barriers.

- Providing more support for local businesses and organizations that promote the cultural heritage of the corridor.

- Encouraging community-based initiatives that focus on preserving and promoting cultural heritage and economic development.

- Providing training and resources for educators and community leaders to recognize and address the unique needs of at-risk communities.

- Fostering community partnerships and collaborations that promote economic growth and social stability.

- Encouraging STEAM education that incorporates the cultural heritage of the corridor.

- Increasing public awareness of the cultural heritage corridor and its importance.

> ➤ Advocating for policies and programs that support the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage and economic development along the corridor.

Service Area Enrollment by Counties

Beaufort-Jasper EOC Head Start program provides comprehensive services to **551** children age's six weeks through five years old and their families. In Beaufort County four hundred twenty-six **(426)** children and their families are served at six (6) sites. Four (4) sites are located in public school buildings, one (1) site is located on Hilton Head Island housed in a Housing Authority community room, and one (1) site is an agency owned facility located in Port Royal serving only Early Head Start students. Children served in public school buildings are collaboratively transported by Head Start and the local school district. Transportation is not provided at our Hilton Head site and not for Early Head Start.

In Jasper County one hundred and twenty-five (**125)** children and their families are served at three (3) sites. Two (2) sites are located in public school buildings and one (1) site is operating in a former elementary school building. The Beaufort-Jasper EOC Head Start program provides transportation for two (2) of these sites. The program currently serves **85%** African American Families, **5%** Hispanic Families, **5%** White Families, and **5%** Multicultural Families. The primary language of the families we serve is English; less than 1% speaks another language.

The Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start targeted recruitment areas encompass the entire counties we serve; however, the program does not provide transportation throughout the entire county. Program transportation is limited to designated locations because of cost, distance, and geographical challenges.

The Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start, with the approval of the Policy Council, has designated the following transportation areas:

a. St. Helena: from Cowan Creek Bridge to Gay Seafood and the Shrimp Shack, Lady's Island: Little Capers, Broomfield, and Waterford Cove.

b. Beaufort: Beaufort City Limits to Carteret Street, Polk Village, Green Lawn, and Port Royal City Limits.

c. Burton: Down S.C. Highway 21N to Lobeco up to Jackie's Alignment Shop. Burton up one mile to Broad River Bridge, including Grayshill, Seabrook, Stuart Point, Dale and Sheldon.

d. Robertville: Hwy 46, Church Road, Tarboro, Wagon Branch, Pineland, Hardeeville City Limits, Purrysburg, Branchwood, Walsh Drive, Deer Run, Cotton Hill, Hwy 17, and Deer Field Road, Levy, Bellinger Hill, Pleasant Hill, Tillman and Tye Branch.

e. Coosawhatchie: Coosawhatchie, Grahamville, Gillisonville, Rivers Hill, Grays, and Mitcheville Communities, between 17 North and I-95 South, including Points South, Switzerland, Ridgeland City Limits, Spring Hill, Fordsville Area, Roseland and Woodsville.

f. Keans Neck Road, Gardners Corner, Big Estate, Jenkins, Yemassee Heights to the railroad tracks.

Beaufort County is a county in South Carolina, also serving as the county seat. *The 2020 US Census* estimated the population for Beaufort County at 187,117. Wikipedia estimates 191,748 as the 2021 population count.

Population (estimates)	2020	2021
Beaufort County	187,117	191,748

Beaufort County is one of the south's fastest-growing counties according to the *Census American Community Survey*, primarily because of development south of the Broad River clustered along the U.S. Highway 278 corridor. The northern portions of the county have also grown steadily, due in part to the strong federal military presence around the city of Beaufort. As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Hilton Head Island–Beaufort Metropolitan Statistical Area comprises Beaufort and Jasper counties. Beaufort County's population is over 70% urban.

The two portions of the county are physically connected via the Broad River Bridge, which carries South Carolina Highway 170. Despite the connectivity, oftentimes the "north of Broad" and "south of Broad" populations of the county find themselves at odds over county-wide issues dealing with growth management.

Beaufort County Service Area

Beaufort County, the larger county of our service area, is home to 33 islands. The county has a total area of 923 square miles, of which 576 square miles is land and 347 square miles is water. It is located in the southern area of the state known as the "Low Country". Beaufort county is situated midway between the celebrated cities of Charleston and Savannah. These attractions, coupled with 30 miles of Atlantic coastline, inlets, rivers and marshlands, has attracted a large influx of new residents over the last decade, making Beaufort County one of the fastest growing counties in South Carolina. This region has an average temperature of 75.2 degrees, with average rainfall of 52.1 inches. Winters in Beaufort County are moderate, with snowfall rare; summers are hot and humid. The average humidity is 75%. There are four major incorporated areas of Beaufort County; The City of Beaufort and the towns of Port Royal, Hilton Head and Bluffton. Northern Beaufort County, which includes communities such as Seabrook, Lobeco, Dale, Sheldon, Burton, Beaufort City, Port Royal, Lady's Island, St. Helena

Island, Greyshill and Yemassee, are traditionally rural. The southern part of the county includes Hilton Head and Bluffton, and is typically more urbanized. St. Helena Island, which is considered to be rural, is the largest island in the low country. Beaufort County is also home to three military bases; Parris Island, The Marine Corps Air Station, and The Naval Base.

Estimated Population Numbers

Beaufort County is 1 in 4 counties in South Carolina that has had population increases of 25%+, based on findings from the 2010 U.S Census Report. From April 2020-July 2021, the population changed by 2.5%.

| Population(estimates)	2010	2020	2021
Beaufort county	162,233	187,117	191,748

Beaufort County's population increased 10 out of the 11 years between year 2010 and 2021. It's largest annual population increase was 2.7% between 2014 and 2015. The county's largest decline was between 2019 and 2020, when the population dropped 2.6%. Between 2010 and 2021, the county grew by an average of 1.5% per year. (*U.S. Census Bureau*)

U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates-for 2021 the racial composition for Beaufort County as: 73.7% White alone, 17.2% Black, 11.2% Hispanic or Latino, and 3.5% Bi-racial.

2020 US Census Bureau data estimates, the average age in Beaufort County as 45.3 years old. According to the Beaufort Regional Dashboard, the highest age population in the county is persons 65+ at an estimated 28.5%. According to USA Facts, the US Census Bureau reports the following population estimates for Beaufort County, persons 35-49 at 14.8%, persons 20-35 at 16.4%, 5-19 at 15.8%, and 0-4 at 4.7% of the population. Among the age

groups reported above, the 65+ group was the fastest growing between 2010 and 2021 with its population increasing by 63.3%. This growth is consistent with Beaufort's popularity as a retirement community. The 0-4 age group declined the most, dropping 17.1% between 2010 and 2021.

Age by Nativity in Beaufort County, Sc
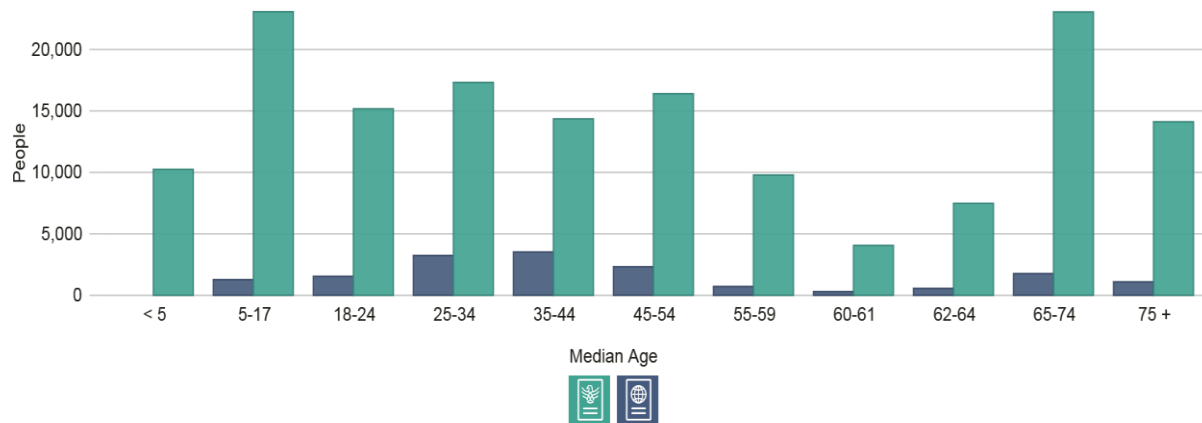
Dataset: ACS 5-year Estimate
Source: Census Bureau

DATA USA:

Composition of Children Under 5

The estimated population of children under 5 made up only 4.7% of the population in 2021. The 4.7 % is comprised of 4,390 females and 4,662 males for a total of 9,052 children as reported by the 2021 USA Facts data. Approximately 7.9% of children under 5 in Beaufort County are enrolled in nursery or preschool. (*US Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey)*

Location	Race	2016	2017	2018	2019
Beaufort	Non-Hispanic White Alone	5, 233	5,228	5,511	5,059
	Non-Hispanic Black Alone	2,400	2,335	2,266	2,157
	Non-Hispanic other race alone	178	172	178	166
	Hispanic	2,237	2,200	2,172	2,216
	Total population under 5 year- old	10,048	9,935	9,727	9,598

Kids Count Data Center

The total population of children less than 1 year of age is described in the table below.

Location	Race	2016	2017	2018	2019
Beaufort	Non-Hispanic White Alone	1,080	1,024	1,081	1,075
	Non-Hispanic Black Alone	471	536	509	544
	Non-Hispanic other race alone	39	34	42	44
	Hispanic	470	466	481	460
	Total under 1 year-old	2,060	2,060	2,113	2,123

Kids Count Data Center

According to the data, there appears to be a decrease in the number of children under five (5) from 2016-2021 and a slight increase in the number of children under one (1) year of age from 2016-2019.

## Population Changes of Incorporated Areas of Beaufort County

The table below demonstrate the population changes of incorporated areas of Beaufort County according to the 2020 U.S Census Report. According to the data a major population increase occurred within the Bluffton area between 2020-2021.

Location	Population Figures		
	2020	2021	% Change
Beaufort City	12,932	12,960	0.2%
Bluffton	28,121	32,191	**14.5%**
Hilton Head	38,191	38,076	-0.3%
Port Royal	12,632	13,169	4.3%

Live Birth Rates in Beaufort County

Live birth rates help to calculate future population growth within an area. Factors that may affect birth rates may include access to reliable resources, economic status, cost of living, educational opportunities for women, and cultural norms. In Beaufort County, according to data provided by Children's Trust of South Carolina, a total of 1,855 children were born in 2020. In 2019, 1,868 live births were reported indicating a slight decrease. The table below shows a breakdown in the 2020 live births by race/ethnicity. The highest number of live births occurred in the white population.

