



Early Childhood Guide

Last Updated: 02/08/2022

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1.0 Purpose of the Guide

NC InCK's Early Childhood Guide provides information about early childhood programs and resources available in Alamance, Durham, Granville, Orange, and Vance counties. This guide is best used in working with families with children birth to age 6. It is intended to help Family Navigators support families in identifying child care and early childhood education options that meet a family's needs. This guide is also intended to help Family Navigators support families in figuring out how to pay for these options. In addition, this guide provides information on home visiting and parenting support, mental and behavioral health, early literacy, early intervention, and Kindergarten Readiness. The early childhood landscape is robust but complicated. The tips located throughout this guide can assist Family Navigators in supporting families through this important stage in their children's lives.

2.0 Early Childhood Education Settings

High quality early childhood education experiences are crucial to young children's well-being. Connecting young children to high quality educational opportunities is one of the most important actions Family Navigators can take to promote healthy development and learning. Options for high quality early childhood education are described below. Details about how to find and pay for early childhood education can be found in [Section 3](#) and [Section 4](#).

2.1 Early Head Start and Head Start

Early Head Start and Head Start are federally funded programs providing educational experiences for children ages birth through 5 in low-income families. Early Head Start serves children ages birth through 2 and Head Start serves ages 3 through 5. Services are free for accepted children. Early Head Start and Head Start provide a curriculum-based learning environment for children as well as opportunities for children to socialize with their peers and with certified staff.

Early Head Start and Head Start prioritize children and families who answer "yes" to any of the following questions:

- Does the child have a documented disability or a suspected one?
- Does the family currently receive TANF or Work First benefits?
- Does the family have a safe place to live?
- Is a parent currently in the military or a veteran?
- Does the child receive SSI benefits?
- Does the family speak another language?
- Is the child in a foster care placement?

2.1.1 Applying to Head Start and Early Head Start

Families need to submit applications and all supporting documents to be considered for this program. Applications are generally open year-round. Early Head Start and Head Start programs usually have a waitlist that is need-based; therefore, families should be encouraged to apply at any time.

Below please find county-specific links to register for Early Head Start and Head Start programs:

Table 1. County-specific registration links for Early Head State and Head Start

County	Entity	Programs Offered
Alamance	Early Learning Community	Early Head Start and Head Start
Durham	Durham Partnership for Children	Early Head Start
	Families & Communities Rising	Early Head Start and Head Start
Granville	Franklin, Vance Granville Opportunity, Inc.	Early Head Start and Head Start
Orange	Families & Communities Rising	Head Start & Early Head Start
	Chapel Hill Carrboro Pre-K/Head Start	Head Start
	Orange County Pre-K	Head Start
Vance	Franklin, Vance Granville Opportunity, Inc.	Early Head Start and Head Start

2.2 NC Pre-K: for children who will turn 4 years old by August 31st

The [NC Pre-K Program](#) is an excellent option for parents seeking high-quality educational experiences to enhance school readiness for eligible four-year-old children. The NC Pre-K program requirements are designed to ensure that a high-quality pre-kindergarten classroom experience is provided for eligible four-year-old children in each local NC Pre-K Program and that, to the extent possible, uniformity exists across the state. Programs are also required to meet the [NC Child Care Rules](#).

NC's Pre-K program meets a number of nationally accepted benchmarks for measuring quality early learning. These include:

- Comprehensive Early Learning Standards
- Staff who are required to meet education/licensure requirements
- 1:9 staff/child ratio
- Developmental screens and referral
- Evidence-based curriculum and formative assessments
- Monitoring and nutritional requirements.

NOTE: NC Pre-K offers programs in both public and private settings. Public settings include Head Start programs, detailed in [Section 2.1](#).

2.2.1 Applying for NC Pre-K Enrollment

Family Navigators can play an important role in making families aware of NC Pre-K enrollment deadlines and supporting them in completing NC Pre-K applications. Families need to go through a thorough application process for NC Pre-K programs in their communities. Applications commonly ask families for proof of residency, birth certificates, and demonstration of income eligibility. Table 1, shown below, provides links to NC Pre-K enrollment information for each county in the NC InCK service area with details on the required documents and the application deadline.

