



The Children's Council

of Watauga County, Inc.

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Annual Report 2010-2011

The Children's Council builds upon the strengths of children, families, and educators by investing resources, information, and training toward promoting the future health and success of our greatest community asset:

Our Children.



The Children's Council of Watauga County, Inc. served children, families and early childhood educators in 2010-2011 through a variety of programs at no cost to consumers.

The Council convenes stakeholders to assess local needs; to ensure accountability; and to manage community, state and federal resources. The Council has established community networks that bridge education, health services and family supports to best meet the needs of young children and their families.

All of the programs, from prenatal to kindergarten come together and concentrate on child development to prepare children **to be ready to succeed in school...**

Healthy child development is dependent on the involvement of parents. Involvement of parents is twice as predictive of a child's academic and social success as family socioeconomic status. Parents' beliefs about what is important, necessary and permissible for them to do with and on behalf of their children are significant. Important is the extent to which parents believe that they can have a positive influence on their children's development and education. Parents who read to their children, have books available, guide TV watching and provide stimulation experiences contribute to school readiness.

As early childhood educators and advocates we know early childhood programs are imperative:

- Positive early learning experiences lead to later success in learning.

- Families are the strongest influence on young children.
- When early childhood educators partner with families, children do better.

Child care providers expand on the opportunities provided to children to enhance development. Child care facilities and the workforce found in those settings receive support from the Council to ensure and improve the capacity of programs to provide quality services to young children and families.

As advocates for young children, families, and our profession of early childhood education we believe that:

- Quality services are key.
- Better and more accessible professional development that every teacher can access to advance their practice is essential.
- Higher standards for programs through a quality rating systems will positively impact our future leaders.

On behalf of the Children's Council staff, Board of Directors and Committee members we are pleased to share the positive impact the Children's Council, Smart Start and a multiplicity of community funders, collaborative partners and volunteers bring about for the children and families in Watauga County.

Child Care Resource & Referral

Child Care Resource and Referral has three main components:

Consumer Education:

Finding quality child care can be challenging. Our service helps families understand quality child care indicators and current availability.

- **262** families received referral information this year.

Technical Assistance:

Technical assistance is provided in child care facilities to help child care professionals work through challenges and opportunities and to enhance quality in

programs.

- **29** preschool classrooms received technical assistance services this year.
- **977** children were impacted by the assistance provided in those classrooms.

Professional Development:

This service promotes increased education of early educators by offering after work and weekend training sessions, as well as a textbook loan program and technical support for college coursework.

- **234** direct teaching staff attended training sessions.
- **69** direct teaching staff enrolled in a college course.

Childcare Subsidies

The Children's Council of Watauga County and the Watauga County Department of Social Services hold a Memorandum of Understanding for the Smart Start funds for child care subsidies.

With the Smart Start funds, the Watauga County Department of Social Services manages and distributes Smart Start funds to child care providers to support families who are working and/or continuing or completing an education.

For the period of July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 the Children's Council of Watauga County, Inc., provided funding of \$96,778.00 for purchase of child care services and \$42,300 for administration of the program.

Teen Pregnancy & Parenting Program

This innovative program provides services to pregnant and parenting teens to support them in staying in school. We offer support groups, childbirth classes, case management, doula services, home visiting, parenting education, and social outings.

Working closely with the area schools and agencies, we work to identify teens early in their pregnancy and offer continuous support through the baby's first year of life. Program highlights for January 2010—June 2011 include:

- 16 pregnant and/or parenting teens parents and 11 children of teen parents were served .

- 5 teen parents received doula services
- 12 teen parents received teen specific childbirth education
- **87 % of participants have stayed in school or returned to school and are currently enrolled.**
- 10 area women trained as postpartum doulas through Doulas of North America (DONA) to become volunteers in teen program after funds are gone.
- 30 area professionals participated in community-wide Lamaze training titled *Creativity, Connection, and Commitment: Supporting Teens During the Childbearing Year.*

application process to the NC Department of Public Instruction.



This program is funded through a grant

Parents as Teachers



Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a voluntary family education and support program that begins before birth and extends through kindergarten entry. The program is based on the beliefs **that parents are their children's first and most influential teachers** and that the early years lay the foundation for children's success in school and in life.

PAT recognizes the family as the expert on their child.

The program helps parents become involved from the very beginning of a child's life.

PAT provides monthly home visits to parents with children ages birth to five, group meeting opportunities, developmental and health screenings, and community referrals.

Watauga County Parents as Teachers 2010-2011 accomplishments:

- 60 children received home visits.
- 31 teen parents received home visits.
- 358 visits were completed by PAT parent educators.
- 25 children received developmental screenings.
- 24 group meetings were provided for families.
- 176 community referrals were made to families.

G.E.D Program

G.E.D classes held at the Council are offered in collaboration with Caldwell Community College. Free child care and limited transportation is provided for participants.

