

North Carolina Statistics:

State Population	9,765,229
<i>(as of 2012)</i>	
0-5 population	747,097
<i>(as of 2012)</i>	
Poverty level	18% of North Carolinians and 30% of children, birth to 5, were living below the poverty level in 2012
# of local collaboratives	76
State/Local Collaborative Total Funding:	\$149.6 million
<i>(FY 2012)</i>	

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North Carolina's Smart Start Initiative

Smart Start was created to respond to the issue, as reported by kindergarten teachers statewide, of children arriving at school without the skills and abilities they needed to be successful. Recognizing that particular strategies to improve skills and abilities needed to be developed locally, based on the specific needs and strengths of communities, an innovative state/local approach was conceived to address this problem. North Carolina policymakers recognized that progress toward a school readiness goal would require tapping into the same innovative spirit that North Carolina had been known for and, therefore, established Smart Start as a public/private partnership. Independent, private organizations work in all 100 North Carolina counties through The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc., and 76 Local Partnerships. The power of Smart Start is that it delivers statewide outcomes with the help of local communities by using evidence-based and evidence-informed strategies to improve the lives of young children and their families. Using data about their communities, local partnerships choose the most effective and appropriate activities to invest in and they rally the local stakeholders in support of solutions.

Smart Start was created through legislation in 1993 (HB § 143B-168.10-16 and SB 402 The Appropriations Act of 2013, Session Law 2013-360). A call for proposals was issued to all counties in the fall of 1993. The chair of the county commissioners and the parent co-chair of local interagency coordinating councils were invited to convene the first county meeting to discuss the proposal and to begin to conduct a needs assessment and write a plan of action. Ninety-two out of 100 counties applied and 12 partnerships, encompassing 18 counties, were selected in year one. For the subsequent 4 years, partnerships were selected in groups of 12 for 3 years. Then the remaining counties were brought into Smart Start during its 5th year of operation.

The statewide vision is that every child reaches his or her potential and is prepared for success in a global community. The North Carolina Partnership for Children's mission is to advance a high quality, comprehensive, accountable system of care and education for every child, beginning with a healthy birth.





serve as liaisons to all three NCPC Board committees. Per legislative requirements, several of the appointing authorities have appointed past local board members to serve on the state board of NCPC.

Funding

In 2012-13, the NC General Assembly allocated \$149.6 million to Smart Start. The local partnership allocations totaled \$144.8 million and NCPC was allocated \$4.8 million. Funding for NCPC was used to meet legislative requirements, including the fiscal accountability system and local partnership audits, as well as helping local partnerships build their capacity. Based upon the legislative requirement, Smart Start raised \$26.3 million, which included \$18 million in cash and \$8.3 million from in-kind contributions.

State-Level Governance

The NC Partnership for Children (NCPC) was created in legislation to administer Smart Start and provide technical assistance and support to local Smart Start entities. It operates through a board of directors; the members are appointed by the governor, speaker of the house, minority and majority leaders of both houses and the president pro tem of the senate. In addition, ex officio members serve because they lead key agencies in the state including the State Superintendent, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the President of the NC Community College System.

NCPC has legislative oversight authority for program and fiscal accountability within all local partnerships and with all statewide contracts. The NCPC is audited annually by the NC Office of State Auditor. All local partnerships are audited every other year by independent auditors based upon a high standard set by the State Auditor. NCPC staff conducts in-depth fiscal and programmatic quality assurance reviews with every partnership on a biennial basis.

The NCPC has a variety of structures that facilitate communication flow between NCPC and the local partnerships. A Local Partnership Advisory Committee meets regularly throughout the year and is comprised of both local executive directors and board chairs representing four regions of the state: east, mid-east, west, mid-west. This Committee reviews policies being considered by NCPC and makes recommendations about operations and policies. Local executive directors



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The Smart Start legislative appropriation is the only statewide funding source that supports both NCPC and the local partnerships. Many local partnerships, however, receive other state grants or contracts including, most commonly, funding for the state pre-K program. Half of the counties have chosen to utilize local Smart Start partnerships as the local administrator of the pre-K program. That means that the local partnerships recruit children, determine eligibility, identify suitable child care settings for pre-K classrooms, provide technical assistance to programs, and serve as the fiscal agent for the pre-K expenditures. This is optional based on the local county's interest and capacity. Generally, if the local partnership is not the local administrator of the pre-K program then the local school system serves in that capacity.

