



2023 - 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



“Building Brighter Futures for Catawba County’s Children”

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Catawba County Partnership for Children works to ensure that children receive the support and services they need prior to kindergarten. In Catawba County, there are **10,146** children from birth to age 5. CCPC is the primary convener for early childhood programming in our community. Thanks to incredible support, collaboration, and input from our many community partners, we are extremely proud to share some of our collective accomplishments from the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

We remain incredibly grateful to our many partner agencies and organizations, knowing none of us can do this work alone. In particular, we deeply appreciate our robust and resilient child care community, Catawba County Schools, Hickory Public Schools, Newton-Conover City Schools, Catawba County Social Services, Catawba County Public Health, Catawba County Library System, the City of Hickory, Appalachian State University, and many other supporters and advocates. We are also thankful to our funding partners including Smart Start, NC Pre-Kindergarten, NC-DSS, and the Catawba County United Way.

We are energized by working alongside so many others as we “build brighter futures” for all young children in Catawba County!

2023-2024 Smart Start Funded Services

- Administration and Program Coordination \$284,650
- Children’s Resource Center - child care resource & referral (In-house Activity) \$212,170
- Imagination Library - free books mailed to children (In-house Activity) \$138,979 (separate allocation)
- Early Childhood Support Team - child care technical assistance (Catawba County Public Health and Social Services) \$696,300
- Parents as Teachers - home based parent education (Hickory Public Schools) - \$439,527
- Parent Support Team - Triple P - parenting classes (Catawba County Social Services) \$24,152
- Child Care Subsidy - child care scholarships (Catawba County Social Services) \$1,036,263



Total Smart Start Allocation: \$2,693,062



Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library program mailed **66,194** books to Catawba County children between July 2023 - June 2024.

5,490 children were enrolled as of June 30, 2024, representing **54.1%** of our birth-age 4 population.

A big thank you to the state of North Carolina and Smart Start for prioritizing early literacy and supporting Imagination Library with Smart Start funding.



Total number of 2023-2024 NCPK children: **410**
Total number of NCPK classrooms: **29**, at **22** locations

2023-2024 Board of Directors

- Kati Clark, C&D Technologies
- Yaidee Fox, City of Hickory (CHAIR)
- Mary Furtado, Catawba County Manager
- Karen Harrington, Social Services Director (SECRETARY)
- Sarah Luhrs, Parent Representative
- Douglas Locascio, Hickory Crawdads (IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR)
- Siobhan Loendorf, Catawba County Library Director (VICE-CHAIR)
- Jennifer McCracken, Public Health Director
- Ryan McCreary, Elementary Principal
- Jonathan McGinnis, HSM Solutions
- Tonya Osland, A New Beginning Child Development Center
- JR Sigmon, Catawba County Schools (VICE CHAIR)
- Leah Snedegar, Parent Representative
- Jameil Surratt, Cintas Corporation (TREASURER)
- Kelly Winters, YMCA of Catawba Valley

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|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| A New Beginning Child Dev. Center | Oakwood Elementary |
| Balls Creek Elementary | Oxford Elementary |
| Bandys High School | Sherrills Ford Learning Academy |
| Catawba Elementary | Snow Creek Elementary |
| Claremont Elementary | South Newton Elementary |
| Clyde Campbell Elementary | Southwest Primary |
| Conover School | St. Stephens High School |
| Fred T. Foard High School | Startown Elementary |
| Hickory High School | Tyndall Center at Sipe’s Orchard Home |
| Lyle Creek Elementary | Viewmont Elementary |
| Maiden Elementary | Webb A. Murray Elementary |

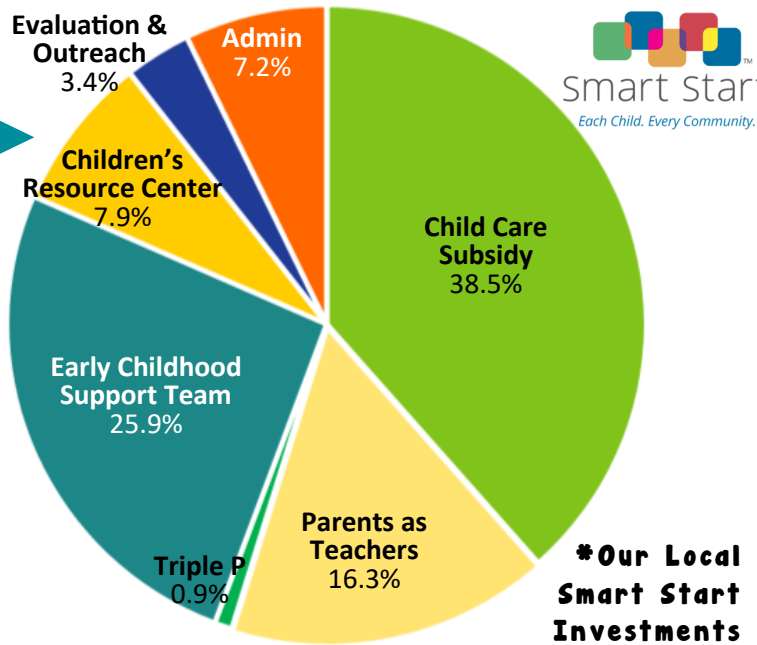
NC Pre-Kindergarten provides a free high-quality preschool experience for eligible children. Catawba County Partnership for Children partners with private child care programs and our public school systems to host classrooms that have a combination of NCPK children, private pay children, and exceptional children.

