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NEWS RELEASE

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Final Discussion Moves Downtown Child Care Initiative Forward

Downtown Durham, Inc., Durham's Partnership for Children, and The Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce Focus on Making Durham a Great Place to Live, Work, Play, and Raise a Young Family

Durham, NC –Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative, Downtown Durham, Inc. (DDI) and The Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce met Tuesday, October 19, 2010 with downtown business and community leaders for a final discussion surrounding the Downtown Child Care Initiative that has been gaining momentum over the past year. Two earlier strategic discussions took place in August of 2009 and February of 2010.

"We introduced this initiative to shed light on the importance of young children and the critical role employers play in making Durham a great place to raise a young family," said Angelica Oberleithner, Acting Executive Director of Durham's Partnership for Children. "Since our last meeting in February, we have continued to work to move this effort forward by conducting data analysis on the existing child care resources and capacity in downtown. Additionally, we coordinated two focus groups – one with downtown employers to discuss their employees' needs and one with local child care directors to discuss potential expansion. We have also researched several "best practice" child care projects in other cities."

Meeting the needs of our downtown employees is critical to the continued growth of Downtown Durham as the city's economic and cultural center.

"Creating a high-quality living and working environment that includes child care provides necessary support to working families and is a crucial element of smart growth," said Bill Kalkhof, President and CEO of Downtown Durham, Inc. "A strong child care system benefits the entire community, including developers and the business sector, by making Durham a more competitive business environment that attracts and retains a well-trained workforce."

To detail the progress of the Downtown Child Care Initiative, the Partnership, DDI and The Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce produced and recently released *Child Care at the Core*, a white paper that outlines the overview, analyses, and recommendations of the project.

"Downtown Durham's revitalization over the past decade has been significant," said Casey Steinbacher, President and CEO of The Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce. "In order for that success to continue, and to attract the workers and companies of the 21st century, we need to increase the availability and quality of child care – for our growing population of downtown employees, residents and businesses – now and in the years ahead."

To request a copy of *Child Care at the Core*, please contact Melanie Busbee at (919) 403-6960, ext. 221 or at Melanie@dpfc.net.

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.