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NEWS RELEASE

Durham's Partnership for Children Board of Directors Approves Funding to Direct Service Providers for FY 2011-12

\$1,662,900 less Smart Start funding available for the new fiscal year

Durham, NC — In keeping with its mission to support innovative and successful collaborative approaches to serve the needs of children birth to age 5 and their families, Durham's Partnership for Children announced Thursday, that its Board of Directors approved an allocations plan to fund 12 programs for the upcoming fiscal year. Funded activities address early care and education, family support and health services delivered by local agencies and nonprofits to young children across Durham County.

On Thursday, June 16, the Board of Directors affirmed the recommendations of its Allocations Committee, which is comprised of board members and volunteers with no ties to prospective Smart Start funded organizations. The eight-month committee process included proposal reviews, presentations by potential bidders, a priority-based rating system, an assessment of community needs and other measures to best optimize the organization's limited funds.

Based on the new state budget that mandates a 20% state-wide cut to the Smart Start system and the projected allocation amount by the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Durham will receive \$1.6 million (24%) less than last year. Since the year 2000, Smart Start funds for Durham have decreased by half while the County's population of young children birth to 5 years of age has increased by more than 30% during that same timeframe.

"The drastic nature of this year's state budget cuts will have a huge impact on this community. It will force the Partnership and its partner organizations to continue to find creative ways to serve families and young children in Durham despite this severe reduction in funding," said Angie Welsh, Durham's Partnership for Children Board Chair. "While the state budget clearly does damage to early childhood programs and the education system as a whole, the Board has made an effort to sustain the early education programs that most effectively prepare young children to be healthy and ready to learn."

The 12 funded activities and their agencies are:

- Choosing and Using Quality Child Care** (Child Care Services Association)
 - Community Awareness & Education** (Durham's Partnership for Children)
 - Early Childhood Outreach "EChO"** (Exchange Clubs' Family Center)
 - Family Support Program** (El Centro Hispano)
 - Healthy Families Durham** (Child and Parent Support Services/Center for Child and Family Health)
 - Program Coordination and Evaluation** (Durham's Partnership for Children)
 - School Readiness Quality Enhancement** (Child Care Services Association)
 - School Readiness Quality Maintenance** (Child Care Services Association)
 - Smart Start Scholarship Program** (Child Care Services Association)
 - TEACH Early Childhood® AmeriCorps** (Child Care Services Association)
 - WAGE\$®** (Child Care Services Association)
 - Welcome Baby Family Resource Center** (Durham County Cooperative Extension)
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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 16 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 420 children and the Early Head Start program serving infants and toddlers. For more information about the Partnership, visit www.dpfc.net or call 919-403-6960, ext. 219.

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