

BUILDING TOMORROW'S
FUTURE
INVESTING IN CHILDREN
NOW **2011-2012**
ANNUAL REPORT





www.wakesmartstart.org

OUR MISSION: Wake County SmartStart works to ensure children, birth to five, are prepared for success in school and in life.

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Wake County SmartStart Core Values

Our core values strengthen our commitment of support to Wake's children and their families.

"Each of us must come to care about everyone else's children. We must recognize that the welfare of our children is intimately linked to the welfare of all other people's children. After all, when one of our children needs life-saving surgery, someone else's child will perform it. If one of our children is harmed by violence, someone else's child will be responsible for the violent act. The good life for our own children can be secured only if a good life is secured for all other people's children."

Lilian Katz, Ph.D.

International leader in early childhood education

Respect

We honor the unique experiences and needs of each young child and family.

Cultural Sensitivity

We value diversity, promote inclusive practice and support community empowerment.

Advocacy

We provide a strong, united voice for those most vulnerable—our children.

Responsiveness

We respond to the individual needs of children and families with regard for our larger community as a whole.

Community Collaboration

We support community collaboration through authentic relationships characterized by honesty, integrity and compassion.

Innovation

We value flexibility, actively seek new approaches in practice and regard challenges as opportunities for growth.

Accountability

We value our role as public stewards through the use of best business practices, strong internal controls and accurate documentation of our efforts



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

OVER THE COURSE of the past 35 years while working in Wake County Public Libraries, I have been delighted time and time again by young readers as they discover the world of books. It is not uncommon for their excitement to spill over as they point to favorite stories, themes and characters to whomever is near. This response to learning about the value of books and reading is a tangible reward for librarians throughout the county and bodes well for the future of our youngest residents as they continue to learn and grow.

However, library settings, whether in schools or in communities, are places where the gaps in learning and the diversity of opportunity for our residents become all too apparent. We see those enthusiastic early learners become relaxed consumers of literature, and at the same time, we see others struggle to gain the confidence to utilize books and reading as a path to success. All too soon, this divide may dull not only the will to learn, but also the opportunities that learning brings.

The library setting reflects the way children from birth to age five develop and absorb opportunities to learn. These early years are a critical point in life to build the brain architecture needed for learning. Eighty-five percent of a child's brain is formed in this important period from birth to age five. Research has shown that children benefit developmentally from high quality early childhood programs.

Approximately 17,000 children, birth to five, benefited from WCSS funded community programs in FY 2011–2012. WCSS allocated \$18 million to 10 community partners that managed 14 local programs. WCSS and its partners provided high quality early childhood program activities to achieve measurable results for our local community. Here are a few highlights:

- Almost 4,000 children directly benefited from at least one WCSS health and family support program activity.
- Approximately 5,000 children who were age birth to five and in regulated childcare received child care subsidy assistance or participated in the NC Pre-Kindergarten program.

Wake County SmartStart (WCSS) believes that all young children deserve the opportunity to succeed in school and life and that our communities benefit from the investment in young children. As a collaborative hub in the community, WCSS works with others to identify the greatest needs and match the highest quality services to those that need them the most. With continued demand on services, WCSS has sought ways to expand the impact of service dollars and become a model of efficiency.

The board of WCSS recognizes that early learning success requires a diverse, multi-faceted approach. The Direct Service and Child Care Providers create a web of programs that serve our families in need. WCSS funds partners that together form a strong net of support for our youngest citizens and their families. When a child participates in a SmartStart program, he or she stands a greater chance of loving the library, attending college, and contributing to our economic wealth and to the stability of all communities.

This report shares this success story in progress. Thank you for helping WCSS ensure that all of Wake County's children have a positive start to their earliest chapters in life.

Sincerely,

A. Dale Cousins, Wake County SmartStart Board Chair

GOAL ONE



Accessible and Available High Quality Child Care

RESEARCH SHOWS THAT high quality child care programs will improve school readiness and raise performance on academic achievement tests through the early elementary years. However, high quality

