

# PLAY. GROW. LET'S GO.



Down East   
Partnership for Children 

2021 - 2022 IMPACT REPORT



## **Shaping the future of early childhood education**

There's no doubt the last couple of years have been hard for children and families across the country and in our community. Your support allowed us to operate, adapt, and continue to move forward addressing the diverse and changing needs of children 0-8. We are proud of the progress that has been made and the hard work by so many in our community to serve others.

The pandemic shed light to just how critical early care and education is to working families. Many centers stayed open to serve first responders and supported those families who work outside the home. Today, as we are moving back to "normal," child care centers face even lower enrollment levels (down 60%) than before the pandemic. Simply put, the landscape has changed for early education and families.

This year, DEPC will conduct a community scan to help shape the future of early childhood programs in our community and base future efforts on this community's specific needs. DEPC will partner with community groups to host listening circles/focus groups where families can share their experiences around obtaining care for their children. We will facilitate discussions on child care choices (traditional child care, stay home with parent, family/friend/neighbor care, etc.) to better serve families in our community. Please join us to help shape this work.

Thank you for all you do each and every day to improve the lives of the children in our community. You make the difference and we hope to see you soon at the Partnership, Discovery Park, at a listening circle or upcoming event.

**Henrietta Zalkind**  
Executive Director



## **Addressing Today's Child Care Crisis**

North Carolina is currently facing an unprecedented workforce crisis in early childhood. Fewer people are entering the early childhood field and qualified teachers are leaving the field at high rates due to low compensation, lack of benefits and lack of recognition in the field. Did you know the average pay for a child care teacher in Nash and Edgecombe counties is around \$10 per hour... even lower than the state average of \$12.

In addition, today, only 70 percent of households include two parents, and only 3.4 percent of all North Carolina families—single-parent and two-parent—have a stay-at-home parent who cares for children full time. Working families depend on quality early care and learning teachers to help them with the healthy intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of their infants, toddlers and preschoolers. These need to be the best possible experiences for our children.

The current early education system is under strain and requires additional resources to strengthen early childhood providers and teachers and support for families of young children as they work.

## **A DEPC Success Story: Supporting the shifting needs of families, child care providers**

In January of 2021, DEPC assessed the child care scholarship program for families and saw significant underspending related to pandemic issues. To further exacerbate the issue, child care providers were overwhelmed with the health and safety demands that were increased with the "Great Resignation" making maintaining staffing requirements in the midst of a declining child care education workforce impossible.

DEPC responded by launching an initiative to retain and recruit child care teachers by tackling teacher compensation. Current child care reimbursement rates to child care providers could not support increased compensation to teachers and staff. We responded and moved to the 2018 state floor market rate. Some instances required a 30% increase to child care providers. Further, we trained child care providers on the importance of compensation at the model salary scale and asked for their commitment to begin working towards the process of paying child care teachers in parity with the local school system.

Our commitment to increased teacher compensation is essential to quality early childhood programs and we continued to pay providers at the 2018 state floor market rate for the entire fiscal year and beyond!

Thank you to our teachers and providers who are working hard each day for our children and families. This year DEPC held an appreciation luncheon for teachers and providers. These are just some of our wonderful early educators.



# By the Numbers

(July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

**15,285**

children 0-8 in both Edgecombe & Nash counties

**699**

children benefited from DEPC childcare scholarships and NC Pre-K

**10,400**

visits were made to Discovery Park

**13,015** children benefitted from parent education and support programs

**673** early childhood professionals receiving training

**119** ECE teachers served through WAGE\$

**538** households were assisted in making child care choices

**220,255**

meals were served at Summer Feeding/Learning Sites



**1,270**

children participating in kindergarten transition activities

**509**

children in NC Pre-K were served by DEPC through a pandemic year



**266**

children participated in Raising a Reader



**3,455**

children are receiving books at home each month through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library



**5,713**

books were distributed in 7 medical clinics during well child visits

## Why We Need Your Support



### LITERACY

One of the most important predictors of school success and high school graduation is reading on grade level by the end of the third grade.

### POVERTY

**32%**

of children in Nash and Edgecombe counties currently live in poverty.

### HEALTH

Too many children and adults are obese or overweight

**30%**

of children in Nash & Edgecombe are obese or overweight.

**38%**

of adults in Nash (**35%**) & Edgecombe (**41%**) are obese or overweight.

