



# *News Release*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Wake County SmartStart to Step Up and Act for Children** *Organization to participate in call for investment in child health and early education*

Raleigh, N.C. –**Wake County SmartStart (WCSS) is proud to be one of the more than 30 co-sponsors of Step Up and Act for Children 2009, a national event which is organized locally by Action for Children North Carolina.** On October 5 from 11:15 until 12:30 p.m., Wake County SmartStart will join child advocates from across North Carolina to assemble at the Old Capitol building in downtown Raleigh and call on the state’s leaders to make children’s issues a higher priority by increasing investments in children’s health and early education. North Carolina’s Step Up for Children 2009 is part of a nationwide effort organized to galvanize public support for a shift in spending towards children and families.

“Regrettably, the next two years will be difficult for North Carolina’s children, as our state’s operating budget for that period allows for reduced funding in so many programs and services from which our children previously benefitted. Thus, our partnership with Action for Children North Carolina and many other child advocates to promote the importance of investing in children’s health and early education comes at an opportune time,” explains Pam Dowdy, Wake County SmartStart Executive Director. “For 13 years, WCSS has worked to ensure children are prepared for success in school and life. Health care and education that are available, affordable and of high-quality are key pieces in ensuring our children grow into productive adults who contribute to the long term well-being of their communities.”

Wake County SmartStart is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure every child in Wake County, birth to 5, is prepared for success in school and life. Created in 1996, Wake County SmartStart works to improve the quality, accessibility and affordability of child care settings, provide preventive health and early intervention services and offer family support services. The organization also promotes, supports, and advocates for the needs of young children living in Wake County. For more information about Wake County SmartStart, its partners and projects, visit [www.wakesmartstart.org](http://www.wakesmartstart.org) or call (919) 851-9550.

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