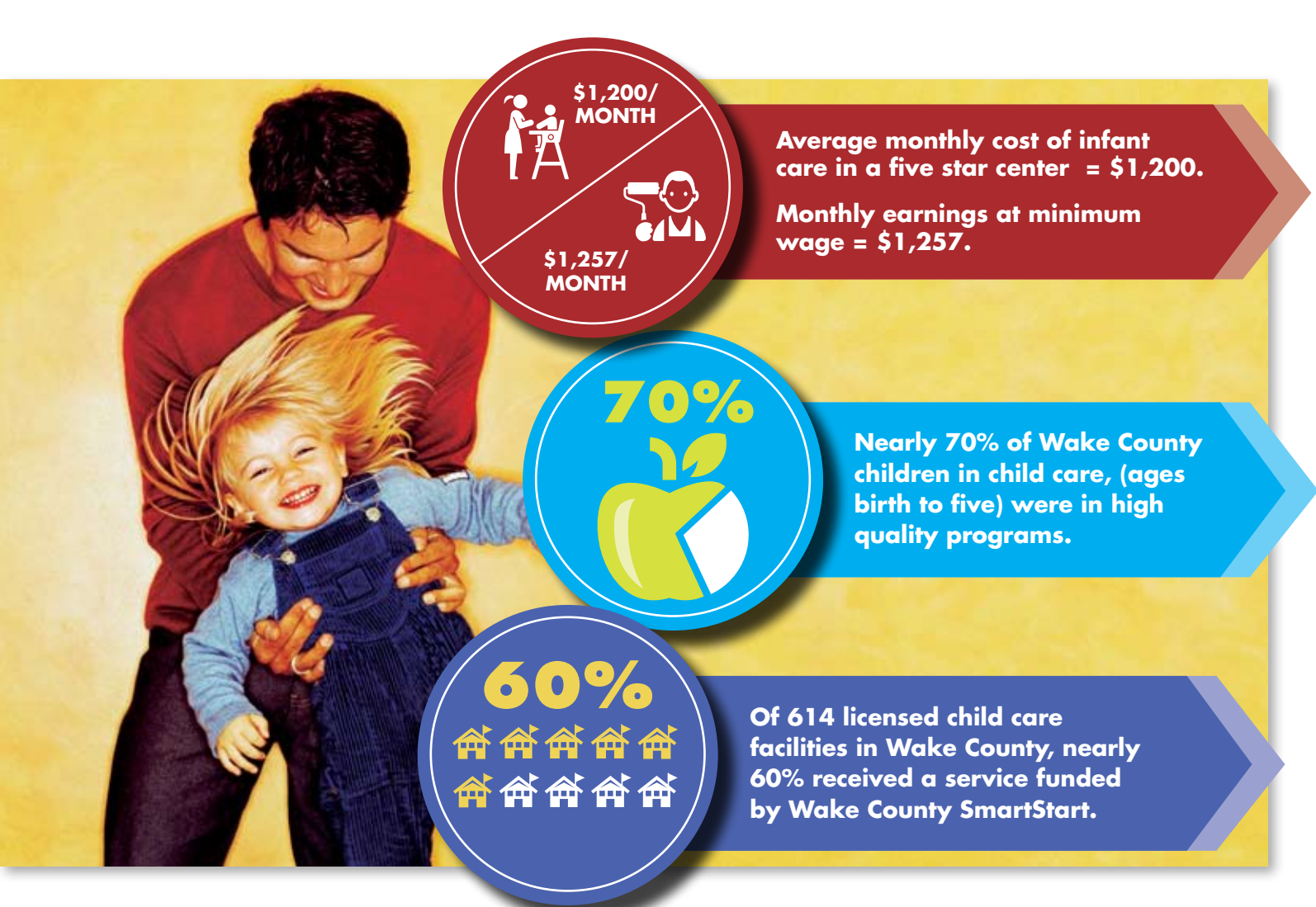
care in Wake County is costly: \$1,200 was the average monthly cost of child care for an infant in a five star center. In FY 2011–2012, WCSS supported child care facilities serving a total of 16,210 children. Nearly 70% of the children in Wake County child care were in high quality programs. Children tend to be most successful in child care programs with low staff-to-child ratios, highly educated and trained teachers, and consistent, sensitive, nurturing interactions between adults and children. While traditional skills such as early literacy and communication are important, preparing children for kindergarten and life encompasses critically important skills like patience, self-control and cooperation. By addressing developmental needs early, children are better prepared to face the complex problems of today and the challenges of tomorrow.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUCSESSES ARE MEASURABLE:

Wake County SmartStart supports the need for accessible and available high quality child care by:

- Providing subsidized payments to child care facilities who serve children enrolled in high quality care.
- Working with licensed child care facilities to maintain or improve their star ratings.
- Improving health, safety and environmental standards.
- Helping families understand the star-rating system and choosing high quality care for their children.
- Strengthening teacher-child interactions through strong connections with caring adults.