LIVE BIRTHS BY RACE/ETHNICITY (NUMBER) - 2020
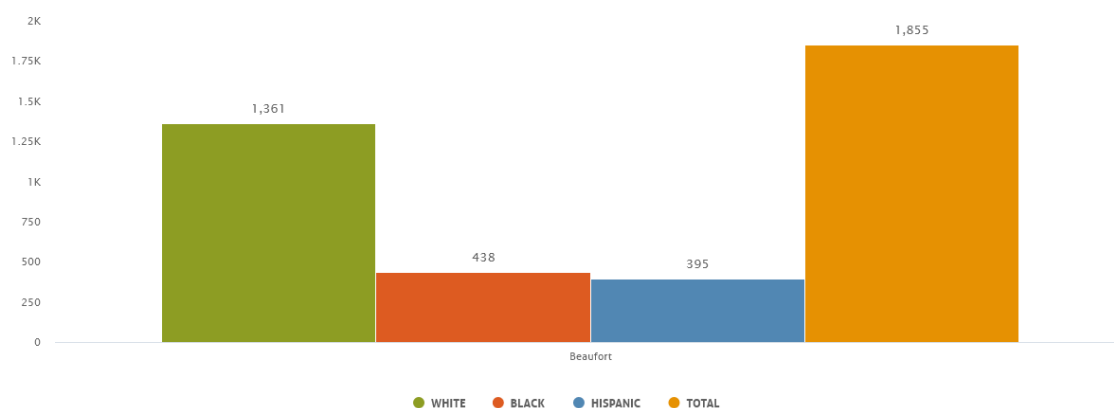
Children's Trust of South Carolina from datacenter.kidscount.org

Beaufort County is one of the fastest growing counties in South Carolina. Much of the population climb can be traced to the area's retirement and military communities, and new developments according to the Low Country Council of Governments. The aerospace industry, also plays a major role in area attraction, as it gravitates into the Southeastern USA, with a fair degree of success in South Carolina. The appeal in this industry will not only affect the population climb, but will also bring in new educational opportunities and produce well-paying jobs that will impact the economic status of the community and its population. Beaufort county is committed to growing the local economy as new businesses locate here and existing businesses expand.

To ensure growth in this industry, one objective from the S.*C Aerospace Task Force Strategic Plan of 2013*, is the need to focus on the education system. The key to South Carolina's aerospace future is developing not only the present, but also the future workforce. Therefore, the K-12 system must integrate Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) curriculums and consider establishing charter/magnet aerospace high schools, with vocational emphasis on preparing students for skilled manufacturing and engineering careers. Preparation for the workforce starts as early as third grade and continues through technical college and/or four-year universities. The Boeing Company and Lockheed Martin are partners in South Carolina's Coalition for Mathematics and Science, which is promoting STEM curriculum development and innovation in education.

In Beaufort County the contribution to this growing industry are already in place. Battery Creek High School is one of six schools in South Carolina to offer an aerospace curriculum. BJEOC Head Start understands the impact

early childhood education has on shaping the future of children and has implemented STEAM activities to our curriculum. Teacher's focus on planning activities related to areas in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math in an effort to introduce and prepare children for the future. Currently, South Carolina's aerospace sector is the fastest growing in the nation.

For some, the benefits of population growth within the county have been an advantage, however, there still remains certain parts of the county's population that has not felt the benefits of this growth. The presence of a significant number of affluent retirement communities mask the economic disparities that can be found in the area. This population continues to face life sustaining barriers such as poverty, adequate employment, and decent affordable housing.

 Although Beaufort County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state, it is also one of the most expensive. The median value of homes in Southern areas of Beaufort County is estimated at $520,700, according to US Census Quick Facts and the northern, more rural part, 137,100, compared to the state of South Carolina at $203,707; this is an example of the economic gap within the county. The City of Beaufort has a higher level of poverty (12.7% vs. 6.9%), a lower median household income ($54,061vs. $71,430) and median value of owner-occupied housing units ($229,600 vs. $309,600). The Beaufort County median household income is heavily weighted by the affluent areas of Hilton Head Island and Bluffton. *(Beaufort Memorial Hospital Community Health Assessment).* Beaufort County trends slightly below the statewide poverty rates.

The National Low Income Coalition (NLIC) in 2022 collected data that illustrates the large gap in rental housing. The report states that in Beaufort County, a single family would have to work 106 hours a week at minimum wage to afford to pay rent at $1,004 a month for a two-bedroom place or make a $24.10 an hour. This is compared to the state housing wage of $19.30. The NLIC also reports Beaufort County as having the highest estimated median renter income in the state at $50,120 versus $40,147 for the state of South Carolina. For renters that have an annual income of less than 20,000, the percentage of households' burden by the high cost of rent is 91%, according to the NLIC. The median gross rent price reported from 2017-2021 was $1,279 for Beaufort County. The aforementioned data demonstrates the impact of housing costs on families residing in Beaufort County. In addition, the chart below from the *US Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey for Beaufort County*, further demonstrates the high cost of rent in the county.

Occupied Units Paying Rent
in Beaufort County, South Carolina
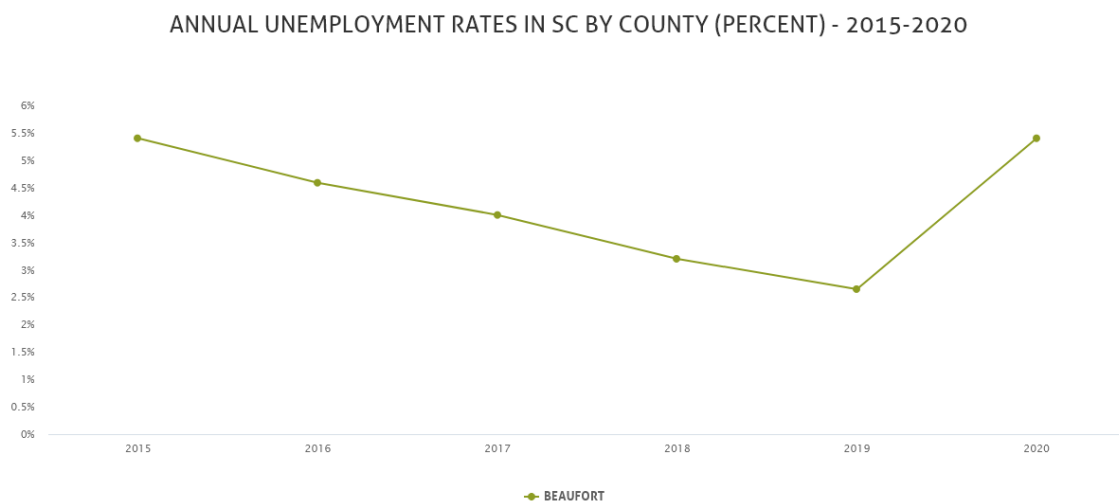
DP04

Measure	Value
Less than $500	5.6%
$500 to $999	19.7%
$1,000 to $1,499	39.7%
$1,500 to $1,999	21.9%
$2,000 to $2,499	7.6%
$2,500 to $2,999	2.9%
$3,000 or more	2.6%

The collection of data regarding the high cost of living and lack of affordable housing in the county suggest that low income families will continue to struggle to afford housing which puts families at risk for homelessness.

According to the *Homeless Management Information* System 2022 Report, 2,446 children under 18 are homeless in South Carolina. Children under 6 make up 7% of that total. According to McKinney-Vento Data 2022, 52 children ages 3-5, in the Low country, are considered homeless compared to 343 children reported for the state.

The 2020 estimated unemployment rate for Beaufort County, as reported by the Children's Trust of SC, is 5.4% up from 2.6% which was reported the previous year.

ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN SC BY COUNTY (PERCENT) - 2015-2020

Children's Trust of South Carolina from datacenter.kidscount.org

Trends show that the unemployment rate in Beaufort County decreased during 2015-2019, which may be due to the growth in Bluffton and Hilton Head areas of Beaufort County. The 2020 unemployment rate increase may be a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation.

Even with the increase in employment, wages invariably do not meet the state average. A large concentration of the working population is employed in traditionally low-paying industries such as retail, leisure, hospitality and trade. Cost of living increases and high cost of housing are still creating an imbalance in economic status for families.

The receipt of public assistance, such as SNAP and SSI, help to create a "safety net" for families that are eligible for Head Start services. Across the state of South Carolina SNAP lifted an estimated 308,392 households above the poverty line. In March 2023, SNAP assisted an average of 625,971 people during the month, including about 289,743 children. *(SC Department of Social Services SNAP Benefits Dashboard).* According to DSS data, for Beaufort county, in March 2023, 5275 households received SNAP benefits of those households, 3,562 children under 10 were served; 2% of the total for the state. This number increased from 3,333 reported in June of 2022.

Multiple data sources demonstrate the many disadvantages of living in poverty. These disadvantages often include greater infant mortality, lower birth weight, lack of early childhood care, inadequate housing, and food insecurities. All of these disadvantages impact how children grow and learn which eventually results in lower scores on math and reading tests for students. The following data illustrates the economic hardships Beaufort County eligible families are facing:

a. Poverty

- In 2020, an estimated 9.32% of people were living in poverty in Beaufort county. The graph below demonstrates the race/ethnic and gender breakdown of families living in poverty. (Data USA)
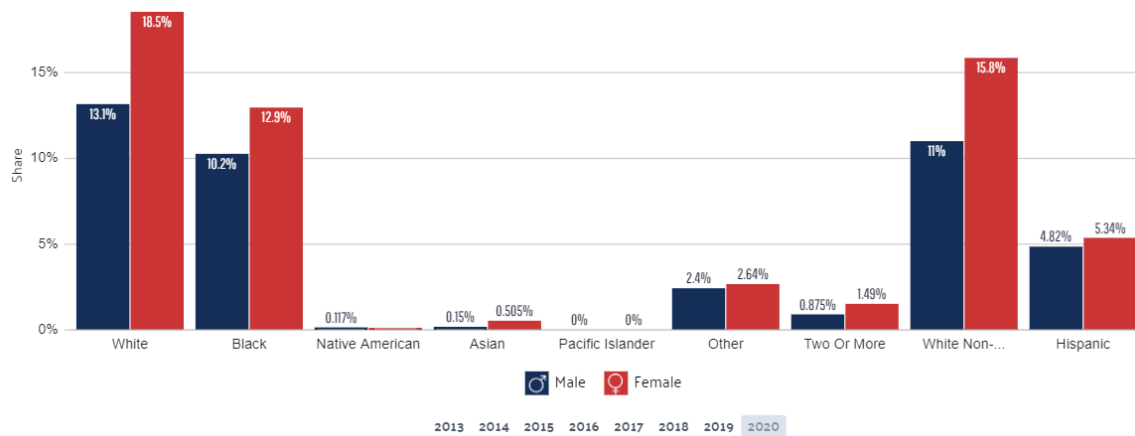
The Kids Count 2020 Data Report for Beaufort County, reported the amount of children under age 18 living in poverty as 20.1% and indicated an improvement from 2018. Children living in concentrated areas of poverty is estimated at 3.2% which indicates an improvement from 2014-2021, according to *Children's Trust of South Carolina Well-Being Data Profile*. The chart below shows the increase of White Non-Hispanic children living in poverty, with all other race and ethnicity's decreasing.