NCPC also has a contract with the Division of Child Development and Early Education to administer several projects that are components of the Race to the Top Early Learning Grant. NCPC was one of the lead agencies in the development and conceptualization of that grant.

In addition, The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation has provided NCPC with a six-year grant to administer Shape NC, an early childhood obesity prevention initiative. Currently, 19 local partnerships are participating in this project.

NCPC also regularly raises additional funds from a variety of public and private funding sources, as well as individual donations.

Staffing

The NCPC has 48 staff members to manage the Smart Start Initiative and other grants. The staff includes:

Executive Staff	5
Public Engagement.....	4
Programs	12
Quality Assurance & Evaluation	6
Community Development.....	3
Finance, Contracts and Operations	14
Information Technology	3
Human Resources.....	1

A key role that the vast majority of the staff plays is to support the success of each of the local partnerships. While the program staff works most closely with local partnerships in providing technical assistance, the public engagement, human resources and finance staff, and others, may also play a role in providing technical assistance to local partnerships in their areas of expertise.

Advocacy

In North Carolina, it is not permissible for individuals who receive state funds to approach policy makers and ask for specific funding. It is allowable for state-funded programs to participate in legislative engagement from an education perspective rather than a traditional advocacy perspective. Smart Start supporters focus on educating legislators about the positive impacts of investing in early education and care for all young children in NC. Weekly legislative update conference calls are hosted by NCPC with the 76 local partnerships during the legislative session to ensure folks are aware of issues being discussed by policy makers. Talking points about specific issues are distributed as they are raised during the session. The new agenda for the 2014 legislative session is currently under development.

Local partnerships are very active in legislative engagement work and many of them have an annual plan for outreach to their local representatives. In addition to speaking on early childhood issues in the community, they are also active in educating legislators about the scope of

the Smart Start work and the importance of high quality early care and education for healthy brain development, school readiness, and future success in life. They reach out to the business and legislative communities utilizing an approach that speaks to long term results and return on investment.

NCPC has a registered lobbyist on staff because the ethics laws require any paid staff member who spends more than five percent of his or her time at the legislature to be registered as a lobbyist. Because of the critical nature of the state funding for Smart Start, it has been necessary for NCPC to be aware of legislative activity and for many years there has been a lobbyist at the NC General Assembly addressing issues related to Smart Start. In addition, NCPC coordinates with lobbyists who contract with other organizations advocating for high quality early care and education and for the past two years an outside private group has paid for a lobbyist to represent Smart Start.

Local Collaborative Overview

The Smart Start network of partnerships covers the entire state. Counties were given the choice of joining Smart Start as a county partnership or joining with other counties in a multi-county partnership. Multi-county partnerships were determined locally and range from the inclusion of 2 to 7 counties. Currently there are 76 local partnerships serving all 100 NC counties. Every local partnership is required to be a nonprofit organization and have its own Articles of Incorporation, and each was created to oversee the Smart Start planning and funding for its county or multi-county area. The decision to create new entities was intentional so that this new organization would belong to the community and not be a part of a pre-existing organization.



Guidance for local boards is provided by NCPC but local board members are chosen by existing board members through a recruiting and application process. NCPC has a rigorous monitoring process for the local partnership governance, including: attending to appropriate board action; transparency for the community; and compliance to policies that reduce any appearance of conflict of interest on the part of the board or the staff. It is crucial to maintain trust among local communities for the partnerships to be effective.

Local partnerships have both formal and informal relationships with other Smart Start local partnerships. They share learnings and best practices, support each other through shared service agreements and, in some instances, develop regional collaborations to provide services more effectively in smaller, more rural areas.

Local Staffing

Local partnership staff is employed by the local partnership and supervised by the executive director of that partnership. All partnerships have an executive director (there are several that are part-time only) and additional staff numbers and positions range from 2 or 3 to 30, based on size and budget of the particular partnership. Their key responsibilities include: convening the community to address issues related to the early childhood system; engaging in strategic thinking on behalf of young children with their local partners; determining evidence-based program strategies to serve the children in their community; raising and leveraging new resources to support their early childhood systems-building efforts; and monitoring all activities to ensure effective outcomes for children.

