

Annual Report

2011-2012



Who We Serve

First Steps serves children pre-birth to 5 years old and their families who are at risk of not being ready for school.

Number of Berkeley County children under 6:

15,150

Number of Berkeley County children under 6 living in poverty:

3000

Babies born each year in Berkeley County to a mother without a high school diploma:

1 in 5

Our Programs

Parents as Teachers

Child Care Training

Child Care Scholarships

Nurse Family Partnership

Our Results

- ✓ 247 families served through our home visitation programs
- ✓ 3649 home visits were conducted
- ✓ 48 different child care homes and centers received training and /or scholarships
- ✓ 619 teachers and providers trained

“If our American way of life fails the child, it fails us all.”

Pearl S. Buck

Berkeley County First Steps is proud to say that we remain committed and able to providing the same high quality programs we have offered since 2001, even despite declining resources and funding. We are able to do this through creative collaborations and the community’s dedication to ensuring educational opportunities for our youngest learners. Partnerships with the Berkeley County School District, DHEC, child care centers – as well as –with parents and community leaders, have been critical to our success. We cannot thank them enough for their support and guidance. We also would like to recognize the hard work and devotion of our staff members, most of whom have been a part of the First Step family for many years.

Since the inception of our programs in 2001, the ratio of children reaching kindergarten “not ready for school” has declined from 1 in 4, to now 1 in 7. There has also been a significant drop in our 1st grade retention rates. Though we have seen much progress, we also recognize the growing stressors on our families due to the weak economy. We are receiving more calls than ever before regarding child care, parenting concerns, and requests for training.

While Berkeley County First Steps remains focused on providing services that meet community needs, we also strive to offer programs that are evidence based, and can show measurable change. Both of our parenting programs are based on nationally recognized models. We also have demonstrated effectiveness at connecting with families who have multiple risk factors. We are able to link these families to medical homes, community services, and quality child care. We provide them with routine health and developmental assessments and parenting and literacy training. We also offer benefits that are harder to quantify, but are just as important, such as encouragement, empowerment, and advocacy.

Berkeley County First Steps believes that education is the way out of the cycle of poverty, and it begins at birth. The foundations for learning are established from 0-6 years, and if those windows of opportunity are missed, it yields children who will struggle through school, and adults who will struggle through life. Berkeley County First Steps believes every child should enter school ready to learn, and with the tools in place to allow them to excel and reach their full potential. We are proud to offer programs that assist families in creating better lives for their children, and a better future for their community.

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Amy Sprague

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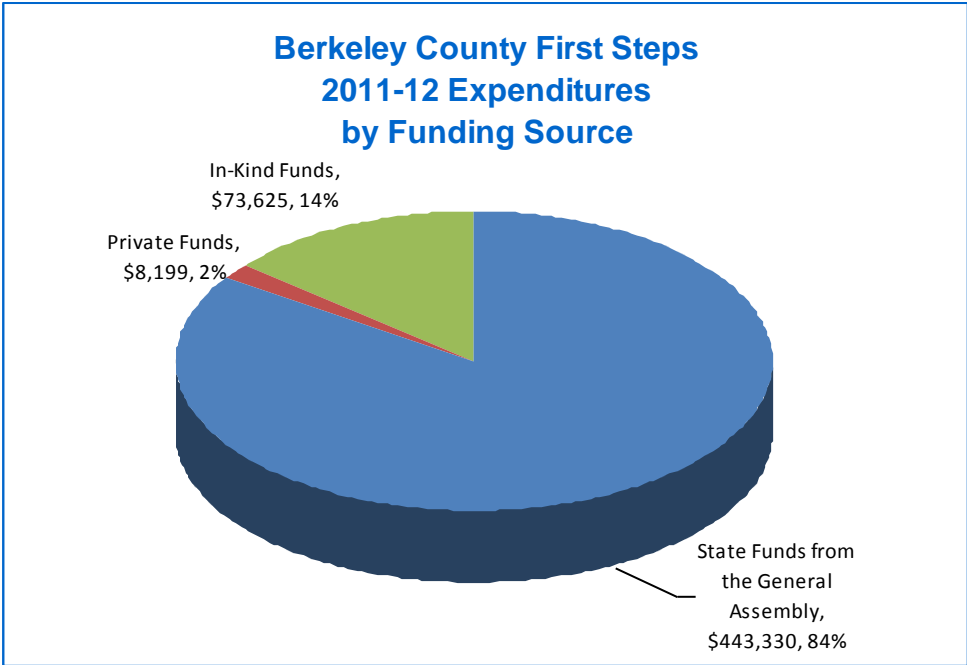
www.berkeleyfirststeps.org

