



EACH CHILD. EVERY COMMUNITY.

*Annual Report to
The North Carolina General Assembly
for Fiscal Year 2019-2020*

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
The Smart Start Network	4
How It Works	5
Funding	6
Raising the Quality of Early Care and Education	7
Supporting North Carolina Families	9
Promoting Early Literacy	10
Advancing Child Health and Nutrition	11
Enhancing Sustainability for Early Childhood Infrastructure	12
A Comprehensive Approach to Early Childhood	13
Graphs, Charts, and Supporting Data	14
Finance and Appropriations	14
Raising the Quality of Early Care and Education	15
Supporting North Carolina Families	17
Promoting Early Literacy	18
Advancing Child Health and Nutrition	19

Introduction

Dear Members of the North Carolina General Assembly:

It is my pleasure to provide The North Carolina Partnership for Children/Smart Start 2019-2020 Annual Report in response to G.S. 143B-168.12(d).

This year was one like no other. In 2020, the world was turned upside down by the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing dramatic changes in North Carolina communities for child care providers and organizations. Months later, the country was rocked by nationwide protests advocating for long-needed racial justice. Throughout the challenges and uncertainty, our early childhood professionals remained focused on serving children and families. North Carolinians learned what those of us in early childhood already knew: child care providers and early childhood professionals are essential workers – essential to our children’s development, to our economy, and to our communities.

The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) and the Smart Start network remained focused on our mission as well, adjusting to continue to meet the needs of local communities and provide trusted guidance to our partners despite the pandemic. Our local partnerships used innovative strategies to help their families and children in their communities, and we re-dedicated ourselves to serving each child in every community. Unfortunately, some of the data traditionally conveyed in this report was impacted by the pandemic because data collection was limited or services were altered.

However, the strength of the 75 local partnerships of the Smart Start network remains a key asset for extending early childhood programs and services to communities across the state. Smart Start’s comprehensive system improves the quality of child care, supports parents, and helps keep young children healthy and growing.

During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, NCPC updated its strategic roadmap through a collaborative process that engaged board members, Smart Start local partnerships, and statewide partner organizations. The new roadmap embraces the network’s role in implementing a statewide vision for early childhood in North Carolina and realizing the goals of the Early Childhood Action Plan. NCPC has also strengthened collaboration and coordination across the network, deepening our connection to local partnerships and local communities.

I am honored to be the new president of NCPC and Smart Start, a comprehensive early childhood system that is the leader of states around the country. We are excited to work with policymakers and legislators in new and innovative ways to meet the needs of children and families. Indeed, the education, health, and development of our youngest children depend on it, and it is the key to our state’s future prosperity.

Sincerely,



Amy Stephens Cabbage, President, The North Carolina Partnership for Children/Smart Start

The Smart Start Network

Smart Start is a network of 75 nonprofit local partnerships that serve all 100 North Carolina counties. This network is led by The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC), which ensures fiscal and programmatic accountability and coordinates a statewide network to create better outcomes for children and families.

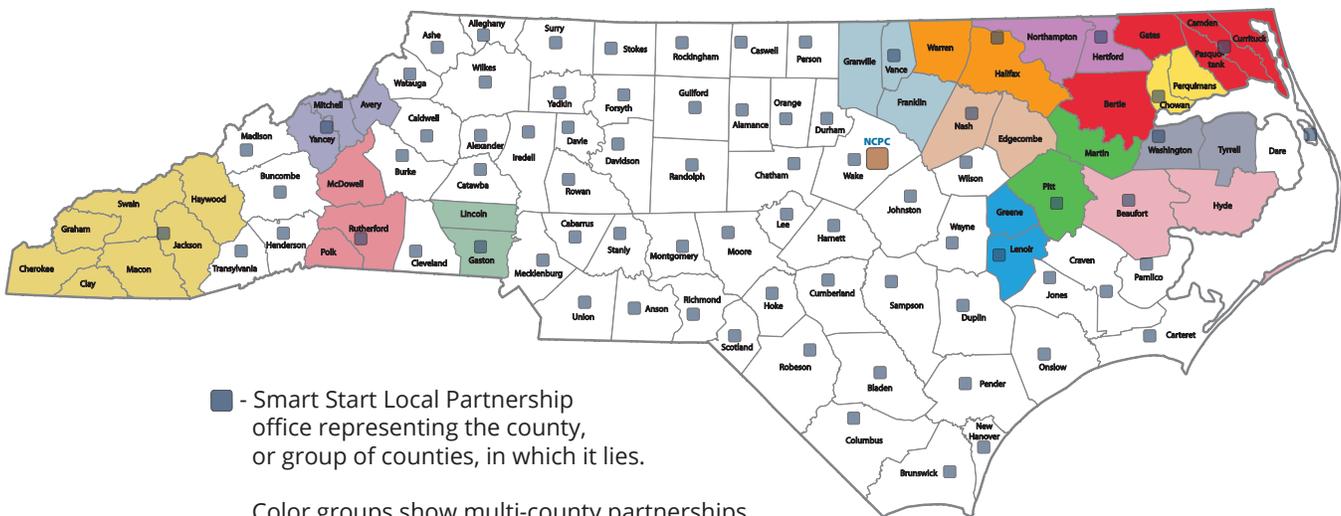
Children are born ready to learn but may not have access to the experiences or environments that foster healthy brain development, such as engaged child-parent interaction, quality child care, and excellent health care. When we provide communities, early childhood professionals, and families the tools and resources they need, we ensure quality early childhood learning opportunities and healthy brain development.

