

2007-2008



ANNUAL REPORT



The mission of Ashe County Partnership for Children is to nurture an active, supportive community that provides choices, opportunities and encouragement for all children and families of Ashe County to be healthy, educated and self-reliant.



Perspectives.....

The past Executive Directors have left a legacy of vision and innovative thinking in serving children and families in our community. Since moving to Ashe County this past summer, I have noticed the easy collaboration between local agencies to ensure our resources are used in ways that help families the most. I have also realized that the needs of a rural community are truly different from those in an urban setting, and policy-makers may not appreciate these differences as they set the requirements for funding opportunities. As the new Executive Director, I will continue the vision of making children and families a top priority in Ashe County.

This past year many volunteers worked tirelessly to streamline the operations of Family Central. The Partnership's Board decided that Family Central had grown enough to be "spun off" from the Partnership and into its own entity, Family Central Enterprise Corporation (FCEC). With FCEC handling the operation of the building and bettering the facilities for all the services its tenants offer, the Partnership can now focus more clearly on programs serving our children and families.

Like many of the families we work with in the community, we are currently facing the prospect of decreased funding due to the economy. Grants that we receive through the State of NC are being reduced, which means we have to be wise with our dollars. We are assessing the changing needs of families in our county and making sure the programs and services we fund truly meet these needs.

With 2008 being an election year, the political climate could change and affect the outlook on funding for services. The Partnership receives grants from Smart Start for programs for children birth to five years old, Even Start for family literacy, and several state sources for domestic violence awareness and prevention.

Transformation isn't easy, but it is a beautiful process that can yield incredible results. We are confronted with the necessity to change: by our economy, by the political atmosphere, and by our own high expectations for fiscal accountability. Our overarching goal is to ensure continuous improvement of our programs and services for the children and families in our community. While we rely on grant funding for many of our programs, we could not be successful without the support we receive from our community. We respect and appreciate all the donations we receive from the residents of Ashe County and will keep our actions transparent to the community.

On a different note, I want to brag about our staff. In my short time here, I have witnessed wonderful attitudes, a spirit of teamwork, and a willingness to do whatever is required to ensure children and families receive uninterrupted services. Despite a change in executive directors and the ongoing tumult of a changing funding environment, the Partnership's staff has exhibited a calm flow and a sense of peace. With this team there is no limit on how far we can rise above the downturn taken by our economy.

Please read through this Annual Report for success stories from some of our programs during fiscal year 2007-2008.

Sarah Wolf, Executive Director

Board Members.....

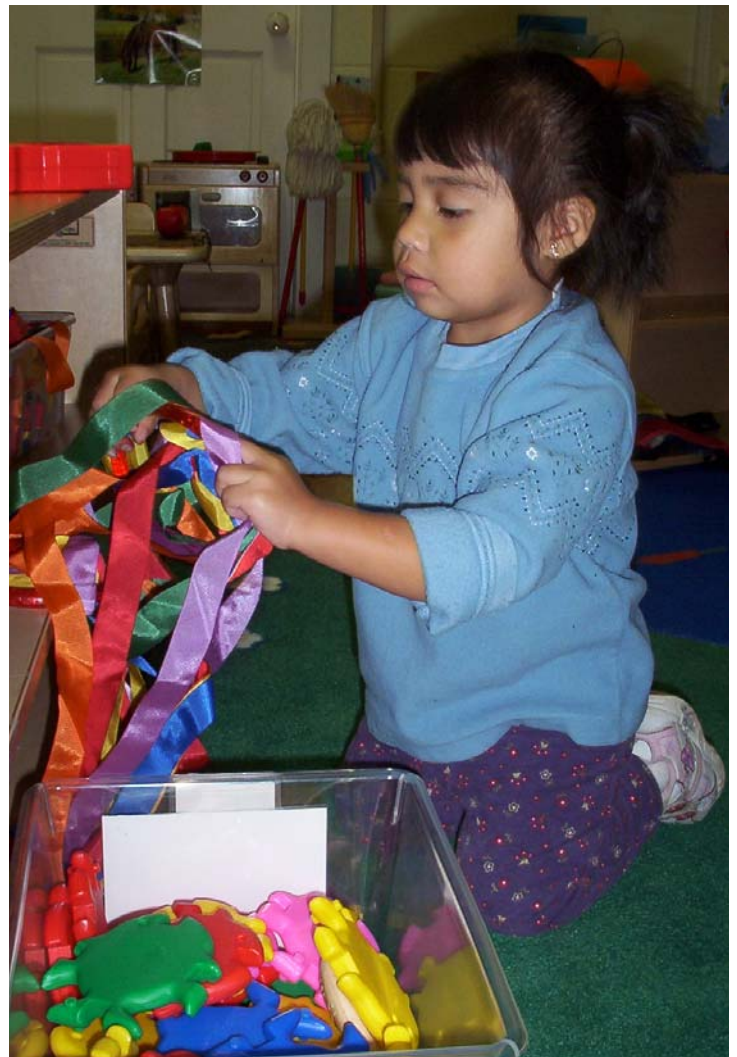
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Rick Powers
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Donna Weaver
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Financial Summary