Building brighter futures for South Carolina’s youngest learners.



Getting children ready for school.

Financial Impact



Total 2011-12 Expenditures: \$525,154

State Funds Leveraged*: 16%

**Percentage of state dollars matched by additional federal, private, and/or in-kind funds*

2011-12 Expenditures by Strategy

| | State \$ | Federal \$ | Private \$ | In-Kind \$ | Total \$ | % of 2011-12 Expenditures |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Parents as Teachers | \$242,602 | \$0 | \$0 | \$60,000 | \$302,602 | 58% |
| Child Care Training | \$31,766 | \$0 | \$3,300 | \$2,000 | \$37,066 | 7% |
| Child Care Scholarships | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | 0% |
| NFP | \$36,625 | \$0 | \$0 | \$11,625 | \$48,250 | 9% |
| Program Support | \$98,042 | \$0 | \$1,600 | \$0 | \$99,642 | 19% |
| Administrative Support | \$34,295 | \$0 | \$3,299 | \$0 | \$37,594 | 7% |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | \$443,330 | \$0 | \$8,199 | \$73,625 | \$525,154 | |

Support Berkeley First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer!

The Amazing Timothy Cross

Parents As Teachers



Berkeley County First Steps would like to introduce you to Timothy. Timothy's mom Leslie found out about our Parents As Teachers program through an open house when he was only three months old. Timothy had been born with a low birth weight, and Leslie wanted to ensure she was giving him the best start in life she could. This is when she connected with Parent Educator Abbey Mills.

Abbey began visiting with the family weekly. Timothy's growth was slow, and by his mid-year developmental screening it became apparent he had delays in speech. Abbey assisted Timothy's mom in setting up services through BabyNet. After more extensive testing, it was also discovered that Timothy had DiGeorge Syndrome. DiGeorge Syndrome results from a genetic defect, and can

cause poor development in several body systems, as well as, developmental delays – especially in speech. Leslie was determined to work with him to overcome any challenges he might face. Abbey partnered with mom in this effort.

One of the main goals of our Parents As Teachers program is to facilitate and model early learning literacy practices with our parents. Children develop competency in language and literacy not through a set curriculum, but through interactions and experiences with the adults around them. Simple activities like reading, story-telling, and singing are some of the best activities to stimulate language and cognitive skills. It also builds motivation, curiosity, and memory. Timothy's mom made a true commitment to this effort, and was always extremely proud to show Abbey her reading logs and the progress Timothy was making. To date, she has read over 3,687 books to Timothy, and on his most recent Ages and Stages screening, he passed "communication" with a perfect score! He is also already identifying letters and numbers by name, and loves going to school. Abbey is so proud of Leslie who has played such an active role in shaping the lives of both herself and Timothy. We are so proud of Abbey for showing Leslie that she is Timothy's first and most important teacher!

Thank you to our partners!

Funding Support

**State of South Carolina
(through South Carolina First
Steps)**

Trident United Way

Kiwanis Club

In-Kind Support

**Berkeley County School
District**

ABC Child Care

DHEC

First Book

Support Berkeley First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer!



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Parents as Teachers



Parents as Teachers

Parents play an irreplaceable role in their child's development.

Program Description

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) model is an evidence-based early childhood home visiting framework for families with children prenatal through kindergarten entry that builds strong communities, thriving families and children who are healthy, safe and ready to learn.