Smart Start brings communities together—parents, early learning and health professionals, educators, business leaders, and elected officials—to coordinate services

and address service gaps based on data. Smart Start also provides the tools and resources communities need to fully engage young children in learning opportunities, so they can grow to be healthy, productive, and well-rounded students, parents, workers, and leaders.

This structure establishes a system for statewide governance and innovation with local inspiration that works in communities across our state.

Serving children birth to 5, Smart Start works across the state to raise the quality of child care, strengthen families, advance child health and development, and improve early literacy. The network implements other state, federal, local, and private programs and services, such as NC Pre-K, child care subsidy, and Head Start, serving as North Carolina's system for early childhood health, development, and learning.



How It Works

At the state level, NCPC supports data-driven results and accountability for the entire network, ensuring state investments are producing strong outcomes for children. The Smart Start Resource Guide of Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed Programs and Practices provides local partnerships with evidence on program outcomes to support informed budget choices that produce targeted results for communities. In addition, continuous fiscal and quality monitoring ensures effectiveness and promotes innovation. These activities include:

- Training local partnership board members and staff on fiduciary oversight, thus protecting accountability in all financial processes from budget oversight to contract management
- Monitoring local partnerships to ensure compliance with state and federal laws, legislative mandates, and state policies
- Supporting centralized accounting and contracting that promote efficiency for the network
- Guiding local partnerships in selection and implementation of evidence-based, evidence-informed programs to achieve the best outcomes for children
- Assessing community assets and needs to determine how best to invest Smart Start funds to impact child well-being
- Reviewing programs at the local level to ensure services target and address unique community needs but are not duplicative of other investments
- Facilitating the sharing of resources, innovative ideas, and solutions across the Smart Start network so that individual counties benefit from collective knowledge
- Maintaining a centralized portal for collection of programmatic data including children served and outcomes for each activity
- Disaggregating and providing access to county-level measures of child well-being collected from state agencies to inform community planning

In local communities, Smart Start's local partnerships have the flexibility and the data to determine how to improve the health, well-being, and development of children based on the needs and resources of their local communities. Local partnerships support the needs of children and families using a combination of state, federal, local, and private funds to provide comprehensive services and programs that support and strengthen early development by:

- Ensuring child care is high quality, child-focused, and family-friendly
- Providing subsidy services to improve access to high quality early education
- Supporting NC Pre-K providers and providing family assistance
- Advancing child health and development through child care centers and medical practices
- Supporting families with programs that improve parenting skills and promote involvement with their child's education
- Promoting early literacy with programs that assist parents, and child care and medical providers
- Ensuring sustainable implementation of evidence-based early childhood services
- Working with community child-serving organizations to improve coordination and alignment of services

With statewide governance and local data-driven decision-making, the Smart Start network acts as an effective and efficient planning and delivery mechanism for North Carolina's early childhood system. The network not only provides programs and services to families and children but also supports shared learning and innovation, allows for flexibility, and leverages other public and private dollars, making North Carolina a leader in early childhood care and education.

Funding

Smart Start has always been a national model for public—private partnership. The public funding creates an early childhood system and infrastructure that allows private dollars to get to communities quickly and efficiently, delivering significant impact to children and families. By investing in collaboration and collective impact initiatives across our network, we build local community capacity to leverage existing resources. In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, local partnership expenditures of state Smart Start funds totaled \$138.8 million, and NCPC expended \$5.69 million. NCPC's spending included \$1.96 million in local partnership funds managed by NCPC to meet legislative requirements, including the fiscal accountability system and local partnership audits, as well as to help local partnerships build capacity. The remaining \$3.73 million was used by NCPC to ensure that Smart Start fully met all legislatively-mandated requirements and operated to the highest standards of fiscal and programmatic integrity.

NCPC provides leadership in best practices and evidence-based, evidence-informed services, as well as non-profit and fund development.

With the highest standards of accountability, North Carolina's early childhood system efficiently moves resources to serve children. Despite the changes in the operations of local partnerships and early childhood programs due to the COVID-19 pandemic, NCPC and the 75 independent local partnerships effectively budgeted resources, reverting only 4.34% of 2019-2020 Smart Start funds.