CHILDREN IN POVERTY (PERCENT) - 2017-2021
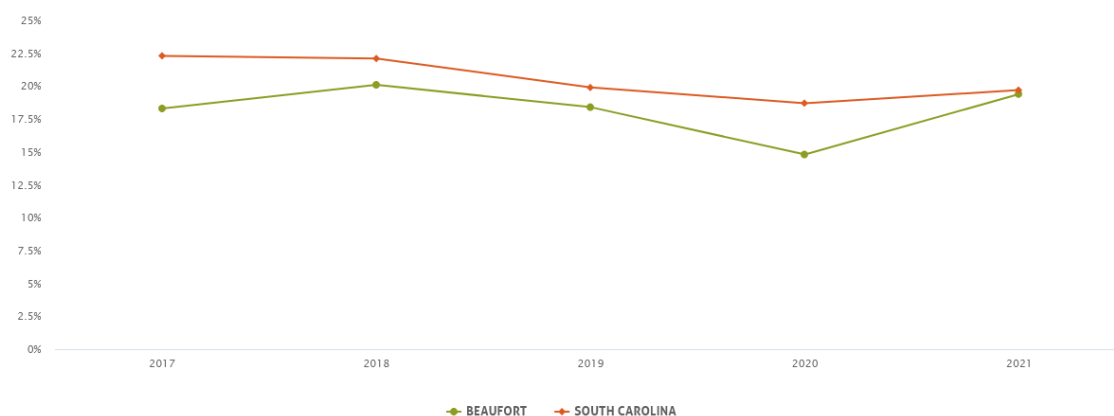
Children's Trust of South Carolina from datacenter.kidscount.org

- In June 2013, the total number of children birth to 5, enrolled in Medicaid was 1,561. of this number, 294 were Caucasian, 733 were African American, 486 were Hispanic, and 84 were of other racial backgrounds (Kids Count 2015). These numbers represent the number of children that are potentially eligible for Head Start services.

- The 2021-2022 SC First Steps Annual Report, states 3,343 children were served in 4K programs. Beaufort County First Steps reported 20 children were served locally. Eligibility for these services are similar to Head Start eligibility.

- Children under the age of 18 living in households that received SSI, cash public assistance income, or SNAP benefits in 2015 was 50.8% for single female households up from 48.6% in 2014. In 2015 27.3% were single male households, which was down from 36.6% the previous year. Married couple households were lower at 15.2% up slightly from previous year of 15.0%. **No age breakdown provided.**

Children under Age 18 with No Parent in the Labor Force: Beaufort County

Location	2012-2016	2013-2017	2014 -2018	2015-2019	2016 -2020
Beaufort	7.5%	7.5%	8.1%	9.0%	**8.7%**

Data provided by: Children's Trust of South Carolina 2021

The percentage for Beaufort County is slightly higher than the 8.3% for South Carolina.

 b. Employment

- 4.5% of African Americans compared to 1.5% of Whites, 3.7% of Hispanics, and 2.9% of other races were unemployed (Census 2000).
- Beaufort County has one of the lowest unemployment rates among South Carolina counties; ranked 43 among 46 counties. The highest unemployment rate is Marion County at 18.9% (SC Employment Commission, March 2011).

- The largest population of the labor force for ages 16 and over in Beaufort county is in Educational Services, Healthcare and Social Assistance with 21.0% employed. Retail Trade is second at 14.6% employed. Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services is third with 14.4% employed. The highest paying jobs are reported in Finance and Insurance, Utilities, and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (US Census Bureau 2021 American Community Survey)
- One neighboring city of both counties, Savannah, GA, reports the highest paying weekly wage for employment in the Manufacturing fields (*Georgia Department of Labor, 2015 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages).* Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, and Manufacturing were also among the top 5 highest paying industries reported in Charleston County.
- Labor market projections for Beaufort County in 2022 shows Construction with the highest growth in employment at an 29.51% change, management of companies and enterprises with the second highest at 28.95%, and health care and social assistance third, 28.75%. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services project a growth of 21.74%.

Family Challenges

Beaufort County is ranked number 7 in South Carolina counties to have better social and economic factors, compared to Jasper County at number 36. Despite the county ranking in the top ten the county has a population that struggles to overcome the barriers of poverty. The problem of poverty often prevents the economic, social, cognitive development of many children and their families, which increases their challenges. One trend in relation to this phenomenon is the amount of single-parent families living in poverty in Beaufort County. Single families with dependent children continue to have the highest rate of poverty across all demographic groups. According to BJEOC Head Start PIR reports in 2020-2021 single parent families composed 78% of the families we served; in 2021-2022 the PIR reported 89%. The US Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2019 estimates, the poverty rate for households headed by a single mother in the county was at 38.1%, compared to single father households at 22.9%. The poverty rate among all families in the county was 8.5%, which is significantly lower than the rate for single-parent households. This rate highlights the challenges that single-parent families are facing.

The data table below show the fluctuating percentages of children born to single parent households in 2020 and previous years. While birth rates to single mothers have shown a slight decrease from the highest rate at 38%, birthrates are still higher than the lowest in 2011 at 36.1%.

Live Births to Single Mothers (includes paternity acknowledged)

Location	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Beaufort	**38.1%**	36.2%	37.5%	37.7%	37.4%

Data provided by: Children's Trust South Carolina

Reports have concluded the combination of poverty and single parent homes can lead to increased school dropout rates, job instability, and decrease of

parental involvement. Single parents can be overwhelmed with being the only supportive adult responsible for their children's well-being. Although each case is unique, poverty and single-parent homes can lead to an unfair advantage for both parents and children.

One of the best predictors of economic growth for families is educational attainment. Education continues to be an obstacle for this population, although attainable, support and community resources are necessary for families to increase the potential to achieve this objective. Children in households were the head of the family lacks a high school diploma for the state of South Carolina has shown a decrease from 14% to now 10% according to the 2022 Kids Count Data Profile. Data from the BJEOC Head Start PIR report from 2021-2022 provides supporting evidence to show the rate of these households is on a decline. While there was an increase in families enrolled who held a high school diploma, GED or advanced degree; 80% of families, 20% of families did not hold a degree of any kind. In 2020-2021, 72% of families held a high school diploma, GED or advanced degree, while 23% had no degree. A Parent's education level can have significant influence of the educational success of their children. Parents who have higher levels of education may show greater involvement and engagement in activities that promote their child's education, as well as seeking out resources to support learning. When parents lack education, supporting their child's educational development may not be a top priority.

a. Single Family Households
- Data collected from the 2021-2022 BJEOC PIR Report show the majority of children enrolled are living in single-parent households. 85% of families are in a single-parent household, while only 15%

reported living in a two-parent household. 89% of single-parent households are female lead and only 2% were male lead households.

- A Data USA report the largest demographic living in poverty are Females 55-64, followed by Females 25-34. In 2020 9.32% of the population in Beaufort County (17.2k out of 185k people) live below the poverty level, the number is lower than the national average at 12.8%.

- Data charts taken from the Census Bureau & ACS 5 Year Estimates show the rate of female households living in poverty has decrease in comparison to 2019. However, there is an increase among females ages 18-24 and males 25-34.
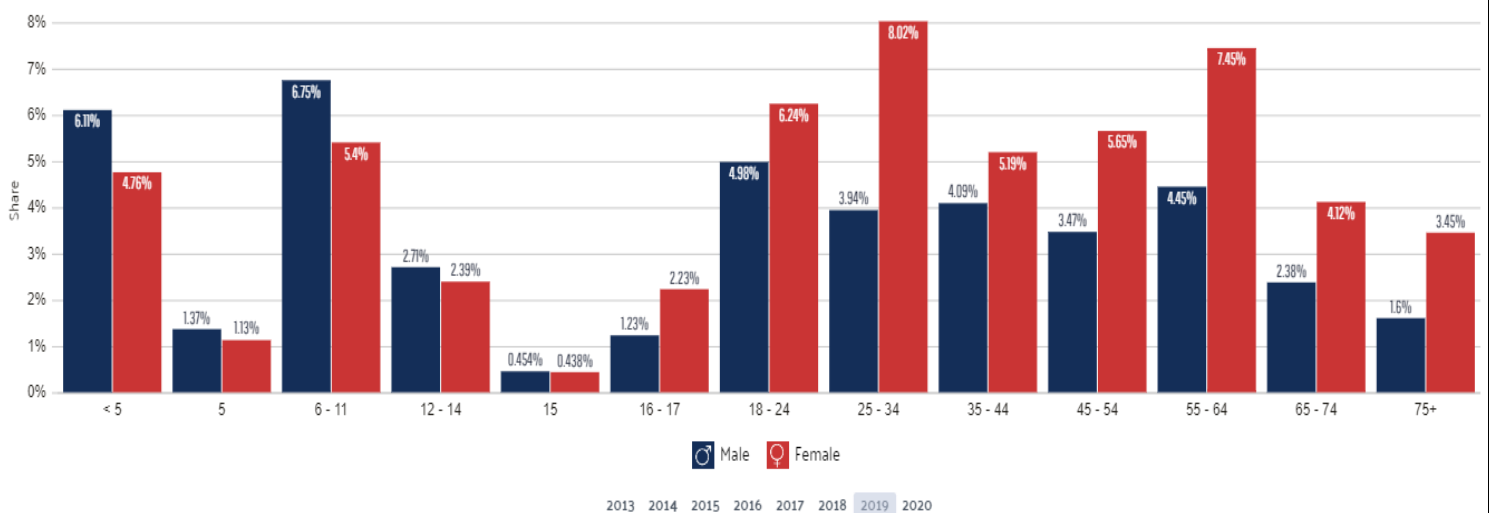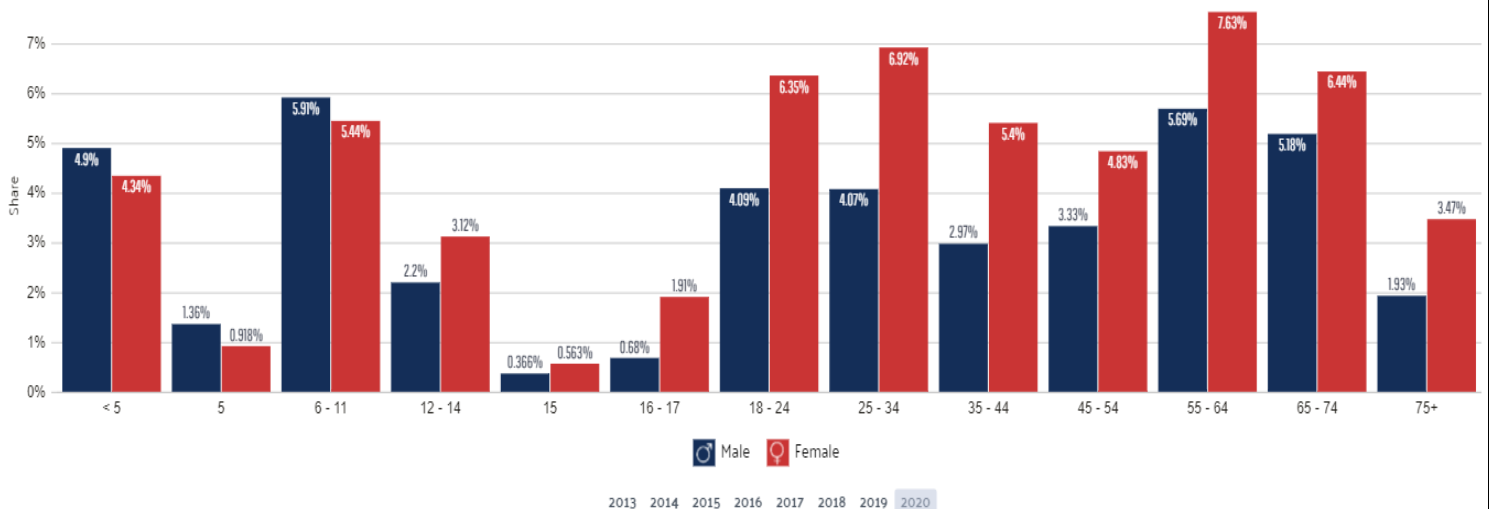
- The total number of children under the age of 18 living in a single-parent household from 2016-2020 was 35%, which is a slight decrease from 2015-2019 at 35.6% (Kids Count Report –Beaufort County 2023).

