

THANKS TO YOU, OUR COMMUNITY IS BECOMING STRONGER, OUR FUTURE IS BECOMING BETTER.

AUGUST 2019

# Building the Foundation for the Future of Forsyth County



There is clear evidence that pre-kindergarten has a profound impact on children's learning and a lasting impact on the quality of their lives as adults.

The first five years are a once-only window of opportunity to develop the social, emotional, cognitive, and academic readiness that enables children to succeed later in life. A young child's brain architecture forms at an astounding rate, with more than one million new neural connections created every second. But it's not only what's happening inside the brain that matters. A nurturing and enriching environment is required for optimal brain development, the kind of environment provided by the skilled teachers and "resource-full" classrooms found in quality Pre-K programs.

Every year there are approximately 4,500 four-year-olds in Forsyth County. While 2,700 are eligible for publicly-funded Pre-K based on

family income, only 1,300 are enrolled due to insufficient state and local funding. At the same time, middle-class families constantly struggle to find affordable, high-quality Pre-K programs.

In June 2014 Family Services launched The Pre-K Priority, an initiative involving over twenty organizations from the early learning field, with the goal of making quality Pre-K programs available to all four-year-olds in Forsyth County. This initiative assumed even greater urgency when, in 2017, a Harvard study came out that ranked Forsyth County 5th worst out of 2,873 counties nationwide for helping poor children move up the income ladder.

Quality Pre-K is an effective means for closing the widening opportunity gap for children in Forsyth County. It prepares children to achieve academic proficiency during the elementary school years, providing the foundation for successful learning throughout high school and beyond. A recent Duke University study of more than one million North Carolina public school children confirmed this, finding significant educational benefits from the state-funded Smart Start and North Carolina Pre-K programs.

These findings have been a spur to The Pre-K Priority's launch of a public education and engagement campaign, with the goal of increasing public awareness and support for quality Pre-K in Forsyth County. Over the coming months, this campaign will show up everywhere – on billboards and buses, on radio and television, in newspapers and on social media. Our aim is to ignite public sentiment and create a movement to make Forsyth County a place that makes smart investments in its young children that will ensure the future vitality and well-being of our community. We are grateful to the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust for funding the public education and engagement campaign.

Through our recent scientific survey of county residents, we found that the vast majority recognize the importance of early childhood education and believe we should be doing more to support quality Pre-K. Our goal is to translate that recognition into a commitment to develop and fund a system of quality Pre-K programs in Forsyth County. The time is now to take this step on behalf of our youngest children. After all, they are the employees, parents, citizens, and leaders of the future. As we like to point out at the Pre-K Priority, "The future is 4 years old."

Thank you for keeping the vision in motion.



Bob Feikema  
President and CEO



## Raising **EVERY** Child Luncheon Deemed Another Big Success



Keynote Speaker Duke University Professor Dr. Ken Dodge told the crowd at the Benton Convention Center that the benefits of Pre-K last until at least 8th grade and possibly beyond.



What can one million North Carolina four-year-olds teach us about Pre-K? The 450 people who attended this year's Raising Every Child Benefit Luncheon found out that high-quality Pre-K really does work.

Dr. Ken Dodge, a Duke University researcher who made national headlines when his team found that the benefits of high-quality Pre-K last until at least eighth grade, said the findings are clear.

"The more that North Carolina invests for NC Pre-K, the better children will fare as they get older," Dodge said.

All children have an inherent right to realize their full potential. Yet, too many of our youngest children in Forsyth County do not enjoy the same opportunities for success. They are not ready to learn when they enter school. They start behind and struggle to catch up. Too many never catch up.

We know that our community's economic vitality and social well-being depend upon having all our children ready for school and for life.

There are times when a singular event can crystallize a community's commitment to a great cause. *Raising Every Child* is one of several endeavors that is helping to inspire champions – those who will ensure that every child has the opportunity to grow up to become truly remarkable and contribute his or her special talents to our community.



