Community Impact Report 2024-2025

Helping children from birth through age five receive the care, nurture, and education they need to thrive.

Smart Start Rowan

a partner in the Smart Start network

More Children Attending High Quality Care

2003	2024
34%	82%

Children age 0-5 enrolled in 4 or 5 star facilities

More High Quality Care Options for Families

2003	2024
2.98	4.67

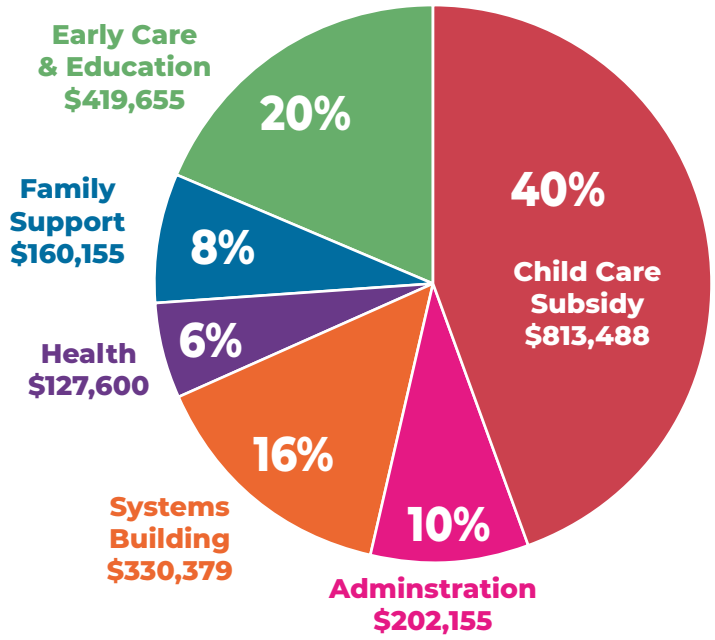
Average Star Rating for Children in 1-5 Star Care

More Early Childhood Teacher Education

2014	2024
47%	68%

Children age 0-5 enrolled in facilities with at least 75% of lead teachers with college degrees

Our Smart Start Investments



Our Other Investments

NC Pre-Kindergarten $1,883,729
CCR&R Core Services $20,197
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library $6,420
Reach Out and Read $13,624
Other $45,074

NORTH CAROLINA NC Pre-K Prekindergarten Program

The NC Pre-K program is designed to provide high-quality educational experiences to enhance school readiness for eligible four-year-old children. Children are prepared in all five of the developmental domains that are critical to children's overall well-being and success in reading and math as they enter school.

Number of Children: **377**
Number of Sites: **17**
Number of classrooms: **29**

Approaches to Play and Learning
Emotional and Social Development
Health and Physical Development
Language Development and Communication
Cognitive Development

Community Partners

Kannapolis City Schools
Local Child Care Facilities
Local Family Child Care Homes
Rowan County Department of Social Services
Rowan County Health Department
Rowan-Salisbury Schools
Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency - Head Start
Terrie Hess Child Advocacy Center

Administration Staff

Amy Brown,
Executive Director

Cinthia Rodriguez,
Director of Finance and Administration

Denise Heinke,
Director of Outreach and Development

Janira Hernandez,
Contracts and Administration Manager

Early Care and Education Availability and Affordability

Provides financial assistance with child care costs for eligible families, as well as enhancements to child care programs to support high quality early learning environments.

Programs Funded: Child Care Subsidy and Subsidy Services Support, Star License Enhancement (SLE)

117 Children (ages 0–5) received Smart Start child care subsidy assistance

20 Child care facilities and family child care homes, all 4 or 5 star, received monetary enhancements for participation in the SLE activity

Program Impact

100% of subsidized children were enrolled in regulated, licensed child care with the majority of those enrolled in 4- and 5-star facilities.

Early Care and Education Quality

Improves the quality of care for young children in local child care facilities, family child care homes, Head Start programs, public schools, and church preschools.