- The total number of families in Beaufort County report by the Census ACS Data 2021 was 49, 919. Of this number 2,979 were families with children under 5 years' old and 21.2% were considered below poverty level. Married households made up 2,213 of this number at 7.1% below poverty levels and single-parent females made up only 741 households with a rate of 60.9% below poverty levels.

- Of the single-parent female households with children under 18 the racial breakdown below the poverty level was 63% African American and 19.9% White. Hispanic rates were not provided in this estimate. Married African American households below the poverty level were the highest among all races at 4.4% of households.

- 35.9% of children in Beaufort County reside in a single-parent household. The county's ranking from 2014-2018 was at 7, based on the 2020 South Carolina Child Well Being Data Profile, which has worsened from previous years. The state total is at 40.3%.

c. Teenage Births

- According to a Beaufort County Profile from Fact Forward in 2019 the county ranked 40 out of 46 in births to teen girls from 15 to 19 years old.

- Beaufort County total births of 15-19 year olds was at 22.8% in 2018 and dropped to 15.1% in 2020. Of the total birth rates in this category 22.4% were African American and 13.1% were white. Hispanics were not included in this data set, but were at a rate of 21.2% in 2015.

d. Education

- The SC State Report Card for Beaufort County in 2021 reported the high school graduation rate was at 86.2%, which is higher than the state at 83.8%. This rate is down from the 88.5% reported in 2021, but higher than the state average of 83.8%.

- The Annual Dropout rate for Beaufort County School District in 2021 was at 1.1% of the total High School enrollment of 6646 students. This is an increase from the previous school year 2020 which was at .07%. The lowest rate reported in 2019 at 1.5%. The State total is at 2.4% for 2021.

- Poverty rate estimates according to the 2021 ACS is highest among those who have less than a high school graduate at 18.4%, 14.7% for high school graduates, 7.6% with some college or associates, and lowest among those with a Bachelor's or higher at 3.8%.

- In comparison with the total number reported, Hispanics in the category of high school graduate or higher have the lowest rate at 78.1% of attainment. African American's are at 88.8%, with White at 97.1% according to the 2021 ACS.

SC School Report Card: Beaufort County School District 2021-2022

Percentage of Students enrolling in Kindergarten and Demonstrating readiness to learn

	Our District	Statewide
Overall	32.6%	36.0%
By Domains: (The cut score for "Overall" was used across all domains in order to provide comparative information. Does not necessarily reflect domain level readiness.)		
Social Foundation	44.2%	52.2%
Language and Literacy	28.5%	29.8%
Mathematics	27.9%	28.1%
Physical Well-Being	47.5%	51.5%

- The Beaufort County School Readiness Profile reported that 1 in 10 Beaufort County births are to a mother less than 20 years of age. Analysis suggest that 43% of these children will be retained or score at below basic readiness by third grade. The report also states 1 in 5 children are born to a mother with < high school diploma; of these, 48% will be retained or score below basic levels by third grade.

e. Homeless/ Out of Placement Children and Families

- Currently Beaufort County has no permanent shelters for the homeless population. Many human service organizations either place families in motels temporarily or bus them to locations outside of the county such as Walterboro, SC, Savannah, GA or Charleston, SC.

Family Health Issues

Beaufort County is reported to be the healthiest county in South Carolina for the 11th year in a row according to the 2023 National Health Findings Report which provides information on how healthy a county is right now, in terms of length of life but quality of life as well. Healthy living starts with prenatal care through adulthood. Many times the health of the people in the community

reflects the well-being of the community. Through medical and dental contractual agreements, the program partners with two providers, a Pediatrician and Dentist, to deliver health care to all children enrolled. Through partnerships, Sight Savers of American and The Community Lyons Club provide vision screenings to children enrolled. The Neighborhood Outreach Connection (NOC) promotes the health of local residents with regular visits from the hospital's Mobile Unit, Volunteers in Medicine (HHI's Free Clinic & flagship model for 92 clinics nationwide), and the Lions Club. Health screenings focus on identifying residents with hypertension, diabetes, HIVAIDS, breast cancer, prostate cancer, and dental needs, and referring them for needed services.

Geographic Location, Jasper County

Jasper County lies within the "Low country" Region of South Carolina, with its western boundary formed by the Savannah River and the eastern border primarily composed of the Coosawhatchie, Broad, New, and Pocataligo Rivers. The County covers approximately 650 square miles, of which over 22 percent are wetlands. The land surface is generally level, broken by numerous streams and swamp areas, with extensive saltwater marshlands covering the lower portion of the County.

Jasper County is critically located between two rapidly growing communities: Savannah, Georgia, and Southern Beaufort County including Hilton Head-Bluffton. Interstate 95 and US Highway 17 link Jasper County to Savannah and provide the primary transportation routes to heavily visited recreation destinations in southern
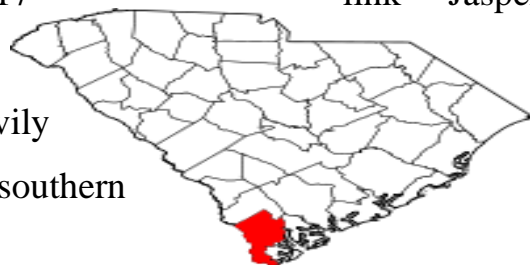
Beaufort County. The County is still generally **rural in character**, with most of the land in agricultural and forest uses.   There are two existing municipalities as well as an increasingly "suburbanized" area along the Beaufort County border. Ridgeland, the County seat, is located in the central part of Jasper County, approximately 30 miles west of Beaufort and 35 miles northeast of Savannah, Georgia. Hardeeville, located in the southern part of the County, approximately 20 miles north of Savannah, is projected to be the most rapidly growing portion of the County over the next 20 years. Underscoring this point is phenomenal ten-fold growth the area of Hardeeville over the last two years—from 5 sq. miles to 50 square miles and growing.

Jasper County Service Area

Jasper County is located in the southwestern section of South Carolina and forms the boundary with Georgia on the western side. It is strategically located between the historic port cities of Charleston, SC, and Savannah, GA. The incorporated towns of Jasper County include Ridgeland, which is the county seat, and Hardeeville. *The small towns that make up this rural county include Coosawhatchie, Gillisonville, Hardeeville, Levy, Okatie, Pineland, Pocotaligo, Robertville, Tarboro, Tillman, and Wagon Branch.*

Estimated Population Numbers

 According to the 2020 U.S. Census, Jasper County's population is 28,791. The U.S. 2020, Census showed that Jasper County is ranked 8th in the state in terms of percentage increase with the population growing by just over 4,000 people, 16.2% since 2010 when the population was 24,777; in comparison, Beaufort County ranked 10th, at 15.3% in the Palmetto State. From 2010 and 2022 population growth has continued to increase 10 out of the 11 years

between the years 2010 and 2021. Its largest annual population increase was 4.3% between 2020 and 2021. The county's largest decline was between 2019 and 2020 when the population dropped by 4%. Between 2010 and 2021, the county grew by an average of 1.8% per year. According to Kids Count, in 2019, there were 1,806 children under 5 years of age. Since 2015, the highest number of children under 5 years of age has increased by 116 children. Children under the age of 1 totaled 366 in 2019, the lowest number in 2016 was at 351.

Racial Composition

Based on the 2020 U.S. Census, the racial composition reports that 58.6% of the population is Caucasian, 37.8% Black or African American, 14.2% Hispanic or Latino origin, Two or More Races 1.6%, 1.0% Asian, 0.9% American Indian and Alaska Native, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. 85.80% of the population was not Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Jasper County's largest race/ethnicity increase was among the white (non-Hispanic) population increasing by 38.78% from 2010 to 2020; in contrast to the decrease in the white (non-Hispanic) population in Beaufort County.

The racial composition of children 5 years and under in the county was 765 Black or African American, 536 White or Caucasian, 485 Hispanic, and 20 Other according to the Kids Count Report of 2019. The table below shows the increase, over time, of children under 5, among all races.

