



partnershipforchildren

JOHNSTON COUNTY a partner in the
Smart Start network



2024 - 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Bright Futures for Johnston County Children





A letter from our **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Partners,

Reflecting on the past year, I feel immense pride and gratitude for the incredible work our team has done to support children, families, and childcare providers in our community. Even through times of change and some uncertainty, we achieved a great deal. We stayed true to our mission, and our collective strength, resilience, and commitment made a lasting impact on the lives of those we serve.

This past year, we expanded our playgroups to Benson to reach more families and hosted our first-ever Child Care Academy to support our local childcare workforce. Whether through new initiatives, community partnerships, or innovative solutions to ongoing challenges, we've stayed focused on our goal of ensuring children are prepared to succeed in kindergarten.

None of this would have been possible without the support of our community, including our Board, volunteers, and generous donors. Every donation, every hour of volunteer time, every collaboration has made a meaningful difference. It is with the help of others that we can continue our work, adapting to the evolving needs of the families and childcare providers we serve.

As you read this report, I invite you to take a moment to celebrate the collective impact we've had. We've made significant progress, but the work is far from over. The coming year presents new opportunities to deepen our impact, expand our reach, and continue to provide essential services and resources that are crucial to the well-being of young children and those who care for them.

Our vision is simple, yet powerful: Bright futures for Johnston County Children. I am incredibly proud that we continue to shine in our efforts to build a brighter future for Johnston County's children.

Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission and for being an integral part of our journey. Together, we will continue to make a difference one child, one family, and one community at a time.

With heartfelt appreciation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Candy Scott".

Candy Scott
Executive Director

Our Vision

Bright futures for Johnston County children

Our Mission

The Partnership effectively utilizes a multitude of resources to ensure that Johnston's youngest residents and their families receive educational, health, and emotional support services, preparing children for lifelong success.

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ALLISON BOYD, CURRENT BOARD CHAIR

The dedicated staff of the Partnership serves Johnston County faithfully, seeking to create bright futures for our youngest residents. Through excellent programs for families, dedicated support for childcare providers, and collaborations with the broader community, they have achieved success. It is an honor to serve them as this year's board chair. My journey to this position is a credit to the Partnership team's dedication and skillful cultivation of the gifts they find in others. As I have progressed from program participant to servant leader, their support has been invaluable. I invite our community to join me in celebrating the Partnership's accomplishments and to continue encouraging and supporting them in their vital work of preparing our youth for lifelong success.



Staff

Maria Aleman • Angela Baker • Debbie Battle • Myra Burrell • Wendy Casey • Alicia Davis
Emily Englehart • Lorena Esparza • Gabriela Espinoza • Vanessa Barbosa Fonseca
Diane Godwin • Savannah Grubb • Melissa Johnson • Melissa King • Taylor Krueger
Cindy Laporte • Heather Machia • Karen Mills • Yaimeli Montero • Lauren Trogon
Leticia Urbina • Jennifer Warren • Elizabeth Williams • Jennifer Williams • Carrie Wright



Special Recognition

Maria Aleman graduated
Leadership Johnston



Allison Boyd received the 2025 Karen
W. Ponder Leadership Award



In the Community

JOCO WORKS



SOJO United Day



Clayton Harvest Festival



Paws for Reading



Family Resource Center Our Family Resource Center offers programs to caregivers that provide opportunities to build social connections and access concrete supports, such as diapers - two elements proven to help children thrive, according to the Five Protective Factors for Strengthening Families Framework. Providing a space where families can meet new people and gain emotional support has been shown to make positive outcomes more likely for children and parents alike.



referrals
made



87% utilized
services

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn A playgroup offers fun, interactive sessions for parents and caregivers to support their child's development, build relationships, gain skills, and prepare children for school success using story-based activities and child-led play.



Children



Caregivers

94%
reported giving the
child in their care
opportunities to learn
and try new things

"I didn't realize the importance of playtime until I started attending the playgroup. I have also learned new activities that I can do at home with my daughter."

Parenting Programs Our programs are known to have an impact on Adverse Childhood Experiences and the Five Protective Factors while also preventing child abuse. This is achieved by providing families with practical strategies and support to handle challenging situations and build positive parent-child relationships.

Circle of Parents

This support group is led by the participants alongside a facilitator, and there are groups for parents of children with special needs, grandparents and kinship care, and Spanish-speaking parents.

The "Circle of Parents Support Group is amazing, and I talk about it all the time with other families I meet that may have a child or children with special needs."

Nurturing Parenting Program

This class explores topics that arise when raising children birth to five, like discipline and developing empathy.

Incredible Years

This class provides strategies for managing challenging behaviors in children ages three to five.

"Incredible Years is important to me because it showed me that we all have the same struggles with children. It also showed that you can find ways to connect with your children."

