

Every Child Deserves a Smart Start



Smart Start of Henderson County

2006-2007 Annual Report



Ensuring a brighter future for
Henderson County children

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What is Smart Start?

Smart Start is North Carolina's nationally recognized and award-winning early childhood initiative designed to ensure that young children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. Working closely with local community agencies and partners, Smart Start of Henderson County funds and supports services that improve the quality and availability of child care; increase access to and use of health services; and support, educate, and advocate for children ages birth to five and their families. Our unique, comprehensive approach allows the community to make decisions and plans that are specific to the needs of young children and their families.

The North Carolina General Assembly provides funds to Smart Start of Henderson County, one of 78 local Smart Start partnerships throughout the state. The Smart Start of Henderson County Board of Directors, made up of parents, child care professionals, and local organization representatives among others, decides how this funding can best be invested in the local community. In 2006-2007, Smart Start of Henderson County managed and distributed \$1,559,030.

Smart Start of Henderson County believes the future of every child begins at birth. Through the programs we fund, Smart Start is helping to ensure a better, brighter future for Henderson County.

Investing in Henderson County- for today and tomorrow

Access to affordable quality early education affects everyone living in Henderson County today. Working families with young children depend on the availability of quality care, and often on assistance that helps subsidize its cost, in order to continue working and contributing to the local economy. Hundreds of Henderson County teachers and administrators work directly for the child care industry. The success Henderson County children meet in school and throughout their lives is greatly influenced by their early educational experiences. The bottom line: it pays to pay for quality early care and education.

Smart Start of Henderson County Board of Directors holds its regular meetings at 8:30 a.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Children and Family Resource Center. Smart Start of Henderson County complies fully with the State of North Carolina's Open Meetings Law.



Letter from the Board Chair

Dear Supporters of Smart Start:

It is my pleasure on behalf of the Board and staff of Smart Start of Henderson County to present the Annual Report for 2006-07. We are now entering our 11th year of providing services for young children in our community. We are proud to report that the number of Henderson County children enrolled in high quality child care programs with a 4 or 5 star rating has increased 98% since 2001. Currently, 54% of all Henderson County children in child care are enrolled in the highest quality programs. We are also proud to report that teacher education has increased, while staff turnover has decreased, ensuring more stable care for our youngest citizens. However, we are sad to report that there are still over 200 children on a waiting list to receive quality child care. We are still only receiving about half of the funding we need to address the needs of our county's young children. Economic experts are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of quality early learning experiences to the future of our country, and the impact that the child care industry has on the local economy. As our population of children 0-5 continues to grow, we must be ready to meet their needs in order to ensure that Henderson County remains a competitive and viable place to live and raise children. We remain committed to improving the lives of the children in our county and look forward to meeting the challenges ahead. It is our hope that the community will continue to support and rally behind our efforts. We need everyone's support in order to ensure that every child in Henderson County gets the start they deserve.

Sincerely,
Tina Stepp, MLIS
Board Chair

Early Care & Education

Our goal: Promote high quality child care choices for every family

Programs we funded for 2006-2007:

Child Care Resource and Referral.....	\$169,347
Child Care Subsidy	\$492,214
Infant/ Toddler Initiative	\$34,955
More at Four	\$19,647
Quality Assistance and Assurance	\$178,071
WAGE\$.....	\$123,361

Teachers from 70 child care centers received training or technical assistance through our early education programs, impacting over 2000 children.