Eligibility:

- The child must be four years old on or before August 31st of the program year
- Family must have a gross income at or below 75% of the State Median Income (SMI) which in 2021 was \$60,552
 - *NOTE: 20% of age-eligible children enrolled may have family incomes in excess of 75% SMI if they have documented risk factors in specific categories including developmental disability, Limited English Proficiency, educational need, or chronic health condition. Therefore, even families with income about the SMI should be encouraged to inquire and apply.*

Although a child may meet one or more of the eligibility factors above, placement is not guaranteed in an NC Pre-K classroom. Waiting lists exist in counties when funding is not sufficient to serve all eligible children.

Table 2. NC Pre-K (age 3-5)

County	NC Pre-K Enrollment Information
Alamance	Alamance County Pre-K Contact Janay Powell, NC Pre-K Coordinator, by phone at 336-513-0063 or email jpowell@alamancechildren.org
Durham	Durham County Pre-K Call 1-833-773-5338 or email prek@childcareservices.org
Granville	Granville County Pre-K Contact Vickie Hines, Early Childhood Coordinator, by phone at 919-693-4613 ext. 101203 or email hinesvs@gcs.k12.nc.us
Orange	Orange County Pre-K

Contact Ellen Perry-Kaji by phone at **919-732-9136 ext. 18003** or email ellen.perry-kaji@orange.k12.nc.us

Vance

[Vance County Pre-K](#)

Call **(252) 433-9230**

3.0 Finding Child Care

High-quality child care experiences and safe, stable, nurturing environments are critical for children’s healthy development. High quality child care is also critical for parents who work. Choosing child care is one of the most important decisions families make, and it can be difficult to find reliable information about child care options. All five NC InCK counties have created the [Child Care Referral Central](#), a collaborative that supports families in finding child care in NC InCK’s region. Supports from the Child Care Referral Central include free referrals to child care programs that meet a family’s needs and desires and information about financial assistance as well as other helpful resources.

TIP: The Child Care Referral Central can be reached by calling this toll-free number: **1-855-EARLY-ED** or **1-855-327-5933**. Find more information, including a free online childcare search tool [here](#).

[Local Child Care Resource and Referral \(CCR&R\) agencies](#) are another resource that connect families to the Child Care Referral Center. All NC InCK counties are a part of Region 12– Child Care Services Association. They also help parents take the guesswork out of choosing care by providing:

- Referrals to local child care providers
- Information on state licensing requirements
- Information on where to get help paying for child care

CCR&Rs assist families by phone, in person, and in other ways that are tailored to each family. The majority of CCR&Rs have websites with child care information and resources. Many of these websites now have online child care search that allow families to find customized child care referrals on their own time.

4.0 Paying for Child Care

There are many different programs that can provide financial support to families paying for child care. The list below is adapted from the [Child Care Services Association](#). For questions about paying for child care, call the Child Care Referral Central at **1-855-327-5933**.

TIP: Family Navigators should encourage families to ask child care providers about financial assistance. Some programs will be willing to provide discounts or scholarships even if they do not have a formal program.

4.1 Child Care Subsidies

[The Child Care Subsidy Program](#) provides families with information and financial resources to find and afford quality child care for their children. Funds are administered by each county's Department of Social Services.

TIP: Although counties often have a waitlist to receive funding, Family Navigators should encourage families to apply. Even if families have applied previously, families should check in with their county administrator and ensure their contact information is up to date. Care subsidy workers will notify eligible families immediately once funds are available.

How to apply: Families can apply through their local DSS office in the county in which they reside.

The links below will provide county specific information to assist families with information and access to child care services:

- [Alamance](#)
- [Durham](#)
- [Granville](#)
- [Orange](#)
- [Vance](#)

Eligibility: The primary guardian must be working or attempting to find work, enrolled in school or a job training program, receiving child protective services, experiencing a crisis, and/or have a child who has developmental needs.

Note that most families are required to pay 10% of their child care costs based upon their gross monthly income (if applicable).

Family Navigators can use the table below to determine whether families may meet the financial criteria to receive a child care subsidy.

Table 3. The Initial Maximum Income Eligibility Limits for Subsidized Child Care Assistance

200% Federal Poverty Level (All children ages 0-5 and all children with special needs)						
Parent Fee Percentage	10% of Maximum Gross Monthly Income					
Family Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
Maximum Gross Monthly Income	\$2,147	\$2,903	\$3,660	\$4,417	\$5,173	\$5,930

Family Size	7	8	9	10	11	12
Maximum Gross Monthly Income	\$6,687	\$7,443	\$8,190	\$8,947	\$9,703	\$10,460

Source: www.ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Services/Financial-Assistance/Do-I-Qualify

For general information about the Child Care Subsidy, please visit the [NC DHHS website](#).