Because Smart Start provides the infrastructure in each local community to deliver results, federal, local, and private funders have invested millions of dollars in North Carolina's early childhood system. In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, NCPC and the Smart Start local partnerships together leveraged an additional \$52.5 million for the state's young children, including \$40.9 million in cash and \$11.6 million from in-kind contributions.

See Charts and Tables on page 14

Raising the Quality of Early Care and Education

Smart Start remains committed to increasing the quality of early care and education across the state. The goal is to promote high quality early care that is child-focused and family-friendly. In North Carolina, licensed child care facilities have star ratings between 1 and 5 stars, with 5 stars being the highest. Smart Start supports initiatives that improve or maintain the high quality (4-5 stars) of child care centers, ensure access to high quality centers for children, and help child care providers by offering professional development and technical assistance.

Raising the Star Ratings and Ensuring Community Support for Child Care

Smart Start works to create a strong foundation for programs and services to achieve successful outcomes, retain educated and qualified teachers, promote health and physical activity, and engage

Smart Start also works to bring together communities to support child care needs in their area. This means not only working with individual child care centers but also supporting funding that comes into local communities to support child care needs, ensuring positive transitions for children from child care to kindergarten, and helping centers raise awareness within their communities about how critical child care is to economic development.

This ability to target and address the needs of each center means:

- **Wake Smart Start** helped Little Believer's Academy move from a 1-star child care center to a 5-star center. The partnership's Quality Enhancement Specialist (QES) provided technical assistance on increasing resources, rearranging the center, educating staff, and providing enhanced care. After the experience, the center director said her children's behaviors improved by at least 75% and parent involvement increased by 80%.
- Due to the hard work of technical assistants from the **Beaufort-Hyde Partnership for Children**, the average star ratings for child care centers is 4.61 in Beaufort County and 4.81 in Hyde County. In the two counties, 88% of children are in 4- or 5-star rated facilities and are receiving a quality education.

Spotlight on:



parents. NCPC works with statewide partners to ensure the latest research and effective programs are applied across the state, while local partnerships work directly with child care centers. This focus on quality has dramatically improved the landscape of early care and education in North Carolina. In fact, the average star rating for children enrolled in regulated early child care and education programs has improved from 2.76 in 2001 to 4.33 in 2020. Smart Start works directly with child care centers in each county to understand the greatest needs for quality enhancements, including environmental ratings, teacher education and skill-building, and health and nutrition.

Infrastructure Support for NC Pre-K

Across the Smart Start network, local partnerships partner with NC Pre-K providers to help eligible 4-year-olds access the program. Partnerships also co-chair the NC Pre-K Committees in all counties, administer the NC Pre-K program in 55 counties through a separate contract with the Division of Child Development and Early Education, and provide an additional \$9.1 million in funding to NC Pre-K. This collaboration and funding across the state helps to ensure high quality services and increase access for children.

Because there is local flexibility in how NC Pre-K is administered, Smart Start can support the program in ways that best meet the needs of families and school systems, which means:

- Staff from the **Johnston County Partnership for Children** provided technical assistance (TA) and support for a child experiencing social-emotional difficulties and aggressive behavior. The TA offered strategies for addressing the child's feelings positively and established techniques for the teacher to use to maintain her own composure. The teacher has seen a difference in her relationship with the children in her class, and the children have more positive behavior.
- **New Hanover Smart Start** technical assistance staff worked with a teacher to support a young child having trouble expressing his emotions in a positive way. Through techniques suggested by the TA and additional resources, the child has a safe place to go to when he is upset and is better prepared to handle his emotions.
- **Cabarrus Smart Start** worked with the local community college to provide education referrals, resources, and support through the Early Education Liaison Program. The program addresses teacher education and business administrator education in child care facilities. More than 100 child care providers are enrolled in the program for support. One student received a needed scholarship, attended education classes, and received the tools she needed to continue her education.

A Value-Add to Subsidy Funds – Supporting Both Children and Parents

For years, Smart Start subsidy funds have been used to increase the quality of early child care and education in the state. Many Smart Start local partnerships manage subsidy funds within their communities to boost quality and promote access for children who are at the highest risk. NCPC supports subsidy innovation by sharing successes and best practices across the network. The ability to be innovative with subsidy dollars to address local needs means:

- In Gaston County, the **Lincoln and Gaston Partnership for Children** provided valuable subsidy assistance to a family of four. Because of the monetary assistance, the family is better equipped to pay for child care and has additional funds to purchase school supplies, clothes, and other needed items.
- The **Sampson County Partnership for Children** provided subsidy scholarship program funds to teenage mothers to help with their high school completion.

[See Data and Tables on page 15](#)

Supporting North Carolina Families

Recent research has proven the tremendous long-term benefits of family support, parenting education and home visiting programs. Studies of these programs have highlighted improved maternal and child health, increased maternal employment, and improved school readiness. Research has also produced new insights on the importance of parent-child interaction, managing behavior, and preparing children to enter school healthy and ready to succeed.