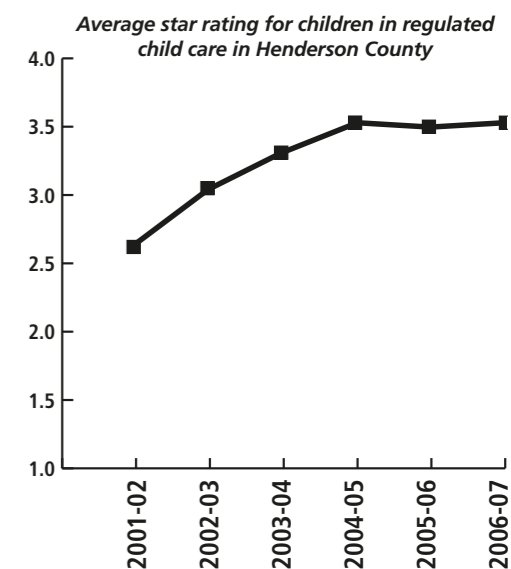
The Quality Assistance & Assurance Program contributed to the overall improvement in quality of child care by helping 82 child care providers enroll in early childhood education courses.

Our Early Care and Education programs did much this year to increase the level of quality and availability of child care in our county. Specifically, technical assistance, provider training, start-up consultations and grants for quality enhancement were all delivered to the professionals within the child care facilities in Henderson County. Professional development supplements and bonuses were offered to support teachers as they pursued advanced academic degrees and as a means to decrease staff turnover within the child care facilities.

The cost of quality early education is a significant barrier for many families in our county. To help overcome this barrier, our subsidy program helps cover these costs for the families with the greatest financial need. Smart Start funds helped the families of 154 children afford child care. Of the children subsidized with Smart Start funds, 98% were enrolled in facilities rated 3 stars or higher. Additionally, our resource and referral program provides parents with the information they need to make the best child care choices for their children.

Did You Know. . .

- Henderson County is home to approximately 7,000 children ages birth through five
- 22.6% of Henderson County children live below the federal poverty level, which is less than \$20,650 per year for a family of four
- More than half of all children under six live in households in which all parents work
- Roughly half of all children under six are eligible for Medicaid
- Over 2,000 preschool children are enrolled in Henderson County child care facilities
- Quality child care costs three times the expense of tuition at a four-year North Carolina college or university
- Longitudinal studies have shown that for every \$1 invested in high quality early childhood programs, \$17 are saved in the future
- Children that attend child care centers that successfully participate in a Smart Start quality improvement program:
 - Have better cognitive and language skills and fewer behavioral problems than other children
 - Are more likely to be immunized on time
 - Are more likely to have a regular doctor



Health & Safety

Our goal: Increase access to quality health services for young children

Programs we funded for 2006-2007:

Child Care Health Consultant \$71,728

Preventive Dental Health..... \$82,321

338 child care professionals received health and safety training through our child care health consultant activity.

Our health programs educate and offer trainings to child care providers, parents and children on a wide variety of health and safety issues. Topics have included diapering, hand washing, proper tooth brushing, disease prevention and emergency preparedness, among others. Our program staff work with child care centers and family child care homes to assist them in meeting required health and safety standards, as well as helping to ensure that young children with medical and dental needs are getting the screenings, referrals, and treatments that they need.

622 preschool children received free dental screenings.



Family Support

Our goal: Provide access to information and resources families need to support the development of their children

Programs we funded for 2006-2007:

Nurturing Parent Program..... \$36,704

Parents As Teachers \$125,906

105 families received parenting education, support, and/or developmental screenings for their children.

Our family support programs educate parents on child development and positive parenting practices. In addition, they connect families to resources in the community that enhance their ability to care for their children. In 2006-2007, parent educators completed nearly 500 home visits with 80 families, working with them on developmentally appropriate activities for young children, and helping to screen their children for developmental, vision, and hearing issues. The Nurturing Parent program taught positive skills to young families and helped parents replace unwanted parenting practices with healthy behaviors. Both programs offered parent education in both English and Spanish, and were open to all families with young children in Henderson County. Of the parents participating in a Smart Start parent education program, 100% reported increased competency about parenting.

United Agenda for Children

The United Agenda for Children is an innovative coalition of citizens, civic leaders, businesses, government and community agencies who have united around a common purpose...to work together to make sure every child in Henderson County is safe, healthy, and well educated. It is the most comprehensive and synchronized child-focused initiative ever attempted in Henderson County.