4.1.1 Tax Credits

Parents who have child care expenses and pay federal and/or state income taxes may be eligible to receive assistance through federal and state tax credits, including:

- Child and Dependent Care Tax Credits
- Child Tax Credit for families with children
- Earned Income Tax Credit for low-income families

For more information and updated tax credit information, please see visit the following websites:

- [2020 Tax Credit Information for Families](#)
- [The Child Care Referral Central](#)

4.1.2 Child Care Services Association (CCSA) Scholarship Program

[Child Care Services Association \(CCSA\)](#) oversees a scholarship program for families in Durham and Orange Counties as well as families affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill.

Eligibility:

- Each parent in the household must demonstrate full-time need for child care. This is usually in the form of 30 or more weekly hours of work, a full-time student schedule, or a combination of the two.
- Household income from all sources must not exceed the maximum income limits by family size for the county or program for which they are being considered. See the chart below for more information.

Table 4. Household income limits by family size for CCSA Scholarship Program

Family Size	Durham County General and Smart State Scholarships	Orange County General and UNC-Chapel Hill Scholarships
2	\$53,202	\$76,069
3	\$65,719	\$93,966
4	\$78,236	\$111,864
5	\$90,753	\$129,761
6	\$103,270	\$147,658

Learn more at www.childcareservices.org/families/paying-for-child-care/child-care-scholarship.

5.0 Types of Child Care

5.1 Center-based Child Care

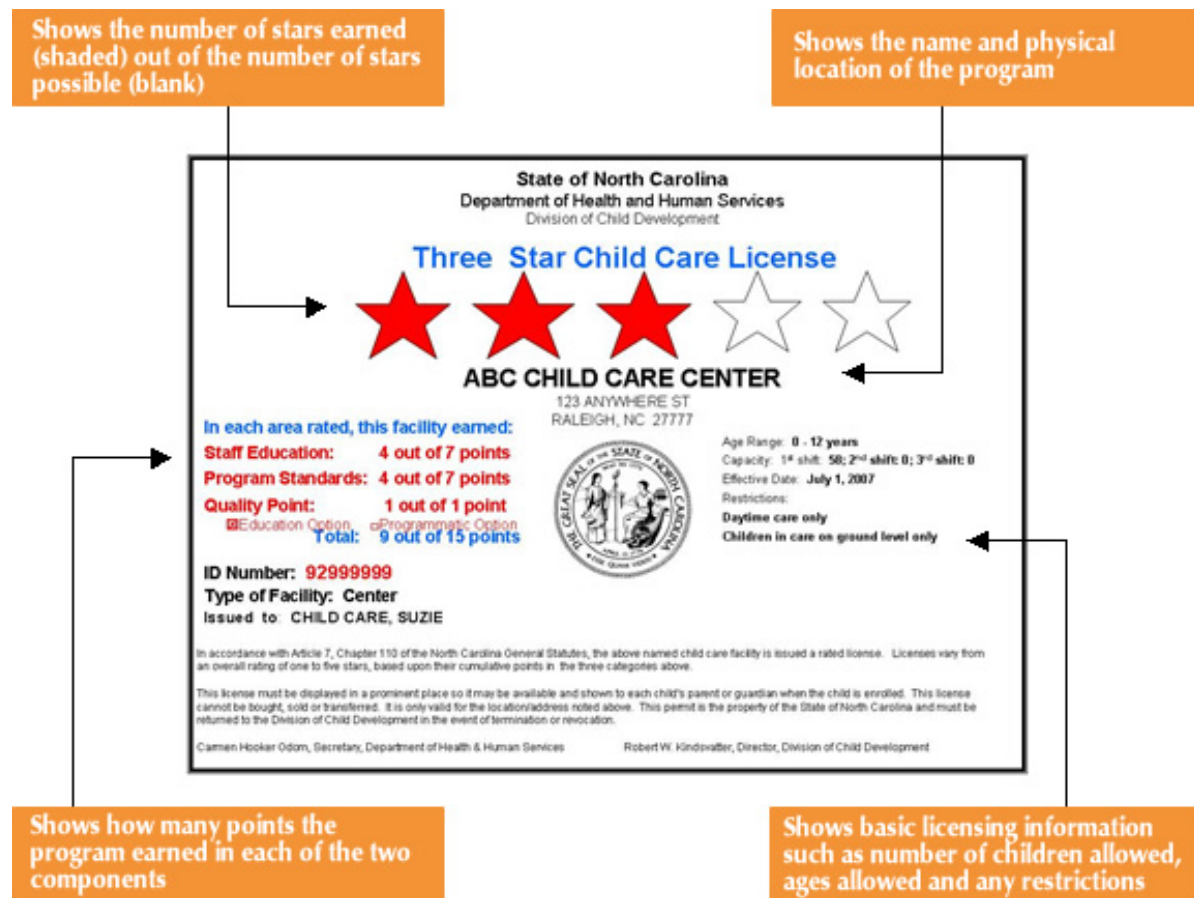
Center-based child care programs typically have a similar structure to Kindergarten classrooms. Children will enter once they are eligible and, therefore, Center-based child care programs can serve as a good transition into the public school system. Center-based child care often incorporates organized programs, a curriculum, and opportunities for children to socialize with their peers. Staff who work at center-based child care facilities are typically certified for a particular age group. Nonprofit organizations, private companies, and religious entities all operate center-based options. Depending on the preference of the family, center-based child care may be a good fit.