Healthy food options are often not available or affordable

**1 in 6**

children in NC face food insecurity.



**14%** in Nash County and **17%** in Edgecombe County live in food insecure homes.



### BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

First 2,000 Days are important

The first 2,000 days of a child's life are the most important time for their brain development. The most rapid period of development in life happens in children's earliest years.

## School Readiness

Both children and schools need to be ready for success by 3rd grade



Quality early care, literacy, summer learning and school attendance are all important to early school success. The Ready Schools Pathways include: Leaders and Leadership; Transitions; Teacher Supports; Engaging Environments; Effective Curricula; Family, School and Community Partnerships; Respecting Diversity and Assessing Progress. School Community Teams across Nash and Edgecombe counties work to build these pathways. Contact us to get involved!

# 2022 Success Stories



**GAME ON**  
BE A CHAMPION  
OF LEARNING  
AND PLAY

## 2021 Game On Campaign Provides Support for DEPC

Thanks to the generous contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations and community partners DEPC exceeded its "Game On" Fundraising Campaign goal. Steve Felton served as chair of the campaign along with DEPC Board Chair Stacy Jesso.

"We cannot thank the staff, board and community enough for their hard work to make this a success," Jesso said. "Steve Felton has done a great job, not only spreading the joy and knowledge about this campaign to our community but he connected with so many people to bring funding to support this great cause."



## Dolly Parton's Imagination Library continues to grow!



Thanks to DEPC committees, community events, businesses and outreach efforts, the current enrollment grew to serve **3,455 children** this year. Every month a *free*, developmentally appropriate book is mailed to each child until they turn 5. Today, DPIL information can be found in restaurants, local barber shops, non-business settings, both county health departments, and local medical clinics. Faith communities have also embraced the promotion of DPIL, sharing registration information and enrollment assistance with their congregations. Events like **Party in the Park Drive Thru** and community fairs helped reach more children this year. The popular social media event "**Where's Dolly Reading**" helped raise awareness about the program and promoted various partners in the community. Visit [depc.org](http://depc.org) to learn more about this program!

## Faithful Families promotes healthy lifestyle

Faithful Families promotes healthy eating and physical activity in communities of faith. The program includes a 9-session healthy eating and physical activity curriculum. Faithful Families' program approach includes small group sessions and policy and environmental changes at the faith community level to promote health for individuals, families, and the local community. Success stories from participants in the 17 Faithful Families communities include:

- Improved strategies for grocery shopping. Learning to prepare a list made shopping easier.
- Healthier food options, decreasing sugary drink intake, while increasing water intake.
- Learning substitute options for meal preps that the whole family would try.
- Finding a community to share exercise and healthy eating ideas and strategies with each other.

## Family Services

A single-mom with a four-year-old was referred to DEPC. She was offered a Pre-K slot for her son and had to decline because of her work hours. She called the Family First Line seeking child care referrals and needing community resources. After brainstorming solutions, mom decided to ask for her Pre-K slot back, apply for DSS (Division of Social Services)/Wrap around services and to ask a friend to pick up her son from Pre-K until she could get assistance. (Little Dilemma- The slot had been filled!) Mom called the Family First Line again and staff were able to find her another Pre-K Program. The 4-year-old has started Pre-K and mom has applied for Wrap-Around services at DSS. Mom was also referred to WIC and a local church pantry to help with the rising cost of food.



## Filling a Community Need

Pastor Gary Lee participated in the 3rd Annual Faith Community Expo with 20 other faith community partners. He shared information about his church's tutoring program for all students and the recently renovated Family Resource Center. Pastor Lee also partnered with DEPC for summer learning resources and partnered with the Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC as a first-time site for Summer Feeding Summer Learning site.

*We want to fill a need in our community and be an asset to every child. Collaborating with Down East Partnership for Children has been great. Viola is such an inspiration. Opportunities like this provide great fellowship and allows us to serve our community much better.*

– Pastor Gary Lee, First Baptist Church of Middlesex





### Early Ed Matters Campaign

DEPC's Subsidy Team recognized 27 child care centers and their impact in our community through the social media campaign, #EarlyEdMatters. Thanks to the Scholarship and NC Pre-K Programs that participated.