Pictured at the pre-event breakfast at Novant Medical Center are former Family Services Board Chairman the Honorable Bill Reingold, left; Dr. Kenneth A. Dodge; Elise Peters Carey, President of Bethany Medial and Director of the Lenny Peters Foundation; and Family Services President and CEO Bob Feikema. During the pre-event breakfast Dr. Dodge spoke to a select group of community leaders who are committed to addressing the opportunity gap that is preventing one-third of our youngest children from reaching their full potential.



Photos by Daryl Shaw

A group of Head Start students from the Winston-Salem State University Child Development Center and Laboratory School took the stage to sing a few songs and show the audience what quality Pre-K looks like.

AUGUST 2019

### WAKE-UP WALK & 5K

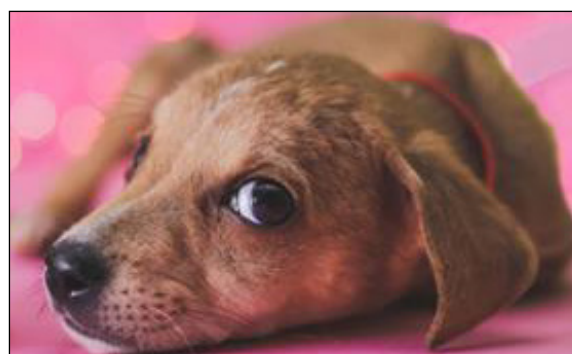


This year's Annual Wake-Up Walk & 5 K on Aug. 24 marked the beginning of the official launch of the Pre-K Priority public education and engagement campaign and incoming pre-schoolers came out to participate in the first-ever Pre-K Parade around Bailey Park.

Dubbed, Forsyth County's Biggest Back-To-School Bash, families as well as runners and walkers came out to show the entire county that every step we take together has the power to build a better community for us all.

MARCH - AUGUST 2019

### Dogs and Donuts



In addition to monthly yoga classes, walking groups, and Pita Potlucks, Family Services recently added monthly visits from therapy dogs as part of the ongoing wellness events for employees.

In the Monthly Mindfulness visits, staff members are invited to join the pups for guided and then self-directed meditation and mindfulness.

In August, that visit included both dogs and donuts, as employees welcomed Brodie, Henri, and Phoebe. All three are always friendly, loving, and ready to bring some cheer and happiness to our day. The certified therapy dogs are wonderful at reducing stress.

JUNE 2019

### Capital Campaign Success!



### The Campaign for Family Services

We are thrilled to announce that the Raising Every Child Capital Campaign surpassed its \$3.75-million goal and officially came to a close at the end of the fiscal year in June.

Just how much did we surpass the goal by? The answer is coming in the next installment of *Vision In Motion* as we share more information about how the fruits of the Capital Campaign are going to enhance our mission and programs: by improving the physical, social, and emotional health of 1,500 young children annually; and adding capacity and classroom space to help support our efforts to make high-quality Pre-K programs available to all four-year-olds in Forsyth County.



APRIL 2019

## MAKING HIGH-QUALITY PRE-K A PRIORITY



Dr. Beth Day-Hairston, Chair of the Department of Education at WSSU, stresses the importance of training highly-skilled Pre-K teachers.



On April 9, Forsyth County community leaders from the private, public, and non-profit sectors gathered at Winston-Salem State University to launch the Pre-K Priority, whose mission is to make high-quality Pre-K programs available for every four-year-old in Forsyth County.

"The Pre-K Priority is about informing the community, voters, taxpayers, policymakers, teachers, and parents about the benefits of quality Pre-K," said Bob Feikema, Family Services President and CEO. "Our children's education is everyone's concern. High-quality Pre-K programs provide an enriching environment that stimulates brain development, promotes learning, and fosters the social-emotional stability that is a prerequisite for success in school."

