

LOCAL

Child care worker survey is released

Partnership for Children cites areas for focus

Durham's Partnership for Children

DURHAM — Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative, has released its 2009 Child Care Workforce Study, Working in Child Care in Durham County.

The report highlights improvements in the child care workforce and also identifies areas on which the partnership and its collaborators can continue to focus, such as examining strategies to support retention among child care teachers.

The survey found that the number of degreed early childhood educators has risen along with earnings. Fifty-one percent of child care teachers in Durham have at least an associate degree and earn on average \$11.08 per hour. The survey indicates that many child care professionals still struggle to make ends meet with 32 percent of teachers and 48 percent of family child care providers reporting no health insurance coverage and 40 percent of teachers reporting they had received some type of public assistance in the last three years.

The Partnership contracted with the Child Care Services Association (CCSA) to conduct the study. The Durham Results-Based Accountability (RBA) Initiative, the city's Workforce Development Board and Time Warner Cable pro-

vided funding for the report. This was the first time the data was released showcasing Durham County exclusively.

In 2003, CCSA conducted a statewide child care workforce study that included Durham County.

"Child care is often an under-represented, albeit important piece to the economic development of our county," said Marsha Basloe, Durham's Partnership for Children Executive Director. "The RBA Initiative, the City of Durham Workforce Development Board and Time Warner Cable also recognized the importance of supporting our effort in Durham to examine systemic improvements and changes in the child care industry comparing current results to data collected six years ago."

Basloe said the child care workforce supplies \$65 million to the Durham economy in annual gross receipts and supports more than 7,000 families.

Durham's Partnership for Children has been working to support quality early childhood education in Durham since 1994. Over the past 15 years, the Partnership has focused on strategies to create systemic change in the child care industry, such as improving the quality of child care, increasing access to child care for low-income working families, and supporting early childhood teacher education.

The reports can be viewed at <http://www.dpfc.net/Reports.aspx> online.