Local Collaborative Funding

Funding for the local partnerships was \$144 million in 2012. Funds were originally distributed based on a funding formula that considers the needs and resources in each county. There have been multiple issues raised through the years about equity and fairness and the NCPC Board has adjusted the formula at different times. During the 2012 General Assembly, a provision was passed that required that NCPC hold harmless the

funding for 35 small counties. This change totally negated the formula based upon need.

Multiple budget cuts in recent years have been difficult for the Smart Start network, creating tremendous stress on the system and reducing the number of children who can be served. No more than 8% of the local Smart

” NCPC has a rigorous monitoring process, including: attending to appropriate board action; transparency for the community; and compliance to policies that reduce any conflict of interest.

Start funding can be spent for administrative purposes. The local partnership may determine which local organizations will provide services with Smart Start funding and some are provided in-house in Smart Start partnerships. Partnerships also raise private funds. For many partnerships, Smart Start funding composes the large majority in most budgets. For almost half though, it is a smaller percentage of their budget than other funding sources, reflecting the additional public and private grants they receive.

Technical Assistance and Support to Local Partnerships

NCPC provides a variety of types of technical assistance including:

- **Webinars** - A variety of webinars are offered throughout the year for all local partnerships. In the past year, webinar topics included: information on the accountability plan; how to report data to NCPC; the quality assurance review process; the evidence based/evidence-informed resource guide; financial reporting requirements; and information on specific programs, such as Reach Out and Read and others related to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- **One-on-one Assistance** - NCPC also provides more tailored one-on-one assistance to local partnerships on issues related to finances and program needs, as well as issues of conflict of interest, board composition, transition and succession, and other board governance support. Private funds also made it possible in the past to offer grants to local partnerships for consultation services in needed areas, such as strategic planning.
- **Group assistance** - Group assistance is provided to partnerships that are implementing the same model, such as Reach Out and Read (ROR). Last year, monthly ROR Coordinator calls were held to discuss related topics and



a summit was offered on planning for sustainability of ROR. The Smart Start National Conference is a large group training event for local partnerships and leaders outside of NC. A Leadership Symposium is provided twice yearly for executive directors and board chairs of local partnerships.

- **Virtual learning** - An on-line learning management system is hosted by NCPC via virtual learning. This focuses on organizational development topics like strategic planning and new board chair orientation, and general topics of professional development.
- **Leaders Collaborative** - This is an in-depth professional development and technical assistance effort for local executive directors and NCPC staff using an 8-month curriculum and technical assistance/coaching around systems change. The Leaders Collaborative includes monthly 3-day sessions for 12 local partnership executive directors and 4 NCPC staff members. This Collaborative focuses on leadership issues such as: appreciative leadership; data-driven decision making; theory of aligned contribution; facilitation skills; leading for equity; and protocols for convening community conversations. Four cohorts of local partnership executive directors have now participated in the Leaders Collaborative.
- **Smart Start On-Line Learning Community** - This is a web-based version of a community of practice where professionals across the country create an account and profile, then hold discussions, forums, and chats, and post



Partnership executive directors are brought together with NCPC staff three to four times a year in Executive Director Forums (ED Forum).

articles in order to discuss their practice within the field. The technical assistance activities, such as the Leaders Collaborative and grants for local partnerships for technical assistance activities, are evaluated. Feedback is also requested when technical assistance and training is offered in a group setting. The results show that partnerships are very interested in receiving assistance and willing to participate in a significant way when they perceive they will learn something valuable from the effort. The evaluation also shows that people have gained knowledge and are applying this knowledge in the field. This is particularly true with the Leaders Collaborative evaluation. NCPC uses feedback to fine tune the curriculum and identify new topics for future technical assistance.

NCPC is currently piloting the use of the ABL_e Systems Change Framework with three local partnerships and is in the planning phase of using some parts of the framework to train and coach partnerships in the four RTT-ELC grant Transformation Zone counties. The Transformation Zones include a collaboration with the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) at UNC-CH to strengthen the understanding and integration of implementation science in planning and execution of strategies.

There are two “generalist” staff members to provide technical assistance and support to partnerships and two program officers with content specialties. The program officers also manage grant-funded projects. There are four coaches and one coach coordinator assisting in the Transformation Zone. In addition, there is a project manager and project assistant supporting the Shape NC early obesity prevention initiative.