Smart Start offers family-focused programs that improve parenting and promote involvement. NCPC supports these programs by evaluating the evidence around parent strengthening and

resources. She feels much better as parent, has seen positive outcomes, and has focused more on her family while practicing her own self-care.

- **Mecklenburg Smart Start** administers Safe Journey, a Parents as Teachers (PAT) program. The program focuses on providing case management and educational support to adolescent parents. Through Safe Journey, a teen mother was able to receive critical support and is now on her way to graduating high school with completed college credits and a high GPA. Her son is also receiving the care he needs for a potential speech delay.
- **In Moore County, Partners for Children & Families** funds the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P). With Triple P, a young father was able to adjust his parenting strategies to fit his son's needs. The father and his wife are now on the same page regarding parenting, and he has seen a difference in the behavior of his young child.
- In Dare County, the **Children and Youth Partnership for Children** has impacted families greatly through parental education support. Parental education is an important predictor of their children's education and behavioral outcomes. Through PAT, a home visiting and parent education program, three families were able to increase their education. One parent with a GED is on her way to achieving a Bachelor of Science, another with just a ninth-grade education has tested for her diploma, and a third mother received her associate degree.
- In Union County, the **Alliance for Children** adjusted to the needs of the community during the pandemic by creating virtual trainings to connect and with support families. The partnership also created new ways to provide Behavior Intervention Support (BIS) and video blogs for parents that focused on virtual schedules, family activities, morning routines, and emotional regulation.

Spotlight on:



engagement programs and providing technical assistance to implement them effectively. Parenting education programs give parents tools to increase their knowledge of early childhood development and positive parenting practices.

Home visiting programs help new parents and parents-to-be by providing education, information, and resources. This dedication to a whole-family approach means:

- The **Guildford County Partnership for Children** funds Healthy Start, which provides in-home visits to families with children who are at risk for abuse or neglect to provide parent education and connect families with community resources. For example, one family who is very thankful for the program, had regular visits and support, which improved the mother's parenting skills and helped her family save and pay for vital

[See Data and Tables on page 17](#)

Promoting Early Literacy

Recognizing that a majority of language development occurs in the first few years of life, Smart Start provides programs that develop early literacy skills needed for success in school, work, and life. Smart Start brings proven national programs to the children and families of North Carolina.

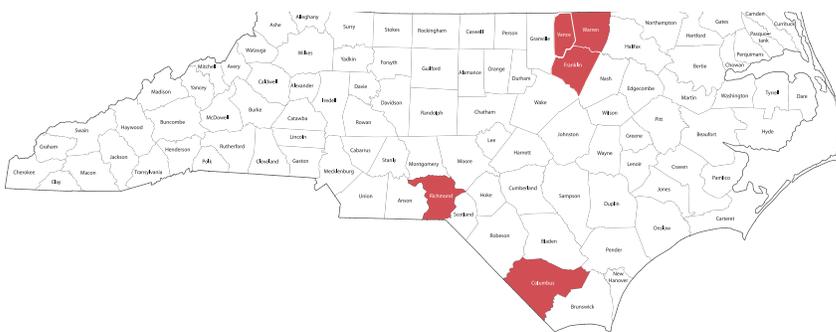
Through Session Law 2017-57, Section 11B.9.(a), funding was allocated to NCPC to increase access to Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library (DPIL), an early literacy program that mails age-appropriate books on a monthly basis to registered children.

During the 2017 legislative session, the General Assembly allocated \$10 million to DPIL, resulting in rapid expansion of the

This comprehensive approach to providing programs in a variety of settings, as well as offering resources to children and parents means:

- The **Richmond County Partnership for Children** connected with a family to register for DPIL. While registering, the parent also learned about the partnership’s Resource Lending Library and regularly retrieves learning material for her two daughters. Through these literacy programs, she had access to resources for her family throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A parent expressed her appreciation for **Columbus Smart Start** and its administration of Reach Out and Read (ROR). ROR integrates reading into pediatric practices and advises families about the importance of reading. Because of the program, her daughter loves to read and enjoys choosing her own book each night.
- The **Franklin-Granville-Vance Partnership for Children** supported a family in need after one parent’s death. Because Parents as Teachers already had a relationship with the family, the program was able to continue monthly personal visits with the newly widowed father. The continuity of service combined with the use of literacy helped the family deal with the challenging situation.

Spotlight on:



program with the goal of the program being available for every child in the state under the age of 5. The Smart Start network was able to quickly get that funding out into communities. In less than two years, every child under the age of 5 in North Carolina has access to DPIL.

See Data and Tables on page 18

Advancing Child Health and Nutrition

Healthy behavior patterns established early in life often lead to lifelong benefits and decreased probability of serious disease later in life. Smart Start works with medical providers, health departments, families, and communities to improve the health and safety of young children, prevent childhood obesity, and ensure more children are screened for developmental delays and referred to services for help long before they start school.

