



# NEWS RELEASE

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**For Immediate Release September 14, 2009**

## **Durham's Partnership for Children receives 14 percent cut in Smart Start funds while Smart Start helps match additional Stimulus Funds for Subsidy Services**

**Durham, NC** — Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative, announced Monday that the North Carolina Partnership for Children, the state Smart Start agency, cut its annual allocation by 14 percent or nearly \$1.2 million for Durham County for the 09-10 fiscal year.

Legislative cuts and a difficult economy have come at the same time when families with young children's need for services have increased. Cuts of this nature make it difficult to meet on-going community needs. The Partnership received a cut of nearly 9 percent last fiscal year.

"This is hard all around because more Durham County families with young children as well as the child care community are facing financial hardship with the difficult economy increasing their need for our funded services, such as child care scholarships, family support programs, health related support, and child care technical assistance," said Marsha Basloe, Executive Director of Durham's Partnership for Children.

Even with these cuts, Smart Start has worked closely with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Division of Child Development (DCD) to make funding decisions in order to match the federal requirement for stimulus dollars for additional child care assistance for the state of North Carolina. Because of these efforts, Durham Social Services will receive \$2.6 million additional one time stimulus dollars to assist families with child care subsidies.

"Although this is a severely difficult cut to our Durham Smart Start allocation as it means our programs are not able to provide all the services needed, we are also appreciative that additional subsidy dollars will be made available to our Durham families. Without the support of Smart Start, North Carolina might not have had the opportunity to bring these needed resources to our state and to our county," said Basloe. "This is a positive outcome of a very difficult task."

The early years are among the most significant in shaping a child's academic and social skills providing the foundation for learning and school success. Research has shown that a child's learning begins at birth and develops as children are engaged and challenged in high quality learning environments and nurtured in relationships with parents and other caregivers.

Basloe added as the economy recovers, she hopes legislators will support early childhood efforts. Research shows that children who enter kindergarten ready to succeed grow to be the capable students of tomorrow.

### **About Durham's Partnership for Children**

**Durham's Partnership for Children celebrates 15 years making young children a priority.** Founded in 1994 and first funded in 1995 to administer the Smart Start grant in Durham County, the Partnership works as an independent, local nonprofit that serves young children birth to age 5 and their families under North Carolina's nationally recognized initiative to ensure all children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. For 15 year, the Partnership has helped working parents pay for child care, improve the quality of child care and provided health and family support services to thousands of Durham County families with young children. The Partnership works to achieve its mission: *To mobilize and unify the Durham community to create and support innovative and successful approaches to serving the needs of children birth to age 5 and their families*, by working with funded partners and mobilizing groups and organizations in Durham County to support and coordinate efforts impacting young children and their families. The Partnership also administers the More at Four Program in Durham County serving 400 children. For more information about Durham's Partnership for Children, visit [www.dpfc.net](http://www.dpfc.net) or call 919-403-6960, ext 221.