Statement of Receipts, Expenditures, and Net Assets
(unaudited) for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2008

Receipts

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Smart Start Grants * | \$ 576,176 |
| State Awards | 82,963 |
| Federal Awards | 496,008 |
| Local Awards | 49,706 |
| Private Contributions | 275,001 |
| Special Fundraising Events | 7,664 |
| Interest & Investment Earnings | 2,337 |
| Building & Kitchen Operations | 166,075 |
| Accounting Services Reimbursements | 64,547 |
| Sales Tax Refunds | 6,034 |
| Other Receipts | 51,936 |
| Total Funds Administered * | \$ 1,778,44 |

Expenditures

| | |
|---|------------|
| Child Care & Educational Affordability | \$ 230,371 |
| Child Care & Educational Quality | 204,173 |
| Family Support | 421,444 |
| Health & Safety | 30,883 |
| Domestic Violence Prevention & Awareness | 349,616 |
| Family Central & Kitchen Operations | 315,892 |
| Management & General Support | 184,241 |
| Sales Tax Paid | 4,912 |

Total Expenditures \$ 1,741,53

Excess of Receipts Over Expenditures \$ 36,915

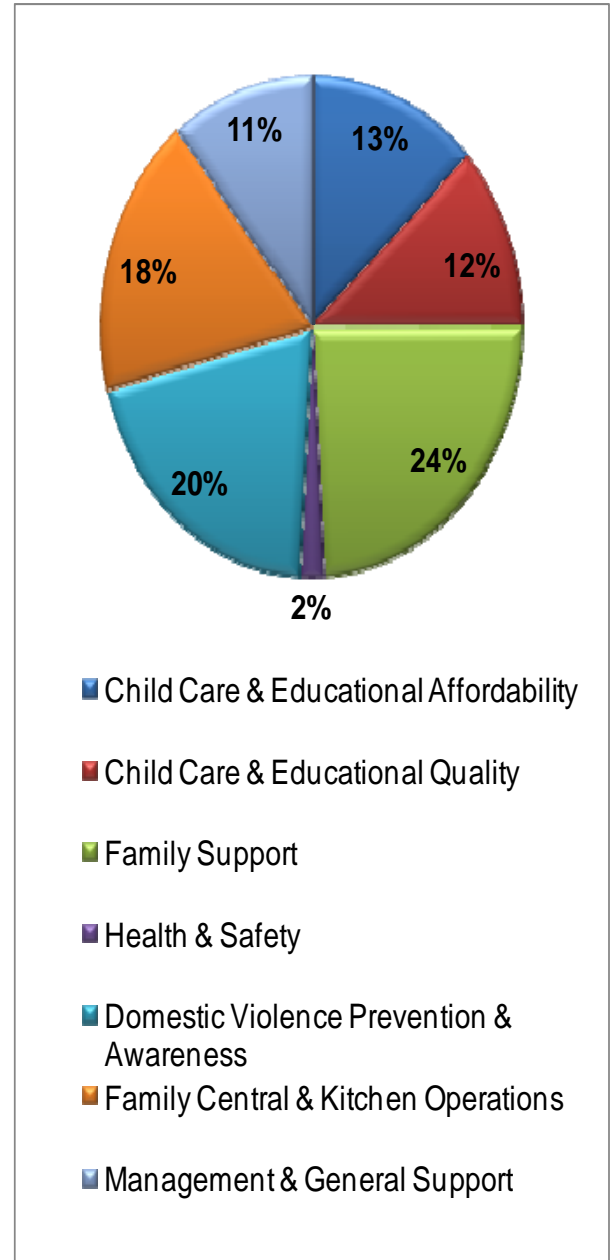
Net Assets at Beginning of Year 128,427

Net Assets at End of Year \$ 165,342

State Contract *

(this contract is between NCPC and DHHS)

Ashe County Department of Social Services \$ 151,147



Making a Difference in Ashe County

Child Care Resource and Referral

77 Parents / Guardians received referrals for child care services.

145 Direct teaching staff attended non-credit based trainings or workshops.

Dental

300 Children received an oral health examination or treatment.



Post Partum Home Visits

17 Parents/guardians participated in home visits.

Comprehensive Health Services

152 children with special needs received therapy or interventions.



A Safe Home for Everyone (A.S.H.E)

124 Clients served

Provided emergency shelter for 21 women and 15 children

95 Clients received crisis counseling from staff.

Child Care Provider Education

61 Direct teaching staff enrolled in a credit-based course.

50 Direct teaching staff received a professional development supplement.

460 Children were enrolled in a child care facility that employed at least one direct teaching staff who received a professional development supplement.

Family Support Services

73 Parents/guardians participated in an ongoing parent education-focused group.

24 Parents/guardians participated in an activity designed to increase the number of families engaging literacy type activities with their children.



Family Literacy Early Education

18 Parents/guardians participated in home visits.