This focus on instilling healthy habits early and working to change the environments children spend a significant amount of time in means:

- The Assuring Better Child Health & Development (ABCD) Coordinator from **Chatham County Partnership for Children** worked with health clinics to

Spotlight on:



improve health outcomes. At one clinic, more than 90% of patients received developmental screenings. The coordinator is continuing to educate about maternal depression and has virtually connected with providers throughout the pandemic.

- The **Alexander County Partnership for Children**, in collaboration with Safe Kids Alexander, provided safety training to the parents of infants and toddlers. Staff educated parents on safely harnessing infant car seats. One family learned that their child's car seat was installed incorrectly, and staff provided needed expertise.
- The **Cumberland County Partnership for Children** has administered music therapy through Kindermusik. Partnership staff have been amazed at the difference in a young child with autism. After attending class, he is now able to play the drums while counting. Through music therapy he has watched others, processed actions, and has found his voice!
- The **Partnership for Children of Lenoir and Greene Counties** partnered with Triple P to provide education on safe sleep practices for children and to distribute diaper bags to families.
- The **Robeson County Partnership for Children** supported a mother on her breastfeeding journey with a nurse from Nurse Family Partnership (NFP). NFP is a home visiting model that arranges for registered nurses to support low-income first-time mothers. The mother received critical care and resources regarding breastfeeding and has now completed Peer Counselor Training regarding breastfeeding and is involved with a breastfeeding coalition.

See Data and Tables on page 19

Enhancing Sustainability for Early Childhood Infrastructure

As the network of Smart Start local partnerships works to enhance support to families, early childhood professionals, and the communities they serve, NCPC works at the state level to strengthen coordination of early childhood governance, as well as ensure the network is meeting and responding to all legislative mandates and changes.

In FY 2019-20, NCPC completed an update of its strategic roadmap, which identified NCPC's role in leading the network of local partnerships to drive coordinated implementation of the state's vision for early childhood. NCPC is now working to carry out this charge with a series of new initiatives to increase local partnership capacity, strengthen early childhood systems, and ensure better outcomes for children and families. These include a project funded by Blue Cross Blue Shield to enhance leadership capacity in Smart Start local partnerships across the state and an evaluation of the Smart Start needs formula, conducted by WestEd, which will produce recommendations on how the Smart Start network can allocate state funds in a more targeted way and better account for differences in community-level characteristics.

NCPC and the Smart Start network have also continued to be a valued partner with state agencies on a variety of early childhood-focused projects and initiatives:

- In the first year of the federal Preschool Development Grant awarded to NC DHHS, NCPC and ten local partnerships worked to develop a framework and

action guide to support increased family knowledge, choice, engagement, and leadership in the early childhood system. In December 2019, NC DHHS was awarded an additional \$40 million for three more years of PDG. In addition to growing the family engagement work, Smart Start will also expand access to the Family Connects home visiting program to more counties in the state with new PDG funds.

- In partnership with the Division of Public Health, NCPC launched an initiative to understand and map how adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and positive childhood experiences (PCEs) show up across North Carolina and where related activities are happening across the state to reduce trauma and increase resilience.
- NCPC has also provided input on early childhood issues and issues facing the Smart Start network to the Office of the Governor, DHHS, and the Commission on Access to Sound, Basic Education during the development of the state's action plans in response to the Leandro case.

Like many others, NCPC and the Smart Start network were challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic and encouraged a robust state response to help children and families navigate the crisis. During the 2020 Legislative Session, COVID-19 response was the highest priority, and NCPC supported legislation allocating federal Coronavirus Relief Funds to child care providers for personal protective equipment, operational grants, and other initiatives to assist in mitigating the impacts of COVID-19.

A Comprehensive Approach to Early Childhood

The North Carolina Partnership for Children and the Smart Start network are committed to advancing an early childhood system that offers accessible, high-quality programs and services for all families and young children in the state, regardless of racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic background. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated many disparities in access and opportunity, and Smart Start will continue to promote policies and interventions that address these gaps. In the 2021 legislative session, Smart Start will support the following areas of work:

- **Ensure comprehensive funding for the Smart Start network and the state's early childhood system.** Now more than ever, Smart Start, the statewide but locally-based early childhood system serving every community in North Carolina, is a vital resource for all families to receive the services and support they need. Maintaining and, as funds allow, expanding funding for North Carolina's early childhood system will ensure equitable access to programs and services that help young children grow up healthy, nurtured, and ready to succeed in school and life. A well-funded system of comprehensive early childhood services is also consistent with the state's responsibility to provide a sound, basic education for all children beginning at birth in response to the ongoing Leandro case and the state's goals to better align educational opportunities in support of the state's economic prosperity.
- **Address short- and long-term challenges facing the early care and education field.** Quality, accessible, affordable child care is a critical part of our economic and social infrastructure, but providers operate on tight margins even in the best of times. Temporary closings and lower attendance as a result of COVID-19 have only made it more difficult for providers to stay open. The General Assembly can continue to support early care and education in the following ways:

» *Continue stabilization measures:* During the 2020 session, the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services and the General Assembly leveraged federal funds from the CARES Act to stabilize child care by providing operational grants, workforce bonuses, and personal protective equipment. If additional relief funds become available, Smart Start supports continued efforts to stabilize child care providers and professionals.