- Nearly 1,300 children participated in the NC Pre-Kindergarten program.
- One in four children in child care benefited from child care subsidies during FY 2011–2012.
- The number of child care facilities with a five star rating, the highest quality rating possible, increased by 34% in the past four years.
- 665 families received education on how to identify and select high quality child care.
- 134 child care providers raised their quality of care through teacher education and improved practices.



SUCCESS STORY

"WHEN WE FIRST began working with Smart Start for Quality Enhancement, we were clueless about the Environmental Rating Scales and how it would impact our program. All of our facilities had one, two, or three stars. Now, six years later, three of our facilities have four stars and have been through the rating scales multiple times, and our fourth facility is currently working with Smart Start to prepare for their first assessments. We have been extremely pleased with the professionalism of all Quality Enhancement Specialists we have come in contact with, as well as the entire project as a whole. The knowledge they have brought to our program has helped us to improve the quality of care tremendously. Personally, I have enjoyed the hands-on help and commitment from my Quality Enhancement Specialist. She has always been available to answer my questions, even now that our assessments are completed. And, she was just as excited as we were when we received our assessment scores. I would highly recommend Smart Start's Quality Enhancement Team to improve any child care program, big or small."

– Child Care Center Director, Cary



GOAL TWO



Children are Safe, Healthy and Live in Supportive Environments

RAISING THE QUALITY of care and education for children in Wake County is only part of the equation for successful outcomes. Children need

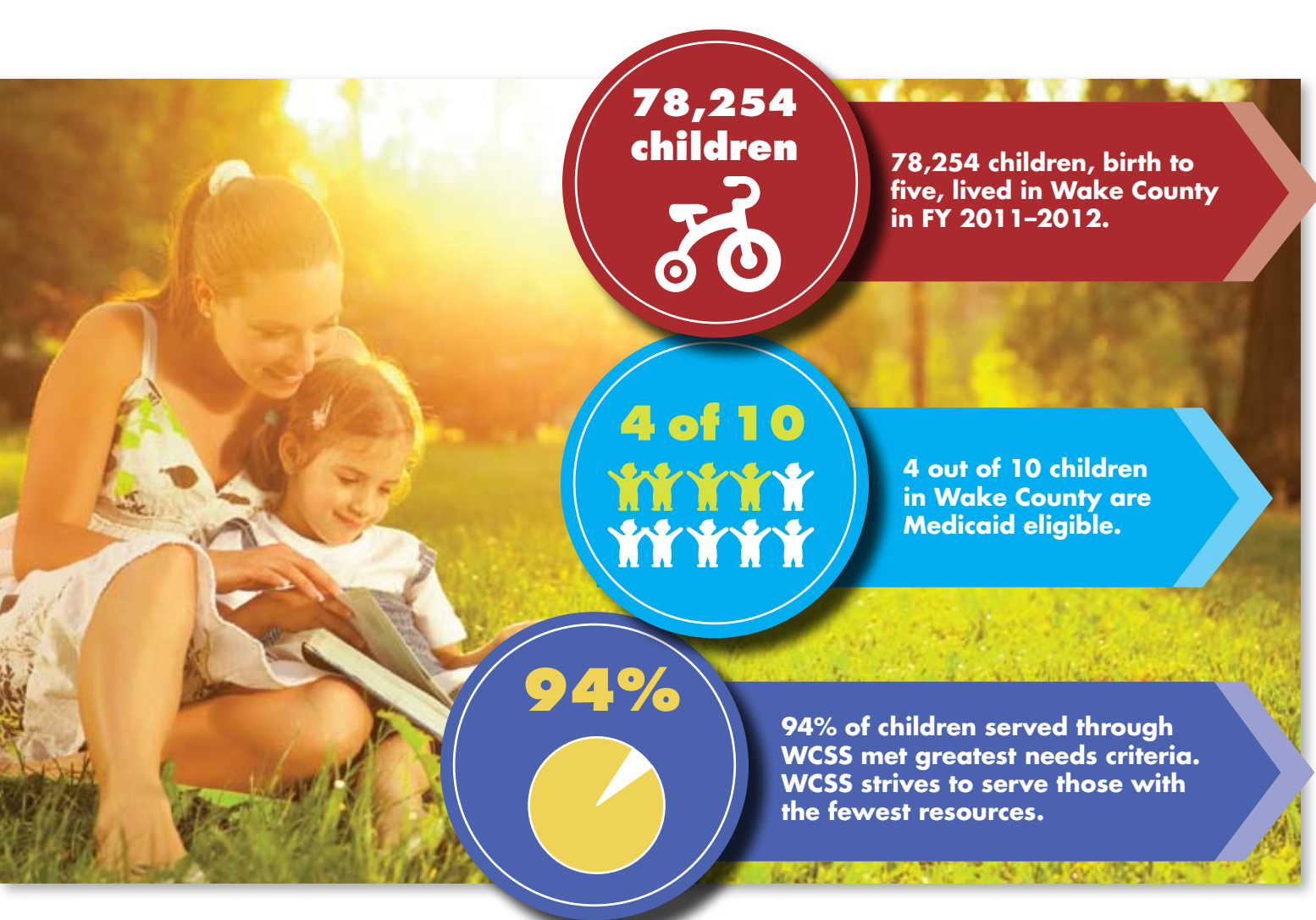
a nurturing home environment that fosters the development of the brain architecture. Parents have the opportunity to promote learning from birth by simply reading their child's cues for engagement. A loving family that provides a healthy start creates the interactions and feedback a growing child needs. Children naturally reach out for this feedback. Like a tennis game where the ball is delivered back and forth between two players, young children build their brains with this exchange of information. This interaction, referred to as "serve and return," builds and strengthens the brain. WCSS funds several programs that empower parents to lead their young children through this stage of life while juggling other responsibilities. Approximately 60% of Wake's children live in families where their sole parent or both parents work outside of the home. Whether it's learning parenting techniques that reduce stress or recognizing the parental role as a child's earliest teacher, the home is where learning begins and continues throughout life.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUCSESSES ARE MEASURABLE:

- 3,800 children received direct services.
- Over 450 families and children accessed a needed service.
- 225 parents demonstrated improved parenting skills and a more positive attitude about their parenting role.

Wake County SmartStart supports safe, healthy and supportive environments by:

- Providing home-based individualized parent education to support positive parent child interaction and promote children's health and well-being.
- Linking parents with important resources to address their children's health and developmental needs.
- Increasing parents' ability to nurture and care for their children in healthy and safe ways.
- Helping parents understand typical child development and determining if children have special developmental needs.
- Serving children in families with limited resources and applying the "Greatest Need" criteria, so that those with the lowest family incomes and other risk factors are prioritized for services.



SUCCESS STORY:

Telamon Corporation Family Literacy Program

"THE FAMILY LITERACY Program continues to be a life changing experience for families. It helps families and parents understand the importance of reading to children. Brianna [child's name changed] is a three-year-old girl. When Brianna and her family first joined the program, she could not pronounce her name correctly or tell you her age. She did not recognize colors and did poorly on her initial assessment of skills. It was very hard to understand her. Brianna had no books in her home. Her parents did not seem concerned that she was not speaking at age three. Brianna developed her skills and grew to recognize colors as well as objects. By the end of the program she was eager to share books and was often waiting for me with a new book. She began sharing books with her parents and engaging her whole family. Her parents began to comprehend how important it is to read with your children. Soon Mom was engaged in helping her daughter learn new things. Additionally, the Mom began to read to all her children. This program benefited not only Brianna, but her entire family."

– Family Literacy Home Visitor



GOAL THREE



**Children are Ready
for Kindergarten**

THERE ARE ONLY 2,000 days between when a baby is born and when that child shows up for the first day of kindergarten. A leading indicator of WCSS's success is