Partnership executive directors are brought together with NCPC staff three to four times a year in Executive Director Forums (ED Forum). The agendas for these meetings are co-created by NCPC and the ED Forum Design Team members who are all local executive directors. Topics are based on identified needs for training and networking. Recent agendas included: subsidy and pre-K; data dashboards; and strategic planning. Every Forum includes statewide updates and may include guest speakers from various government offices.

Local Collaborative “Snapshot” - Guilford County Partnership for Children (GCPC) and Alamance County Partnership for Children

The Guilford County Partnership (GCPC) was created in 1998 in the midwestern Piedmont area of the state. It is mostly an urban county, including two large municipalities, Greensboro and High Point. The focus of GCPC is children, birth through age 5, and its program strategies include comprehensive early learning, health, family support and literacy. The GCPC shares office space with many other nonprofits in the Self-Help Office Complex in Greensboro.

The work of Smart Start is managed by an administrative staff of four and nine program staff. The Partnership contracts with 12 other nonprofits and government entities to administer 18 programs and services in the community. The work is overseen by a Board of 20 volunteers who set strategic direction, engage in community education and involvement and develop funds and resources for the Partnership. The Partnership also works with key community foundations to create community awareness and engagement about the importance of the early years.

GCPC is ready to put in place a collective impact approach to systems change throughout the county. It is a resource-rich community and there is no shortage of services, programs and initiatives for young children. The challenge is the connections and collective impact of all of them, including the development of a joint evaluation plan. At GCPC, performance measures are already in place that are tied to Partnership-funded activities and initiatives. The progress and results are reviewed twice a year by the board.

With an operating budget of \$16 million, the major funders of the GCPC are Smart Start and NC Pre-K. Fundraising is led by a sub-committee of the Board.

The Alamance Partnership for Children is located near the I-85 corridor in the middle of the state and is mostly rural. This partnership is known in the community as essential to the future outcomes of the county. A former director

shared this example of the depth of the collaboration of the Alamance Partnership for Children (Smart Start):

“In Alamance County, the Children’s Executive Oversight Committee (CEOC) was formed to provide county-wide attention and resources to the needs of children and families. It was originally established through the Systems of Care Initiative to serve adolescent children who were multi-agency involved, and who were at-risk for entering or already involved in the juvenile justice system. After the Partnership for Children’s executive director joined the committee, the shift began to be made towards serving younger children as a way to prevent a growing need for corrections and interventions for older children. The Committee was eventually endorsed by the Board of County Commissioners as the entity that would oversee several large public grants, and serve as the hub for vetting potential new grant opportunities. The CEOC was co-chaired by the Director of the Department of Social Services and the Executive Director of the local Smart Start partnership. The committee was composed of: the public health director; DSS director (co-chair), United Way director; the local sheriff; the local chief of police; the superintendent of schools; the vice president of the local hospital; chair of the Board of County Commissioners; all members of the local legislative delegation; a member of the school board; a representative of the Chamber of Commerce; a district court Judge; a pediatrician; and at least two parents who received services through one of the human service agencies. Due in large part to the highly collaborative and deliberately diverse composition of the CEOC, as well as the strong early childhood infrastructure that existed in the County, Alamance was awarded a 6 year, \$9M SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) grant to develop a comprehensive system for serving children 0-5 with social/emotional delays.”



GCPC is ready to put in place a collective impact approach to systems change throughout the county.



Pros and Cons of North Carolina's State/Local Model

Pros

- The statewideness of Smart Start is hugely powerful and influential. Every legislator has a Smart Start partnership, every community owns its local partnership and all of the state is covered by Smart Start.
- The state NCPC office infrastructure provides, leadership, and accountability without being a state bureaucracy. It is cheaper and more nimble than any state agency. NCPC has delivered on its promise of keeping the entire system fiscally and programmatically accountable.
- The independent nature of the NCPC and local Smart Start partnerships allows the creation of efficiencies and streamlining procedures.
- This approach supports local expertise and innovations based on research to best meet the needs in communities and to continue to contribute to the field's ability to support families and young children's optimal development.
- The affinity between the local leaders creates a network of communities to speak up on behalf of young children in the entire state.

