



## **Committed to launching every child as a healthy, lifelong learner**

The Down East Partnership for Children has been making a difference for children and families in our community for 18 years. Budget cuts threaten to reduce its impact. We need your help to ensure DEPC continues to help build a strong community.

**Proposed budget cuts this year could reach \$1.5 million in addition to recent funding reductions of \$873,000 to the DEPC.** Cuts at this level will impact thousands of children and families and every program the DEPC offers. This means quality care is at risk, child care scholarships will be cut, income for teachers faces reductions— all of which can destabilize the child care industry that employs hundreds directly and allows over 5,600 parents to be productive employees.

Simply put, essential programs for children and families will be cut and jobs will be lost. The impact would be immediately seen in the quality of care and programs available to children and families of Nash and Edgecombe counties. The longer-term impact is significant to building ready schools and ready communities and ultimately unravels our ability to launch every child as a healthy, lifelong learner.

**We need to hold the line on early childhood investments. Investing in early childhood education is a fiscally responsible way to reduce deficits and create surpluses in the short- and long-term.**

### **Seven Reasons to Support the Down East Partnership for Children**

The DEPC:

- **Invests more than \$7 million annually** into the local economy which supports more than 20 programs in the community.
- **Focuses on children 0-8 to maximize the impact** on children's development when they will benefit most from high quality educational opportunities.
- **Implements a model of services focused on prevention vs. intervention.** Studies have shown 90% of brain development occurs during the first 3 years of life. Investing in the early years saves money down the road.
- **Supports families** to meet the needs of their children and **ensures access to high quality care and education.** Through the Family First system, more than 3,200 families have been connected to the comprehensive system of services available ranging from basic needs to parent education. 70% of children now have access to quality early education.
- **Builds "ready schools"** that meet the needs of all children and families. Creates community-school teams for each elementary school. 16 of 19 elementary schools have participated in the Ready Schools Initiative.
- **Collaborates to support "ready communities"** that can advocate for and build systems that support the healthy growth and development of children. A network of community leaders is working on areas from Healthy Kids Collaborative and Ready Schools to leadership development and outreach to community leaders, including faith-based, civic and businesses.
- **Prepares future generations of the workforce while supporting the workforce of today.** DEPC supports child care subsidies for more than 1,000 children a year, allowing their parents to work and pursue higher education and enabling businesses to have a stable workforce. The DEPC contributes funding directly to 86 positions and supports over 200 child care providers through salary supplements and partners with the child care industry that provides 727 jobs in 165 businesses. The direct economic impact is nearly \$127 million a year.

## **Why Invest Early?**

The early years are a critical time in children's development – a window to build our children's future that will never be open again.

National studies show that the return on investment in early childhood is significant. As much as \$7 saved in reduced welfare and crime costs for every \$1 invested.

Currently only about half of children grades 3-8 are proficient in math and reading. Of children not proficient in reading by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, only 5% are proficient by the end of high school.

Gaping holes in early childhood development among disadvantaged children create the achievement gap in our schools. High-quality, reliable childcare insures both school readiness and improved graduation rates and a future generation of job-skilled workers.

## **Economic Impact**

DEPC supports child care subsidies for more than 1,000 children a year, allowing their parents to work or pursue higher education and enabling businesses to have a stable workforce. Stable child care results in reduced absenteeism, cuts down on turnover, and increases productivity of employees.

Child care problems can cause US businesses to lose as much as \$3 billion a year.

We partner with the child care industry that provides 727 jobs in 165 businesses. The direct economic impact is nearly \$127 million a year.

## **Working together – we can make a difference.**

Everyone has a role to play in strengthening our community and improving the quality of life for our children and families. Be a part of the solution! You can:

- **Volunteer** your time. Share your time and expertise. Volunteer on the playground, provide office and event support or participate in community events/programs.
- **Join a committee.** Some of DEPC committee options include the Ready Schools, Healthy Kids Collaborative or Week of the Young Child.
- **Stay connected.** Sign-up for e-alerts and DEPC publications. To sign up for Smart Start e-alerts go to [www.ncsmartstart.org](http://www.ncsmartstart.org).
- **Speak up about children's issues.** Invite the DEPC to speak at your event, contact local leaders about the importance of early childhood. Write your legislator to let them know the impact of DEPC.
- **Make a donation.** Every contribution makes a difference in the life of a child!
- **Contribute materials or supplies.** In-kind discounts or donations of materials/supplies for a variety of activities for children ranging from items for playgroups and school events to children's books and door prizes.
- **Sponsor Week of the Young Child.** Help support DEPC's efforts to promote and celebrate young children during the week of April 9-16, 2011.

## **Contact the DEPC**

For up-to-date information about the partnership or partner with the DEPC visit [www.depc.org](http://www.depc.org). For questions or to reach someone about how to get involved, call Brenda Battle at (252) 985-4300.

*The Down East Partnership for Children is a non-profit organization located in Rocky Mount and is committed to launching every child in Nash and Edgecombe counties as a healthy, lifelong learner by the end of the third grade. For 18 years the DEPC has built and delivered a model of services for children that creates Ready Kids, Ready Families, Ready Schools and Ready Communities.*

Find us on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/downeastpartnershipforchildren>)