



Building Blocks for Growth

A Publication For Parents, Providers, and Smart Start Supporters



Harnett County
Partnership
for Children

Smart Start
More at Four
pre-kindergarten program

November– January 2011
Quarterly Newsletter

Smart Start Program Teaches Family Reading and Brings Books into Homes

Once again the Harnett County Partnership for Children (HCPC) will be offering Harnett County families an early literacy program proven to increase time spent reading to young children. Raising A Reader is a national literacy program for children birth to five that fosters parent-child bonding and brain development to prepare children for success in school. The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc., the organization that leads Smart Start, has recently awarded this grant to the Harnett County Partnership for Children. The Harnett County Partnership for Children contracts with North Carolina Cooperative Extension / Child Care Resource and Referral to provide Raising a Reader in Harnett County.

“The Raising a Reader program has been successfully operating in Harnett County for two years and has served over 300 families” stated Tiffany McConnell, Program Manager for HCPC. “Parents are reporting that their child is excited about the books they receive each week and want their parents to read the books to them right away.”

Nearly half of all U.S. children enter school without the early reading skills necessary to succeed in school. To address this challenge, Smart Start offers Raising A Reader to child care centers in communities with a proven need for an early literacy program. As part of the program, children receive bags with books to take home. Books are rotated among children and families weekly. The center also hosts weekly reading sessions and at least four workshops a year to teach families book-sharing strategies. Children take a trip to the library and are encouraged to get their first library card.

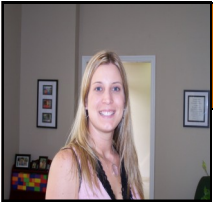
Smart Start has been implementing the program in counties across the state for the past three years. Last year alone, Smart Start Raising A Reader programs helped 831 families in 63 classrooms across 9 counties learn how to effectively read with their children to promote literacy skills.



ABCD Project Targets Pediatric Practices

NEW PROGRAM

In collaboration with Partners for Children and Families of Moore County, the Harnett County Partnership for Children is implementing the Assuring Better Child Development (ABCD) Project. This Project will provide training and on-site technical assistance to medical practices to facilitate the indication of children who may benefit from early intervention services. Participating practices will also be provided with information and resources for families. Services for this program are provided by Sandhills Community Care Network in efforts to improve the quality of child development services in pediatric practices. Funding for this project was made possible by a grant received from the North Carolina Partnership for Children. If you would like additional information about this program please contact Tiffany McConnell, Program Manager, at (910) 893-2344.



Giving Thanks "One Good Thing" By: Lisa Familo, HCPC Executive Director

As November quickly approaches I am reminded of the true meaning of Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is a time to remember the things we have to be grateful for, a time to give thanks for the thousands of fortunate moments, the multitude of blessings that we receive each year. That's not always as easy as it sounds, especially when our state is facing some of the worst economic times in its history, but this year, more than any other, I am counting my blessings and remembering to find "one good thing" in every challenge.

Hudson's story...

In May, my friend's daughter, Hudson, died suddenly at the age of 17 months after a three-day stay in the hospital due to incredibly aggressive bacterial meningitis. At her memorial service,

her Mother shared a message that has become a guiding principle in my life. The message was about finding the silver lining, the "one good thing" in every situation or challenge. It was her goal as a Mother to teach her daughter this important lesson but in the end it was Hudson who taught her mother, and so many others, this lesson. "It's a lesson that we all know inside, but one that we need to be reminded of often—to love and treasure every moment in this all-too-short life, to hug, kiss, and laugh often, to soften in our anger, to love unconditionally and overwhelmingly, to always tell our friends and family that we love them—to enjoy and cherish what is and stop worrying about what should and shouldn't be."

I found this profoundly powerful, the fact that this Mom in the midst of the greatest storm she had ever faced, raw

with grief, attempting to find meaning in the death of her daughter, was able to share this lesson. It changed me, as a person and a parent. I hold my kids a little tighter, laugh a little louder, shout a little less, and linger a little longer to marvel at the wonders around me. And during those challenging times and moments of frustration, I think of those who would give their life for just one more frustrating moment with their loved one and count my blessings.