Ashe Family Literacy: I wanted to share with you what has happened since I came here. In first place I didn't speak any English words, but I had the opportunity to come to ESL and learn to be able to get a GED. Well now I can read, write, and speak English. I'm able to help my son with his homework. Also it has helped me a lot in many ways. My math skills have improved. I'm really happy about everything I have learned. Thanks to the program and the people who have been helping me all the time. We have childcare in the same building where our classrooms are. I'm really happy about that too, and for the transportation that they provide us.

Maria Socorro Rocha



Coco (as Maria prefers to go by) was recognized for having the highest attendance in her classes. Her child attends the on-site Ashe Family Child Development Center.

Earlier this year, **A Safe Home for Everyone** received a phone call from a lady who lived approximately 900 miles away and needed to relocate immediately. It was imperative that she get out of state, away from her abuser. She didn't know where to go, but she said that she called the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, told them her story and stated that she wanted to go "somewhere cold". They asked her to narrow it down to three places, so she did this and ended up with our phone number. We lost contact with her for several days, but she soon followed up, stating that she was on her way and would keep in touch with us as she came along. She called us from Marion, VA to get final directions. At this point, we warned her that she would lose cell phone signal for a while and she would probably feel like she was going the wrong way because of the terrain that she was getting ready to travel through. She took a deep breath and said she was ready, she had come this far! Within a couple of hours, she arrived at our office, ready to start a new life. From the first time we met her, she has had a positive outlook on life; willing to do whatever she needed to in order to move ahead. She went into the shelter that day, took her rental car back to the airport with a couple of days and started looking for a job. She was able to acquire a vehicle that had been donated to A Safe Home for Everyone, quickly find a job, and started saving for her new place. Housing is very hard to find in Ashe County, but she moved up the ladder at her new job and even became a supervisor within a very short time period. She has proven to be nothing but focused, hard working, and an inspiration to both staff and other clients. She was finally able to find housing and is enjoying life in a new place, on her own, taking care of herself. This client is truly a success story that needs to be shared.

