



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Linda Leonard, Executive Director
Phone: 336-249-6688

Smart Start Partnership Travels to Raleigh to Ask DAVIDSON COUNTY Legislators to “Hold the Line” on Investments in Young Children

RALEIGH, NC – On Tuesday, June 8th, child advocates, child care professionals, parents and business leaders from Davidson County traveled to the North Carolina General Assembly as part of Smart Start’s statewide “Tuesdays for Tots” initiative. The constituents met with the Davidson county legislative delegation and asked members to “hold the line” and continue to invest in young children in Davidson County. Earlier this year more than 800 community leaders from across the state voted that access to quality early education and care was a top priority for young children.

“Smart Start of Davidson County is committed to ensuring that all local children have access to early education and health services to help them succeed in school and in life,” said Lynne Brame, Board Chair. “However, while the challenges facing local families continue to grow, the funding that allows Smart Start to serve families is in jeopardy. Today’s meeting is to help legislators better understand the needs in our community and to ask that they ‘hold the line’ and continue to invest in young children and our state through Smart Start. Today’s children are North Carolina’s future leaders, parents and workers. Our state’s prosperity depends on their healthy development and growth.”

Tuesdays for Tots is Smart Start’s signature effort that takes place during the legislative session. On Tuesdays, advocates representing Smart Start’s 77 partnerships come to Raleigh for one-on-one meetings to educate lawmakers on the challenges facing young families and how Smart Start meets these critical needs.

Smart Start is North Carolina’s early childhood initiative. For the past 16 years, it has been a recognized as a national model in helping ensure that young children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. Smart Start is a public-private initiative that provides early education and care funding to all of North Carolina’s 100 counties. Smart Start funds are administered at the local level through nonprofit organizations called Local Partnerships. The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc., (NCPC) is the statewide nonprofit organization that provides oversight and technical assistance for local partnerships.

Smart Start has experienced funding reductions over the past 9 years of \$43.8 million. This amounts to a loss of \$101.2 million when combined with the effects of inflation. These cuts are occurring at the same time that economists and other business leaders are advocating that investments in young children are one of the strongest investments not only for the short term but also for sustained growth and job creation. In fact, the North Carolina General Assembly’s Legislative Study Commission on Children and Youth concluded: “It is critical to ensure the healthy development of children in the State and improve outcomes for all children in order to ensure the future success of our State and our citizens.”

Sixty local residents traveled to the North Carolina General Assembly today. The residents met with the following members of the Davidson County legislative delegation: Senator Stan Bingham, Representative Hugh Holliman, Representative Larry Brown, and Representative Jerry Dockham. Pictures are attached.

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Smart Start is North Carolina’s early childhood leadership network dedicated to assuring that every child reaches his or her potential and is prepared for success in a global community. For more information, visit www.ncsmartstart.org.

The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.

office: **1100 Wake Forest Road**
Raleigh, North Carolina 27604



voice: **919-821-7999** fax: **919-821-8050**
web: www.ncsmartstart.org