Family Navigators can support families in determining if center-based child care is a good fit for their children by reviewing a list of questions found [here](#). In addition, Family Navigators can help families find high quality centers by reviewing ratings. Each center-based child care facilities receive a rating from the NC Department of Health and Human Services based on two components:

- **Staff education standards** include the percentage of administrators and teachers who have completed credential requirements and the amount of child care experience staff members have.
- **Program standards** include criteria such as staff child ratios, activities available, and an environmental rating scale which measures the physical environment for safety and available equipment.
 - *NOTE: Religious-sponsored child care programs are not required to receive a star rating.*

Below is a sample rating diagram. Family Navigators and families have the right to request this from any child care facility being considered by a family. Ratings can also be found by reviewing the license information in this [NC DHHS Child Care Search Tool](#).

Figure 1. NC Department of Health and Human Services rating diagram



5.2 Family Child Care Homes (FCC)

Family child care homes (FCC) provide care for children in a residential setting. If a family is looking for a home environment that is less like a traditional school and has fewer children enrolled, this can be a good option. In NC, these homes cannot have more than 9 children under the age of 13. FCCs are licensed and therefore must meet requirements set by the state to be in operation. It is important to note that unlike Early Head Start, Head Start, and NC Pre-K, FCCs can have children of varying ages all in attendance together. Family Navigators should encourage families to visit a FCC prior to enrollment; however, this may be difficult as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

5.3 In Home (babysitter/nanny)

Families can have someone come to their home to care for their child. This allows the child to have individualized care. Families can independently search and locate a potential babysitter or nanny or connect to an agency for assistance. [Care.com](https://www.care.com) provides a list of potential babysitters and nannies that includes reviews, tips on questions to ask when interviewing candidates, and resources for how to set up appropriate payroll for an individual once they are hired. There are no scholarships or subsidies available for in-home babysitters or nannies, and therefore, this option requires the family to pay a babysitter or nanny directly.

6.0 Home Visiting and Parenting Support

Young children need safe, stable, and nurturing relationships to develop and learn optimally so that they will be ready to succeed in school. By connecting families to home visiting and parenting support programs, Family Navigators can play an important role in equipping families with the information, resources, and support they need to foster early relational health and reach essential developmental benchmarks. Home visiting and parenting support may be especially important options to offer to families whose children are not enrolled in programs outside the home.

6.1 Home Visiting Options

Home Visiting programs provide support to families from pregnancy through the first five years of a child's life. These programs provide education, connections with community resources, and a variety of targeted supports to help addressing needs of the family. Services are delivered in the homes of families, which makes home visiting programs convenient and personal, allowing a provider to gain a close understanding of how to provide assistance to a family.

6.2 Connect with a Home Visiting Program

Table 5. Home Visiting Programs

Program	Eligibility	Alamance	Durham	Granville	Orange	Vance
Attachment & Biobehavioral Catchup	Any guardian of a child 6 months to 48 months		Contact Kate Murray at kate.murray@duke.edu			
Family Connects	All children born in Durham county are automatically offered this service		Sign up for a visit through the Nurse Home Visit Sign-Up Form			
Healthy Families-Durham	First-time guardians who are pregnant or have a baby up to three months old. Families are selected based on whether they have one or more risk factors .		For referrals, call Griffin Sloop, Intake Coordinator, at (919) 385-0759.			

