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## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

Friday, Aug. 15, 2008

### **Nearly 200 Durham preschool teachers convene for training conference**

Baseball themed training focuses on teaming for early care and education to offer best to children in Head Start and More at Four programs

Durham, NC — On Monday, Aug. 18, Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative, in partnership with Operation Breakthrough Head Start will host a two-day training conference, "Team Up for Early Care and Education" at Grey Stone Baptist Church.

This first joint training for Durham's pre-k programs will cover program standards, health and safety, nutrition, family support and transportation for nearly 200 early childhood educators who will be serving nearly 1,000 children through Head Start and More at Four programs in Durham County.

"Professional development for preschool teachers is very important as 90 percent of a child's brain growth develops by preschool. These teachers are tasked with teaching children at the most critical time in their development. These trainings will support their efforts to ensure more of our county's children arrive to kindergarten ready to succeed," said Marsha Basloe, executive director of Durham's Partnership for Children.

The training carries a baseball theme as classrooms have been transformed into "dugouts". Team work is the emphasis as these teachers work with young children, many whom have never been in a formal child care setting and may be at-risk for school failure due to economic and language barriers.

"These early childhood educators are on the frontlines working to close the preparation gap for children who need help most," said Operation Breakthrough Head Start Director Marlo Walston.

**WHAT: Team Up for Early Care & Education Teacher Training**  
**\*Durham Bulls Mascot Wool E. Bull will visit the conference at 12 noon\***

**DATE:** Monday, Aug. 18, 2008

**TIME:** 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.

**WHO:** Durham's Partnership for Children and Operation Breakthrough Head Start

**WHERE:** Grey Stone Baptist Church, 2601 Hillsborough Road, Durham, NC 27705

For more information on the two-day training or the More at Four Pre-K Program, contact Karine Stallings at 403-6960 ext. 221.

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#### **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. In September 2006, Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative, launched **Corporate Champions for Children** — a consortium of businesses that convene around issues affecting young children and their families. For more information about Durham's Partnership for Children, visit [www.dpfc.net](http://www.dpfc.net) or call 919-403-6960, ext. 221.

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