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THURSDAY, DEC. 20, 2007

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**DURHAM'S PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN PARTNERS WITH BARNES & NOBLE—SOUTHPOINT TO COLLECT
4,400 BOOKS FOR CHILDREN ACROSS DURHAM COUNTY.**

The Durham community generously purchased new books worth nearly \$20,000 for the holiday book drive.

Durham, NC—Durham's Partnership for Children, A Smart Start Initiative, announced Wednesday that more than 4,400 new books were collected from Nov. 1 through Dec. 18th in partnership with Barnes & Noble- Southpoint for the 2007 Holiday Book drive benefiting thousands of children across the county.

Durham's Partnership for Children works with community agencies and nonprofits, Durham Public Schools, the business community, local government and individuals to close the preparation gap for young children beginning at birth.

That's why the book drive was a critical piece to supporting early literacy for families with young children, many who don't have access to books of their own.

"The volume of books customers have purchased on behalf of young children is definitely a testament to the generosity of the greater Durham community," says Angela Born, Community Relations Manager for the Barnes & Noble store. "It has been a rewarding endeavor to see the outpouring of support."

This year, the Barnes and Noble staff set really high goals to make sure they communicated the need to customers to donate books to young children. Each store participates in a holiday book drive. The Southpoint store was sixth place across the region that extends from Pennsylvania to Florida. "Given the size of this community competing with other stores in more urban settings, our sales staff effort and the customer support was phenomenal," Born added.

The books have been distributed to area homeless shelters, family support programs focused on parent education and literacy and health programs. Books have also been donated to North Carolina Central University's holiday giveaway for families in need and families served by funded partners of Durham's Partnership for Children, such as Welcome Baby, Durham Social Services, Healthy Families Durham, Hispanic/Latino Consultation, El Centro Hispano's FAMOSA. The remaining books for older children (middle school and high school age books) will be distributed to Durham Public Schools and the Durham Public Library.

"This book drive has given Durham's Partnership for Children an opportunity to connect with the broader Durham community and build awareness for our work to ensure children have what they need to be prepared for kindergarten," says Karine Stallings, Community Development Manager. "Early literacy practices are important to our mission to ensure children are ready for school, making this a win-win partnership with Barnes & Noble-Southpoint."

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 or call 919-403-6960, ext. 221.

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