Program Components

- 1. Personal Visits** are designed to meet the needs of each individual family with intensity ranging anywhere from twice monthly to weekly.
- 2. Group Connections** are provided monthly to ensure families build social connections with each other and learn new ways to support their child's development.
- 3. Screening** is done on a regular basis for each child's health and developmental progress.
- 4. Resource and Referral Network** connects families to needed resources, strengthening protective factors and fostering positive change.

Berkeley County PAT families are recruited through schools, child care centers, and BabyNet; however, at least half are self-referrals. All possess at least two of the risk factors below.

Risk Factor Profile:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| % in Poverty | 98% |
| % with LBW or Developmental Delays | 48% |
| % Caregiver depression/mental illness | 44% |
| % < HS Diploma | 23% |
| % Teenage mother | 20% |
| % Abuse, Neglect or Domestic Violence | 19% |
| % with Substance Abuse | 8% |

PAT Outcomes

First Steps PAT programs measure progress through pre/post assessments of parenting skills using the Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS) and the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI).

Thank you to our partners and donors!

Berkeley County School District

First Book

Cainhoy Food Pantry

And our families, who donate clothes, toys, and baby supplies

Why PAT Works

Clients in First Steps home visitation programs, including PAT, saw **significant increases in their pre- and post-assessments**. Overall, **54%** of participants who scored at a low quality of parenting improved to a moderate quality of parenting, **44%** who had moderate parenting skills moved to high quality, and **11.9%** who had low quality parenting at pre-test increased their skills to high quality.

*First Steps Evaluation
High Scope Educational Research Foundation, 2009*

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ **Increase parent knowledge of child development and improve parenting practices:** 89% of our families made measurable progress on their KIPS or ACIRI post scores.
- ✓ **Provide early detection of developmental delays and health issues:** Of the 39 delays detected this year, 31 are now "on track", and all clients are receiving appropriate early intervention services.
- ✓ **Prevent child abuse and neglect:** Despite serving at-risk families, we have no active abuse or neglect cases within the program.

PAT by the Number\$

| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| State Funds | \$23,908 | \$242,602 |
| Federal Funds | \$206,204 | \$0 |
| Private Funds | \$3,047 | \$0 |
| In-Kind Funds | \$60,000 | \$60,000 |
| Total | \$293,159 | \$302,602 |
| State \$ Leveraged | 1126% | 25% |
| | | |
| Families Served | 135 | 80 |
| Cost per Family | \$2,172 | \$3783 |
| Number of Visits | 1718 | 1569 |
| Cost per Visit | \$170 | \$193 |

Berkeley County First Steps

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Child Care Training

Those who care for young children need high-quality, accessible, affordable professional development.

Program Description

Efforts to improve the quality of child care must include providing affordable, high quality training that meets the needs of the local child care workforce.

First Steps-sponsored training is certified through the SC Center for Child Care Career Development and includes topics in the areas of nutrition, health and safety, curriculum, child guidance, professional development and program administration. Best practices in training include not only the training, but also follow-up with supported practice in the classroom.

In Berkeley County, quality child care training opportunities are now more accessible, and free of charge, because of First Steps funding.

All providers within the county - family day care homes, group homes, and centers - are invited to attend our trainings via mailers, and postings on our website.

Our goals are:

1. To provide classes that will facilitate compliance with DSS and ABC regulations, and will allow providers to improve the level of care they offer
2. To offer topics that will not only improve provider knowledge of child development, but will present skills that are easy to implement in the classroom
3. To encourage child care staff to advance in their careers by earning credentials, certificates, or degrees in early education

We routinely conduct surveys of providers to ensure that the topics we offer are useful, provide information that expands on what they already know, and are incorporated into the classroom setting.

We also monitor DSS violations within the county and will provide trainings that will address high-citation areas.