Children Under 5-years-old by Race

Location	Race	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Jasper County	White or Caucasian	523	521	483	514	536
	Black or African American	748	736	719	735	765
	Non-Hispanic Other Race	14	13	16	19	20

	Hispanic	405	415	440	440	485
	Total under 5-years-old	1690	1685	1658	1708	1806
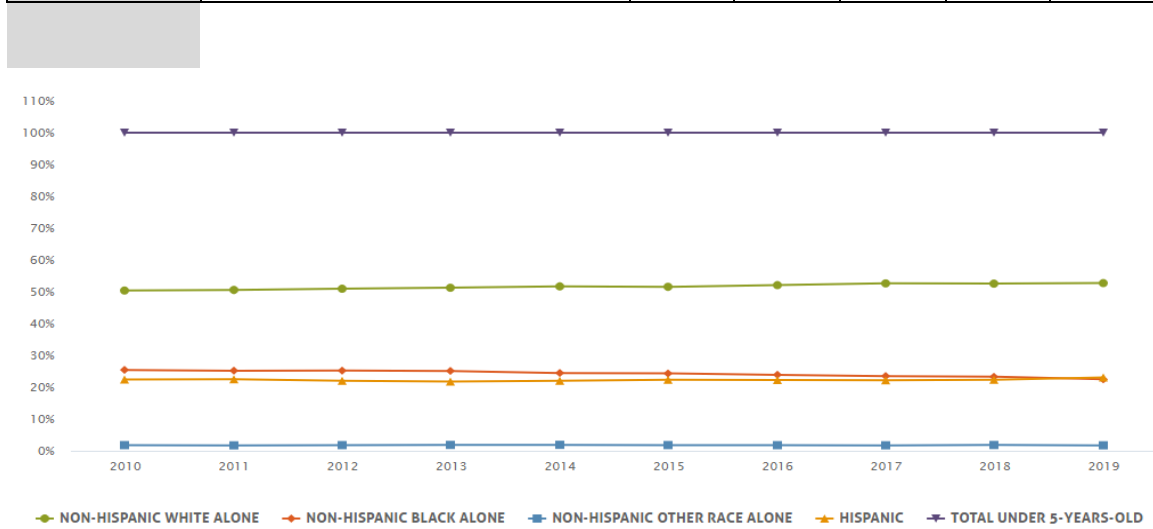
Economic Status

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, Jasper County's median household income was $47,811, compared to Beaufort County, $70,501, and South Carolina, $59,318. While the County median income remains below the state amount, the increase during the period was higher. Considering 2020 data, Jasper County's rate of increase was lower than the state and was the 5th lowest in the Lowcountry Region. While median household income remains positive and growing, although, at a slower rate than neighboring Counties, a negative statistic is the persistent percentage of individuals living below the poverty level.

In, 2020 Jasper County had an unemployment rate of 5.1%, down to 3.4% in 2021. The county has seen the job market increase by 1.5% over the last year. Future job growth over the next ten years is predicted to be 38.5%, however, economic growth is progressing slowly. The economy of Jasper

County, SC employs 12.5k people. The largest industries in the county are Retail Trade, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Construction, and the highest paying industries are Information, Public Administration, and Utilities. (Data USA) However, the economy has not increased the total of 730 employer establishments since reported on the 2010 census.

Jasper County has long been mired in inexorable economic deprivation and persistently high poverty levels that seemed impervious to change—almost forgotten or perhaps forsaken. Despite the county rankings Jasper County is considered, "*The gateway of South Carolina, the land of diversity, opportunity and challenge",* according to the county Chamber of Commerce. But a closer look at Jasper reveals a story of resilience and transformation. This closer look reveals a community brimming with assets—physical assets, such as a port and an airport, and social assets including a successful jobs training center—which can drive economic growth. (Governing Studies at Brookings) Despite the positive outlook on the impact of the future deep water port, presently, there is still a high concern for the number of people living in poverty; trends suggest that the high rates of poverty may remain consistent.

Although Jasper County is ranked as one of the poorer counties in the state, the region of the county near Bluffton - Hilton Head (Beaufort County) and Chatham County are steadily growing in population. Rural communities are typically at a disadvantage when it comes to adequate daily resources. Jasper County is no exception. According to the Jasper Sun Times, residents in rural Jasper County are known to travel to wealthier, more developed Beaufort County and to Savannah for work. In Jasper County, over 50 percent of commuters drive longer than 30 minutes to work each day.

Unemployment is only one factor that contributes to the economic status of the county, the other major factor is affordable housing.   Although

statistics indicate that Jasper County has more affordable housing in comparison to neighboring counties, much of the housing available can be considered substandard due to major rehabilitation needs. With a higher cost of land and rising construction, housing production is lagging, while rental costs are increasing with a median gross monthly rent in Jasper County being $1,111 (U.S. 2020 Census). This creates a problem for the economic base of these rural communities, without consistent affordable housing production, businesses are less likely to recruit employees in the area. This creates a struggle for low income families in this area because, without the opportunity to achieve affordable housing, families will have to move out of the county, possibly become stagnant, or, even homeless.

CHILDREN IN POVERTY (PERCENT) - 2012-2021
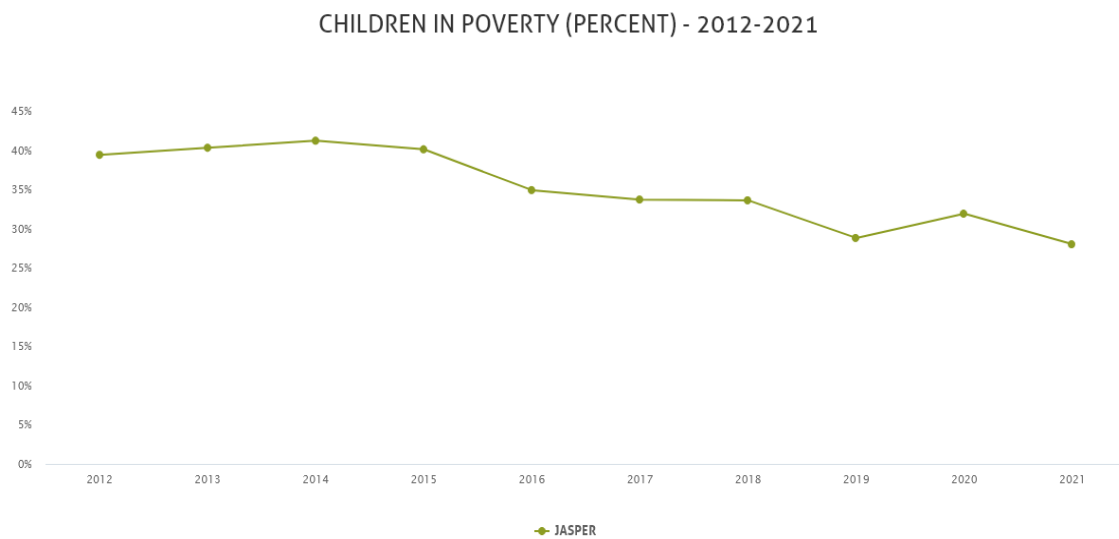
Children's Trust of South Carolina from datacenter.kidscount.org

a. Poverty

- According to the 2020 U.S. Census, 18.5% of people in the county, were determined to be living in poverty. The US Census estimates, 9% of people in Jasper County were living at less than 50 percent, 23% were living at less than 125 percent, and 30 percent were living at less than 150% percent of the poverty level. Although the majority

of the population in the county is White, African American's make up the highest rates of poverty.

- 31.3% of children under 18 years in Jasper County live in households with incomes below the poverty level. The number of children under the age of 18 that were living in poverty in 2021 was 1,537 or 28%, a slight decline from the most recent census report. (Kids Count)

- Single parent female headed households continue to have higher rates of poverty in the county in comparison to married and other living arrangement households. The rate of children living in single parent families worsened between 2014-2018.The rate of poverty for single parent homes reported on the 2020 U.S. Census is 51.3%.

- Data suggests that Jasper County's chronically poor and low income newcomers labor under toxic poverty levels. Creating escape velocity for children born in poor neighborhoods is paramount to their future life prospects. The current level of child poverty is a clear sign that Jasper County needs to invest considerable resources into its anti-poverty programs and tailor income subsidies to the needs of chronically poor and low-income families, particularly those nurturing school-aged children. (Governance Studies at Brookings)

- Single parent female headed households continue to have higher rates of poverty in the county in comparison to married and other living arrangement households. The rate of poverty for single parent homes is 51.3%. Other living arrangements, which are not specified in census estimates, are the second highest in comparison to married households and have a higher rate of families living in poverty. No current data available for children 5 and under in specified household types due to low sample size.

- There are 33.6% of children in Jasper County living households with incomes below the poverty level. (Children's Trust of South Carolina)

  a. **Employment**

- Unemployment Rate in Jasper County, SC was 5.10% in January of 2020, according to the United States Federal Reserve. Historically, Unemployment Rate in Jasper County, SC reached a record high of 10.50 in January of 2009 and a record low of 2.50 in January of 2019.

- Children under age 18 with no parent in the labor force was 8.2% (Kid Count Report 2018). *No data on the breakdown of ages is available.*

Living in a rural community may be a more peaceful way of living versus an urban lifestyle, however for many families; the lack of everyday resources can become a challenge. Data suggest there is an increasing trend in the number of single parent families. In a community that lacks adequate resources this can be a serious challenge. Many researchers believe that family makeup is linked to poverty, as data states above; this is true for the county. In the county 50.3% of children lived with only one parent. According to the 2018 Kids Count Data, 57.6 babies were born to teens 15 to 19 years of age, per 1000. With the increase in unemployment over the years and the lack of adequate affordable housing, estimates for the upcoming years should look similar to the current trend. In the last two years over 60% of the population served in

LIVE BIRTHS TO SINGLE MOTHERS (INCLUDES PATERNITY ACKNOWLEGED) (PERCENT)

Children's Trust of South Carolina
KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org
A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation
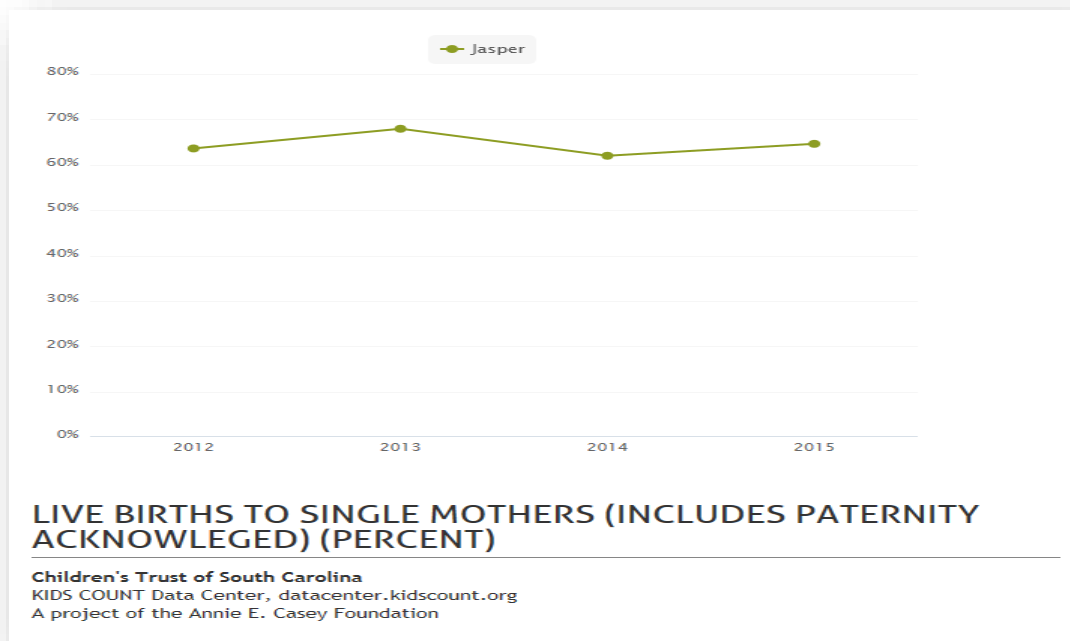
the county were low income single mother households. The table below illustrates births to single mothers are increasing, and data suggests the trend.