Cons

- The model requires close attention to promoting the statewide shared vision, accountability, and relationships across the network.
- Over 20 years, the program and its parameters have changed, knowledge about the field has expanded and these changes are sometimes confusing and upsetting to people deeply invested in their programs. It becomes highly charged to discontinue any project.
- Given the power of the local partnerships to influence their local policy makers, local issues can create confusion and mis-direct policy makers. State policy cannot be effective if it is written for individual locales.
- Maintaining a stable and highly skilled cadre of local executive directors all across our diverse state is challenging. Some locations have real difficulties recruiting and sustaining effective leaders.
- Some communities have challenges attracting new volunteers to their effort, given a sense that the local partnerships are "clubs." New leaders are necessary to keep bringing innovation to the system. This also sometimes creates complacent boards and leads to errors in judgment.



Performance Measurement and Evaluation

The Smart Start theory of change is a systems building approach coupled with local decision making to direct funds to:

- increase quality for early care and education;
- sponsor family support initiatives to enhance parents' understanding of child development and foster family engagement; and
- support health initiatives particularly focused on early intervention and well child care.

Smart Start integrates evaluation throughout the work at the state and local levels. Smart Start uses multiple approaches to monitor and assess results including:

- 1) **Performance Based Incentive System (PBIS)** using county level indicators to assess community impact of Smart Start activities;
- 2) **Evaluation studies** conducted by third party researchers to document results of select Smart Start activities and/or the overall impact of Smart Start; and
- 3) **Local Partnership evaluation activities** to document numbers served and outcomes of local efforts.

The Performance-Based Incentive System (PBIS) measures children's well-being, for which local Smart Start Partnerships are held accountable. PBIS assesses progress towards realizing Smart Start's mission of advancing a high quality, comprehensive, accountable system of care and education for every child beginning with a healthy birth. PBIS uses validated data sources that directly impact young children (e.g., NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education, and Division of Public Health).

The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) produces annual PBIS reports for each county.

NCPC has established minimum and high performing standards for each PBIS indicator. When counties fall below standards, NCPC works with the local partnership to develop a plan of action to address the need. Local partnerships use the PBIS data to guide funding decisions and program activity development.

Key indicators measured in PBIS include:

- **Early Care and Education – Quality**
 - Average Star Rating of Child Placements – *for all children*
 - Percent of Children in 4 and 5 Star Care – *for all children*
 - Average Star Rating of Child Placements – *for children receiving subsidy*
 - Percent of Children in 4 and 5 Star Care – *for children receiving subsidy*
 - Average Star Rating of Child Placements – *for children with special needs*
 - Percent of Children in 4 and 5 Star Care – *for children with special needs*
 - Percent of Children Attending a Nationally Accredited Child Care Facility
- **Early Care and Education – Supply**
 - Percent of Children Receiving Subsidy Enrolled in Regulated Care
 - Percent of Low Income Children Enrolled in Early Care and Education Programs
- **Early Care and Education Workforce – Staff Education**
 - Percent of Children with a Lead Teacher Having 5+ Education Points
 - Percent of Children with an Administrator Having 5+ Education Points
 - Percent of Children with a Family Child Care Home Provider Having 5+ Education Points

- **Health**
 - Percent of Children in Early Intervention – *Ages 0-2 and Ages 3-5*
 - Percent of Children Enrolled in Medicaid Receiving a Well-Child Visit
 - Infant Mortality Rate
 - Percent of Low Income Children Age 2-4 Who Are Obese
 - Percent of Children with Elevated Blood Lead Level

These indicators and performance standards were established by committees of state and local board members and state and national subject matter experts and were approved by the NCPC board. In recent years, NCPC has provided disaggregated data to local partnerships to help them target their resources. Most partnerships have achieved high performing standards in the mandatory categories, but if the data is disaggregated, it becomes clear that there are areas that need considerable work. One example is the ages of children in high quality care: many more four year olds are in the highest care while few infants have access to high quality care. NCPC and the state board have chosen to look at the disaggregated data at this point rather than add new measures to the PBIS.

Major Accomplishments

Through working with key organizations in local communities, the Smart Start collaborative approach has achieved numerous major outcomes.

- Over the past several years, Smart Start has dramatically increased focus on excellence through:
 - The Leaders Collaborative, which sparked a cultural shift to a Smart Start community of learners who strive for excellence and have broad-based conversations about programmatic strategies.
 - A legislative requirement for evidence-based or evidence-informed strategies; grant funding to implement these research-based practices; and development of a resource guide providing the research evidence for commonly funded Smart Start programs and practices and technical information about how to determine the level of evidence for other strategies.
 - Provision of disaggregated data by county, including age, race/ethnicity, and gender to support local data-driven decisions, and making this and other data accessible to local partnership staff through a user-friendly on-line tool.