On October 20, 2007, the United Agenda for Children hosted a citizen engagement event called Speak Out for Kids, in which more than 280 residents who demographically matched our community participated. Speak Out for Kids served as a community forum where citizens joined together to discuss the issues facing the children in our community and to set priorities for our children in the areas of health, safety and education.

The top seven community priorities for children identified at this meeting were:

- Increase access to preschool education through increased subsidies and additional preschool spaces
- Develop programs that help young people make post graduation plans
- Increase the number of school nurses
- Increase mental health services for children in the community and in the schools
- Provide more mentoring programs for at-risk youth
- Create social venues for teens
- Increase affordable housing in the community

Smart Start of Henderson County is proud to be a partner and financial sponsor of the United Agenda for Children. The Smart Start Board of Directors has made a commitment to listen to the priorities set by the community and work with the coalition to actively address the areas of need that fall within our agency's mission. For more information about the United Agenda for Children, see the website at www.unitedagendaforchildrenhc.org.



Building Community

Smart Start of Henderson County is an active community partner dedicated to improving the lives of Henderson County's youngest citizens. We collaborate with numerous local agencies through our planning committees, board membership and funding systems. Additionally, we are active partners in the United Agenda for Children, the Henderson County Chamber of Commerce, the Kindergarten Transition Team and the Local Interagency Coordinating Council. Through these collaborations we have helped to build community capacity and make efficient use of existing resources.

Fiscal Year 2006-2007

All Smart Start funded programs are required to provide at least a 10% cash and/or in-kind contribution. These contributions reduce the cost to Smart Start for administering activities or providing services. Reportable matching contributions include other non-state funds, donated services and materials, and volunteer time. These resources are used to defray what might otherwise be costs to Smart Start, or to expand the types of services provided by Smart Start without additional use of state funds. The program match for services generated by our funded programs in 2006-2007 was \$198,584. Additionally, volunteers donated a total of \$13,797 of their time directly to Smart Start of Henderson County, thereby decreasing our administrative costs.

Current Members of the Board of Directors:

OFFICERS

Tina Stepp, Chair, Henderson County Public Library
Terry Maybin, Vice Chair, Tomorrow's Hope Child Development Center
Renee Kumor, Secretary, Member At Large
Earl Medlin, Treasurer, Blue Ridge Community College

McCray Benson, Community Foundation of Henderson County
Marcie Burlett, Henderson County Commissioners
Linda Charping, Henderson County Department of Public Health
Pam Daubert, United Way of Henderson County
Robin Estes, Park Ridge PREP Program
Jennifer Folsom, Parent
Renay Knapp, North Carolina Cooperative Extension
Melissa Maurer, Blue Ribbon Custom Frame Shop
Tina Morgan, Henderson County Department of Social Services
Laurie Morin, Laurie's Child Care
Candy Priest, Member At Large
Denise Purcell, St. James School for Little Folks
Kathy Revis, Henderson County Public Schools
David White, Western Carolina Community Action
Noah Wood, Child Care Resource and Referral

