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# Community Impact Report 2024-2025

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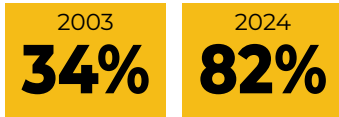
Helping children from birth through age five receive the care, nurture, and education they need to thrive.



a partner in the  
Smart Start network



### More Children Attending High Quality Care



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



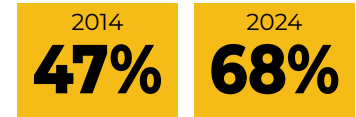
### More High Quality Care Options for Families



Average Star Rating for Children in 1-5 Star Care

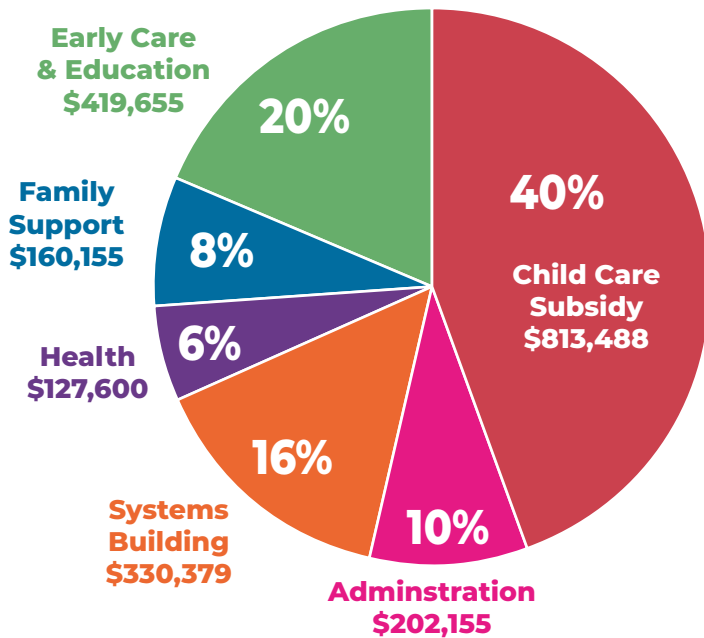


### More Early Childhood Teacher Education



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



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

## Board of Directors

Jeanne LeMaster, Chair  
 Lorie Aldridge, Vice Chair  
 Henry Kluttz, Secretary  
 Toi Degree, Treasurer  
 Billie Burris  
 Lisa Clevinger  
 Barbara Corriher

Susan Herrington  
 Sheila Igo  
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 Erik Lipscomb  
 Meredith Littell  
 Jerry Miller  
 Melissa Oleen  
 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](http://www.rowan-smartstart.org), find us on social media, or visit us at 1329 S. Jake Alexander Boulevard in Salisbury.



Thank you,

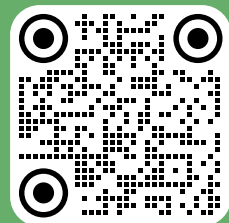
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy A. Brown".

Amy Brown,  
Executive Director

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Salisbury, NC 28146  
704-630-9085  
[www.rowan-smartstart.org](http://www.rowan-smartstart.org)



a partner in the Smart Start Network



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