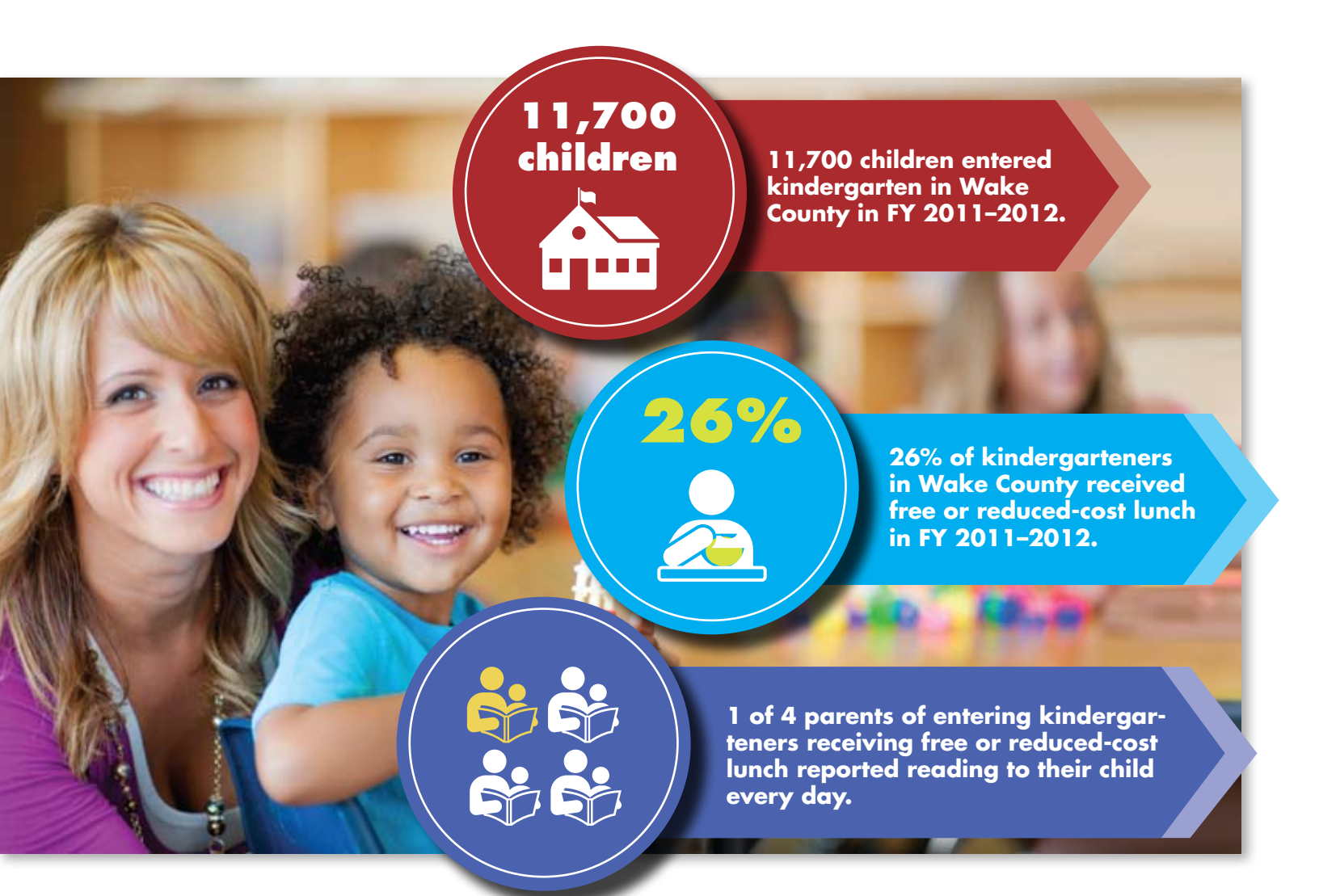
how prepared children are to enter school. Support and intervention provided in the early years can change a child's trajectory in life. In order to most effectively target our resources, WCSS focuses on the areas of child development that contribute most to a child's success in school. We support activities which increase the quality of early care and education and encourage children's development of stronger language and socio-emotional skills. Children's skills of patience, self-control, and verbal reasoning are often called "executive functioning." These skills prepare a child for success in school and in life.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS SUCCESSES ARE MEASURABLE:

Wake County SmartStart supports the need for kindergarten readiness by:

- Serving at risk 4-year-olds in high quality NC Pre-Kindergarten programs.
- Helping parents develop skills to promote their child's early literacy development.
- Improving parent's ability to address their children's social and emotional needs.
- Providing school readiness support activities to children and parents who will be transitioning to kindergarten.

- Almost 1,300 children were served in high quality NC Pre-Kindergarten programs. Early support leveled the playing field for these children and increased their learning potential.
- 870 parents of children served through NC Pre-K (almost 99% of those returning a survey) reported that their children were better prepared for kindergarten as a result of NC Pre-K.
- Nearly 300 children (receiving services other than NC Pre-K) improved school readiness, language, and social emotional development.