Thank you to the following agencies for partnering with us to provide trainings:

- ABC Special Needs Program
- OSHA Volunteer Program
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- SC PITC Program

Why Training Works

Research shows that well trained and educated individuals in the child care workforce are **key to ensuring that children are both safe and in a setting to promote their healthy development.**

National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ **Provided 21 workshops with a total of 619 participants**
- ✓ **92% of providers indicated their knowledge of the topic had increased because of the training**
- ✓ **89% were able to incorporate what they learned into the classroom**
- ✓ **74% of our trainings focused on infant/toddler care and staff-child interactions**

Training by the Number\$

| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| State Funds | \$32,904 | \$31,766 |
| Federal Funds | \$0 | \$0 |
| Private Funds | \$3,289 | \$3,300 |
| In-Kind Funds | \$4,000 | \$2,000 |
| Total | \$40,193 | \$37,066 |
| State \$ Leveraged | 22% | 17% |
| Child Care Staff Trained | 542 | 619 |
| Providers Represented | 42 | 48 |
| Number of Training Hours | 38.5 | 41.5 |
| Cost per Person Trained | \$74 | \$60 |



Getting children ready for school.

Child Care Scholarships

Too many families in Berkeley County cannot afford quality care for their children.

Program Description

The latest Kids Count data shows that more than two-thirds of children under 6 in South Carolina (68%) have all available parents in the labor force. **Access to quality child care is essential for these children to experience safe, nurturing, and stimulating interactions while away from their primary caregivers.** Yet, of those families working or going to school who are income-eligible for child care assistance in South Carolina, only a small fraction receive it due to lack of funds. In the absence of nurturing and consistently available family, friends or neighbors, parents are faced with few - or no – affordable care options.

Berkeley County First Steps provides vouchers to eligible parents in our Parents As Teachers or Nurse Family Partnership programs. Families must reside in Berkeley County, be employed or in school full-time, and fall within the ABC income standards to qualify. Each voucher is good for 52 weeks of care.

Risk Factor Profile:

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| % in Poverty | 100% |
| % single parent household | 100% |
| % with less than HS diploma | 62% |

Our goals are to:

1. Ensure our parents are able to maintain steady employment – For many of our families, child care expenses consume so much of their paycheck, it is more economical to not work.
2. Promote parents getting their high school diploma or college degree – Approximately half of our applicants are teenage mothers who would be unable to stay in school without the voucher.
3. Provide parents with quality child care options – Many parents must resort to placing their children with unregulated caregivers because it is the only care they can afford.

Thank you to our partners:

- ABC Child Care**
- Parents As Teachers**
- Nurse Family Partnership**

Why Access to Quality Care Works

Children develop in an environment of relationships that includes their immediate and extended families, non-family caregivers, neighbors, and community - and poverty can compromise those relationships. **When children receive few opportunities for positive serve-and-return interactions - when the responses from adults are sporadic, inappropriate, or missing entirely - they are not getting the stimulation their brains need to develop in a healthy way.**

*The Long Reach of Early Childhood Poverty,
National Scientific Council on the Developing Child*

Program Results 2010-12

- ✓ **100% of children served attended centers with a quality rating of at least a B or higher**
- ✓ **78% of original applicants remained in our programs, and stayed employed and/or in school for the duration of the voucher**
- ✓ **22% of applicants not only graduated from high school, but moved on to enrollment in college classes**

Scholarships by the Number\$

| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| State Funds | \$30,385 | \$0 |
| Federal Funds | \$7,927 | \$0 |
| Private Funds | \$10,316 | \$0 |
| In-Kind Funds | \$3,872 | \$0 |
| Total | \$52,500 | \$0 |
| State \$ Leveraged | 72% | 0% |
| Children Served | 8 | 6 |
| Cost per Child per Year | \$3,500 | \$3500 |
| Tuition per Week | \$68 | \$68 |
| Child Care Providers Served | 5 | 5 |

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Getting children ready for school.

Nurse-Family Partnership



Helping vulnerable first-time moms empowers them to achieve a better life for themselves and their children.

