

# WHY SMART START WORKS:

The North Carolina Partnership for Children and Local Smart Start Partnerships



## STATE-WIDE GOVERNANCE AND INNOVATION WITH LOCAL INSPIRATION

Smart Start is a network of 75 nonprofit local partnerships led by The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc (NCPC). NCPC works to ensure strong fiscal and programmatic oversight and the local partnerships serve all 100 North Carolina counties and are an engaged and important part of local communities.

### The Smart Start Network



## WORKING IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA

### Guilford County Partnership for Children



Because of **Shape NC**, a program tackling childhood obesity, children go outside ready to be engaged at Friendly Avenue Preschool in Greensboro, NC. Parents are in disbelief when they find out that their children are trying new veggies straight from the garden and they inquire how they can encourage similar practices at home.

### Down East Partnership for Children

#### Parents and children receiving subsidy scholarships

in Nash and Edgecombe Counties are provided access to high quality child care. As part of the subsidy program requirements, parents participate in parent engagement activities like volunteering at their child's center, visiting the library and/or attending parent education sessions.



### Madison County Partnership for Children



Children in Madison County receive a different kind of prescription from their health care providers - reading. Last year, hundreds of children in Madison received books at well-child visits through **Reach Out and Read**, an early literacy program that partners with medical offices.

### Brunswick County Partnership for Children

In addition to learning about child development, families and children in Brunswick County benefited from instruction on how to incorporate activities for play and learning with children as part of their participation in the **Parents As Teachers** program.



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## ENSURING *OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY* AT ALL LEVELS

### The North Carolina Partnership for Children:

- **Guarantees** that all of North Carolina's children have the opportunity to benefit from Smart Start by allocating funds to all 100 counties based on available resources, current funding levels, and local communities' growth and needs each year.
- **Provides** cost effective tools and systems for Local Partnerships to do business – supporting centralized accounting, computer, and program reporting systems to ensure reliability, accuracy, and economies of scale.
- **Conducts rigorous monitoring** of Local Partnerships; delivers training and technical assistance; and holds Local Partnerships **accountable for meeting performance standards in governance, fiscal, and programmatic operations**. NCPC has had no audit findings in the past 20 years.
- **Offers** leadership training to Executive Directors, management teams and board members to promote organizational stability and growth.
- **Supports** child care businesses in **improving quality and achieving higher stars** on North Carolina's rated license **through onsite technical assistance**, training, and support for child care professionals to obtain higher education.

## PRODUCING *MEASURABLE RESULTS FOR* ALL NORTH CAROLINA FAMILIES

- **Increasing access to high-quality child care** for families. The percentage of children in **4 and 5 star programs increased from 33% in 2001 to 72% in 2019**.
- **Improving early literacy** by collaborating with nationally recognized literacy organizations, local partnerships, child care programs, and pediatricians to promote early literacy across the state. Programs like Raising a Reader and Reach Out and Read® (ROR) provide books to parents to read with their children and information on how to help children develop language and literacy skills. A recent evaluation of ROR showed that parents in the program **are 97% more likely** than new participants to engage with their children in reading activities.
- **Preventing early childhood obesity** with initiatives that help child care programs offer more nutritious meals and physical activity time. Smart Start is partnering with The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation on a **\$6 million, groundbreaking initiative called Shape NC** that was highlighted as key part of a strategy to create a healthier state by the North Carolina Institute of Medicine.
- **Providing local communities** with a place for parents, leaders, and providers to come together to tackle the big issues facing early child care and education. Local partnerships also leverage other local, state, and federal resources to build of the Smart Start investment.
- **Giving parents the tools they need** to raise healthy, successful children by providing education and resources through programs that **increase parents' knowledge of children's development** and positive parenting practices.
- **Increasing the number of children who receive the appropriate developmental screenings**, referrals and follow-up to detect and treat developmental delays early by working with doctors' offices. Today, **North Carolina has the highest rate of developmental screenings** in the nation.