

Smart Start: North Carolina's Early Childhood System

December 2018
Leadership North Carolina



- **A child's early years set the foundation**
- **Adverse experiences disrupt development**
- **Soft skills are for success in school, work, and life**

Smart Start is a nationally recognized leader in early childhood and healthy development

“North Carolina’s Smart Start initiative has been the national pace setter for early childhood systems for more than two decades. A system that is flexible enough for local decision making, yet accountable to the public at the state level, has provided young children access to high quality early learning in ways that is simply unprecedented in the United States.”

-- Rhian Evans Allvin, Former Director, National Association for the Education of Young Children

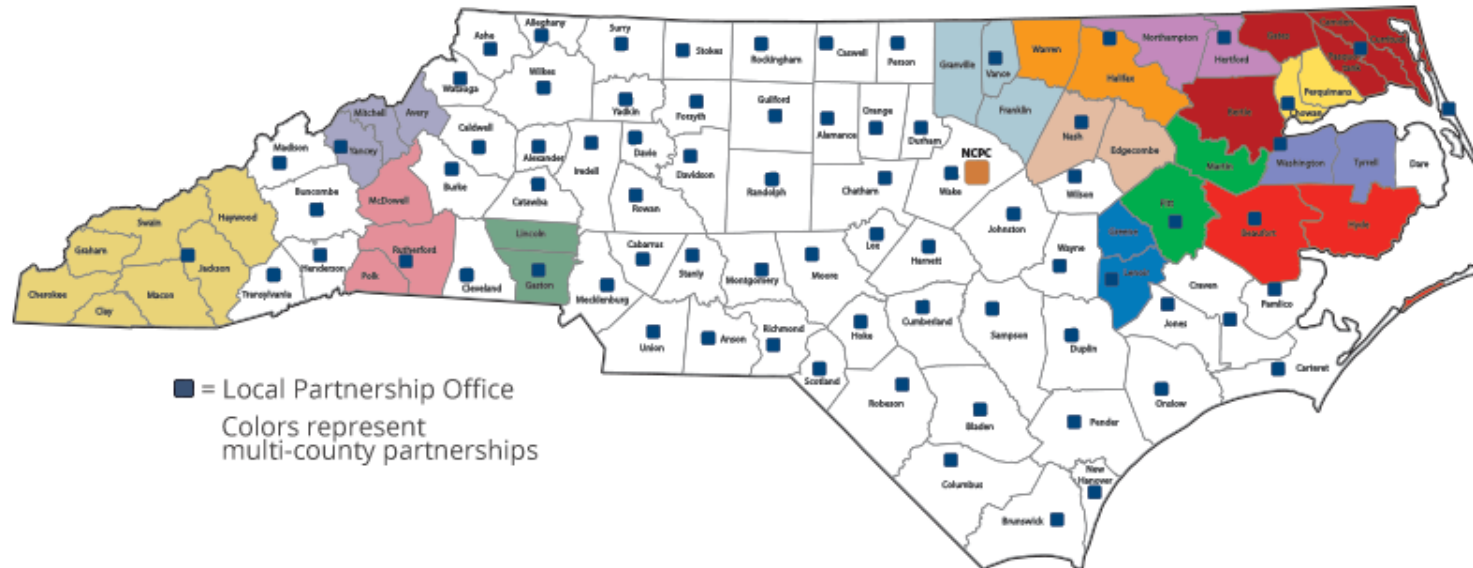
“Our business community in Virginia early on looked to Smart Start for advice as we created Smart Beginnings, helping us think about effective program practices, accountability, measuring performance in our community efforts and creating programs to maximize outcomes for young children.”

-- Kathy Glazer, Director, Virginia Early Childhood Foundation

The Smart Start Network



The Smart Start network provides expertise, guidance and infrastructure to ensure NC children receive the care and nurturing they need to thrive.



- **75 nonprofit local partnerships**
- **Led by the North Carolina Partnership for Children**

**Tailored to meet the specific needs of each community,
Smart Start invests in:**

- **Early care and education**
- **Family Support**
- **Health and Development**
- **Early Literacy**

**Children are ready to succeed, lead productive lives,
and contribute to a vibrant NC.**

Statewide Governance

At the state level, NCPC:

- **Ensures compliance and accountability**
- **Pushes for excellence**
- **Supports Local Partnerships**

Statewide Governance

- **Train local boards and staff on fiduciary oversight**
- **Monitor local partnerships to ensure compliance**
- **Support centralized accounting, contracting functions**

Statewide Excellence

- **Guide partnerships toward selection and implementation of evidence-based, evidence-informed programs.**
- **Facilitate the sharing of resources, innovative ideas, and solutions across the network.**
- **Maintain centralized portal for collection of program data.**

Local Flexibility

- **Identify the needs and resources of their communities**
- **Use local data to drive decision making**
- **Increase the health, well-being and development of their children.**