SUCCESS STORY:

"WITH THE NEW common core requirements that North Carolina has adopted, the curriculum is very rigorous. There are assumptions with this curriculum that children have attended preschool and enter kindergarten with certain aspects of academic readiness accomplished. Children that attend NC Pre-K come in with an understanding of academics [and a] sense of structure and community. NC Pre-K is so important to North Carolina schools in order to continue our success in education, especially with the new curriculum in place! I worked in NC Pre-K for nine years and now teach kindergarten. I have always been an advocate for this program, but now I see just how important it is for success in kindergarten and throughout education. My current kindergarten students who have been through the NC Pre-K program are some of the highest scoring children in the class! What a beneficial program!"

– Wake County Kindergarten Teacher



WCSS' CORE VALUES INCLUDE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

"We support community collaboration through authentic relationships characterized by honesty, integrity and compassion."



THINK ABOUT OUTREACH to young children and their families in Wake County as a wheel of support, with WCSS as the hub. WCSS staff coordinate and collaborate with the spokes of direct service providers reaching out to the community. By partnering with community organizations, health care providers and parent educators, more children and families were reached. Below are highlights of collaborative work by WCSS.

WCSS is a member of the Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC), which assesses the needs of the community and creates clearer paths to needed services. The group engages community agencies, professionals and parents to improve efficiencies of services for families often burdened with concerns about their children.

The LICC and WCSS identified issues with access and coordination of home-based services for young children. WCSS convened the Home Based Services Integration Advisory Committee. This committee of experts used a structured process to identify needs, best practices and an agenda. The committee guided the process for a community assessment; WCSS then took on planning, future implementation and funding. The long-term goal of the program is to create an easily accessible online system for families and community programs seeking home-based services. The initiative will enhance efficiency and reduce duplication.

WCSS, with partners, created a primary portal application system that coordinates placement of children in Wake County's NC Pre-Kindergarten classrooms. The Wake Pre-K Collaborative consists of partnering agencies Wake County Public Schools, Telamon Head Start and Wake County SmartStart. This collaborative maximized resources through shared coordination of pre-k eligibility criteria and funding streams. The application system, WakeKIDS, streamlined data entry. This model is currently being piloted in seven other counties by the Division of Child Development and Early Education.

SEED (Social & Emotional Early Development) is an early childhood mental health consultation program developed by Lucy Daniels Center and WCSS. The program assists child care facilities in developing and sustaining policies and practices that support the healthy social and emotional development of the children they serve. Participating centers receive onsite consultation and mentoring. WCSS provided evaluation and planning to ensure efficiency and effectiveness and identified sites for participation in the project.

WCSS believes children deserve a healthy start in life. Preventing Obesity by Design (POD-Wake) addresses the obesity epidemic in young children attending child care by creating interactive outdoor learning environments. The three-year project focuses on design, management and training to create active outdoor environments that include fruit and vegetable gardens which produce food for the children. WCSS worked with POD-Wake to identify facilities that best matched this initiative's criteria and provided technical assistance for implementing the model.

Additionally, many WCSS staff members served on community boards, committees and one-time initiatives to broaden the reach of WCSS. These included the Triangle United Way, Chambers of Commerce and Wake County Human Services among others.

WCSS' **PARTNERS &** **THEIR PROGRAMS**



Catholic Charities

- School Readiness Services for Hispanic Children

Child Care Services Association

- Choosing and Using High Quality Child Care Project

Lucy Daniels Center for Early Childhood

- SecurePath (Social/Emotional Interventions for Young Children)

Project Enlightenment (Wake County Public School System)

- Supporting School Readiness
- Parents as Teachers Home Visiting Program

SAFEchild, Inc.

- Crianza con Carino (The Nurturing Program for Spanish Speaking Families)

The Salvation Army

- Project CATCH (Community Action Targeting Children who are Homeless)

Telamon - North Carolina Head Start

- Family Literacy Program

Wake County Human Services

- Child Care Health Consultant Program
- Child Care Subsidy Service
- Nurse Family Partnership

MOTHEREAD, Inc.

- Literacy Invites and Nurtures Kids Success (L.I.N.K.S.)

Wake County SmartStart

- NC Pre-Kindergarten Program
- Program Coordination and Evaluation
- Quality Enhancement Initiative in Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes
- Quality Maintenance Initiative in Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes

2011-2012

VOLUNTEERS & DONORS

Wake County SmartStart's success is the result of many individuals who contribute to the mission of helping young children. Thank you to all of volunteers, donors, staff, and board members.

