



**UNDER EMBARGO** until Tuesday, Sept. 25, at 12:01 a.m. ET

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## **Young Adult Parents in the Spotlight: Program Investments Continue to Build Success for Parents and Their Children as New Report Highlights Opportunities**

**COLUMBIA, South Carolina** — Children's Trust of South Carolina has received a two-year project grant from the Office of Adolescent Health to continue the Community Support for Young Parents program in South Carolina. The award is \$970,000 for the current fiscal year and will be distributed through a wide variety of established state and local partners.

This funding will support many of the recommendations released today in *Opening Doors for Young Parents*, the latest KIDS COUNT® policy report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

"Young parents face multiple milestones and challenges all at one time — having a child, finishing school, earning and managing money, and living on their own," said Children's Trust CEO Sue Williams. "Often they are ill-prepared for a rapidly changing labor market and less likely to find stable jobs offering wages that can sustain a growing family. With all these stressors compounding, we find children are at greater risk for neglect, and sometimes even abuse."

Of the young adults in South Carolina who are between the ages of 18-24, 11 percent (44,000) are young parents. Some 69 percent of the 51,000 children of young adult parents live in low-income families.

The report outlines specific recommendations on how to support young adult parents, including many program initiatives implemented by Children's Trust.

"Through our work at Children's Trust, we see how effective the report's recommendations can be," said Williams. "We have helped young families find pathways to success through home visiting programs, quality early care and evidence-based, family-strengthening programs."

The Community Support for Young Parents program, implemented in partnership with the South Carolina Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and the South Carolina Center for Fathers and Families, supports programs to help pregnant and parenting teens and young adults continue their education, improve their parenting skills, and delay subsequent pregnancy. Funding will specifically engage fathers and will be concentrated in six counties: Charleston, Darlington, Florence, Horry, Richland and Spartanburg.

"We are grateful for the continued support from the Office of Adolescent Health," said Williams. "We encourage our policymakers and elected officials to support the recommendations in this report with funding and proactive policies. With greater prevention

investments in parents, especially young parents, we can break generational cycles of poverty and abuse.”

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#### **Release Information**

*Opening Doors for Young Parents* will be available September 25 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at <https://www.aecf.org/opening-doors-for-young-parents>. Reporters may request an embargoed copy beginning September 18.

#### **About Children’s Trust**

Children’s Trust of South Carolina is the only statewide organization dedicated to strengthening and supporting public and private prevention efforts that keep South Carolina’s children safe. It works to prevent child abuse, neglect and unintentional injuries so every child has the opportunity to thrive in a healthy, nurturing environment. Children’s Trust is home to KIDS COUNT South Carolina, Safe Kids South Carolina, Prevent Child Abuse South Carolina and other programs that deliver on this mission. For more information, visit [scChildren.org](http://scChildren.org).

#### **About the Annie E. Casey Foundation**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation’s children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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