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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2010

Durham's Partnership for Children Partners with Barnes & Noble – Southpoint to Collect 2,865 Books for Children Across Durham County

Durham, NC—Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative, announced Wednesday that generous Barnes and Noble Streets at Southpoint customers purchased more than **2,800 new books** for Durham County disadvantaged children for the 2010 Barnes and Noble Book Drive that ran from Nov. 1 through Dec. 31.

Durham's Partnership for Children works collaboratively across Durham County with community agencies and nonprofits that serve young children and their families. Over the eight week book drive, the Partnership distributed many of the books to more than 18 community agencies serving children in home visiting programs, social services, medical facilities, and a variety of family support and family literacy programs. The Partnership will continue matching these generously donated books up with the children and families that need them most.

"The Durham community showed an outpouring of support again this year by purchasing nearly 3,000 books for young children," said Cheri Hodges, Community Relations Manager at the Barnes & Noble store. "It's a fun and personal way for us to share the joy of reading and improve the lives of needy children in our own community."

In addition to distributing books through Durham's early childhood system, the Partnership worked with other organizations, such as the Durham County Guardian ad Litem Program, Urban Ministries, and the Durham Literacy Center to distribute books to older children. Family literacy is essential to the Partnership's mission. The book drive gives Durham's Partnership for Children an opportunity to connect with the broader Durham community and build awareness of its work to ensure children have what they need to be prepared for kindergarten.

"One of the most rewarding pieces of this drive is seeing that needs are being met," said Melanie Busbee, Community Development Coordinator with the Partnership. "So much effort and generosity goes into making this book drive a success. It is incredible to see the community giving so much to children in need."

About Durham's Partnership for Children - 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 more than 15 years, 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, 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 Pre-Kindergarten Program in Durham County serving more than 400 children and the new Early Head Start Grant serving Durham infants and toddlers. For more information about the Partnership, visit www.dpfc.net or call 919-403-6960, ext. 219.