### Summer Feeding Sites Promote Summer Learning

Summer can be a difficult time for families to find healthy meals they can afford. It can be a time where children experience loss in learning. This year, three Summer Feeding Meal sponsors included: Nash County Public Schools (NCPS) and Edgecombe County Public

Schools (ECPS) Nutrition Program and the Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC. In addition to providing meals, targeted sites received resources for summer learning/enrichment and physical activity. Cummins Rocky Mount Engine Plant has been a staunch supporter of summer learning, including the Campaign for Grade-level Reading and Twin Counties Read to Rise. This year there were 15 community-based sites.

### Why does attendance matter?

Each year DEPC promotes an Attendance Matters campaign. The theme for this year was "Stay in the Game." It is more difficult for children to learn to read and to gain other foundational academic skills when they miss many school days, arrive late or leave school early. Students who are chronically absent in preschool, kindergarten, and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by third grade and are more likely to have poor attendance in later grades.



### Westside Church of Christ

Susan Stanfield, DEPC Volunteer, supports Edgecombe County Public Schools' Migrant Program with Kelvin Johnson. Johnson also received Spanish ChopChop Magazines from DEPC.

# Thank you!



Thank you Stephanie Perg for visiting the Ripe Revival Mobile Farmers Market at DEPC. The Mobile Farmers Market offers fresh, local produce at a "pay what you can" price to promote a culture of health for our community.



Theresa Alston Stokes donates books for summer learning. Thank you for supporting reading during out of school time!!!



We are so grateful for the strong ongoing collaboration with the Rocky Mount Housing Authority to provide support and resources. The Housing Authority participated in Summer Learning Week at their Summer Feeding Summer Learning Camp, hosted a Community

Day, grew a community garden and partnered with Baskerville Elementary. Thank you to Principal Newkirk and Jerry Harper, Housing Authority Resident Manager!



### Successful Partnerships

DEPC continues to partner with Nash UNC Health Care/Nash Women's Center. Sonja Person, Family Services Coordinator, shares information about Choosing Quality Child Care & DEPC family services with the virtual Childbirth Classes and the virtual Breastfeeding Classes. Sonja also shares our quarterly Building Blocks Newsletter with Boots Vandemark to share with her new moms. Contact us if you'd like to receive these resources or schedule an outreach consultation on available services.



### Triple P Discussion Group Supports Parents

One family entered the program with five children, no job, and living in a homeless shelter. When the mom first started the program, her confidence seemed defeated, and she did not open up much during discussions with other parents. Every week, she would come in facing new challenges and frustrations. As the sessions continued, families and facilitators rallied around her and praised her for the ways in which she began to implement what she had learned even in the face of her challenging circumstances. She began contributing more and more to the conversation, revealing the ways in which she found success and started to see herself as a capable advocate

for her family. We worked with her at DEPC to help provide new resources to her family and to relay her efforts to the employment and housing organizations she would apply to. On the last night of class, she shared with the group the exciting news of her visit to a home she had been approved to rent through the work she had done with the Partnership and our local Housing Authority. She also started a new job that she was thrilled about and was approached by the shelter she previously lived in to come back and teach life skills courses to families once her move was complete. The room quickly became filled with excitement and celebration. Not only was she leading her family through better parenting skills, but she was also building them a better life in all capacities.

# Donors & In-Kind Sponsors

Allegra Marketing & Print  
Almand's Drug Store  
AmazonSmile Foundation  
Ameriprise Financial  
Anonymous Trust  
Arrow Exterminators  
August Georges  
B & K Grading and Paving  
Barnhill Family Foundation  
Believing by Faith Ministries  
Belmont Lake Golf Club  
Bin and Barrel  
The Blackburn Giving Fund  
Blanche's Bistro  
Boddie-Noell Enterprises  
Nicholas Bunn Boddie & Lucy Mayo Boddie Foundation  
CBC/WRAL Community Fund of Triangle Community Foundation  
Carlisle Funeral Home  
Carolina Capital Advisors  
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Childtrust Foundation  
Chili's  
Coastal Credit Union  
Coming Incorporated Foundation  
Cummins Rocky Mount Engine Plant  
Cummins Engine Foundation