Program Description

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) helps transform the lives of vulnerable first-time moms and their babies. Through ongoing home visits from registered nurses, low-income, first-time moms receive the care and support they need to have a healthy pregnancy, provide responsible and competent care for their children, and become more economically self-sufficient. From pregnancy until the child turns two years old, Nurse-Family Partnership Nurse Home Visitors form a much-needed, trusting relationship with the first-time moms, instilling confidence and empowering them to achieve a better life for their children – and themselves.

In Berkeley County, Nurse-Family Partnership is implemented through DHEC. The program targets first-time pregnant mothers between 9 and 28 weeks of pregnancy. We recruit through outreach to the local schools, hospitals, and various social service agencies. This strategy pairs a registered nurse with a mother early in her pregnancy to build a long-term relationship of education and support. An average of 64 home visits are conducted beginning prior to the 28th week of pregnancy, and continuing until the child reaches his or her second birthday. All nurses are not only registered, but must have completed training at the Nurse Family Partnership National Service Office in Denver, Colorado.

Risk Factor Profile:

| | |
|---------------------------|------------|
| % in Poverty | 88% |
| % single parent household | 92% |
| % < HS Diploma | 25% |

At the completion of each home visit, nurses will enter data into the "Efforts to Outcome" performance management system. This is a web-based tool that assists the nurses in monitoring client outcomes and improvement.

Our goals are to improve – pregnancy outcomes, the child’s health and development, and the economic self-sufficiency of the family.

Thank you to our partners:

Department of Health and Environmental Control

Duke Endowment

Blue Cross Blue Shield

Why NFP Works

NFP is supported by the most extensive research foundation of any maternal and child health program. Three randomized controlled trials in 1977, 1988 and 1994 - which are still being examined today for long-term impact – show consistently proven results in the areas of **improved prenatal health, fewer childhood injuries, fewer subsequent pregnancies, increased intervals between births, increased material employment, and improved school readiness.**

Program Results 2011-12

- ✓ **100% of infants were up-to-date on immunizations by 18 months, and all had received developmental screenings**
- ✓ **81% of clients completed the expected # of home visits yielding a below average rate of low birth weight deliveries**
- ✓ **37 moms have graduated with 15% more moms returning to school or employment by 18 months than the national average**
- ✓ **50% reduction in violence during pregnancy and 10% decrease in maternal smoking**

NFP by the Number\$

| | 2010-11 | 2011-12 |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| State Funds | \$0 | \$36,625 |
| Federal Funds | \$0 | \$0 |
| Private Funds | \$0 | \$0 |
| In-Kind Funds | \$0 | \$11,625 |
| Total | \$0 | \$48,250 |
| State \$ Leveraged | | 32% |
| Families Served | NA | 167 |
| Cost per Family | NA | \$289 |
| Number of Visits | NA | 2,080 |
| Cost per Visit | NA | \$23 |

Berkeley County First Steps

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 www.berkeleyfirststeps.org



Community Leadership in Early Childhood

“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”

Frederick Douglas

Berkeley County First Steps has always recognized that our mission cannot be achieved without community team work and shared effort. We routinely collaborate with a variety of community partners such as WIC, DSS, BabyNet, Head Start, Child Find, DHEC, Berkeley Citizens, and the school district, to coordinate services for our families.

We are also thankful to partners for allowing us in-kind space to conduct our programs and trainings. The Berkeley County School District generously houses our PAT program at 5 different elementary schools, and allows us use of their Board Room for meetings and trainings. Berkeley Electric Cooperative and child care centers have also graciously provided us with training space.

Berkeley County First Steps works with several state and local agencies in organizing trainings for our child care providers. ABC Special Needs, SC PITC, Clemson Extension, CCR&R, the OSHA Volunteer Program and our neighboring First Steps offices all assist us in offering free, local trainings to our teachers. We are able to maximize our outreach, while reducing overlap and duplication, by sharing resources and information with these agencies.