Stacy Cox, Case Manager



Ashe Family Literacy: Hi! My name is Hortencia Rosales. When I came here to the U.S., I didn't speak English, even less write it. In that day my son was 5 years old, so I enrolled him in school. One day when he got home from school he asked me, "Mom can you read this book to me?" I felt sad because I couldn't. That is when I realized that I needed to learn English to help my son. One day a Latin lady told me there are English classes in Family Central School. I waited to go ask because I didn't even know how to ask for the class. One day I lost my shyness and I went, and yes I found it. I studied English for 4 years and now I am trying to get my GED. I am very thankful because I can help my son. Now he is in the 6th grade and when he asks me for help doing his homework I am available to help him. I can always have an answer and that makes me feel happy and confident. I have succeeded learning English. Now I'd like to succeed to get my GED and I will. I know it! Thank You!

Hortencia Rosales

SUCCESS.....

Child Care Resource and Referral

Mount Jefferson Child Development Center increased their STAR rating to the highest level of a 5. This was with the help of the CCR&R technical assistance given by Kay Philipp, Child Care Specialist. Kay performed mock Environmental Rating Scale assessments, then assisted in making the needed changes to improve the classrooms to achieve the needed scores on the assessment.

In the spring of 2008, Ashe County Child Care Resource and Referral earned the honor of being a part of a pilot program through the Office of School Readiness, an agency of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Ashe County was chosen due to our high overall STAR rating, and was one of only three counties in North Carolina who were honored with the participation in the NC High Quality Pre-K Standards Classroom Recognition Program Pilot. This program works with four year old classrooms which are not More at Four to insure quality and preparedness for Kindergarten.

Jaime Irwin, CCR&R Director

Family Support: Nancy Manzanarez began coming to the Literacy program for the English as a Second Language classes in January 2008 with her son, Juan Daniel. Nancy spoke very little English and did not have very much confidence in her abilities. I began teaching Parent Education in March or April of 2008 and began to interact with Nancy on a daily basis. She appeared to be nervous and shy and would seldom speak out in class. She was very reluctant to use any English for fear of pronouncing a word incorrectly. Juan Daniel had many struggles early on as well. He had never been around other children and was not accustomed to being away from his mother. He would cry out for her through out the day and did not talk very much or interact with the other children. Nancy was also still nursing Juan Daniel and each separation was difficult for both of them. Both have made significant progress over the past few months. Juan Daniel interacts well with the other children and seldom cries for his mother and is eager to participate in activities. He speaks both English and Spanish words well. Nancy works with him on vocabulary and reading at home also. Nancy is able to understand much more English and asks me to slow down sometimes if I talk too quickly in the Parenting classes. She is

very social and has a thirst for knowledge. She asks for help with pronunciation when she needs it. Her confidence in her abilities has grown so much. She reads aloud in class and attempts to share her experiences in English first and will ask if she doesn't know a word in English.

Both Nancy and Juan Daniel have come very far in this program. All

staff members have noticed the positive change taking place with them. They have both blossomed intellectually and socially. Juan Daniel is able to work a puzzle, play animal bingo, and he will wait for a turn with a toy patiently. Nancy is able to converse with me and other staff in English to express any needs or share stories about her family. She enjoys learning new vocabulary and phrases common in English. Nancy and Juan Daniel are great examples of how ESL and Even Start sponsored Day Care can work together to make our community even better. Both Juan Daniel and Nancy take pride in their accomplishments and are a great asset to our program.

Bobbi Lambeth, BSW
Parent Educator



Family Central has been a focal point of Ashe County since March 2000, when the county leased the former Ashe Central High School campus to the Partnership. As the needs of families have grown, as well as those of the tenants of Family Central, the Board of Directors decided it was

time to expand the vision and spin the operations of Family Central into a new organization, Family Central Enterprise Corporation (FCEC). Many volunteers donated their expertise and time during 2007 and 2008 to bring the ideas and plans together so that FCEC could begin operating on July 1, 2008 and allow the Partnership to return to its core mission of serving the needs of children and families in Ashe County.

Gary Wolfe, Board Chair of FCEC states, "As we begin down the path of facility management, the Board of Directors and management of FCEC will continue working in harmony with the Partnership and other tenants of the building to make this facility a center for family services of which the residents of Ashe County will be proud. Our goals will be focused to improve the facility and enhance its role in serving the needs of not only its tenants, but the many visitors that come to Family Central on a daily basis."