Program Outcomes

74

participants amongst
3 parenting programs

Showed positive
impacts on all Five
Protective Factors



Significant increases
in positive parenting
practices



Significant decreases
in harsh discipline
practices





Inclusive Child Care

Our Child Development Specialist plays a critical role in ensuring young children are on track to meet important developmental milestones. They recently completed **36 developmental assessments**, providing essential screenings to identify any potential delays. Based on these findings, the specialist successfully facilitated **23 referrals** for follow-up services. With a strong **61% use rate** for these referrals, the specialist's efforts are directly connecting families to the necessary support, making a tangible difference in children's early development and well-being.

Child Care Academy

Our Child Care Academy is a three-week program that offers free, comprehensive training and support to individuals interested in pursuing a career in childcare. Participants complete all required training, observe classrooms, learn about interviewing and professionalism, and create a professional portfolio. The Academy is designed for individuals with no prior experience working in a licensed child care facility, who will qualify as Teacher Assistants upon graduating.



Across

3

Academies



26

Graduates



14

Hired in
Licensed Facilities



4

Pursuing
Higher Education

"The Child Care Academy provides invaluable insight, training, and assistance to individuals who wish to pursue a career in early childhood education. One of the greatest benefits of hiring a graduate of this program is that they enter the workforce with the necessary state credentials and foundational training. This allows directors to focus on integrating them into their school community, fostering relationships with students, families, and fellow educators. Kids 'R' Kids Clayton has directly benefited from this partnership by hiring three outstanding educators from the program. Because the Academy has already laid the groundwork, these teachers were prepared and adaptable from day one."

Quality Child Care High-quality child care improves social, language, and pre-math skills, while reducing behavioral issues and making the kindergarten transition easier. The Partnership improves child care access through various support services and \$995,000 in funding for the county's child care subsidy program. We also provide services to support early childhood educators, including professional development trainings, coaching and consultation, and higher education support.

98%
of training
participants
gained skills they
could use at work
immediately



95 Trainings



540 Staff



86 Facilities

4,611

Children
Impacted



104

staff members
received education-
based salary
supplements from
WAGE\$



"Unfortunately, this career path does not pay much. The WAGE\$ Program helps ease that deficit for me. When I have less financial stress, I have more time to plan good experiences for my class."



Local Interagency Coordinating Council

LICC promotes a community-wide vision of interagency cooperation in supporting children, birth to five, with or at risk for disabilities, and their families. LICC collaborated with **12 community organizations** to provide vision, hearing, and developmental screenings along with information from community resources. In total, **35 children were screened and 26 referrals were made.**



Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library provides free books monthly to children from birth through age 5, fostering early literacy skills, a love for reading, and preparing them for success. Due to state funding capacity, we've temporarily closed registrations as of February 2025. If this program has impacted your family, please contact your legislators to advocate for funding.



7,418
children

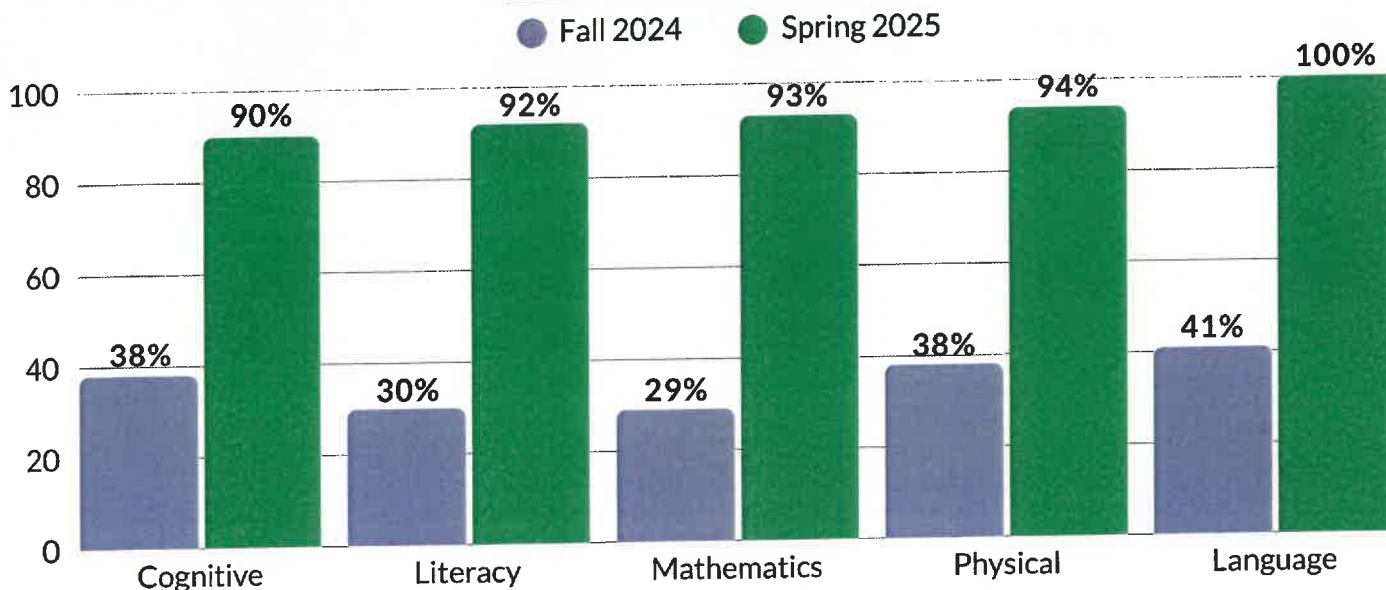
80% of families
reported increased
reading frequency