- *A notable increase in child care quality-* In FY 2012-13, 73% of North Carolina children in child care were in four- and five-star programs, compared to 33% in 2001.
- *A sizeable increase in the early care provider education levels –* Seventy-two percent of children in star rated care had a lead teacher with at least 5 education points in FY 2012-13, up from 47% in FY 2006-07.
- At the county level, partnerships have been forged with business and community leaders, human service agencies, faith communities and others on behalf of young children and the public is better educated about early childhood issues.

Key Components to Success at the State Level

- Strong leadership and shared vision with an eye to innovation;
 - Fostering a “learning culture” across the network and providing infrastructure, tools and technical assistance for community results;
 - Having strong working relationships with state agencies that work on behalf of young children; and
 - Ability to demonstrate statewide and county level results through data.

“ NCCPC developed, with private funds, the First 2000 Days educational campaign which local partnerships have used to educate business and government leaders.

- Initiation of on-site quality assurance programmatic reviews to support on-going quality improvement capacity in each local partnership and to assure services meet the Smart Start standards.
- State level collaborations across agencies serving young children and private funders to prioritize and better align key strategies and develop common indicators, such as the Alliance for Evidence-Based Family Strengthening Programs, and to increase the effectiveness of programs such as the NC Parents as Teachers Infrastructure Work Group co-led by NCCPC .
- Local partnerships stepped up to administer NC Pre-K in many communities to assure children could access a high quality preschool experience. Currently, local partnerships administer NC Pre-K in 56 of NC’s 100 counties and school districts administer in the remaining counties.
- NCCPC developed, with private funds, the First 2000 Days educational campaign which local partnerships have used to educate business and government leaders, and which has been embraced by early childhood professionals and advocates statewide, as well as by other states.
- *A significant increase in third grade test scores -* An econometric analysis conducted by Duke University found that Smart Start and NC Pre-K funding combined yielded an average of a 5-month advancement in reading instruction and 3 to 5 months in math.
- *A significant reduction in the need for elementary school special education services -* Researchers at Duke also found that Smart Start funding was related to a 9% decrease in placement in special education at 3rd grade.

Key Components to Success at the Local Level

- The ability to demonstrate community impact using data;
- Continual attention to assessing needs, and community-wide engagement to create a seamless system of supports and services for families that are easily accessible, responsive to community and family needs, with data to substantiate the impact; and
- Having strong relationships with all local organizations working on behalf of young children.

Lessons Learned

- Our lessons learned have come in stages and, like the stages of human development, layer on top of each other to create a complex understanding of process, relationships, communications, and practice. It is essential that we view learning and systems building as



a process that is not ever “finished.” We continue to learn and improve; we are not running a race to reach a finish line.

- Lessons learned in the first ten years clustered around logistical and accountability issues and learning about collaborative community work.
- Lessons learned in the second ten years were about deeper content knowledge and expanding the collaborative work.
- When Smart Start was first created in 1993, there was only a hint of the kind of scientific knowledge about early childhood that we now possess. The work of the neuroscientists was just beginning to expose the critical nature of the first five years of brain development. We were not able to use that science to inform our programmatic decisions. In the second ten years of Smart Start, we were obligated to make that science the centerpiece of our work. Utilizing evidence-based programs and strategies is now essential and assures the public that we are getting the best return on the programs we implement.
- Similarly, when Smart Start first began, there were only a few research studies about collaborative work, the methodologies, the outcomes, and the process. Today there are many more resources, studies and evaluations that document best practice in the area of collaborative work. Theory of Aligned Contributions, The ABle framework, Collective Action and Implementation Science are a few. Smart Start is again obligated to use this new technology to improve the quality and effectiveness of the model.

Interviews

Donna White, *Deputy Director*
North Carolina Partnership for Children

Diane Umstead, *Community Development Director*
North Carolina Partnership for Children

Cindy Watkins, *Executive Director*
Guilford County Partnership for Children

Resources

- [Smart Start website](#)
- [Guilford County Partnership for Children website](#)
- [Smart Start legislation](#)
- [Smart Start evaluation results](#)
- [Performance Based Incentive System \(PBIS\) statewide report \(2012\)](#)
- [Smart Start Resource Guide of Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed Programs and Practices](#)