I now wear a bracelet around my wrist that simply says "One Good Thing" in honor of Hudson and the life lesson that she taught me. I strive to find the "one good thing" in every challenge and share her story so that her short life can blossom into a lifetime of positive action.

**"When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change."
- Wayne Dyer**

Help Us Contribute to the **Harnett County Food Pantry** this Thanksgiving Season!



The Harnett County Partnership for Children will be hosting a food drive the months of October and November to collect non-perishable food items to benefit the Harnett County Food Pantry.

The Harnett County Food Pantry provides a three-day supply of food to Harnett County families who are hungry and in need of a meal. The Pantry serves more than 200 families a month.

Suggested items :

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| Spaghetti Sauce |
| Pasta Noodles |
| Canned Vegetables
(Green beans, peas, corn, tomatoes, carrots, etc.) |
| Cereal and Grits |
| Peanut Butter |
| Canned Fruit |
| Cornmeal/ Jiff Mix |
| Rice |
| BABY FOOD |

Please turn in all donated items to the Harnett County Partnership for Children, 1901-G North Main Street Lillington NC, 27546 by November 17th, 2010. We would love to have all items delivered to the Pantry by Thanksgiving.

Smart Start

Early Childhood Professional Development
is **NOW** accepting applications for the
2010-2011 school year.

The Smart Start Early Childhood Professional Development program assists child care providers, who are planning to obtain higher education in the early childhood field, by developing individual professional development plans. Also, Early Childhood Professional Development works collaboratively with directors of child care facilities to develop a Facility Professional Development Plan.

What does the Smart Start Professional Development program offer YOU?

- ◆ Individual professional development plans
- ◆ College enrollment assistance
- ◆ Lending textbook library
- ◆ Assistance in finding financial support
- ◆ Assistance in finding compensation programs
- ◆ Reimbursement grants
- ◆ Additional resource materials
- ◆ Quarterly informational sessions



TEACH participants MAY be eligible to receive funding for higher education expenses that are not covered through the TEACH program!

For more information or to apply, please contact :

Anitra Wilson

Professional Development Coordinator

(910) 893-2344

anitra.wilson@harnettsmartstart.org

Harnett County Partnership for Children Staff

Lisa Familo
Executive Director

Debbie Fann
Finance Manager

Audrey Foster
Fiscal Specialist

Tiffany McConnell
Program Manager

Tara Fish
More at Four Manager

Marcia Gilchrist
More at Four TA Consultant

Lauren Strickland
Outreach Coordinator

Anitra Wilson
Professional Development
Coordinator

Grimaneza Grasser
Program Support Specialist



Harnett County LICC



As a valued member of our community, the partnership would like to invite you to join the Harnett County Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC). The LICC, a community-based advisory group, was implemented in an effort to convene a wide sampling of Early Intervention professionals. The Council's goal is to provide opportunities for service providers to become involved in local and regional activities, such as *Project Child Find*; to increase public awareness of Early Intervention strategies and programs; to perform community needs assessments and system evaluations.

We welcome all professions, serving children ages birth to five years, to attend our meetings the third Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at the Harnett County Agriculture Center at 1:30 pm and typically last for one hour.

For questions please contact Beth Mason, CDSA at (910) 814-2480.

Congratulations

Anitra Wilson

HCPC Professional Development Coordinator



For achieving the educational qualifications to be certified by the North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development at a level

Eleven

Congratulations Anitra! We are proud of you!

Leadership Harnett 2010

Congratulations are in order to

Tiffany McConnell

HCPC Program Manager

for her participation and graduation from the Leadership Harnett Program.



The goal of Leadership Harnett is to identify potential community leaders and to provide them with the information and encouragement needed to spur action and involvement. For more information on Leadership Harnett please visit www.leadershipharnett.com

Smart Start Quality Enhancement ANNOUNCEMENT!

Providers:

Please make sure you keep on file the actual dates your ERS assessments took place.

This is key in determining when you must reapply in 3 years. Knowing your previous ERS date helps you, your staff, your consultant, and Quality Enhancement (if you desire to receive services) know the time frame they have to work in to help your facility prepare. This way you can make sure your facility is in tip-top shape so you may maintain or increase your star rating.