Post-Secondary Education

Beaufort and Jasper Counties in South Carolina are home to several post-secondary educational institutions, offering a range of certificate, diploma, undergraduate, and graduate degree programs.

Some of the notable institutions in these counties include:

University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB): USCB is a public university with campuses in Bluffton and Beaufort. The university offers undergraduate programs in a variety of fields, including business, education, nursing, and humanities. Graduate programs are also available in education and hospitality management.

USCB Gateway Campus: The Gateway Campus of the University of South Carolina Beaufort, located in Bluffton, offers bachelor's and master's degree programs in education and hospitality management.

University of South Carolina Beaufort - Hilton Head Island Campus: The Hilton Head Island Campus of the University of South Carolina Beaufort offers undergraduate programs in business, hospitality management, and nursing.

University of South Carolina Salkehatchie: USC Salkehatchie is a regional campus of the University of South Carolina, offering undergraduate programs in business, education, and liberal arts. The campus is located in Allendale, which is in Jasper County.

Technical College of the Lowcountry (TCL): TCL is a public technical college with campuses in Beaufort, New River, and Hampton. The college offers certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs in areas such as automotive technology, nursing, culinary arts, and criminal justice.

Technical College of the Lowcountry - New River Campus: The New River Campus of TCL, located in Jasper County, offers certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs in areas such as welding, health sciences, and business.

Technical College of the Lowcountry - Hampton Campus: The Hampton Campus of TCL, located in Hampton County, offers certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs in fields such as industrial technology, nursing, and computer technology.

Technical College of the Lowcountry - Bluffton Campus: The Bluffton Campus of TCL, located in Beaufort County, offers certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs in fields such as culinary arts, health sciences, and welding.

Technical College of the Lowcountry - Colleton Campus: The Colleton Campus of TCL, located in Walterboro, offers certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs in fields such as early childhood education, criminal justice, and automotive technology.

Beaufort County School District Adult Education: The district offers adult education programs at various locations in Beaufort County, including Beaufort, Hilton Head Island, and Bluffton. These programs include GED preparation, English as a Second Language (ESL), and workforce development.

South University - Savannah: While not located within Beaufort or Jasper Counties, South University - Savannah is located nearby in Georgia and offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs in areas such as business, nursing, and healthcare administration.

Whale Branch Early College High School: Located in Seabrook, Whale Branch Early College High School is a public high school that allows students to earn college credits while completing their high school diploma. Students can earn up to two years of college credit while still in high school.

Hilton Head Island High School International Baccalaureate Program: Located in Hilton Head Island, this public high school offers an International Baccalaureate program for students seeking a rigorous college preparatory education.

Overall, the post-secondary education offerings in Beaufort and Jasper Counties are diverse, with options ranging from technical education to traditional university degrees. Students seeking higher education in these

areas have access to a range of programs and institutions to fit their needs and goals.

In addition to Post-Secondary Education, Beaufort and Jasper counties have varying types of workforce investment opportunities available. There are several programs and initiatives aimed at providing job training and career development to individuals in the community.

Workforce Investment (Beaufort and Jasper Counties)

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): The WIOA is a federal program that provides funding for job training and other employment-related services. The program is administered locally by the Lowcountry Council of Governments, which serves Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, and Jasper Counties. The program offers services to job seekers, youth, and employers.

Technical College of the Lowcountry (TCL): TCL offers a range of career-focused programs aimed at providing students with the skills and training needed for high-demand jobs in the region. The college partners with local employers to ensure that its programs are aligned with workforce needs.

Apprenticeships: Several industries in the area offer apprenticeship programs, including the construction, manufacturing, and healthcare industries. These programs provide on-the-job training and classroom instruction, leading to industry-recognized credentials.

SC Youth Apprenticeship Program: The South Carolina Youth Apprenticeship Program provides high school juniors and seniors with the opportunity to earn high school credit, college credit, and a paycheck while gaining hands-on work experience in a variety of industries.

These programs benefit the community by providing individuals with the skills and training needed to secure high-demand, well-paying jobs, which in turn contributes to the economic development of the region. The programs target a range of individuals, including job seekers, youth, and employers.

Student Dropout Rates

Student dropout rates in Beaufort and Jasper Counties, the data is as follows:

Beaufort County:

2019-2020: 2.5%

2020-2021: 2.1%

2021-2022: Data not yet available

<u>Jasper County:</u>

2019-2020: 3.0%

2020-2021: 2.4%

2021-2022: Data not yet available

Teen Pregnancy

Teen pregnancy and birth rates in these counties, the data is as follows:

<u>Beaufort County:</u>

In 2019, the teen pregnancy rate was 13.3 per 1,000 females aged 15-19, and the teen birth rate was 8.6 per 1,000 females aged 15-19.

In 2020, the teen pregnancy rate was 12.7 per 1,000 females aged 15-19, and the teen birth rate was 8.0 per 1,000 females aged 15-19.

<u>Jasper County:</u>

In 2019, the teen pregnancy rate was 24.5 per 1,000 females aged 15-19, and the teen birth rate was 15.5 per 1,000 females aged 15-19.

In 2020, the teen pregnancy rate was 23.3 per 1,000 females aged 15-19, and the teen birth rate was 14.4 per 1,000 females aged 15-19.

Regarding children born to teens in high school, middle school, and postgraduate (high school), the data is not readily available.

Homeless and Foster Children

According to Kids Count data from 2020, there were 124 children ages 0-5 who were homeless or living with foster parents in Beaufort County, and 35 children ages 0-5 in Jasper County.

Family Health

In reviewing family health issues, there are a range of health issues that may impact families in Beaufort and Jasper Counties, including chronic diseases, mental health conditions, and substance use disorders. It is worth noting that the high rates of uninsured individuals in both counties may limit access to preventative care and treatment, which could exacerbate health issues in the region.

With regards to family health issues and the number of children 0-5, along with their families, that receive Medicaid, are uninsured, and the areas Health Professional Shortage Area Score (HPSA), the data is as follows:

Medicaid: In Beaufort County, as of 2021, approximately 34% of children ages 0-5 were enrolled in Medicaid, and in Jasper County, approximately 57% of children ages 0-5 were enrolled in Medicaid.

Uninsured: In Beaufort County, as of 2021, approximately 5% of children ages 0-5 were uninsured, and in Jasper County, approximately 8% of children ages 0-5 were uninsured.

Health Professional Shortage Area Score (HPSA): According to data from the Health Resources and Services Administration, as of 2021, Beaufort County has an overall HPSA score of 10, with a primary care HPSA score of 8. Jasper County has an overall HPSA score of 17, with a primary care HPSA score of 17. These scores indicate a shortage of primary care providers in the region.

Regarding the ratio of population to physicians and primary care doctors in Beaufort and Jasper Counties, the data is as follows:

Beaufort County:

Population to physician ratio: 977 to 1

Population to primary care doctor ratio: 1,545 to 1

Jasper County:

Population to physician ratio: 2,086 to 1

Population to primary care doctor ratio: 4,598 to 1

Overall, the data suggests that while there are workforce investment opportunities available in the region, there are also significant challenges related to education, healthcare, and economic opportunity, particularly in Jasper County. Initiatives aimed at improving education, increasing access to healthcare, and promoting economic development may help to address these challenges and improve outcomes for individuals and families in the region.

Children living in Poverty/Homelessness

According to data from the Kids Count Data Center, as of 2020, there were approximately 298,000 children in South Carolina living in poverty, representing a poverty rate of 19%. Given the poverty rates in Beaufort and Jasper Counties, it is likely that a significant number of children in these areas are also living in poverty, which may increase their risk of experiencing housing instability or other challenges.

According to 2020 data from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, there were approximately 235 individuals experiencing homelessness in Beaufort County on a given night in January 2020. Similarly, according to the same data source, there were approximately 50 individuals experiencing homelessness in Jasper County on a given night in January 2020.

As for poverty percentages by demographic in Beaufort and Jasper Counties, according to the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey estimates for 2019, the poverty rates in Beaufort County were 13.8%, while in Jasper County, the poverty rates were 27.1%. Poverty rates can vary by demographic, and the US Census Bureau provides data by demographic characteristics such as race and age.

COUNTY	POVERTY RATE
Beaufort County	13.8% (2019 data)
Jasper County	2701% (2019 data)

Medicaid Coverage

Regarding Medicaid coverage, according to data from the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services as of 2021, the percentage of individuals enrolled in Medicaid by gender and race in Beaufort County is as follows:

Female: 60%

Male: 40%

Black or African American: 47%

White: 36%

Hispanic or Latino: 8%

Other: 9%

In Jasper County, the percentage of individuals enrolled in Medicaid by gender and race as of 2021 is as follows:

Female: 63%

Male: 37%

Black or African American: 74%

White: 16%

Hispanic or Latino: 7%

Other: 3%

It is important to note that these percentages are subject to change over time and may not reflect the current situation.

Prenatal Care

Prenatal care in Beaufort and Jasper Counties typically involves regular check-ups with a healthcare provider, including a physical exam, weight and blood pressure checks, and various tests and screenings to monitor the health of both the mother and the developing fetus. Prenatal care may also include education and counseling on topics such as nutrition, exercise, and childbirth preparation.

According to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the percentage of mothers in Beaufort County who began prenatal care during their first trimester of pregnancy in 2020 was 81.2%. In Jasper County, the percentage was 77.8%. It's important to note that early and regular prenatal care can have a significant impact on the health of both the mother and the baby, so it is encouraging to see a relatively high percentage of mothers in these counties accessing prenatal care early in their pregnancy.

Live Births

As for the total number of live births in Beaufort and Jasper Counties, according to data from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, there were 2,166 live births in Beaufort County and 227 live births in Jasper County in 2020.

Based on the 2020 Census data, live births in Beaufort County by race and ethnicity were as follows:

White: 1,080

Black or African American: 846

Hispanic or Latino: 197

Asian: 20

Other: 23

In Jasper County, the live births by race and ethnicity were as follows:

Black or African American: 194

White: 22

Hispanic or Latino: 5

Asian: 1

Other: 5

<u>Infant Mortality</u>

According to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the percentage of mothers in Beaufort County who began prenatal care during their first trimester of pregnancy in 2020 was 81.2%. In Jasper County, the percentage was 77.8%.

It's important to note that early and regular prenatal care can have a significant impact on the health of both the mother and the baby, so it is encouraging to see a relatively high percentage of mothers in these counties accessing prenatal care early in their pregnancy.

According to the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the infant mortality rate (IMR) in Beaufort County in 2020 was 5.6 deaths per 1,000 live births. In Jasper County, the IMR in 2020 was 16.7 deaths per 1,000 live births.

It's important to note that infant mortality rates can be influenced by a variety of factors, including access to healthcare, socio-economic status, and maternal health, among others. Therefore, it's important for local health authorities and healthcare providers to continue to monitor these rates and work to improve health outcomes for mothers and infants in these counties.