» *Improve workforce compensation and benefits:* As the pandemic has proven, child care professionals are essential, but those professionals have long struggled with low wages and minimal benefits. Smart Start supports policies that provide high-quality early educators with appropriate wages and benefits.

» *Guarantee the long-term sustainability of the field:* As the state evaluates the pandemic's long-term effects on early care and education, Smart Start supports innovative, comprehensive policies and investments to maintain accessible, high-quality, affordable care for young children in every community, particularly infants and toddlers.

- **Expand access to home visiting and other programs that nurture strong families.**

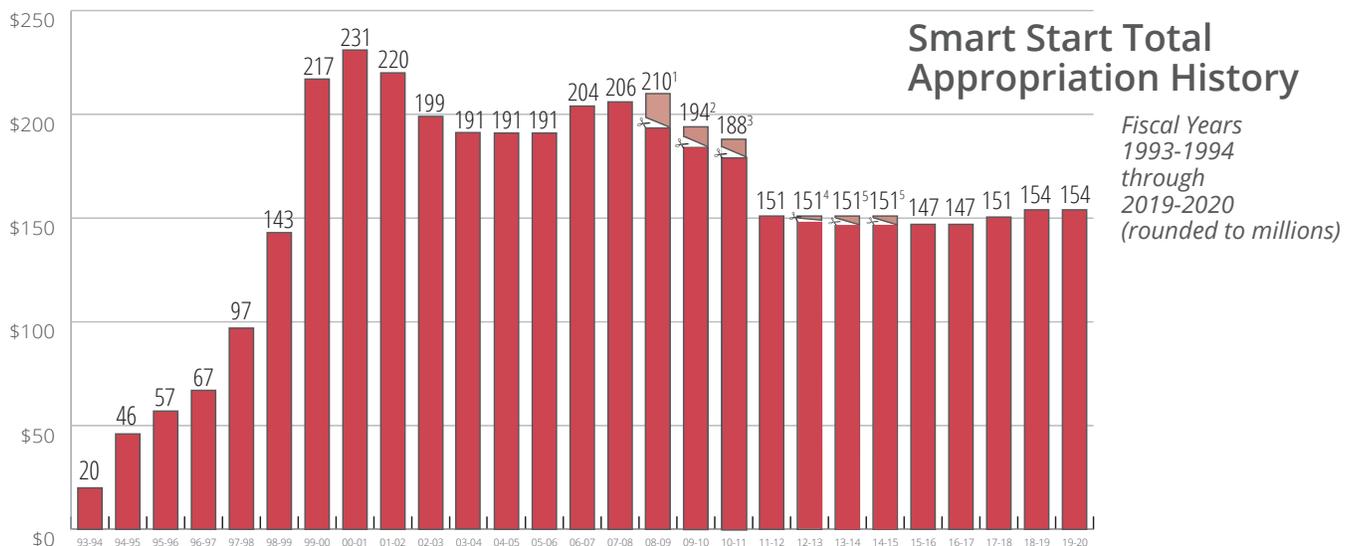
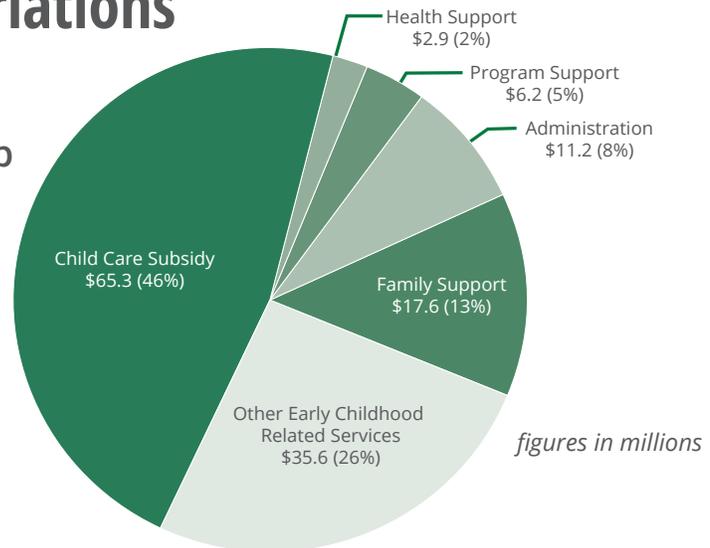
Young children learn and grow most effectively in strong families where parents can successfully face the challenges of caring for their children while meeting their responsibilities at work and in other aspects of life. COVID-19 has only magnified the difficulties facing parents. As the backbone of North Carolina's home visiting and parenting education system, Smart Start supports policies to promote universal access to home visiting, strengthen programs to provide parenting education, and support social-emotional health and resilience.