Granville-Vance District Health Department: Newborn Postpartum Home Visit	Available for all guardians within the first 60 days after delivery.			Contact Granville Public Health at (919) 693-2141		Contact Vance Public Health at (252) 492-7915
Parents as Teachers	All guardians from pregnancy through when a child is five	Contact Tracey Brown at (336) 513-0063 ext. 104 or at tbrown@alamancechildren.org		Contact Jackie Avent at (919) 693-4613 or at aventj@gcs.k12.nc.us		

For additional resources, visit the [National Home Visiting Resource Center](#) and [Healthy Families America](#).

6.3 Connect with a Parenting Support Program

Sometimes parents and caregivers need a little extra support as they want to provide the best care for their children. Parenting support programs are designed to offer families just that. Programs vary in what is offered and which families are eligible. Family Navigators should reassure families that accessing parenting support is not in any way a sign of failure but, rather, demonstrates a desire to create the best environment for a child.

TIP: Given the way NC InCK is determining which children are assigned a Family Navigator, it is likely that a child who is working with a Family Navigator will have complex health needs. Therefore, when determining which programs shown in the table below to prioritize, consider referring the family with [CMARC](#) and/or assisting the family in connecting with the [Family to Family Health Information Center](#).

Table 6. Parents Support Programs

Program	Eligibility	Alamance	Durham	Granville	Orange	Vance
CMARC	Families with children birth to age five who are at risk for developmental delay or disability or	Children can be referred using this form .				

	have been diagnosed with a developmental delay or disability are eligible. This program is run by local health department					
Community Response Program	Children birth to age 5 who have been reported to Child Protective Services (CPS) with reports closed or screened out at intake				Contact Alexa Hamel at 919-245-2748 or at ahamel@orangecounty.nc.gov	
H.E.A.R.T.S.	Parents age 12 through 22	Request more info here .				
Fatherhood of Durham	Fathers or soon-to-be fathers		Make a referral here			
Family to Family Health Information Center	This program is located in Wake County, NC InCK families with children who have or are at increased risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions can	Make a referral here or by calling 1-800-852-0042				

	access this resource					
Family Center Adolescent Parenting and Parent Support Programs	Available for parents up to age 25	To sign up or learn more, call 336-227-5601			To sign up or learn more, call 336-227-5601	
Kaleidoscope Play and Learn –	Families with children birth through age five	Contact Vivlica Rodgers at 336.513.0063 ext. 110 or at vrodgers@alamanchildren.org				
The Incredible Years	Ideal for children that have behavioral challenges or ADHD	Find a program here .				

Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)	Parents of children ages 2- 12	Find a program here .				
Welcome Baby	Parents with children birth through age five		Contact Patience Mukelabai, Program Coordinator, 919-560-7392 or at pmukelabai@dconc.gov			

7.0 Mental Health and Behavioral Health Support

Many children from birth to age 6 may benefit from early childhood mental health services to reduce the risk of long-term mental health issues. Early mental health challenges may be identified through parent or caretaker concerns or can be elevated by the NC InCK integrated care team.

Family Navigators play a critical role in helping to support healthy child development. Addressing behavioral, social, and emotional challenges early is important because it reduces the risk of mental health problems later on.

If Family Navigators identify a need for behavioral health support, they can follow the outline of the best next steps below:

- If a parent indicates a behavioral, social, or emotional concern, a formal evaluation with a primary care provider or behavioral health provider is an important next step.
- Encouraging a family to talk with their pediatrician or family doctor who can refer children to services and therapists who have experience with young children and evidence-based therapies is a great first step. These include, but are not limited to: parent-child interaction therapy, child-parent psychotherapy, and child-parent relationship therapy. A family may prefer that the Family Navigator support the process of finding an appropriate mental health specialist. If so, the Family Navigator can search [NCchildtreatmentprogram.org](https://www.ncchildtreatmentprogram.org) for providers.
- For children enrolled in an Early Head Start or Head Start Program, families are assigned a case manager or Family Engagement worker who can provide referrals to supports in the community. Some programs also have staff members that are licensed to provide interventions to families at no cost.