Child Care Providers

Finding affordable child care, while maintaining forty plus hours a week is a challenge many families struggle with in both Beaufort and Jasper Counties. Many families rely on child care to maintain economic status. In in both counties, over half of children age 6 and under are in families where both parents or the single parent work; At least 29% of children 6 and under have both or the single parent working 35 hours or more. In South Carolina In 2005-2006, the Together for Beaufort data report recorded the average cost of day care for childcare centers to be $100 weekly, in 2009 that number is at least $145 weekly. The average rate for family childcare homes is still at $115 weekly. Jasper County reports in 2002, charges averaged $75 weekly, which has increased. This rate will continue to rise due to state licensing quality improvements, which include lower child to adult ratios. Weekly costs can be a heavy load on low income families because half of their earnings are going towards child care cost. Child care will continue to be one of the most significant expenses in a family budget, often exceeding the cost of housing, college tuition, transportation, or food. High child care costs can be a barrier in maintaining stable employment for some families, especially single parent households.

The SC Voucher program offers financial assistance, through the SC Department of Social Services (DSS), to child care providers to care for children from low income families so their parents can work and go to school. The voucher pays for average of 17,000 children a month to attend child care programs in SC.

First Steps of Beaufort County Child Care Quality Enhancement (QE) provided services to 7 child care facilities in the county that served 340

children 0-5 years in 2020-2021. The Parents as Teachers (PAT) home visiting program served 9 families. Jasper County First Steps Annual Report data shows PAT serving 14 families. Countdown to Kindergarten, a home visiting model for rising kindergarten children, served 30 children. Also, the Imagination Library, which provides free, age-appropriate books to children age birth to 5 years, distributed 4,219 books to 547 children. Through collaborative partnerships, many BJEOC Head Start families benefit from the services and resources available through First Steps.

The Beaufort County School District's (BCSD) pre-kindergarten program currently serves 983 4-year olds at 18 elementary schools in Beaufort County.

Beaufort County School District
Office of Early Childhood
Pre-Kindergarten Program

2021-2022

School	Capacity	Waiting List
Beaufort Elementary	40	0
Bluffton Elementary	80	0
Broad River Elementary	60	0
Coosa Elementary	40	0
Hilton Head Early Childhood Center	160	18
Davis Early Learning Center	80	0
Daufuskie Elementary	3	0
Shanklin Elementary	60	0
Ladys Island Elementary	20	0
MC Riley Early Childhood	80	5
Mossy Oaks Elementary	40	0
Okatie Elementary	40	0
Pritchardville Elementary	40	13
Port Royal Elementary	20	0

Red Cedar Elementary	80	0
River Ridge Academy	40	6
Robert Small International	40	0
St. Helena Elementary	60	0
TOTAL:	983	31

*Number of children on the waiting list varies. Office of Early Childhood continuously screens children for PK throughout the   school year. Students are moved into the program as soon as an opening occurs.

The Jasper County School District's (BCSD) pre-kindergarten program currently serves children at both Ridgeland and Hardeeville Elementary. Ridgeland elementary currently serves 80 preschool slots; Jasper County serves up to 100 preschools.

Beaufort County Facilities

Provider Name	Street	City	Zip	County
The Savy Apple Preschool	790 Parris Island Gateway	Parris Island	29906	Beaufort
James J. Davis Head Start	364 Kean Neck Road	Seabrook	29940	Beaufort
Grays Hill Child Development Center	182 Bruce K. Smalls Dr.	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort
Joseph S. Shanklin Head Start	121 Morrall Drive	Burton	29906	Beaufort
Our Children Day Care	15 Stanley Road	Burton	29906	Beaufort

Provider Name	Street	City	Zip	County
Beaufort Head Start	1800 Prince St.	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
Child Enrichment Center	601 Charles Street	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
Victory Baptist Church Beaufort Christian S...	378 Parris Island Gateway	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort
Hobbit Hill Cottage	2409 Oak Haven St.	Beaufort	29907	Beaufort
Beaufort Academy Kindergarten	7 Fairfield Estate Road	Beaufort	29907	Beaufort
Honey Tree Preschool	2202 First Blvd.	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
Alpha Christian Development Center	216 Grober Hill Rd.	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort
Hobbit Hill, Too	5 Rue Du Bois	Beaufort	29907	Beaufort
Provider Name	Street	City	Zip	County
Mossy Oaks Kindergarten Preschool	2218 Mossy Oaks Road	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort

Leroy H. Gilliard Head Start	1410 Tailbird Road	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
Wee Care Day Care	641 Parris Island Gateway	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
Hobbit Hill Preschool	921 Magnolia Bluff Circle	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
St. Helena Head Start	1031 Sea Island Pkwy.	Saint Helena Island	29920	Beaufort
The Little Brown School	802 15th Street	Port Royal	29935	Beaufort
Penn Center P.A.C.E	17 Penn Center	St. Helena Island	29920	Beaufort
Christian Heritage Montessori School	14 Simmonsville Road	Bluffton	29910	Beaufort
Cross Early Childhood Center	495 Buckwalter Pkwy.	Bluffton	29910	Beaufort
Amazing Creations	4464 Bluffton Park Crescent Dr...	Bluffton	29910	Beaufort

Provider Name	Street	City	Zip	County
Low Country Day Christian Preschool	357 Red Cedar Street	Bluffton	29910	Beaufort
Kids College	17 Goethe Road	Bluffton	29910	Beaufort
May River Montessori School	60 Calhoun Street	Bluffton	29910	Beaufort
Sandalwood Head Start	143 Sandalwood Terrace	Hilton Head	29926	Beaufort
The Children's Center	8 Natures Way	Hilton Head Island	29926	Beaufort
Hilton Head Island Recreation Center	20 Wilborn Road	Hilton Head	29925	Beaufort
All Saints Episcopal Preschool	3001 Meeting Street	Hilton Head	29925	Beaufort
First Presbyterian Day School	540 William Hilton Parkway	Hilton Head Island	29928	Beaufort

Christ Lutheran Preschool	829 William Hilton Parkway	Hilton Head Island	29928	Beaufort
St. Lukes Preschool	50 Pope Avenue	Hilton Head Island	29928	Beaufort
Hilton Head Preparatory School	8 Fox Grape Road	Hilton Head Island	29928	Beaufort
Sea Pines Montessori	9 Fox Grape Road	Hilton Head Island	29928	Beaufort

Beaufort County Child Care Homes

Provider Name	Street	City	Zip	County
Mary A. Edwards (Child Care Home)	7083 Roseida Road	Burton	29906	Beaufort
Melonie Quimbley (Child Care Home)	48 Harding Street	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort
Marie A. Simmons (Child Care Home)	392 Station Parkway	Bluffton	29910	Beaufort

Provider Name	Street	City	Zip	County
Voncile S. Brown (Child Care Home)	3007 Cedarbrook Street	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort
Nina Mikell (Child Care Home)	27 Johnny Morrall Circle, Apt B4	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
Mary Foster (Child Care Home)	2507 Fripp St.	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
Mitsi Chaple Evonne (Child Care Home)	2307 McTeer Circle	Beaufort	29902	Beaufort
Provider Name	Street	City	Zip	County
Sandra Drew Vergas (Child Care Home)	133 10th Avenue	Bluffton	29910	Beaufort
Charlotte Fields Elizabeth (Child Care Home)	3094 Clydesdale Circle	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort
Denise Palmer (Child Care Home)	14 Peanut Lane	St. Helena	29920	Beaufort
Erica Jones (Child Care Home)	4015 Dogwood St	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort
Tatiana Logan (Child Care Home)	155 Great Bend Dr	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort

Lori Latham (Child Care Home)	27 Hidden Oaks Rd	St Helena	29920	Beaufort
LaVerne Doctor (Child Care Home)	379 Orange Grove Rd	Saint Helena	29920	Beaufort
Beverly Hamilton (Child Care Home)	205-G Old Shanklin Rd	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort
Valerie A. Jackson (Child Care Home)	10 Brilliant Lane	Burton	29906	Beaufort
Felicia Ann Young (Child Care Home)	54 Pine Grove Road	Beaufort	29906	Beaufort

Disability Data

Unfortunately, there is no data collected on the true prevalence of disabilities, within the counties (Beaufort & Jasper), services are provided for. According to nationally reported estimates, over 10% of children and youth have developmental disabilities at any point in time, and more than 17% are affected at some time before age 18 by deafness, blindness, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, speech defects, developmental delays, learning disabilities, and emotional or behavioral problems. According to the United States Census, children under five years old in Jasper County total 1,546; children under five years old in Beaufort County totaled 9,012. Per, Ashley Gould Hutchison,

Director of Readiness for Beaufort Country School District (BCSD), currently provides Special Education services to 2,202 students with disabilities, ages 3 to 21, under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Per, Paige Elmore, Director of Special Education for Jasper Country School District (JCSD), currently provides Special Education services to 252 students with disabilities, ages 3 to 21, under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Continuously, Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start meets the required 10% enrollment, of children with disabilities. For the school term 2021-22, the program served 58 children with disabilities of the 577 funded for enrollment. During the 2021-22 school year, Beaufort County School District (BCSD) and Jasper County School District (JCSD) began implementing the Evaluation Planning meetings, conducted prior to the evaluations. Evaluation Planning meetings allows the parent/guardians a chance to meet with the designated Local Education Agency's (LEA's), Evaluation Team, to discuss parent concerns, developmental screening results, and additional information needed to determine how to best meet the child's needs. The Evaluation Teams consist of, but are not limited to:

- The Parent/Guardian
- School Psychologist
- Speech/Language Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- General Ed Teacher
- Head Start Representative
- Early Interventionist
- Special Education Teacher

- Local Education Agency (LEA)

Both Beaufort and Jasper Counties School districts are currently, utilizing Response to intervention (RTI). Response to intervention is a process designed to provide students with interventions before they are identified as students who are served through special education services as students who have disabilities. RTI is a general education initiative that allows students to receive targeted interventions in their areas of weakness before they are referred to special education. However, RTI isn't necessary in every situation.

If students are not eligible for services via the LEA's, private services are offered by Beaufort Jasper EOC Head Start, to community partners that offer services/therapy, in the area of concern. Programs such as Palmetto Speech, Lowcountry Therapy, Spontaneous Therapy, and Healthlink (Beaufort Memorial) are great links for children to access services when they do not qualify by the LEA.

Collaboration with these agencies above serve children from birth-5 years of age. Baby Net provides early intervention services for families who have infants and toddlers, birth to three years of age, with developmental delays or conditions associated with these delays. Eligible children are served regardless of family income. Services to these families include family education, health services, assistive technology, screening and assessments, and occupational therapy.

Health Link is an agency that is not listed in the chart above because they have a collective part in serving all of these children; the services they provide overlap with the above organizations. Health Link is an outpatient center specializing in children's rehabilitation, providing specialized therapy and support to children in order to achieve their own measures of success. Health

Link brings together specialists in physical and occupational therapies, speech/language pathology, and social services/case management.