Programs Funded: Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC), Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R), NC Pre-K, Quality Enhancement & Support (NC Pre-K QES), Childcare Health Consultation (CCHC), WAGE$

75 Child care facilities/family child care homes received technical assistance (Note: This is a duplicated count based on the type of technical assistance provided)

146 Technical assistance opportunities were provided to early childhood professionals

55 Trainings/workshops were offered to early childhood professionals

24 Child care staff from 14 facilities/family child care homes utilized the Early Learning Resource Center

104 Teachers and directors received salary supplements through WAGE$

Program Impact

Of all Rowan County WAGE$ participants, 91% shared that the supplements help ease financial stress and 97% shared that the supplements help them feel more appreciated and recognized for their work.

Family Support, Child Health, Literacy, and Systems Building

Provides families with education, information, resources and support so their children can have the best start in life.

Programs Funded: Assuring Better Child Health & Development (ABCD), Community Awareness & Education, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL), Healthy Beginnings, Kaleidoscope Play & Learn (KPL), Program Coordination & Evaluation, Reach Out & Read (ROR), and Triple P

Over 8,500 Young children participated in child health and wellness programs offered by 6 medical practices, including Rowan County Health Department

339 Parents/caregivers participated in family support programs, including one-on-one and group parenting support, as well as parent/child playgroups

9,498 Children, age 0–5, received DPIL books

4,830 Books were distributed to children for parents to read at home, by 28 medical practitioners trained in the ROR program

440 Total participants attended 4 large parent-child interactive community events hosted by Smart Start Rowan

Program Impact

100% of caregivers that participated in the Triple P program felt it helped them deal more effectively with their child's behavior.

Program Staff

Laura Villegas, *Director of Programs*
Amanda May, *NC Pre-K Manager*
Betty Trujillo, *Early Education Manager*
Ermalyn Jaeck, *Lead Parent Educator*
Cathy Stewart, *NC Pre-K Coordinator*
Tania Cuevas, *Parent Educator*
Lizbeth Berio, *Program Assistant*
Lindsey Cuevas, *Resource Specialist*
Lisa Edwards, *ABCD/Reach Out and Read Coordinator*

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Tamara Sheffield
Melonie Thompson

OUR VISION

Our vision for Rowan County is that every child will receive the education, nurturing, and support needed to provide the foundation for them to grow into healthy, productive citizens.

OUR MISSION

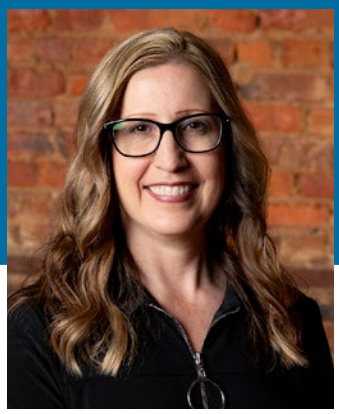
Smart Start Rowan will collaborate to offer services, using a whole child approach, that foster growth, encourage learning, and provide resources and support to community partners and families of children, prenatal through age five in Rowan County.

The Smart Start Rowan Board of Directors and staff are happy to share with you our Fiscal Year 2024-2025 investments and services provided to our community. We're extremely proud of these accomplishments, as we continue helping prepare young children for future success through quality programs in the early years. All children need and deserve a "Smart Start", and we want them to enter school healthy, ready, and able to learn. We work closely with partner agencies, to ensure children have access to the following:

- Affordable and high-quality child care
- Health care and early intervention services
- Parenting support and education programs
- Early literacy opportunities

The work of Smart Start Rowan is critically important to the economic development of our community. Higher investments in early childhood programming pay off in the long run, with decreased remediation, healthcare, and court costs, as well as a more productive and viable workforce in later years.

If you are reading this report, it means you care about investing in and supporting Rowan County's young children, families, and early educators. I hope you will consider getting involved with Smart Start Rowan, to help us fulfill our vision that every child will receive the education, nurturing, and support needed to provide the foundation for them to grow into healthy, productive citizens. If you would like more information about services provided by our agency, or to volunteer or donate to support our work, please call 704-630-9085, check out our website at www.rowan-smartstart.org, find us on social media, or visit us at 1329 S. Jake Alexander Boulevard in Salisbury.



Thank you,

Amy Brown,
Executive Director

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a partner in the Smart Start Network

Donate Today