TIP: If a family has a child enrolled in an Early Head Start or Head Start program, encourage the family to talk to staff in their program about assessing for mental health needs and providing or referring to community organizations to meet those needs.

For more information about child mental and behavioral health see the [NC InCK Behavioral Health Service Guide](#). For more information on childhood trauma and resources to support families of children experiencing trauma, see [NC InCK's Foster Care Guide](#).

8.0 Early Literacy

Early, frequent exposure to books builds a lifelong love of learning, promotes language development, and sets the stage for school success. Children benefit from having access to a selection of books in their homes. Several community-based literacy programs offer free books and literacy supports to families, including home visiting focused on language development. These supports are offered at no cost to participating families. Examples of these programs in each county can be found in the table below.

Table 7. Community-based Literacy Resources

Program	Alamance	Durham	Granville	Orange	Vance
Book Harvest- Book Babies		For more info, visit this website .			
Dolly Party Imagination Library	For more info, visit this website .	For more info, visit this website .	For more info, visit this website .	For more info, visit this website .	For more info, visit this website .
Families Learning Together Initiative				For more info, visit this website and this website . Contact Alice Denson at 919-914-6153 or at Adenson@orangeliteracy.org	
Public Library Literacy Programs	For more info, visit this website .	For more info, visit this website .	For more info, visit this website .	For more info, visit this website .	For more info, visit this website .

Reach Out and Read	For more info, visit this website .				
Ready4K		For more info, visit this website .			

9.0 Early Intervention

9.1 For children from birth to age 3

Referring children from birth to age 3 for early intervention services can promote multiple aspects of development and help to put services into place that facilitate Kindergarten Readiness. Children may benefit from referral to a local [Children's Development Services Agency](#) (CDSA). CDSA is the lead agency for the NC Infant Toddler Program (NITP) which provides supports to children who have:

- A developmental delay
- Specific diagnosed physical or mental conditions that have a high probability of resulting in developmental delay

A complete list of conditions that result in eligibility for the NC Infant-Toddler Program can be found [here](#).

Family Navigators can refer a child directly to a local CDSA, encourage a family to do contact a local CDSA, or communicate with a child's health care provider about a referral to a local CDSA. Children in Durham, Granville, Orange, and Vance Counties can be referred to the Durham CDSA by contacting:

Portia Pope, Director
portia.pope@dhhs.nc.gov,
 Phone: 919-560-5600

Children in Alamance County can be referred to the Greensboro CDSA by contacting:

Debbi Kennerson
debbi.kennerson@dhhs.nc.gov,
 Phone: 336-334-5601

9.2 For children from ages 3 to 5

Children who are 3-5 years of age and not yet in kindergarten can receive screening and evaluation for developmental concerns through the local school districts and their Exceptional Children Preschool Programs. Referring children from ages 3 to 5 to these programs can help to put services into place that facilitate Kindergarten Readiness. Children may benefit from a referral for screening and evaluation if they:

- Have a developmental delay
- Received services previously through a local CDSA

Family Navigators can contact School District Preschool Coordinators directly or encourage families to do so using the contact information in the table below:

Table 8. Contact information for School District Preschool Coordinators

County	Contact	Phone number	Email
Alamance-Burlington	Kara Ballard	336-570-6644	kara_ballard@abss.k12.nc.us
Chapel Hill-Carrboro	Thea Wilson	919-918-2156 ext. 23104	twilson@chccs.k12.nc.us
Durham	Karen Thompson	919-560-2000 ext. 22162	karenc.thompson@dpsnc.net
	Suzanne Cotterman	919-560-3505 ext. 26011	suzanne.cotterman@dpsnc.net
	Vickie Hines		hinesvs@gcs.k12.nc.us
Granville	Chenita Roberts	919-528-2313	robertsc@gcs.k12.nc.us
Orange	Barbara Bossen	919-732-6138 ext. 18002	barbara.bossen@orange.k12.nc.us
Vance	Cassandra Evans	252-492-2127 ext. 2701	cevans@vcs.k12.nc.us

Additional information about the Exceptional Children's Program is [here](#).

10.0 Smart Start and The North Carolina Partnership for Children

Smart Start works to support children ages 0 to 5 across North Carolina by improving early care and education programs, providing parents with tools and resources, and ensuring children have access to quality preventive health care. Each of NC InCK's five counties is a part of an independent Local Partnership which receives funding and capacity building support from Smart Start. Many of the programs highlighted throughout this guide are administered by a Local Partnership.

