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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2010

City of Durham Proclaims 2010 Year of the Young Child

The City of Durham recognizes the early childhood system and services to thousands of young children in the areas of quality early care and education, family support and health

Durham, NC – Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative, announced Thursday that it accepted a Proclamation from Mayor William (Bill) Bell proclaiming 2010 The Year of the Young Child in Durham.

The Partnership accepted the Proclamation on behalf of Durham's young children and their families and collaborating partner organizations, and groups focused on programming for young children birth to age 5 and their families.

Accepting the Proclamation at the regular City Council session on Feb, 15, 2010, Partnership Executive Director Marsha Basloe thanked the Mayor and all members of City Council: "You are making an investment in our future. Those children who are born today, will, if we do the right thing, be graduating from High School in the year 2028." Basloe added, "On behalf of all young children and their families, the Partnership is grateful to the Mayor for his leadership and Council for their hard work on behalf of all citizens of Durham. This is the beginning of a great work we can do together. We thank you and look forward to future collaboration."

The Proclamation recognized high-quality early care and its critical role in supporting the current workforce and for building Durham's future success, evidence-based, bilingual family support programs and vital health programs for young children and their families. The Proclamation also points to the national initiative 'Fight Crime, Invest in Kids' to engage the city's law enforcement to provide leadership in building awareness for early childhood initiatives as a preventive measure for reducing crime in the long term.

Over 15 years, the Partnership has worked towards its mission—to mobilize and unify the Durham community to create and support innovative and successful collaborative approaches to serving the needs of children birth to 5 years of age and their families. The Partnership, a Smart Start initiative, also funds programs that provide education and support to families with young children, health services for young children, More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program and Early Head Start.

The Partnership has also convened many community initiatives focused on improving outcomes for young children, such as the RBA Children Ready for and Succeeding in School Committee, the Transition to Kindergarten Initiative with Durham Public Schools, the Early Childhood Faith Initiative with End Poverty Durham, and Docs For Tots NC, a civic engagement program for pediatric residents at Duke University.

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 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 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 more than 400 children and the new Early Head Start Grant which will serve 120 Durham infants and toddlers beginning in the Spring of 2010. For more information about the Partnership, visit www.dpfc.net or call 919-403-6960, ext 221.

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