



The Guilford County Partnership for Children (GCPC) has a mission of ensuring that all children ages prenatal to five are emotionally, intellectually, and physically ready for success in school.

GCPC administers Smart Start funds in Guilford County. Smart Start is North Carolina's statewide early childhood initiative designed to ensure that every child living in North Carolina enters school healthy and ready to succeed.

Smart Start Funded Programs FY 2024-2025

Early Care & Education

Bringing Out the Best – UNCG Center for Youth, Families & Community Partnerships

Bringing Out the Best is an early intervention program providing family-centered, community-based services targeting children ages birth to five with social and emotional challenges. The goal is to increase the number of children in Guilford County that are healthy and ready to succeed as they enter school. Program services are typically delivered in early care and education classroom settings.

Childcare Health Consultation – Guilford County DHHS, Division of Public Health

Childcare Health Consultants (CCHCs) work with early care and education programs to assess, plan, implement and evaluate strategies to achieve high-quality, safe, and healthy environments for young children. The program collaborates with the NC Childcare Health and Safety Resource Center to provide health and safety resources, training, and technical assistance for early childhood educators.

Childcare Subsidy – Guilford County DHHS, Division of Social Services

Childcare Subsidy provides financial assistance to cover childcare expenses for parents and caregivers to maintain employment, to participate in job training or educational programs that will lead to employment, to provide care to children in need of protection, to enhance the development of children, to facilitate the reunification of families, to aid families in crisis and to prevent children from entering foster care.

Education, Quality Improvement & Professional Development (EQUIPD) – UNCG

EQUIPD provides services to early childhood educators to increase program quality and staff education through professional development and educational planning, peer coaching, curriculum development experiences, director leadership, consultation of teaching/learning requirements and quality enhancement for early care and education facilities.



Child Care WAGE\$ - Child Care Services Association

The Child Care WAGE\$ program provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers, directors, and family child care providers working with children between the ages of birth to five in Guilford County. WAGE\$ is designed to provide young children more stable relationships with better-educated teachers by rewarding teacher education and continuity of care.

CDA Apprenticeship – Children and Families First

The CDA Apprenticeship offers participants on-the-job learning and coursework to support early childhood educators in attaining an Infant-Toddler or Preschool certification. The Apprenticeship Program offers one-to-one mentoring and classroom-based technical instruction. All apprenticeships culminate in a CDA exam and nationally recognized credential from the Council on Professional Recognition.

Family Support

Family Literacy/Language Development – Reading Connections

Reading Connections provides family literacy activities for families with young children who have some risk for low literacy skills. The program provides parents an opportunity to support their children’s literacy development while improving their own literacy skills. Centered on the belief that parents are their children’s first teachers, the program incorporates focused literacy instruction for parents and children, fostering both a habit and a love of reading among the families served.

Healthy Start – Family Service of the Piedmont

Healthy Start is designed to promote healthy pregnancies, positive birth outcomes and provide participants with the knowledge and resources needed to give babies their best start in life. Healthy Start Home Visitors help parents to nurture their children’s development and create a positive living environment. Services are offered from prenatal to age 2.

Parents as Teachers Guilford County –YWCA High Point

Parents as Teachers (PAT) provides parenting education and support to families from pregnancy until their child turns five and enters kindergarten. PAT focuses on encouraging parent/child interactions, understanding children’s development and how it impacts a child’s behavior and strengthening families. Parents as Teachers builds strong communities, thriving families, and children that are healthy, safe, and ready to learn by matching parents and caregivers with trained professionals who make regular personal home visits during a child’s earliest years.



Health

Family Connects Guilford – Guilford County DHHS, Division of Public Health

Family Connects is an evidence-based nurse home visiting program that helps parents better understand how to care for their baby, increase their confidence, provide breastfeeding support, reduce emergency room visits and reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect. During a home visit, a Family Connects nurse will address a family's questions and concerns, offer emotional support, check vital signs/assess the overall health of baby and birthing person, provide education, identify back-to-work and home support needs, and make appropriate referrals. Family Connects is available to any individual in Guilford County who gives birth.

NICU Family Support – Family Support Network of Central Carolina

NICU Family Support offers enhanced support and education to families with infants admitted to the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). All services are free and confidential. Peer support is provided to help parents navigate complex medical concerns more effectively, give them a support system of other parents who have experienced a similar journey and help them feel less isolated.

Adopt-A-Mom Program/Prenatal Care – Every Baby Guilford

Adopt-A-Mom coordinates prenatal care for pregnant women who are not eligible for Medicaid, do not have private insurance to cover the cost of care and cannot afford to pay out of pocket for prenatal care.

Program Support

Awareness and Engagement – Guilford County Partnership for Children

Awareness and Engagement promotes the benefits of early childhood education in the community and provides information on programs and services available for young children, families, and caregivers. The activity also seeks to increase access to services by sharing community resources to connect families to early childhood supports.

Program Coordination & Evaluation-Guilford County Partnership for Children

Program Coordination and Evaluation works with Smart Start funded service providers to clarify and meet program goals and activities and supports the evaluation of each program. The service also works to identify new partners to support young children and families in Guilford County.



Additional Programs Administered by GCPC

NC Pre-Kindergarten Program (NC Pre-K)

NC Pre-K is a pre-kindergarten program for eligible four-year-old children. The NC Pre-K program is offered at participating Guilford County Schools, Children and Families First (Head Start) sites, and licensed four- and five-star private childcare facilities. In the 2023-2024 school year there are 2,166 NC Pre-K slots in Guilford County. Priority is given to children who have not had prior preschool experience. NC Pre-K services are offered at no cost to families who meet eligibility requirements.

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth until they turn 5 years old, no matter their family's income. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is not a place—it is a process to build children's home libraries. Each month, a high quality, age-appropriate book is mailed to the home of all registered children at no cost to the family.

More about Smart Start

Smart Start's Mission

Advance a high quality, comprehensive, accountable early childhood system that benefits each child in North Carolina beginning with a healthy birth.

What is Smart Start?

Smart Start brings together all the people involved in a young child's life—families, teachers, doctors, caregivers, social workers, and many others—to ensure every child has all they need for healthy growth and development. Experiences during early childhood literally shape the structure of the brain. Because today's children are tomorrow's leaders, parents and workers, everyone has a stake in making sure that all children have the experiences they need to thrive.

Smart Start measurably increases the health and well-being of young children birth to 5, building the foundation for future learning, by:

- Improving children's early care and education programs so that they are safe and healthy and provide opportunities for children to learn skills they need for success in school.
- Providing parents with tools that support them in raising healthy, happy, successful children.
- Ensuring that children have access to preventive health care.



Why Smart Start Works?

Smart Start was created in 1993 as an innovative solution to a problem: Children were coming to school unprepared to learn. Policymakers recognized that progress would require tapping into the same innovative spirit that inspired private sector advances, and therefore, established Smart Start as a public/private partnership serving all 100 counties in North Carolina.

Programs supported by Smart Start build the foundation for children's future learning by improving early care and education programs and supporting families and children's overall health and well-being. Every part of our community wins when young children and families have the support they need to thrive.

**For more information about the Guilford County Partnership for Children,
or for information about how to contact a program partner,
please contact GCPC at (336) 274-5437 or visit our website at: www.guilfordchildren.org.**