TIP: If a Family Navigator is not sure what to do in support of a child, consider calling the appropriate Local Partnership to ask for help.

Please find contact information for each Local Partnership in the table below:

Table 9. Local Partnership Contact Information

County	Website	Contact information
Alamance	Alamance Partnership For Children	Call: 336-513-0063
Durham	Durham's Partnership for Children	Call: 919-403-6960
Orange	Orange County Partnership for Young Children	Call: 919-967-9091
Granville-Vance	Franklin-Vance-Granville Smart Start	Call: 252-433-9110

11.0 Kindergarten Readiness and Children’s Health Care Providers

Kindergarten Readiness is important because it is associated with greater academic success and better health outcomes. In North Carolina, Kindergarten Readiness refers to the development and learning expectation of students using a measure called the Early Learning Inventory (ELI). Only half of North Carolina children who are assessed are fully ready for kindergarten. To learn more about the ELI, please visit their website [here](#).

NC InCK created a Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle, a set of interventions that primary care providers can employ to help promote Kindergarten Readiness. Family Navigators can play a key role in connecting children to the early childhood programs and services that are part of the Bundle.

The Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle includes universal components that are applicable to all children at specific ages and flexible need-based components for children with specific needs. Need-based components can be delivered in clinic or through referrals. More information about The Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle can be found [here](#).

Table 9. NC InCK Kindergarten Readiness Promotion Bundle components

		BIRTH TO 3	3 TO 5
UNIVERSAL	Conduct well visit	✓	✓
	Office-based literacy promotion	✓	✓
	Developmental screening	✓	✓
	Social-emotional screening	✓	✓
	Fluoride varnish	✓	
	Hearing and vision screen		✓
NEED-BASED	Refer to Pre-K		✓
	Refer to CDSA	✓	✓
	Refer to Exceptional Children’s program	✓	✓
	Provide/refer to parenting support program	✓	✓

Provide/refer to early childhood mental health program	✓	✓
Refer to community-based literacy program	✓	✓

TIP: Encouraging families to attend well child visits regularly is the first important action that Family Navigators can take to support Kindergarten Readiness.

Family Navigators can learn more about the recommended schedule of well child visits from the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#).

Regular well child visits provide an opportunity for physicians and families to implement early interventions when needed. During visits, families can track the growth of their child, address any concerns they may have about their child's development, and learn more about milestones. Below are some questions or statements a Family Navigator can suggest for a family to ask a doctor during well child visits:

1. Can you share information with me about child's development?
2. Is my child on track for their age?
3. I noticed my child is not walking right now. Are there things I can do to help support them?
4. Can we talk about the different immunizations my child is encouraged to have?

A Family Navigator can also encourage a family to share information with the doctor about NC InCK and, if comfortable, invite them to be a part of the child's integrated care team.

12.0 Key Terms

As Family Navigators support families navigating services, they may come across the following terms:

- **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** Describes the services that a child between 3-21 years old must receive if they have an identified disability
- **NC Pre-K:** A program that provides high quality educational experiences for 4-year-old children
- **Durham Pre-K:** This program is specific to Durham, NC. Durham invests additional funds to provide support for children to attend Pre-K.
- **Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP):** A plan for children birth to age 2 that outlines the services they and their family will receive
- **Family Engagement Specialist:** An individual employed by a Head Start or Early Head Start program who provides case management to children and families
- **Child Care Subsidy:** State and federal funds that assist families with paying for child care services
- **Center-based child care:** Child care that is generally provided in a commercial setting such as schools, churches, and day care centers
- **Wrap-around care:** Care that is provided before and/or after traditional program hours

- **STAR Rated Licensing:** A rating system for center-based child care centers determined by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to evaluate quality of care (N.B. licensed child care facilities and family child care homes do not receive STAR ratings)
- **Dual Enrollment:** Refers to children that are enrolled in concurrently in two programs (for example, Head Start classrooms are often a part of the NC Pre-K program)
- **Head Start and Early Head Start:** Federal programs that promote early education for infants, toddlers, and pre-school-aged children
- **Smart Start:** An NC initiative that provides funds to the NC Partnerships for Children in each county to help children get ready for school and continue to succeed