



Contact: **Karine Stallings**
Durham's Partnership for Children
Community Development Manager
403-6960 x221 599-5855 (mobile)
Karine@dpfc.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2008

THE MARY DUKE BIDDLE FOUNDATION GRANT HELPS FAITH INITIATIVE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

*GRANT TO DURHAM'S PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN WILL HELP FUND EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT WITH THE FAITH
COMMUNITY TO CONNECT FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN TO RESOURCES.*

Durham, N.C. – Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative, Tuesday, announced that The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation awarded \$2,500 to the Partnership's Faith Initiative.

The Faith Initiative is a volunteer supported program that grew out of End Poverty's 0 to 5 Workgroup. Over the past two years, the workgroup with the help of Duke University's Center for Child and Family Policy surveyed more than 50 places of worship in Durham County on how they support families with young children and what kinds of resources they would require to increase support for families with young children.

Durham's Partnership for Children works with community agencies and nonprofits, Durham Public Schools, the business community, local government and individuals to close the preparation gap for young children beginning at birth.

With this initial grant, the survey information will be compiled into a report and shared with the faith community to lay the groundwork to developing more aligned support for young children where families, work, play and worship.

"Many of the large-scale churches surveyed didn't know about the resources available to families with young children, said Ann Stock, community volunteer who worked on the project. "We also were able to capture all the different and unique ways the faith community helps families with young children. By knowing what families with children birth to age 5 are seeking in support from the faith community and what the faith community is offering in support to these families, the Partnership can build synergy and alignment around the needs of young children especially in these lean economic times."

"The grant from The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, demonstrates the commitment to build better connections between early childhood education and our greater Durham community that can collectively change conditions for Durham's families with young children, birth to age 5," said Durham's Partnership for Children Executive Director Marsha Basloe. "We appreciate the support of The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation and look forward to building more awareness for the local needs of young children in the faith community."

About The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation

The primary purpose of The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation is to further and extend Mrs. Biddle's life-long interests in religious, educational, and charitable activities in New York City and the state of North Carolina. For more information on the foundation, visit <http://www.marydukebiddlefoundation.org>

About Durham's Partnership for Children

Durham's Partnership for Children was founded in 1994 and first funded in 1995 to administer the Smart Start grant in Durham County. Smart Start is North Carolina's nationally recognized initiative to ensure all children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. Smart Start helps working parents pay for childcare, improves the quality of childcare and provides health and family support services in every North Carolina County. The Partnership works with funded partners (affiliated organizations) 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 0-5 and their families." Durham's Partnership for Children also administers the Governor's More at Four Program in Durham County. For more information about Durham's Partnership for Children, visit www.dpfc.net or call 919-403-6960, ext 221.

-###-