Berkeley County First Steps Partnership Board

2011-2012

| Name | Position | Board Category |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Amy Sprague, Chair | Kindergarten teacher, Hanahan Elementary | Parent of preschool child |
| Richard Meister, Vice Chair | Retired, School Principal | Legislative appointee |
| Sharon Fashion, Secretary | Youth Services Coordinator, Berkeley County Library | Library appointee |
| Lillie Caldwell | Adult Education, Berkeley County School District | Family Education/Support |
| Cathy Delaney | Head Start Director, Berkeley County School District | Head Start appointee |
| Susan Gehlmann | ED of Curriculum and Instruction, Berkeley School | School District Appointee |
| Jean Gooch | Infant Toddler Specialist, ABC Special Needs Program | Early Childhood Education |
| Jerlean Holmes | Child Care Center Owner/Director | Child Care/ECD Provider |
| Samone Johnson | Service Coordinator, DSS | DSS appointee |
| Sandy Moore | DHEC Clinic Director, DHEC | DHEC appointee |
| Elaine Norton | Principal, St. Stephen Elementary | Early Childhood Education |
| Delores Rock | Parents As Teachers Supervisor, School District | Family Education/Support |
| Christine Tiller | Child Care Center Owner/Director | Business Community |
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Support Berkeley First Steps today through a tax-deductible donation, or volunteer!

Getting children ready for school.

What is First Steps?

South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness was created in 1999 by the South Carolina General Assembly for the purpose of **having every child in South Carolina arrive at kindergarten ready to learn**. Sadly, many South Carolina children possess one or more risk factors that put them at **high risk** (greater than a 1 in 3 chance) for **“early school failure”** – either being retained or scoring below grade level in reading or math – by third grade.

First Steps exists to bring together efforts in early childhood at the state and local level, public and private, to focus and intensify services and assure the most efficient use of all available resources to serve the needs of South Carolina’s young children and their families.

First Steps works to accomplish its mission through a state coordinating office and a network of county partnerships (46), each a private non-profit organization led by a board of early childhood stakeholders. With a modest recurring appropriation of state funding, First Steps leverages cash and in-kind resources at the federal, state and local level to improve services for young children in five strategy areas:

Family Strengthening

A parent is a child’s first and best teacher.

Healthy Start

Children’s development and ability to learn are profoundly impacted by their health.

Quality Child Care

Access to high-quality care is a critical component of a child’s healthy development.

Early Education

Quality preschool opportunities set the stage for success in school.

School Transition

Preparing children and parents for a successful transition into full-day kindergarten.

Each First Steps county partnership determines how to spend its funds based on an annual needs and resources assessment and collaboration with community partners to **fill gaps in local services** for young children and their families. First Steps has proven its impact through strong program and fiscal accountability and independent evaluations every three years - a requirement of its enabling legislation.

All programs that receive First Steps funding - whether they are operated by a First Steps county partnership or a collaborating partner, such as a school district – must adhere to program standards that require programs to be research-based and operated with fidelity; staff who have appropriate qualifications, training, and supervision; services to be comprehensive and coordinated with available community resources; standard assessment instruments that document client outcomes; and programs that **target services to children most at risk** for not being developmentally ready for school.

www.scfirststeps.org

Other First Steps Services in Berkeley County

Public 4K Expansion: CDEPP

Since 2006, First Steps has been the administrator of state Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) funds to expand access of low-income children to full-day, four-year-old kindergarten within select rural school districts, using community-based settings such as Head Start and private child care.

Approximately 520 children statewide are served by First Steps CDEPP, including at 2 centers in Berkeley County:

Sunshine House #106

Betty’s Day Care and Preschool

Qualifying children must live in Berkeley County, be four years old by September 1 of the current year, and qualify for free/reduced lunch or Medicaid. Interested parents should contact one or more of the above centers to complete an application.



BabyNet

South Carolina’s Early Intervention System

First Steps is the lead agency for BabyNet, South Carolina’s early intervention system for children under 3. Parents of children 0-2 years old with disabilities or suspected developmental delays should contact their local BabyNet office to schedule an evaluation.

BabyNet in Berkeley County: 843-740-3193

Berkeley County First Steps

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