Look to the stars for quality child care

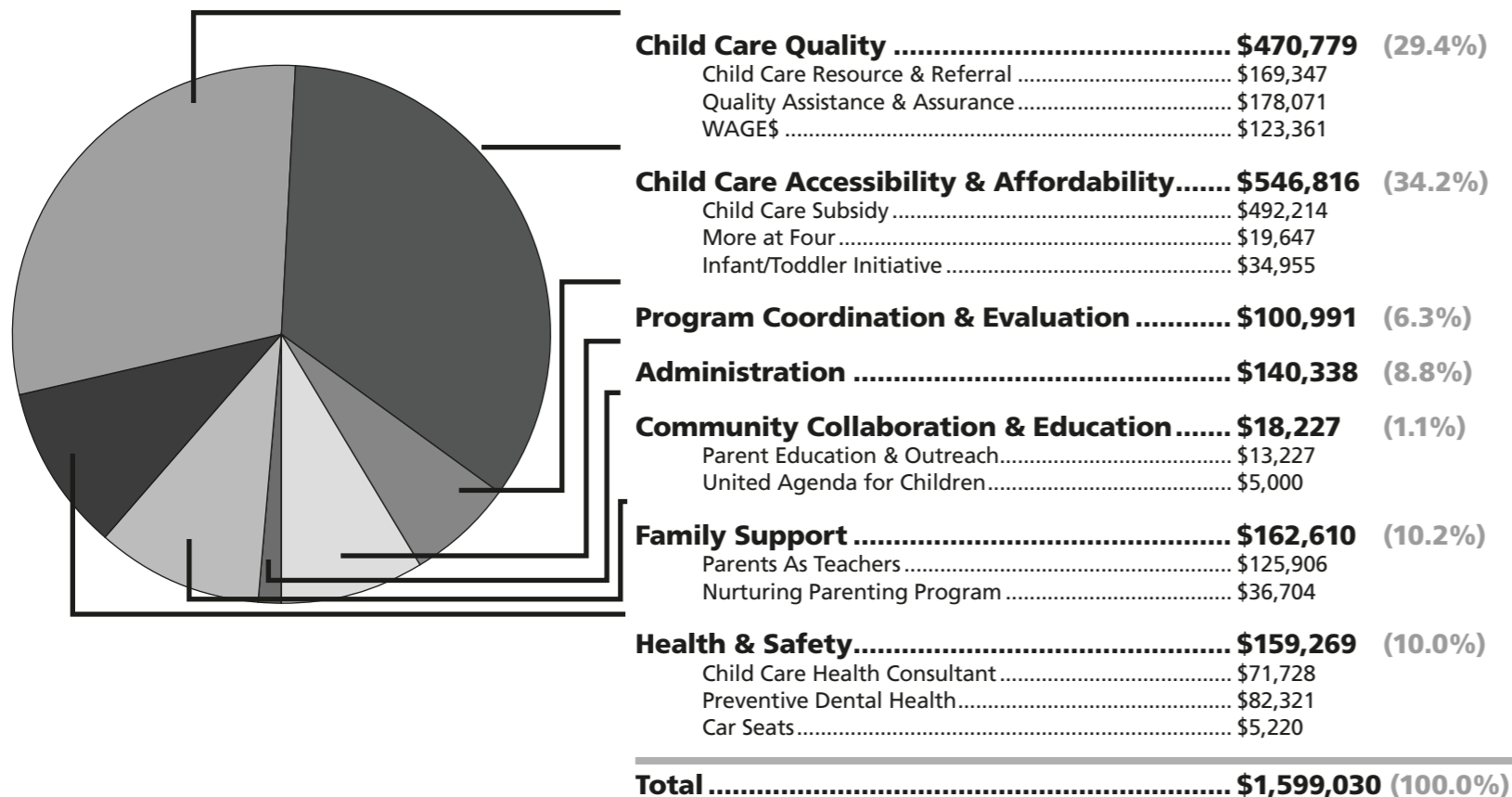
Deciding who will care for your children is one of the most important decisions you will make as a parent.

Fortunately, there is a system in place which provides parents with useful information about child care centers. Every licensed child care facility in Henderson County has a star rating between one and five. A facility meeting the minimum licensing requirements would receive a rating of 1 star, and higher star ratings are assigned as a facility progressively attains more of the state's requirements for top quality child care. Star ratings are earned on the basis of the two components which provide the most accurate indication of quality, staff education and program standards.



For more information on the 5 star rating system, please contact Child Care Resource and Referral at 828-692-3847, or visit the NC Division of Child Development web site at www.ncchildcare.net.

2006-2007 Expenditures



Henderson County's Highest Rated Childcare Facilities

5 Stars ☆☆☆☆

Alexandra's Child Care Home
 Best Ever Home Day Care
 Blessed Beginnings
 Bruce Drysdale More at Four
 Calvary Head Start Center
 Foster Circle Head Start
 Genesis
 Harvest Outreach Head Start
 Helping Hand Development Center
 Laurie's Child Care
 Little Red School
 Michelle's Family Child Care Home
 Nessa's Young'uns Day Care
 Sugar Hill Head Start Center
 The Beacon Child Development Center
 Tumblin' Toddlers

4 Stars ☆☆☆

Balfour Early Head Start Center
 Big Willow Preschool and Day Care
 Bunny Trail Family Child Care Home
 Children United Child Care Center
 Chris' Day Care Home
 Henderson County Public Schools Exceptional Child Pre-K
 Hendersonville School for Little Folks
 King Creek Head Start Center
 Lincoln Circle Head Start Center
 Love and Learning Child Care Center
 Minds in Motion Preschool
 Noah's Ark Christian Daycare
 Open Arms Child Development Center
 Renee's Child Care
 St. James School for Little Folks
 Tomorrow's Hope Child Development Center
 Trinity Presbyterian Head Start

3 Stars ☆☆☆

ABC's & 123's
 Alice's Playground
 Bell's School for People Under Six
 Carrusel Family Child Care Home
 Children's World Day Care
 Heritage Hall International School
 His Kids Child Development Center
 Joan's Day Center
 Martha's Day Care Home
 New Beginnings
 Telamon Migrant Head Start

Help ensure a brighter future for children

What you can do:

- Cherish, love, nurture, and advocate for the children in your own life.
- Support leadership that cares for young children and their families.
- Know the issues affecting young children and their families on the local and state levels.
- Volunteer your time to help organizations that serve young children.
- Get to know the children in your neighborhood. Ask them about their lives.
- Share Smart Start success stories with your state and local legislators.
- Vote on issues that affect young children.

Find out more about the programs that we currently fund:

AmeriCorps and Children Together

Places AmeriCorps volunteers in qualifying early childhood facilities in order to provide release time for teachers pursuing higher education
Contact Sonia Girona at 693-1580

Child Care Health Consultant, Henderson County Department of Public Health

Helps child care facilities with health and safety issues through trainings and consultations

Contact JoAnne Danielson at 694-6092

Child Care Resource and Referral, Children and Family Resource Center

Provides referrals for child care to parents as well as parent and provider trainings

Contact Noah Wood at 692-3847

Child Care Subsidy, Henderson County Department of Social Services

Helps families pay the cost of child care

Contact Amelia Cox at 698-4440

Infant / Toddler Initiative, Children and Family Resource Center

Provides monetary awards for high quality child care facilities serving infants

Contact Noah Wood at 698-0674

More-at-Four, Henderson County Public Schools

Provides free quality preschool for qualifying 4-year-olds

Contact Laura Ross at 698-5039

Parents as Teachers, Children and Family Resource Center

Offers in-home parent education on child development and parenting to parents of children ages birth through 3

Contact Linda Carter at 698-0674

Preventative Dental Health, Henderson County Department of Public Health

Offers free dental screenings and education to child care providers, parents, and children

Contact Diana Rothweiler at 694-6067

Smart Start Rewards, Children and Family Resource Center

Provides monetary rewards for child care providers who increase their education level as well as a longevity bonus for teachers who remain with one facility over time

Contact Catherine Taylor at 698-0674

Quality Assistance and Assurance, Children and Family Resource Center

Helps child care facilities improve and maintain quality through technical assistance, grants, and provider training

Contact Noah Wood at 698-0674



Get Involved with Smart Start

Volunteer. Donate Money. Write Your Elected Officials.

The children of Henderson County need your help and there are many ways to become involved. If you'd like to know more, simply fill out the form below and send it in or call our office at 828-693-1580 or e-mail us at info@smartstarthc.org.

Yes! I want to be a Champion for Children in Henderson County by:

- Making a cash or in-kind donation
- Volunteering with a program
- Learning more about children's issues

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Mail this form to: (Check payable to)

Smart Start of Henderson County, P.O. Box 542, Hendersonville, NC 28793-0542