Early Care and Education

- **Raising the Star Ratings**
- **A Value Add to Subsidy**
- **Infrastructure Support for Pre-K**

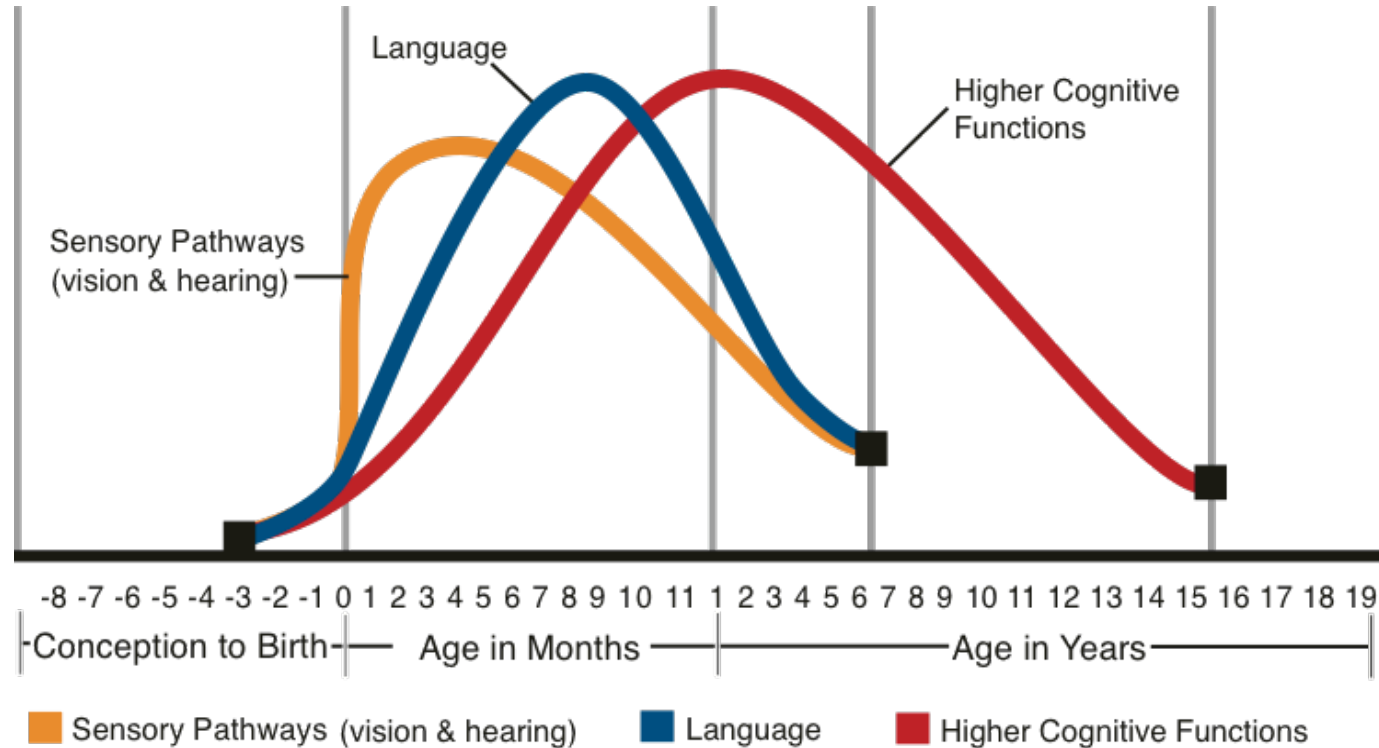
Supporting NC Families

- **Parents are the first and most important teachers in a child's life**
- **Parent education programs can give parents tools to increase knowledge of development and positive parenting practices**

Advancing Child Health and Development

- **Instilling healthy behaviors early can have lifelong benefits**
- **Smart Start improves outcome for children by:**
 - **Working with medical providers, health departments**
 - **Preventing childhood obesity**
 - **Ensure screening for developmental delays**

Promoting Early Literacy



Graph Source: C.A. Nelson (2000)

Making NC a Leader in Early Education

- **Smart Start and NC Pre-K have proven to increase 3rd grade reading and math scores and reduce special education placements**
- **More than 20 states have adopted components of the Smart Start model in creating their own systems**

Smart Start in the Community

- **Smart Start brings communities together**
 - **Parents, early learning and health professionals , educators, business people, elected officials, public safety**
- **Better coordination of services and address service gaps based on data**
- **Provide tools and resources they need to fully engage young children in learning opportunities**

Building Resilient Communities

- **ACEs**
 - **Adverse Childhood Experiences**
 - **Adverse Community Experiences**
 - **Atrocious Cultural Experiences**
- **Building Community Resilience describes how communities can approach the full scope of the 21st century's challenges equitably and sustainably**

Smart Start in the Next 25 Years

- **Must get funding levels back up**
- **Must engage private partners**
- **Must get to our youngest children**
- **Must support our community leaders**

Questions?



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