Volunteers

Natasha Adwaters	Cynthia Chamblee	Erica Hayes	Deborah Lofton	Michele Putterman	Donna Spence
Sandra Aguilar	Donellia Chives	Dana Headley	Nayeli Luna	Jeff Quinn	Kristen Spruill
Laura Aiken	Nichelle Cole	Donna Hedgepath	Gay Lytton	Karen Ray	Karine Stallings
Nannette Ausby	Gloria Cook	Shannon Helm	Marcia Mandel	Coprecia Robinson	Cheryl Stephenson
Jan Baker	Sue Cotterman	Kerry Henderson	Shanté Martin	JeToya Robinson	Joe Stewart
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			The John Rex Endowment	

2011-2012

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Acknowledgements

Writing/Editing

WCSS Staff

Design

Archetype Graphic Design & Writing Services



Wake County SmartStart FY 2011-12 Financial Statements

Statement of Receipts, Expenditures and Net Assets—Modified Cash Basis

	Unrestricted Funds		Temporarily	Total Funds
	Smart Start Funds	Other Funds	Restricted Funds	
Receipts:				
State Awards	\$ 6,115,165	\$ 5,587,370	\$	\$ 11,702,535
Private Contributions		16,209	49,271	65,480
Interest and Investment Earnings		6,787		6,787
Sales Tax Refunds		14,124		14,124
Other Receipts		79,767		79,767
Subtotal Receipts	6,115,165	5,704,257	49,271	11,868,693
Net Assets Released from Restrictions:				
Satisfaction of Program Restrictions		23,877	(23,877)	
Total Receipts	\$ 6,115,165	\$ 5,728,134	\$ 25,394	\$ 11,868,693
Expenditures:				
Programs:				
Child Care and Education Quality	\$ 965,638	\$ 15,027	\$	\$ 980,665
Family Support	942,902			942,902
Health and Safety	541,682			541,682
NC Pre-Kindergarten	3,027,768	5,452,043		8,479,811
Support:				
Management and General	361,881	285,531		647,412
Program Coordination and Evaluation	275,294	51,333		326,627
Other:				
Sales Tax Paid		8,793		8,793
Total Expenditures	\$ 6,115,165	\$ 5,812,727	\$	\$ 11,927,892
Excess of Receipts Over Expenditures		(84,593)	25,394	(59,199)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year		1,878,964	28,594	1,907,558
Net Assets at End of Year	\$	\$ 1,794,371	\$ 53,988	\$ 1,848,359
Net Assets Consisted of:				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 10,523	1,794,371	53,988	\$ 1,858,882
Refunds Due From Contractors	23,412			23,412
Total Assets	\$ 33,935	\$ 1,794,371	\$ 53,988	\$ 1,882,294
Less: Due to State	31,471			31,471
Funds Held for Others	2,464			2,464
Net Assets at End of Year	\$	\$ 1,794,371	\$ 53,988	\$ 1,848,359

Note: During FY 2012, the NC Partnership for Children and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) entered into a contract with and made payments to a service provider selected by Wake County SmartStart. This service provider contract is not reflected on this statement. However, a summary of the service provider contract entered into the by the NC Partnership for Children and DHHS is presented here:

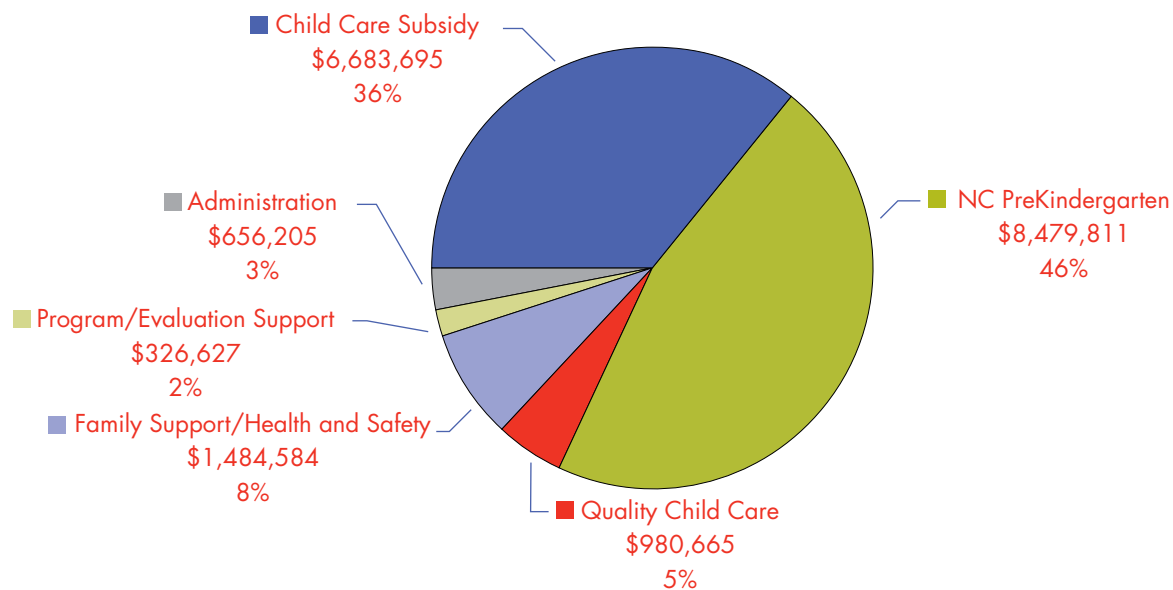
Schedule of State Level Service Providers Contracts For the Year Ended June 30, 2012