Davenport Motor Company  
DoubleTree by Hilton  
Durham Bulls  
Edgecombe County  
Food Lion  
Foundation Builders Academy  
Futrell-Mauldin Community Fund  
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John Hackney Agency of Rocky Mount  
The HoneyBaked Ham Company  
Independent Insurance Agents of NC  
Junior Guild of Rocky Mount  
Just Give  
The Links at Cotton Valley  
Lou Reda's An American Table  
Marrow Pitt Ace Hardware  
Melissa Mishoe  
Moody Brothers Jewelers  
NC Community Foundation  
NC State Employees Combined Campaign  
NC Wesleyan College  
Nash Building Systems, Inc.  
Nash Community College  
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Nichols Automotive Specialist, Inc.  
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PNC Foundation  
Prime Smokehouse  
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QVC  
Ribeyes of Tarboro  
Ripe Inc.  
Sara Lee  
The Secret Garden II  
Sheetz  
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Southern Bank  
S.T.E.P.  
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Sun Drop  
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Tarboro Parks & Recreation  
Think and Grow Child Care Center, Inc.  
Tidal Wave Auto Spa  
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Triangle United Way  
United Way Tar River Region  
Upper Room Ministries/South Hill United Methodist Church  
Vidant Health Foundation  
Wake Stone Corporation  
Welcome to Tarboro Magazine  
Westridge Grill  
Wilson Tobbs  
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation, Inc.



# Individual Donors

Joyce Alford  
Will Alston  
Watkins Barker  
Viola Barnes-Gray  
Betty Battle  
Michelle Battle  
Natalie Bess  
Paul & Emily Bondy  
Deborah Boone  
Thomas & Diane Braddy  
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Mary Brook Weston  
Anne Williams  
Francina Williamson  
Tim and Wendy Wilson  
Mary Beth Wingfield  
Sterling Winslow  
Henrietta Zalkind  
Orlando & Ericka Zito



# Board of Directors

(As of October 2022)

DEPC's Board of Directors and working committees are made up of parents, child care providers, representatives from the school systems, human service agencies, members of the faith community, local businesses and government. Each member is committed to ensuring the financial and programmatic integrity of the Partnership.

## Officers:

### BOARD CHAIR:

**Stacy Sumner Jesso**, SumnerMadison Consulting

### VICE CHAIR:

**Dr. Trent Mohrbutter**, AVID Center

### TREASURER:

**Adrienne Covington**, VP of Finance, NCC

### SECRETARY:

**Natalie Bess**, Edgecombe County Deputy County Manager

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE CHAIR:

**Leigh Daughtridge**, Monarch

### CCR&R ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR:

**Frenchy Davis**, Foundation Builders Academy

### STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE CHAIR:

**Dr. Trent Mohrbutter**, AVID Center

## Members:

**Betty Battle**, Edgecombe County Department of Social Services

**Dr. Valerie Bridges**, Edgecombe County Public Schools, Designee **Dr. Michael Myrick**

**Sherron Deal**, Retired Educator

**Natema Drummond**, Parent

**Dr. Steve Ellis**, Nash County Public Schools, Designee **Melissa Dancy-Smith**

**Michelle Etheridge**, Edgecombe County Health Department

**Eric Evans**, Edgecombe County Manager, Designee **Natalie Bess**

**Debby Futrell**, Area LAHEC

**Tanya Heath**, Edgecombe Cooperative Extension

**Lew Hunnicutt**, Nash Community College, Designee **Adrienne Covington**

**Linda Knight**, Child Care Center

**Shane Lancaster**, Coastal Credit Union (Business)

**Dr. Glenda Lawrence-Knight**, Princeville Town Manager

**Benton Moss**, Simmons & Harris

**Amy Pridgen-Hamlett**, Nash County Department of Social Services

**Ashley Reynolds**, Parent

**Catherine Roche**, Braswell Memorial Library, Designee **Gloria Sutton**

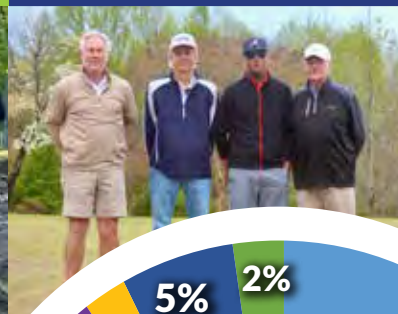
**Monique Smith**, Parent

**Wendy Wilson**, Carlton Family Foundation

**Robert Yarbrough**, St. Mark AME Church

If you are interested in joining a Committee or the Board, please contact Henrietta Zalkind, Executive Director.

