



CONTACT:
Karine Stallings,
Community Development Manager
919-403-6960, ext. 221
919-599-5855 (mobile)
Karine@dpfc.net

Press Release

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Report findings embargoed for Oct. 16, 2008

DURHAM'S PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN RELEASES FIRST REPORTS ON YOUNG CHILDREN'S SCHOOL READINESS AND HEALTH

Report cards for health and school readiness capture data snapshot of children birth to age 5 in the areas of health, economic security, child care, and early literacy.

Durham, NC — Forty-one percent of Durham County children ages 2 to 4 are overweight or at-risk for becoming overweight compared to 31 percent of children across North Carolina, according to a new report Durham's Partnership for Children will release to the public on **Oct. 16, 2008**.

The new county-wide reports, ***Getting Ready: Indicators of School Readiness in Durham County*** and ***Getting Ready: Indicators of Health in Durham County***, capture multiple data points at the county level for young children.

The reports will be released during Durham's Partnership for Children's Annual Meeting to an audience of more than 150 community leaders and volunteers during on Thursday, Oct. 16 from 8-10 a.m. at the Durham Hilton, 3800 Hillsborough Road. **Verizon is the lead presenting sponsor of the event.**

The Partnership aims to use the reports to educate the public on the indicators for school readiness in the areas of ready families, ready schools, ready children, and ready communities as well as indicators that support the state of health for young children. Data in the report were compared to state figures.

Data highlighted in the reports will also underscore the focus of the event to introduce new approaches to meeting young children's growing needs in Durham County.

David Lawrence, Jr., former publisher of *The Miami Herald* and a well-known child advocate from Florida, will deliver the keynote message on strategies to building more capital to address the needs of young children. Lawrence will rally the Durham community behind plans to build private support that can help to supplement public dollars to help provide innovative programming for young children in Durham over the long term. Lawrence led the charge to build a \$100 million endowment and public referendum for the children of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

According to the North Carolina Partnership for Children, legislative funding allocated to Durham's Partnership for Children as a Smart Start grant only meets 13 percent of Durham County's total funding need for young children ages birth to age 5 in the areas of early care and education support, parent programs and health services. This event will help build awareness for examining alternative collaborative approaches to ensuring our early childhood system continues to have resources available to support young children and their families.

"Over the past 13 years, we have made a lot of progress to improve early childhood education and provide high-quality child care to children who need help most, but we still are challenged with increasing unemployment and poverty rates and continued limited resources to serve all the young children and families who need help," said Marsha Basloe, executive director of Durham's Partnership for Children. "By planning a long-term endowment, our Board of Directors' future vision is to generate additional resources to ensure more children arrive to school healthy and prepared to succeed."

The report findings may be provided to media before the event. Please contact Karine Stallings for copies of the reports embargoed for Oct. 16' 2008. Contact Karine Stallings, 919-403.6960 x221 or Karine@dpfc.net

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 child care, improves the quality of child care 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 ages birth to 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 or call 919-403-6960, ext.

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