Wake County Human Services Child Care Subsidy	\$6,683,695
Total Expenditures—Wake County SmartStart (See above.)	\$11,927,892
Grand Total Expenditures by and through Wake County SmartStart.....	\$18,611,587

2011-12 Financial Statements (continued)

Wake County SmartStart Functional Expenditures

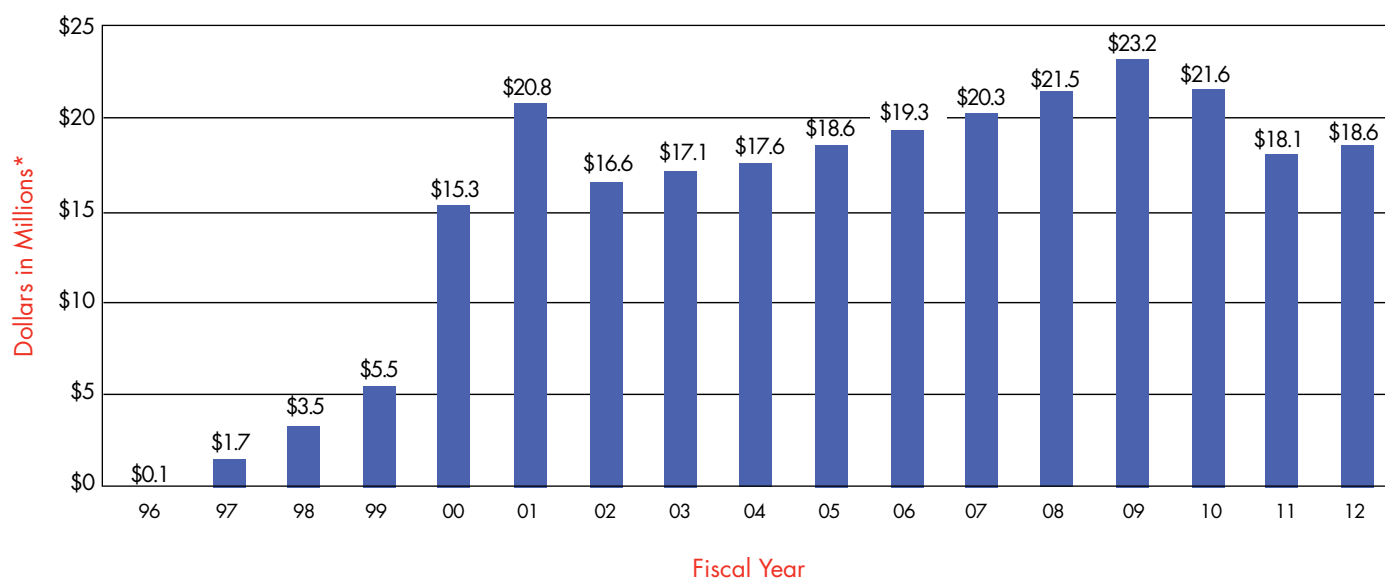
FY 2011-12



Please note: Percentages have been rounded.

*Administration includes sales tax paid.

History of Wake County SmartStart's Community Investment



*Figures are rounded to the nearest one hundred thousand dollars.



Wake County SmartStart

4901 Waters Edge Drive, Suite 101
Raleigh, NC 27606

Ph.: 919.851.9550

www.wakesmartstart.org



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