

Durham County's Efforts to Use Data to Drive Policy Making

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**Presentation to the
North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC)**

August 12, 2017

Background:

Importance of Assessment and Intervention During Early Childhood

- One million new neural connections formed every second
 - After age 5, pruning decreases connections
 - Vocabulary gap present by age 24 months
 - Warm/responsive parenting has impact, but parents need support to succeed



- **Family Connects:** Universal assessment of needs at birth, followed by connection to community resources, has population impact

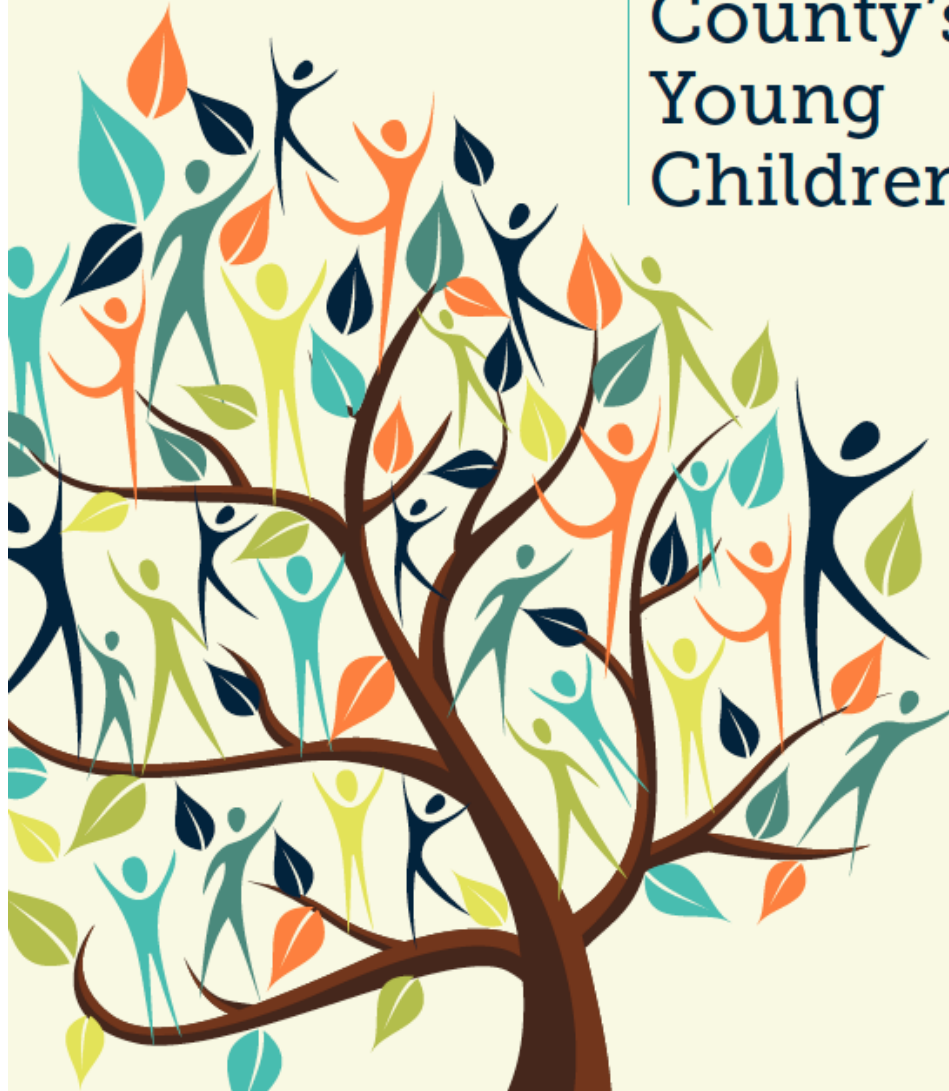


- **NC Pre-K:** A year of high-quality pre-k can close gap



2017

State of
Durham
County's
Young
Children



State of Durham County's Young Child Task Force

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Findings and Recommendations



Adverse Childhood Experiences

- 5% of young children are the subject of a maltreatment report.
- 47% of families of newborns have a risk that requires services.
- 12% of new mothers have a significant mental health problem.
- 7% of new mothers screen positive for substance abuse.
- 16% live in a home where housing costs exceed 50% of income.
- 7% live in a household where there is no working parent.

From Durham Connects interviews and administrative data



#1

RECOMMENDATION

Provide trauma-informed services in a systemic way to build resiliency in young children.

These services include:

- screening for adverse childhood experiences, and
- training parents and school personnel to address trauma in children.



Birth and Maternal Health

- About a third of Durham babies are born to mothers who do not receive prenatal care in the first trimester.
- Relative to black and Hispanic women, white women are much more likely to receive prenatal care in their first trimester.



#2

RECOMMENDATION

Increase efforts to educate the community about preconception and prenatal services available in Durham.

Outreach efforts should focus in particular on the Hispanic and black communities.



Early Childhood

- Slots in licensed center and in home-based care are available for only 45% of infants and toddlers and 66% of preschool-aged children.
- 38% of Durham children enter kindergarten with a reading proficiency at or above grade level.



#3

RECOMMENDATION

Improve the availability, affordability, and quality of early child care and education in Durham, with the goal of improving all children's preparedness for kindergarten.



Kindergarten to Grade 3

- 53% of Durham 3rd graders in public and charter schools score below grade level in reading.
- 20% of Durham 3rd graders have limited English proficiency (vs. 14% statewide)
- 14% of Durham children grades K-3 missed 11 or more days of school in a year.



#4

RECOMMENDATION

Expand educational and support services in grades kindergarten through three so that Durham's children meet or exceed the state average for reading and math proficiency.



Data

- Data are not available on many important health and well-being indicators for young children.



#5

RECOMMENDATION

Improve data collection across agencies and age groups so that community stakeholders can continue to identify the areas of greatest need and to track progress in these areas that have been identified as a focus.

Better data tracking will also determine if efforts to improve the quality of life for Durham County's young children are successful.



State of Durham County's Young Children

Research and writing for this report were provided by Yu Bai, Amy Dominello Braun, Beth Gifford, and Kelly Evans at the Duke Center for Child and Family Policy, and Edward Fiske, former Education Editor of The New York Times.

To view the full report online, visit:

childandfamilypolicy.duke.edu/durhams-young-children