Jasper County First Steps' Early Identification and Referral (EI&R) programs serve families with young children with suspected delays in development and coordinates public awareness for BabyNet services, acting as a local portal to connect families to community-based services they may need or desire to ensure the school readiness of their children. Service include early detection of developmental delays and health issues, activities that promote child development, and Increases children's school readiness and school success. In 2021-2022, 17 children were served ages 0-3, under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Community Resources

In addition to the review of demographic and socioeconomic data, family self-assessments were conducted among the enrolled Head Start families. The assessments helped to gather the progress of family engagement outcomes and individual needs of the population served. Barriers identified in receiving services in both counties were, lack of transportation and employment hours.

Agencies, in the area, work together collaboratively to meet the needs of the residence in both counties. Beaufort County, the larger county of the two counties served, has a large amount of resources available to the community. Jasper County, largely rural, lacks an adequate amount of resources. The list below is only half of the identified resources in the surrounding communities that are available to eligible families. Many of the resources overlap in areas of need.

Area of Need	Community Resource
Abuse	• *Beaufort/ Jasper County Alcohols and Drug Abuse Department* • *CAPA (Open Arms Shelter)* • *Hopeful Horizons (previously Hope Haven and CODA)*
Assistance & Related	• *American Red Cross* • *Beaufort County Housing Authority* • *Beaufort Jasper EOC* • *Bluffton Self Help* • *Council for Latin Americans* • *Credit Counseling and Financial Education* • *Deep Well Project* • *Department of Social Services in Beaufort/Jasper* • *Emergency Management Office (Disaster Relief)* • *Family Promise* (Homelessness assistance) • *Franciscan Center* • *HELP of Beaufort* • *Jasper County Council on Aging* • *Low Country Food Bank* • *Salvation Army*

	- *Second Helpings* - *Section 8* - *Self Help* - *Senior Services of Beaufort County* - *Storks Nest* - *United Way of the Low Country* - *Universal Staffing*
Educational	- *Access Network* (Education and Counseling) - *Beaufort County Library* - *Beaufort County School District- Adult Education* - *COSY* - *FACES* - *Jasper County Adult Education Program* - *Literacy Volunteers of the Low Country* - *Low Country Legal Aid* - *S.C Vocational Rehabilitation* - *Technical College of Low Country* - *University of South Carolina Beaufort* - *PASOS* - *Black Chamber of Commerce*
Employment	- *Re-employment support groups* Beaufort/Jasper - *SC Workforce Center* - *WIA (Job Skills)*

Health	• *All Children's Pediatrics*
	• *Beaufort County Health Department*
	• *Beaufort Jasper Hampton Comp Health*
	• *Neighborhood Outreach Connection*
	• *Coastal Empire Community Mental Health*
	• *Good Neighbor Free Medical Clinic*
	• *Jasper County Health Department*
	• *Mobil Prenatal Clinic Jasper*
	• *Pregnancy Center & Clinic of the Low Country*
	• *Volunteers in Medicine*
	• *Jamison Consultants*
Parenting	• *CAPA*
	• *Clemson University Extension*
	• *COSY*
	• *Penn Center*
	• *Community First- Grandparents/Single parents*
	• *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group*
	• *FACES (Beaufort County School District)*
	• *First Steps*
Transportation	• *Palmetto Breeze Beaufort/Jasper*

To ensure that the Early Head Start/Head Start children and families receive the necessary services, over the last seventeen (17) years, the program has worked diligently to increase the number of partnerships and written Memorandum of Agreements with local and state agencies/programs that will be beneficial to the children and families we serve. Below are a current list of agencies and some of the services they provide.

Beaufort County Department of Social Services

- Provide temporary assistance to needy families: foster care, child/adult protective services.
- Provide a listing of families with age eligible children to Social Service Specialist
- Assist in mass recruitment mailings to these families
- Provide Customers with programs and recruitment information
- Allow Early Head Start staff to speak to DSS customers regarding procedures for enrolling age eligible children
- Coordinate services of shared customers concerning pre-existing family plans.
- Provide training to early Head Start staff and families.

Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC)

- Offer Health Care to individuals of all ages and income levels
- Service includes screenings and selected treatment for various diseases, immunization, maternal, and child health
- Joint sharing of training and technical assistance
- Actively recruit early Head Start eligible families

- Distribute DHEC information on preventive health services
- Provide updated immunization and health screening results follow up
- Provide WIC and Family Support services to Pregnant mothers
- Evenings and Saturday Clinic available
- EPSDT screenings for enrolling Head Start children and their families
- Coordinate services of shared customers concerning pre-existing family plans

DHEC's BabyNet Program

- Make referral of children at age two and one half years of age if Early Head Start deems to be an appropriate placement
- Provides training to Early Head Start staff and families
- Resource and support services are utilized when appropriate
- Share screening and diagnosis reports when appropriate with early Head Start

Clemson University Extension Cooperation Services

- Provide extension services and information in agriculture, family and consumer science areas and nutrition
- Provide training and technical assistance to staff and families
- Distribute parenting newsletters
- Have available Early Head Start recruitment information at events

Hopeful Horizons

- Provides a twenty-four-hour hotline, and safe shelter for citizens of domestic violence

- Provide referrals of sheltered residents with Head Start age children
- Provides individual and group counseling for staff and families
- Provide training, technical assistance and resources
- Coordinates Kid's Fest which is a county wide free fun day of activities and prizes for children and information for parents

Beaufort-Jasper Comprehensive Health Services, Inc.

- Provides Health services to individuals of all ages and income levels on a sliding scale fee
- Provide transportation for patients to and from appointments
- Provide initial follow up medical and dental screening and treatment
- Provide in-kind resources and materials to promote health and nutrition
- Provide evening patient care hour
- Recruit Early Head Start families

Beaufort County Sherriff's Office Community Service Division

- Provide DARE program to families
- Provide Mentoring to Early Head Start families
- Interact with children, staff and parents to promote respect for law enforcement

Beaufort County Housing Authority

- Provide low rent housing assistance
- Provide home ownership program
- Provide listing with Early Head Start eligible children
- Assist with mailing recruitment information for Early Head Start

- Share monitoring reports, demographics, and other program information
- Assist in the Community Assessment

Beaufort and Jasper County School Districts

- Provide education to student's Pre-K through 12th grade
- Make age appropriate referrals
- Collaborate with transitional activities from early Head Start
- Coordinate shared recruitment
- Provide services to special needs children transitioning from an IFSP to and IEP
- Provide family literacy options to families
- Provide facilities, joint trainings, and resource materials
- Collaborate for emergency transportation services for Early Head Start and regular transportation services for Head Start children housed in district facilities
- Provide demographic information and assist in the distribution and collection of the community assessment survey
- Child Find Services

Beaufort County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Department

- Provides counseling, referrals, prevention workshops, structured group sessions, and Red Ribbon Campaign materials for Early Head Start families
- Utilize Medical funding source to pay cost incurred in the provision of services to Head Start families
- Provide Alcohol and Drug assessment and treatment to Head Start families

Beaufort County Disabilities and Special Needs Department

- Provides family support services, including residential, and employment services for persons with mental retardation and related disabilities
- Make referrals of children with disabilities
- Has a representative serving on our Health Advisory Committee
- Assist with transition activities

Community Coalition

Beaufort-Jasper EOC Head Start/Early Head Start program successfully partnered with the Early Childhood Coalition of the Lowcountry, along with Together for Beaufort, is a community coalition that works to meet the needs of families and children in the community.

These partnerships work towards creating a system of care for children and their families that supports their health, well-being, and development. In partnership with other community organizations, the agency strives to provide resources and support to families with young children to ensure that they have access to high-quality early childhood education, healthcare, and other essential services.

The local faith community has joined the partners above to create a Community Coalition. The coalition operates under a grant. This partnership was created to further deliver holistic services to families, maximizing community partnerships, including faith-based, to help provide intense experiences to change the intergenerational patterns associated with low levels in literacy and poverty.

Beaufort-Jasper EOC is a community oriented agency and advocate for children and families. Most of the agency's managers serve on local boards and committees for their service areas. The agency's Head Start Director serves as an active participant of the County's Early Childhood Coalition Committee. In addition, the Head Start Director also is an active member of the South Carolina Early Childhood Advisory Board.

Most importantly, the Beaufort-Jasper EOC Agency works in partnership with parents. This is an ongoing process to include parents in the planning and implementation of program activities. Parents and community members currently serve on Early Childhood and Health Advisory Committees and Policy Councils.

Assessment Review

The data on the Economic Status, Family Challenges, and Family Health Issues in both counties served point out the need to implement new ideas to efficiently serve our families. However, the data also shows that strengths do exist among the families that are served. By combining the data researched and reviewing assessments completed by Beaufort Jasper Head Start families, this assessment illustrates the need for the center-based program options currently operating.

Ten areas that the community can enhance its efforts to develop stronger partnerships are:

- ➢ Foster stronger relationships between local businesses and community organizations to increase access to resources and support for families.
- ➢ Increase collaboration between different community organizations to better coordinate services and programs for families.

- Develop a centralized database of community resources and services for families with young children to increase access to essential services.
- Enhance efforts to engage and involve parents and caregivers in the community and decision-making processes.
- Increase outreach efforts to underserved and marginalized communities to ensure that all families have access to essential services.
- Strengthen partnerships with local healthcare providers to improve access to healthcare and promote preventative care.
- Increase partnerships with local schools and educators to ensure that children have access to high-quality early childhood education.
- Increase partnerships with faith-based organizations to provide additional support and resources to families.
- Develop stronger partnerships with law enforcement to better identify and support families experiencing domestic violence or other forms of abuse.
- Increase efforts to involve youth and young adults in community efforts to support families and children.

Beaufort-Jasper EOC also recommends the following to enhance efforts to reduce child maltreatment, enhance how children are identified with special needs and ways to improve the implementation of STEAM:
- community organizations work together to provide education and resources to parents and caregivers, develop a centralized reporting system for suspected cases of abuse or neglect, increase awareness and education around the signs of abuse, and provide support and resources to families who have experienced abuse or neglect.

➢ Local LEAs can better identify children with special needs and disabilities by implementing providing ongoing professional development and training to teachers and staff, developing partnerships with healthcare providers, and providing support and resources to families of children with special needs.

➢ To enhance and better implement STEAM with early childhood in mind, community organizations can provide resources and training to early childhood educators, develop partnerships with local businesses and organizations to provide STEAM-focused learning opportunities, and increase access to technology and other resources needed for STEAM education. Additionally, community organizations can work to promote STEAM education as a way to support children's overall development and prepare them for future success.

The results of this Community Assessment are implemented in the Program Narrative to:

1. *Determine goals and philosophy*
2. *Component of Services with Program Options*
3. *Recruitment Areas (We service all areas in Beaufort and Jasper Counties)*
4. *Continue Services in current Centers*
5. *Use current ERSEA Criteria*