Ensuring every child in Catawba County enters kindergarten prepared for lifelong success.

2023-2024 Revenues



Smart Start Allocation through North Carolina Partnership for Children*: **\$2,693,062**
 Smart Start for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library: **\$142,236**
 NC Pre-Kindergarten: **\$2,503,466**
 NC Division of Child Development & Early Education: **\$68,994** (for Child Care Resource & Referral)
 NC Department of Social Services: **\$135,511** (Family Support Grant, for Parents as Teachers)
 ARPA Support Funds for Families in Need: **\$25,000**
 Private Donations, Fundraisers & Other Grants: **\$164,976**



* Smart Start funds are only used for evidence-based and evidence-informed programming that responds to local needs, as determined by data-driven planning and collaboration.

***Our Local Smart Start Investments**

Program Highlights

Supporting Children and their Families

- Imagination Library mailed out books to 7,094 children throughout the year (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024).
- Our Nest Diaper Pantry gave out 37,899 diapers, serving 374 families with emergency diaper needs and additional referrals.
- The Early Childhood Support Team provided car seat safety assistance to 305 families, ensuring the safety of their young children.

Supporting Parents and Caregivers

- The Children's Resource Center provided child care referrals to 253 parents and guardians, equipping them with the knowledge needed to make informed decisions for their children's care
- Through Triple P (Positive Parenting Program), 29 parents participated in Level 4 parent education groups, gaining advanced strategies to support their child's development and address challenging behaviors.
- Parents as Teachers educators provided 1,619 home visits with 101 parents and guardians, offering personalized guidance and support to strengthen family relationships and promote healthy early childhood development.
- PEEPs (Parent Engaging and Empowering Parents) Playgroups offered 68 weekly playgroups for children and their caregivers in three different locations (Long View, Kenworth, and Ridgeview communities), providing opportunities for socialization, learning and community engagement.
- Child Care Subsidy provided financial assistance for 351 families in Catawba County, helping them to afford high quality child care.

Supporting our Child Care Community

- Early Childhood Support Team Nurses provided critical health & safety training to 349 early childhood professionals, including CPR/First Aid, ITS SIDS, Emergency Preparedness, and Infectious Disease.
- Early Childhood Support Team Nurses conducted 4,220 health consultations with staff and child care directors, ensuring the well-being and safety of children in child care facilities throughout the county.
- Early Childhood Support Team's Education Specialists provided additional early childhood education support to 499 child care staff, further enhancing their professional development and the quality of care in Catawba County.
- Early Childhood Support Team Clinicians provided mental health services to 107 children in 37 different child care facilities.
- The Children's Resource Center provided workshops and trainings to 382 early childhood teachers.

2023-2024 Community Context

of children birth-kindergarten: **10,146**
 # of licensed child care programs: **39**
 # of family child care homes: **8**
 # of half-day programs: **19**
 # of public school pre-k classes: **24**
 # of Parents as Teachers educators: **7**
 # of trained Triple P facilitators: **29**



Catawba County Partnership for Children Staff

Ashley Benfield, Children's Resource Center Program Director • Marisa Carlton, Community Engagement Coordinator
 Leslie Ferrell, Grants & Contracts Manager • Kim Lyke Holden, MBA, Executive Director
 La'Gentry Ross, MS, MEd, Early Childhood Systems Manager • Alex Scarborough, MBA, Fiscal Manager •
 Gail Summer, EdD, KidsREAdy Catawba Coordinator • Libby Throckmorton/Sara Thompson, Program Manager
 Leonor Tobar, Latino Outreach Specialist • Breanna Wallace, Family Support Coordinator