Please contact Quality Enhancement if you have any questions or concerns at (910) 893-7597.

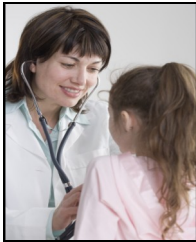
2010-2011 Smart Start Programs

Parents As Teachers

This program helps parents understand what to expect in each stage of their child's development. This program is based on the premise that the parent is the child's first teacher. Contact Melanie Graham at (910) 814-6050.

Parent Education Child Care

Parent Education Child Care is a program offered to parents who attend Central Carolina Community College to help pay for child care. Contact Keisha Petty at (919) 718-7276.



ABCD Project

This Project provides training and on-site technical assistance to medical practices to facilitate the indication of children who may benefit from early intervention services. Participating practices will also be provided with information and resources for families. Contact Tiffany McConnell at (910) 893-2344.

Raising a Reader

This program encourages families with young children to use the library on a regular basis and to incorporate daily reading into their routine. Contact Megan Spell at (910) 893-7597.



More at Four

The More at Four Program is a free pre-kindergarten program for four year olds. More at Four is designed to help prepare four year old children for kindergarten through a curriculum-based, classroom style learning environment. The goal of More at Four is to reach at-risk children and give them a chance to grow socially and educationally before entering kindergarten. Contact Tara Fish at (910) 893-2344.

Quality Enhancement

Quality Enhancement specialists use the state's Environment Rating Scales to evaluate overall child care quality and provide technical assistance, intensive training, and materials. Contact Carolyn Greene at (910) 893-7597.



WAGES

Educational-based salary supplements are provided to qualifying teachers, directors, and family child care providers. Contact Allison Miller at (919) 967-3272.

Early Childhood Professional Development

Individualized professional development plans are created for child care providers and administrators, to set educational goals and provide assistance in the college application process. Contact Anitra Wilson at (910) 893-2344.

Child Care Subsidy

Through Child Care Subsidies, qualifying families can ensure their children are safe and well-cared for while at work. Contact the Department of Social Services at (910) 893-7500.

FREE Lead Screenings for Toys

The Harnett County Partnership for Children is offering FREE lead screenings for toys at child care centers, child care homes and to Harnett County families. Lead Screening kits are limited, so please contact Lauren Strickland at (910) 893-2344 or lauren.strickland@harnettsmartstart.org to schedule a time to have four toys of your choice screened. Screenings will be available until all kits are depleted.



The Harnett County Partnership for Children will be using Lead Check® Swabs for this screening event. Lead Check® is a screening test. It is not intended to be a quantitative test for lead.

Harnett County Partnership for Children 2010-2011 Board of Directors

Rocio Bynum— Parent of a child 0-5

Anne Carver— Central Carolina Community College

Connie Chester— Campbell University, Education Department

Jo Ann Geddie— Child Care Provider/ Owner

Carolyn Greene— Child Care Resource and Referral

Nancy Guy— Business/Community Member at Large

Vera Jones— Harnett County Schools (Designee)

Beatrice Hill— HC Commissioner

Cindy Milton— HC Department of Social Services

Elsie Lee— Child Care Provider/ Owner

Denise Matthews—

Rosa Maria Matthews— Angier Migrant Head Start

Lisa McFadden— Harnett County IT

Melody McGee— Central Carolina Community College (Designee)

Karen Mintz— Infant Toddler Specialist, Region 5

Ginger Harris-Pike— Central Carolina Community College (Designee)

Kittrane Sanders— Harnett County Cooperative Extension

Charlene Sharp— HC Health Department (Designee)

Sandra Tull— Sandhills CDSA

Julie Wahl— South River Electric Membership Corporation

Blekley Walker— Child Care Provider/ Owner

Shirley Whitley— Johnston, Lee, Harnett Community Action

Amber Wise— Harnett County School System

HCPC would like to thank all Board Members and Committee Members for their valuable time and dedicated service to the young children of Harnett County.

We Appreciate you!!



P.O. Box 70 Lillington, NC 27546

SAVE A STAMP!

If you would like to receive this
newsletter by email please contact

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lauren.strickland@harnettsmartstart.org

www.harnettsmartstart.org