- Last year the program served approximately 21 students.
- The child care room served 15 children ranging from infants as young as 4 weeks old to children as old as 5 years.
- From July 2010 through June 2011, eight women graduated with a GED.
- Six of those women have gone on to college .
- Due to high demand, a waiting list for enrollment was started.

Kindergarten Orientation

In an effort to help support children and their families as they transition into Kindergarten:

- A member of our staff attended Kindergarten Orientation meetings at 7 of the 9 elementary schools.
- 316 gift bags with information about Kindergarten readiness and resources available in Watauga County were shared with families. The bags also included scissors, crayons, a child-sized pencil, watercolor paints, play dough, a glue stick, a book mark, and a book.

The Resource Corner

The Children's Council has a lending library of reference books and age-appropriate toys, books, and materials for child care providers and parents to check out. These materials can provide hours of "play-together" times for families, as well as provide child care providers with materials to enhance learning in their programs. Highlights for this year include:

- 41 individuals attended the required training for membership to The Resource Corner.
- 31 memberships were opened—23 from childcare programs, 3 from family childcare homes, 3 families, and 2 individuals.
- Approximately 72 resource books, toys, and theme kits were checked out from The Resource Corner this year.

Raising A Reader

Raising a Reader is a national nonprofit organization offering local agencies an evidence-based early literacy and parent engagement program that has demonstrated it can improve the reading readiness skills of children birth to age five.

This program rotates red bags filled with award-winning books into children's homes on a weekly basis, exposing children to approximately 100 different books throughout the school year. The program also encourages families to take advantage of their local public library to further enhance children's literacy opportunities.

In 2010-2011, the Council received the third year of funding from the North Carolina Partnership for Children to sustain the pro-

gram. 12 sites across the county were served, impacting a total of 213 children.

Program highlights for July 2010-June 2011 :

- 210 families participated in the Raising a Reader book sharing program.
- 170 pre-surveys were completed providing information about parent literacy practices with their children.
- 143 post-surveys were completed providing information about parent literacy practices with their children.
- 60 families attended one parent literacy training event.
- 50 families attended two parent literacy training events.



- 42 families attended three parent literacy training events.
- 26 families attended four parent literacy training events.
- 195 new children received blue library book bags at the end of the year

Child Care WAGES® Project

In Watauga County, **386** children gained more highly-skilled teachers committed to their classrooms thanks to the Child Care WAGES® Project .

Research shows that child care programs with highly-skilled teachers and low turnover rates benefit children developmentally, socially, and eventually economically. The turnover rate in early childhood programs for Watauga County was 15% for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.

The Children's Council funds this project to provide education-based salary supplements to qualifying early educators. It encourages teachers to take college-level early education classes and rewards them for their progress.

34 early childhood educators from 13 child care programs participated in the WAGES® project during this fiscal year.

In a countywide survey completed in 2010-2011, one provider shared the following comments about the WAGES® project: "I feel more capable in doing my job. I feel appreciated for my dedication to the field. Parents feel more relaxed and confident in leaving their child with me knowing I have an education in child development."



2010-2011 Financial Report

Total Funds Available By Category:	\$757,338
Administration:	\$115,767
Child Care Subsidy:	\$139,078
Early Care and Education:	\$191,319
Family Support:	\$277,360
Program Coordination	\$ 12,000
Other Unrestricted Income	\$ 21,804

The Council provides programs and services through collaborative efforts with community agencies and partners. We were funded in part by the following sources, equal to the total budget listed above:

NCPDI—Drop out Prevention	\$128,988
Watauga County	\$ 3,750
Town of Boone	\$ 5,600
Boone Service League	\$ 1,000
Valle Fair Grant	\$ 2,000
United Way	\$ 19,500
Rumple Presbyterian	\$ 2,000
High Country Women’s Fund	\$ 3,500
Smart Start	\$537,103
NC Division of Child Development	\$ 19,793
North Carolina Partnership for Children	\$ 8,592
Private Contributions	\$ 17,330
CCR&R Program Income	\$ 3,698
Other Income	\$ 4,474

2010-2011 Staff

Doris Matraw, Executive Director (July and August 2010)

Brian Cornell, Executive Director (September 2010 through June 2011)

Charisse Cuthbertson, Contracts and Finance Manager

Diana Smith, Administrative Assistant

Lee Marshall, Child Care Resource and Referral Director

Lorrie Looper, Resource and Referral Family and Community Educator / Raising a Reader Coordinator

Robin Triplett, Parents As Teachers Coordinator / Teen Parenting Specialist

Lynette Walker, Parents As Teachers— Parent Educator

Crystal Kelly, Teen Pregnancy Parenting Program Coordinator

Nancee Ponds, GED Teacher

Birdie McKinney, Child Care Provider

Fayza Rink, Child Care Provider



2010-2011 Board Of Directors

- Karee Mackey, Chair: Cooperative Extension
- Elaine Norris, Secretary: Department of Social Services
- Freda Smith, Treasurer: CPA
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- Sherry Street-Tobin: Appalachian State University
- W. Scott St. Clair: Blue Ridge Pediatrics
- Julie Bostick: Easter Seals UCP
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