Graphs, Charts, and Supporting Data*

Finance and Appropriations

Total Local Partnership Expenditures

Fiscal Year 2019-2020
\$138.8 million



¹ One-time budget reduction of \$16M reduced available 08-09 budget to \$194M
² One-time budget reduction of \$7M reduced available 09-10 budget to \$187M
³ One-time budget reduction of \$6M reduced available 10-11 budget to \$182M
⁴ One-time budget reduction of \$1M reduced available 12-13 budget to \$150M
⁵ Recurring budget reduction of \$3.7M reduced available 13-15 budget to \$147.3M

Early Childhood Allocations Within the Total State Budget

	FY 2000-2001	FY 2019-2020
Total State General Fund Budget	\$13,854,000,000	\$24,800,000,000
General Fund Smart Start Appropriation	\$231,000,000	\$147,000,000
DCD Subsidy General Fund Appropriation	\$54,000,000	\$50,900,000
NC Pre-K General Fund Budget	-	\$29,280,000
% of Total State General Fund Budget	2.1%	0.92%

*In the 2018-2019 fiscal year, Smart Start launched a new data reporting system that provides more detail about results directly achieved with Smart Start funds. These data are complementary to the population level results that NCPC has reported each year.

Raising the Quality of Early Care and Education

	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020
Number of all child care programs (one- to five-star) receiving support to improve or maintain the quality of care	1,974 child care programs serving approximately 79,292 children	1,826 child care programs serving approximately 72,900 children	1,080 child care programs serving approximately 46,233 children
Purchase of care expenditures excluding NC Pre-K	\$53,300,396	\$53,990,269	\$53,545,012
Number of low-paid teachers receiving an education-based salary supplement ensuring continuity of care for children by highly qualified teachers	4,732 teachers serving approximately 54,891 children	4,781 teachers serving approximately 54,460 children	4,616 teachers serving approximately 53,546 children
Number of teachers participating in Smart Start-funded programs that helped them to study early education at the college level	1,411 teachers serving approximately 16,368 children	802 teachers serving approximately 9,303 children	680 teachers serving approximately 7,888 children
Number of counties where a Smart Start local partnership administers NC Pre-K	55	55	55

Results of the previous year:

The following highlights the increase in quality in North Carolina child care programs:

- On average, child care centers that participated in programs to enhance quality had the following outcomes:**
 - » An increase in average star rating from 4.28 when they began receiving Smart Start funded technical assistance to 4.32 (out of 5) when they were relicensed by the Division of Child Development and Early Education.
 - » An increase in program standard points from 5.08 to 5.10 (out of 7)
 - » An increase in teacher education points from 5.59 to 5.68 (out of 7)

- Promoting a child's health and development is the cornerstone of many Smart Start funded activities. Teaching Strategies GOLD is a common instrument for measuring child development. Among those Smart Start funded activities that used Teaching Strategies GOLD, participating children achieved these outcomes (*right*):

	Pre	Post
Language - Meets or Exceeds	64%	93%
Literacy - Meets or Exceeds	49%	90%
Math - Meets or Exceeds	23%	80%
Physical - Meets or Exceeds	69%	95%
Social Emotional - Meets or Exceeds	63%	93%
Cognitive - Meets or Exceeds	53%	85%

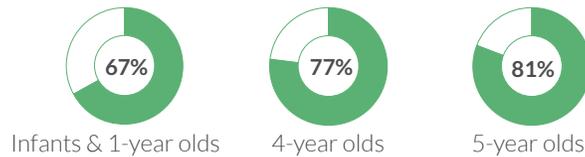
**This data represents a change to a more reliable calculation during fiscal year 2019-2020

- On average, child care centers that participate in programs that enhanced the education environment improved on Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales (ECERS). Based on a seven-point scale:



- On average, child care centers that participate in programs to reduce teacher turnover rates saw a decrease in turnover from 13% in 2018-19 to **11%** in 2019-20.*
- At a statewide level:

- » The percentage of children in 4 and 5 star programs increased from 33% in 2001 to **73%** in 2020.
- » The percentage enrolled in 4 and 5 star programs for:



- » The average star rating for:



- ★ children enrolled in regulated early child care and education programs increased from 2.76 in 2001 to **4.33** in 2020



- ★ children receiving subsidized care increased from 2.68 in 2001 to **4.52** in 2020



*This data regarding teacher turnover reflects data through March 2020, as the pandemic impacted data collection.