Thanks to those who participated in our Annual Golf Classic!



## Financials

### Expenditures

#### Programs & Support Services:

Child Care Subsidy	\$4,183,783
Child Care Resource & Referral	\$366,754
Family Support	\$756,220
Ready Schools/Ready Communities	\$103,943
Healthy Kids Collaborative	\$279,982
Research & Evaluation	\$100,487

**Total Program Services** **\$5,955,302**

Management and General **\$695,495**  
(includes Family Resource Center building renovations)

**Total Expenditures** **\$6,486,664**

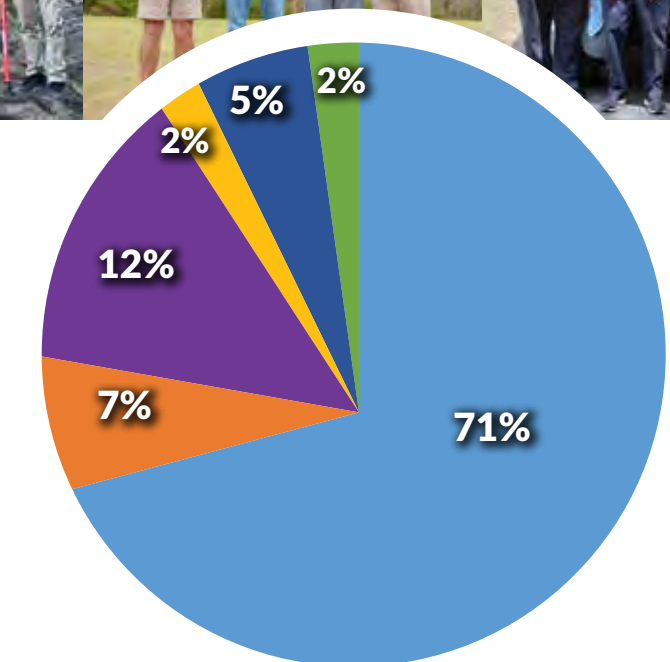
### Assets

Change in Net Assets **\$151,700**

Net Assets, Beginning of Year **\$652,167**

Net Assets, End of Year **\$803,867**

(Unaudited)



Ready Schools/Ready Communities

Child Care Subsidy

Family Support

Research & Evaluation

Child Care Resource & Referral

Healthy Kids Collaborative



## Learn more about our Programs

Down East Partnership for Children offers a variety of services and resources for families with children ages 0-8. Scan the QR code to the right to view all of DEPC's family services and our programs for 2023!



## Your donation builds dreams for our children!

Have you ever wondered how you could make a difference in the lives of children in your own community? You can make that difference simply by supporting Down East Partnership for Children. Your donation helps to provide support for the many programs and opportunities necessary in helping to fulfill our mission of "launching every child as a healthy, lifelong learner by the end of the third grade." No matter the amount, when you make the decision to give, you become a part of our mission, and we, along with the children in our community, have two words for you; **Thank You!**

### Our Vision

We believe that all children and their families can reach their full potential when surrounded by a united and supportive community.

### Our Mission

Launching every child as a healthy, lifelong learner by the end of third grade!

### Our Goals



#### Health

Health and development on track beginning before birth.



#### Families & Communities

Engaged families and coordinated communities.



#### Early Care & Education

High quality early care and education.



#### Ready Schools

Effective teaching and learning for K-3 students, inside and out, 365 days a year.



Please make checks, corporate matches, or other gifts payable to:  
DEPC, P.O. Box 1245, Rocky Mount, NC 27802, ATTN: Jackie Kearney

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_



#### Be A Champion

Please accept my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help give children a brighter future.

☐ Make it a monthly donation to be included in the Champions Circle.



#### Volunteer

Please contact me with volunteer opportunities with DEPC.



#### Fifth Annual Fore Every Child Golf Classic

- ☐ \$100 Hole Sponsorship
- ☐ \$300 Team Sponsor (4-person team)
- ☐ Prize donation for raffle  
(Gift certificate, promotional item like hat, t-shirt, etc.)

**JOIN US!**  
April 21,  
2023



#### Monthly Gift

Make a Monthly Gift to DEPC. Please contact me with more information.



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



a partner in the  
smart start network



\*DEPC is qualified as a charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to DEPC are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.