



PRESS RELEASE

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Durham's Partnership for Children looks at cutting nearly 3 percent of its Smart Start budget to plan for lower tax revenues

North Carolina Partnership for Children asks local partnerships to plan for funding cuts in anticipation of cuts from the Department of Health and Human Services' budget.

Durham, NC — With the latest nonstop reporting on the slowing economy the North Carolina Partnership for Children asked local partnerships, like Durham's Partnership for Children, a Smart Start Initiative to look at trimming nearly 3 percent of its Smart Start budget in order to prepare for lower tax revenues. This would trim Durham's Partnership for Children's Smart Start budget by \$215,698.

NCPC said that local partnerships, such as Durham's Partnership for Children, should be prepared for additional cuts later in the year, even though there have been no formal notifications as of date pertaining to it. Last legislative session, NCPC and local Smart Start agencies worked to secure a small statewide increase for service expansion. This would have been the first increase in eight years for Durham's Partnership for Children, which had been challenged to meet on-going community needs with flat funding since 2000.

"This is tough all around because more Durham County families with young children are facing financial hardship with stunted economy which has increased their need for our funded services, such as child care subsidies, family support programs and health related support," said Marsha Basloe, Executive Director of Durham's Partnership for Children. "At the same time, we must now erase the small legislative increase originally allocated for this fiscal year in addition to planning for further funding cuts. The end result means more negative impacts for families."

The initial funding increase would have allocated resources for the following services:

- Expansion of existing services based on needs identified.
- A birth and beginning years parent educational support program.
- A developmental screening program for pediatricians that serve a high number of patients birth to age 5 enrolled in Medicaid.
- Financial support for high-quality infant-toddler slots which are in high demand in Durham County.

According to Basloe, the funding cut means that the partnership will have to look at our most pressing needs in our community as we look at impending cuts.

For more information on the funding cuts, contact Karine Stallings, Community Development Manager at 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. 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 or call 919-403-6960, ext. 221.