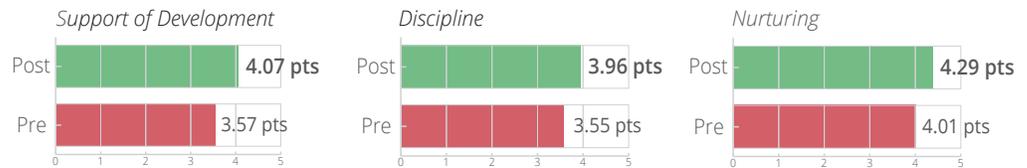
Supporting North Carolina Families

	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020
Number of families participating in Incredible Years funded by Smart Start	310	234	212
Number of families participating in Nurse Family Partnership funded by Smart Start	846	684	559
Number of caregivers participating in one-time Positive Parenting Program parent education	537	532	524
Number of caregivers participating in Nurturing Parenting Program	930	878	718
Number of families participating in ongoing parenting programs	1,648	1,532	1,322

Results of the previous year:

In the last fiscal year, programs that support parent education and family engagement accomplished the following:

- Based on the Life Skills Progression Positive Parenting Practice measurement instrument, parents that participated achieved the following improvements (based on a five-point scale):



- Using the Parenting Practices Inventory (PPI), the following increases were reported in the use of appropriate discipline, positive parenting practices, and setting clear expectations (based on a seven-point scale):



- Based on Keys to Interactive Parenting (KIPS) measurement tool, parents that participated achieved the following shifts in scores of positive parenting skills:

- » Parents scoring low – pre=27%, post=23%
- » Parents scoring moderate – pre=54%, post=43%
- » Parents scoring high – pre=19%, post=34%

- 80%** of parents who were referred to a service are using that service.

Promoting Early Literacy

	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020
Number of children participating in the evidence-based program Reach Out and Read (ROR)	81,367	90,222	91,169
Number of medical offices participating in the Smart Start evidence-based program ROR	146 offices in 58 counties	152 offices in 60 counties	161 offices in 61 counties
Number of families participating in the evidence-based program Raising A Reader (RAR)	8,419	7,825	6,434
Number of children participating in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library	162,037	234,931	273,061
Number of children whose caregivers are participating in Motherread or Fatherread	517	511	428
Number of children whose caregivers are participating in other literacy programs	2,891	3,116	2,417

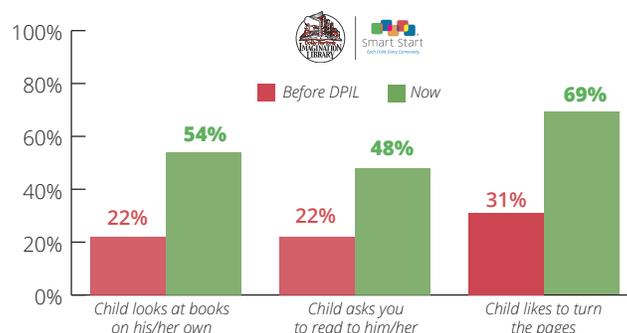
Results of the previous year:

Smart Start has offered a wide range of early literacy initiatives that promote parent and child shared reading time. Results show an increase in the percentage of parents who report reading to their children daily.

Reach Out and Read (ROR) did not conduct its annual survey due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On average, parents who participated in Dolly Parton's Imagination Library reported an increase in reading to their child daily from 42% before they began receiving books to 69% after at least four months of participating in DPIL. The investment in DPIL was even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among participating families, 32% said they could not buy books without DPIL, and 33% said COVID-19 had an impact on their reading habits or access to books.

On average, parents who participated in other programs designed to increase parent and child shared reading time reported an increase in reading to their child daily from 38% at baseline to **54%** after participating in the program.



According to the 2017-18 National Survey of Children's Health, the percentage of children that are read to on a daily basis is **40%** in North Carolina and **37%** across the Nation.

Advancing Child Health and Nutrition

	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020
Number of medical practices and physicians participating in ABCD	89* medical practices	76 medical practices	59 medical practices
Number of children with special needs or at-risk for developmental delay that received Smart Start health-related enhanced services	929	969	1,333
Number of children receiving healthier food options and more physical activity in child care as part of the evidence-based Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) program	2,040	3,330	4,260
Number of child care facilities that received child care health consultation (CCHC) services funded by Smart Start	1,833 facilities impacting 54,990 children	1,705 facilities impacting 51,150 children	1,460 facilities impacting 43,800 children
Number of children that participated in Shape NC initiatives	1,279**	3,957**	4,636**

* A Federal grant supporting ABCD ended in 2016

** Beginning in FY17-18, Shape NC was redesigned to be a more intensive intervention concentrated in four counties. Over a three-year period, a total of 60 child care centers have participated. Beginning in FY 2018-2019, 17 child care centers began receiving "Baby Shape."

Results of the previous year:

Health and Safety Assessment

Average classroom scores pre and post:

