

Every Child Deserves a Smart Start



Smart Start of Henderson County 2007-2008 Annual Report



Ensuring a brighter future for
Henderson County children

851 Case Street
Hendersonville, NC 28793
Phone 828-693-1580
www.smartstarthc.org

Inside:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|
| What Smart Start of Henderson County supports | Pg. 1 |
| United Agenda for Children..... | Pg. 5 |
| Our financial report | Pg. 6 |
| Choosing quality child care | Pg. 7 |

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 Henderson County's youngest residents.

Smart Start of Henderson County believes the future of every child begins at birth. Through the multiple programs that 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 impacts all of Henderson County's residents. Working families with young children depend on the availability of quality care, and often on financial assistance that helps to offset its cost, in order to continue working and contributing to the local economy. There are hundreds of Henderson County teachers and administrators who work directly for the child care industry. The success our 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.

As one of 78 local partnerships throughout the state, Smart Start of Henderson County is funded through the North Carolina General Assembly. The Smart Start of Henderson County Board of Directors, comprised of parents, child care professionals, and local organization representatives among others, decides how this funding can best be invested in the local community. For the 2007-2008 fiscal year, Smart Start of Henderson County managed and distributed \$1,593,690.

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.



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 2007-08. We are now entering our 12th year of providing services for young children in our community.

We are proud to report that currently 64% of all Henderson County children in licensed care are enrolled in the highest quality programs, with a star rating of 4 or higher and 80% of all Henderson County children in licensed care are enrolled in facilities with a rating of 3 or higher. 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 an average of 250 children per month remain on a waiting list to receive quality child care. We are still one of the lowest funded counties in the state, receiving only about half the funding we need to address the needs of our county's young children.

In 2007, the United Agenda for Children held a special forum, Speak Out for Kids, which brought together 280 people from our community to discuss the top priorities for children in our county. One of the top priorities that came out of this forum was the need for increased access to preschool education through increased subsidies and additional early care. 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 rally behind our efforts. We need everyone's support to ensure that every child in Henderson County gets the smart 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 2007-2008:
 AmeriCorps and Children Together \$4,963
 Child Care Resource and Referral \$164,156
 Child Care Subsidy \$491,937
 Infant/ Toddler Initiative \$34,300
 More at Four \$18,400
 Smart Start Rewards \$205,953
 Quality Assistance and Assurance \$117,473

The Smart Start Rewards program contributed to the overall improvement of child care quality by assisting 75 child care professionals enroll in early childhood education courses.



Our Early Care and Education programs accomplished a great deal 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 early education professionals of Henderson County. As a means of increasing the overall educational level of child care providers, and to prevent staff turnover in the field, professional development supplements were offered to those teachers who pursued advanced academic degrees and/or who retained consistent employment within the same child care facility over the course of the year.

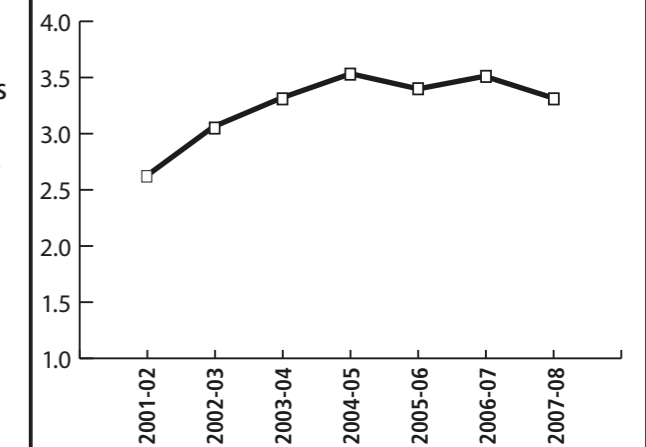
The cost of quality early education is a significant barrier for many families in our county. To help overcome this barrier, our subsidy program helps cover these costs for families with the greatest financial need. Smart Start funds helped the families of 170 children afford child care. Of all the children subsidized with Smart start funds, 98% were enrolled in facilities with a star rating of 3 or higher. Additionally, our Resource and Referral program continued to provide parents with the information required to make the most informed child care choices for their children.

Did You Know . . .

- Henderson County is home to approximately 7,000 children ages birth through five
- 22% 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 indicate that for every \$1 invested in high quality early childhood programs, \$17 are saved in the future
- Children that attend child care facilities 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

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

Average star rating of regulated child care facilities in Henderson County



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Health & Safety

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

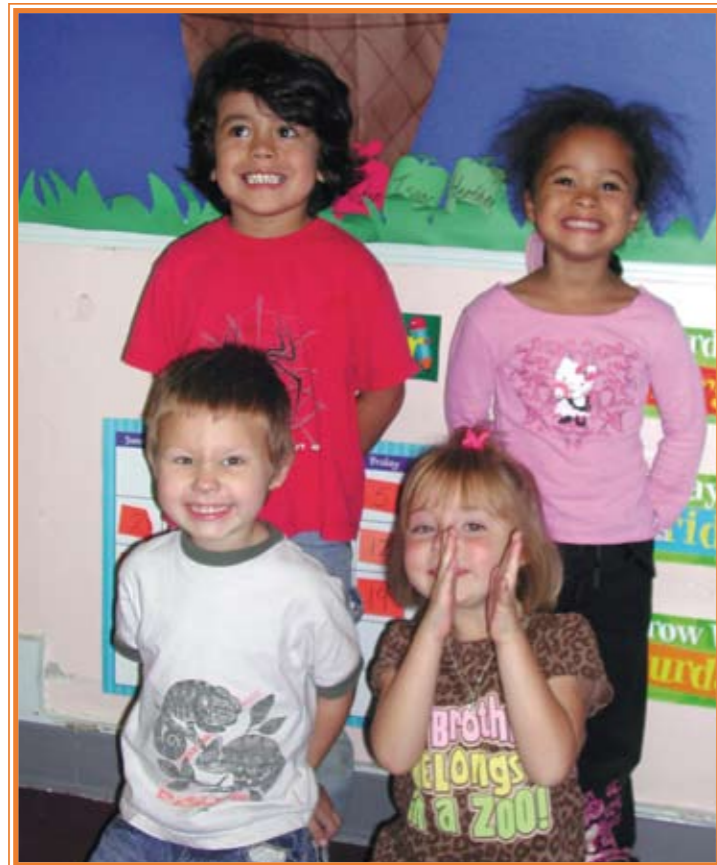
Programs we funded for 2007-2008:

Child Care Health Consultant.....\$74,564
Preventive Dental Health.....\$87,900

Through our child care health consultant activity, 235 on-site consultations were conducted and more than 1100 children were positively impacted.

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 Henderson County's child care facilities, providing assistance in meeting required health and safety standards and ensuring that young children with medical and dental issues are receiving the screenings, referrals and treatments they need.

721 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 2007-2008:

Nurturing Parent Program.....\$19,647
Parents as Teachers.....\$129,185

350 community resource referrals were made to parents participating in our family support programs.

Our family support programs educate parents on child development and positive parenting practices. Likewise, they connect families to resources in the community that enhance their ability to care for their children. During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, parent educators completed nearly 650 home visits with 89 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 participating parents, 99% 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. More than 280 residents participated, all of whom demographically matched our community. 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:

1. Increase access to preschool education through increased subsidies and additional preschool spaces
2. Develop programs that help young people make post graduation plans
3. Increase the number of school nurses
4. Increase mental health services for children in the community and in the schools
5. Provide more mentoring programs for at-risk youth
6. Create social venues for teens
7. 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, and to see what has been accomplished in the last year, please visit the website at www.unitedagendaforchildrenhc.org

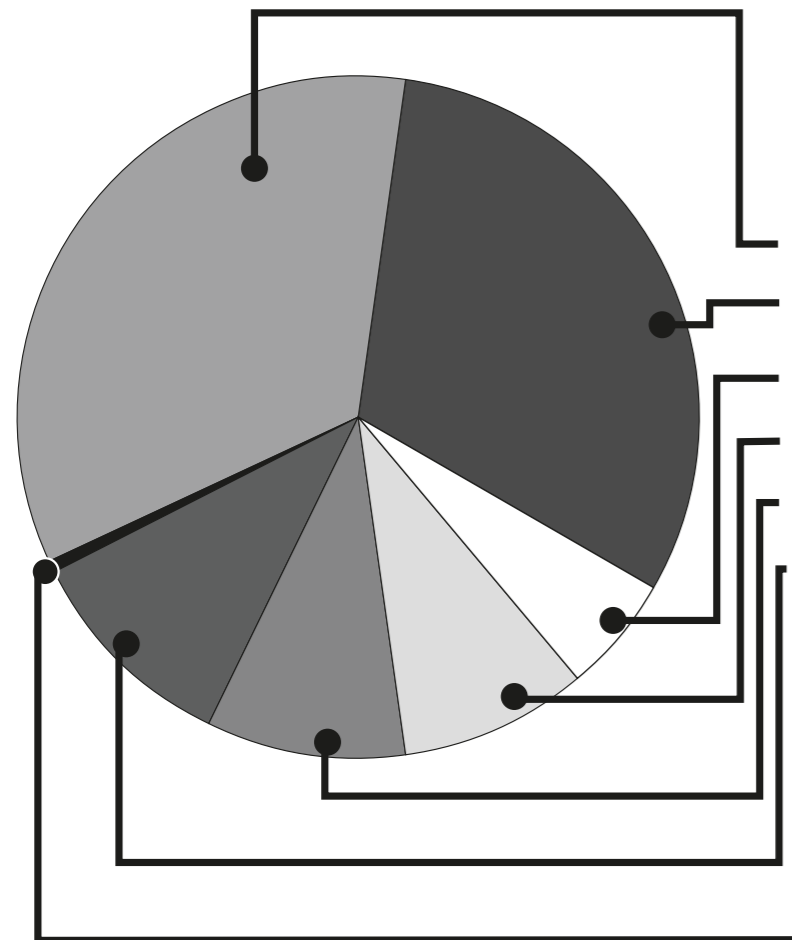


Building Community

Smart Start of Henderson County is an active community partner dedicated to improving the lives of our 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 2007-2008

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 funding, 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, without additional use of state funds. The program match for services generated by our funded programs in 2007-2008 was \$194,075. Additionally, volunteers donated a total of \$124,608 of their time directly to Smart Start of Henderson County, thereby decreasing our administrative costs.



Expenditures

- 30.9% (\$492,545) Child Care Quality
- 34.2% (\$544,637) Child Care Accessibility & Affordability
- 5.8% (\$92,248) Program Coordination & Evaluation
- 8.8% (\$140,156) Administration
- 9.3% (\$148,832) Family Support
- 10.5% (\$167,681) Health & Safety
- 0.5% (\$7,591) Community Collaboration & Education

We thank these community members who donate their time and energy as Directors, ensuring that all Henderson County children enter school healthy and ready to succeed.

Current 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
Milton Butterworth, Blue Ridge Community Health Services
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
Trina Rushing, Parent
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 facilities. 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 one 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.

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
- Foster Circle Head Start
- Genesis
- Harvest Outreach Head Start
- Helping Hand Developmental Center
- Hendersonville School for Little Folks
- Laurie's Child Care
- Little Red School
- Michelle's Family Child Care Home
- Nessa's Young'uns
- Sugar Hill Head Start Center
- Tumblin' Toddlers FCCH

4 Stars ☆☆☆

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

3 Stars ☆☆☆

- ABC's & 123's
- Carrusel FCCH
- Children's World Day Care
- His Kids Child Development Center
- Joan's Day Center
- Martha's Day Care Home
- New Beginnings
- Telamon Migrant Head Start
- The Beacon Child Development Center

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 in addition to 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 692-3847

Parents as Teachers, Children and Family Resource Center

Offers in-home parent education on child development and parenting skills to parents with children ages birth through 3
Contact Linda Carter at 698-0674

Preventive Dental Health, Henderson County Department of Public Health

Offers free dental screenings for young children and dental 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 longevity bonuses for teachers who remain with one facility over time
Contact Noah Wood 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