



---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** CONTACT: Jeremy Evans, Community Development Coordinator  
DATE: August 29, 2006 PHONE: 919-403-6960, ext 224; jeremy@dpfc.net

---

### **Durham's Partnership for Children Receives 2006 National Venture Grant**

Durham, NC - **Durham's Partnership for Children**, a Smart Start Initiative supporting the needs of young children and their families, has been awarded a \$5,000 National Venture Grant from the North Carolina Partnership for Children under the auspices of Smart Start's National Technical Assistance Center. The grant funding stems from the Center's *Linking Economic Development and Child Care Project* and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

Durham's Partnership for Children was one of only sixteen counties in the state to receive the National Venture grant, which aims to fund programs that link economic development to the local child care industry. In Durham, these funds will be used to create a network for child care services, including a child care center, a family child care home and a neighborhood public school. By creating a "multi-hub network" for child care in Durham County, the Partnership hopes to facilitate the development of collective activities that enhance operational capacity while also strengthening the quality of local child care services.

Durham's Partnership for Children recognizes that the child care industry is an important and unique component of the local economy. With over 400 distinct local child care facilities in Durham County alone, the industry is represented by a diverse array of small businesses spread loosely throughout the community. As such, its economic impact is often underestimated; the child care industry employs over 1600 people in Durham County and has a direct economic impact of over \$337 million. However, the mission of child care sites is what makes them unique. Aside from remaining a viable small business, a child care site also works to care for children and families and prepare its students for success in school. Therefore, the child care industry provides a critical service for our community which has a direct impact on school readiness, but also on families, since parents can continue to work when they have access to quality child care for their children. In turn, improving the quality of child care sites strengthens the industry as a whole and has a direct and positive impact on Durham's economy.

The 2006 Venture Grant is aimed at this crucial link between economic development and quality child care. The Venture Grant will support the development of collective strategies among child care sites that will help them become stronger small businesses. It will also facilitate the dissemination of fresh ideas that stem from this new effort. Therefore, children and families are the true beneficiaries of this grant, since the new ideas improve the overall quality of early care and education throughout Durham County.

## **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.*

*For more information about Durham's Partnership for Children, visit [www.dpfc.net](http://www.dpfc.net) or contact Jeremy Evans at 919-403-6960, ext. 224.*