



News Release

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Wake County SmartStart's Early Childhood Programs Vital in Area Ranked "Most Amenable to Child Care"

Ranking confirms importance of Wake County SmartStart's programs which ensure quality child care is available and accessible

RALEIGH, NC – Raleigh, North Carolina has ranked second in the Early Childhood Education's Trend Report entitled "Metropolitan Areas Most Amenable to Child Care". Of the 30 metropolitan areas ranked, Raleigh is one of only two North Carolina communities listed. The report, in which the top 100 metropolitan areas in the US were ranked based on their climate for child care, looked at factors such as prevalence of children under 5, number of working women, number of single mothers, population growth, poverty, and total population.

"Given our region's high percentage of both working women and of children under 5, as confirmed by the Early Childhood Education Trend Report, child care is a necessity for many. As our population continues to grow and more children enter child care, Wake County SmartStart's role in ensuring high-quality child care is both available and accessible to families who need it is increasingly critical," explains David Zonderman, Wake County SmartStart Board Chair.

In its last fiscal year, Wake County SmartStart offered professional development, educational opportunities and technical assistance to more than 83% of Wake County's child care teachers. These programs resulted in an increase in the skills of child care professionals, which in turn positively affected the quality of child care. The organization also funded services and activities through which almost 70% of Wake County's child care facilities received consultation and training, resulting in more highly-trained child care workers, and this directly impacts the quality of care. "Wake County SmartStart supports and promotes high-quality child care in a region in which there is a tremendous demand for such services. A reduction in funding in this legislative session to Wake County SmartStart's early childhood programs has the potential for negative implications for years to come," adds Zonderman.

The full Trend Report can be found via [Wake County SmartStart's homepage](#).

Wake County SmartStart is a nonprofit organization that works to ensure every child in Wake County, birth to 5, is prepared for success in school and life. Created in 1996, Wake County SmartStart works to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of child care settings, provide preventive health and early intervention services and offer family support services. The organization also promotes, supports, and advocates for the needs of young children living in Wake County. For more information about Wake County SmartStart, its partners and projects, visit www.wakesmartstart.org or call (919) 851-9550.

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