NC Pre-K NC Pre-K offers high-quality education to eligible 4-year-olds, improving their math, language, and literacy skills. Through play-based learning, NC Pre-K students develop cognitive, social, and emotional skills necessary for success.

366
children served through NC Pre-K

NC Pre-K Student Growth



Safe Kids Johnston County

Safe Kids Johnston County is a coalition of local agencies and individuals dedicated to reducing death and injury among children through prevention, intervention, and education. The group hosts several community events, including car seat checks, medication disposals, hot car displays, and bicycle rodeos.



203 car seats evaluated
86 car seats provided



79% of evaluated seats were not installed or used correctly

Read to Grow Johnston County

Read to Grow is a collaborative striving to engage all stakeholders in the efforts to ensure each child in our community reads proficiently by 3rd grade, develops a love for reading, and unlocks their full potential for success. Read to Grow works to address the three pillars of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading: summer learning loss, kindergarten readiness, and chronic absenteeism.

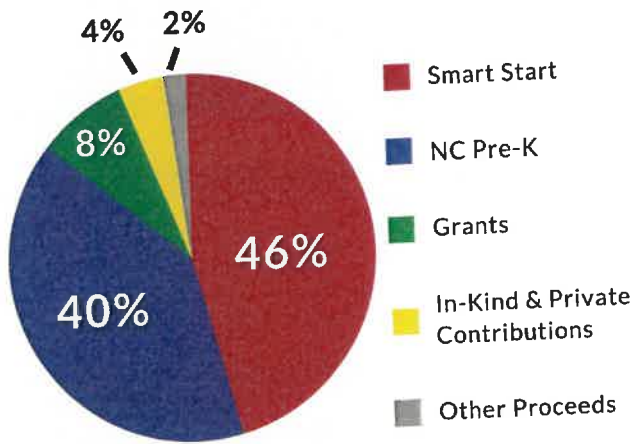
"These partnerships are more than events; they are stepping stones toward lasting change. Our stakeholders serve as trusted messengers, offering spaces and support where it's most needed. In turn, Read to Grow provides resources, expertise, and opportunities for children to thrive. When we come together, our shared resources and relationships create a brighter future for Johnston County's children."



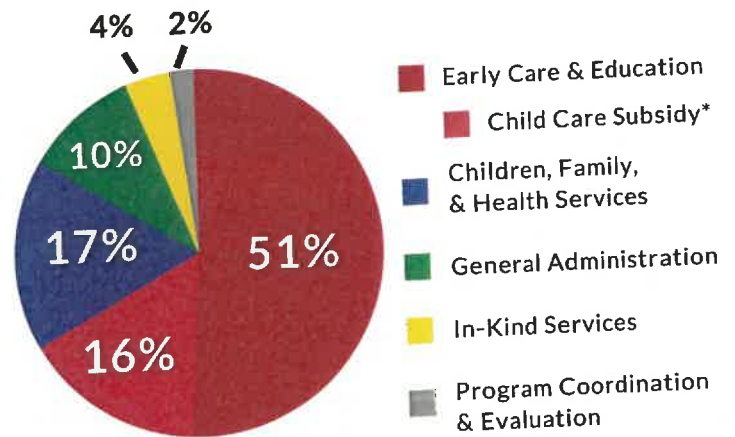
Our Summer Literacy Infusion Program, designed to combat the "summer slide," by engaging children in targeted literacy activities resulted in an impressive **88%** of students maintaining or improving their reading levels.

Financials

Resources - \$6,100,113



Expenditures - \$6,100,146



*Providing subsidy to families helps pay for quality child care so they can work or attend school.

Volunteer Support

A heartfelt thank you to all our wonderful volunteers!
Our community wouldn't be the same without your contributions.



219
volunteers



\$26,932.28
value of volunteer time



847
volunteer hours



To volunteer, contact Jennifer Williams, jwilliams@pfcjc.org, 919-750-3703.

Fore the Kids Golf Tournament



Donors

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Jennifer Williams • Morgan Forrester-Ray • Tim Johnson • Bryant Spivey • Johnnie Pippin

100% donor support from our Board of Directors.