The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust's Great Expectations grant to Family Services, in the amount of \$847,250, will fund a public education and engagement campaign and feasibility study during 2019-20. Family Services will convene the Pre-K Priority's Steering Committee and has established five local work groups associated with early education expertise.

"Research shows that every dollar spent on early childhood initiatives provides more than eight dollars in benefits back to society," said Joe Crocker, director of the Local Impact in Forsyth County at the Trust. "However, nearly half of the children entering kindergarten in Forsyth County are at risk of falling behind their peers in reading. The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust is committed to ensuring all of our community's children have access to quality early childhood education that lays the foundation for success in kindergarten and beyond."

According to Family Service's benchmark scientific research study among Forsyth County registered voters, 84 percent of voters support "giving our children a strong start through quality early education programs" with 54 percent indicating "we should be doing more."

Studies of high-quality programs like the North Carolina Pre-K Program have found positive outcomes, including improved math and reading scores. The gains made by children enrolled in high-quality early education programs translate into improved outcomes as adults in terms of post-secondary educational attainment, increased income, homeownership, improved health status, and less contact with the criminal justice system.

AUGUST 2019

## Alliance for HOPE International Returns after January Study Tour



Above: From left, Family Services President and CEO Bob Feikema stands with Forsyth County District Attorney Jim O'Neill, Winston-Salem Police Chief Catrina Thompson, Alliance for Hope President and Co-Founder Casey Gwinn, and Children's Law Center of Central North Carolina Executive Director Iris Sunshine.

Below: Casey Gwinn makes the case for the Family Justice Center model.



In late January, after more than a year of discussion and planning, Family Services welcomed officials from the San Diego-based Alliance for HOPE International for a comprehensive two-day Family Justice Center Study Tour.

The focus of the Study Tour was to identify the strengths, limitations, and gaps in services for victims of family violence and sexual assault; assess what additional resources are needed; identify the obstacles survivors face in accessing comprehensive support; and determine how the Alliance can best support efforts to establish a Family Justice Center in Forsyth County.

As part of the Study Tour, the Alliance gathered information about our community through surveys of service providers; online research; benchmarking of local family violence statistics; meetings with law enforcement, victim/social services providers, faith-based groups, elected officials and other partners; a focus group with survivors; and court observation.

It's hard to believe that seven months have passed since then. Our planning process has continued with regular meetings of the Forsyth County Family Justice Center Steering Committee and monthly meetings of the Survivor's Advocacy group.

Several members of the steering committee attended the International Family Justice Center conference held in San Diego in March. Momentum is building across North Carolina as Gaston, Wake, and Mecklenburg counties are also working with the Alliance to develop a Family Justice Center in their communities.

On August 27 and 28, the Alliance team returned to Forsyth County for a Strategic Planning Session. More than one hundred participants from more than forty organizations attended the session to create the vision and lay the groundwork for a Family Justice Center that meets the needs of Forsyth County.

Visit [forsythfjc.org](http://forsythfjc.org) for up-to-date information on the planning process.

JUNE 2019

## Shimmy for the Shelter

The sixth annual Shimmy for the Shelter fundraiser on June 22 brought in nearly \$1,000 to help support our Women's Shelter.

Produced by Luci Jennings and Black Fox Belly Dance, the event consists of a potluck supper, belly dance floor show and amazing raffle prizes donated by businesses large and small.





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OCTOBER 2019



## Against Domestic Violence

A VIP event benefiting Family Services — Oct. 29  
Hosted by Trouvaille

**RISEFORSYTH.org**

Give A Gift  
Get a Chance to  
Win!

### GIVE A GIFT

#### HOW IT WORKS:

Purchase a \$20 gift certificate and a Family Services Women's Shelter resident will receive a \$20 gift certificate to the **SNOB** shop.

#### VIP OPTION:

Purchase 5 gift certificates or more (\$100 or more) and you will receive a VIP admission ticket to the RISE cocktail event at **Trouvaille Home** on **Oct. 29, 2019**.

### GET A CHANCE TO WIN

**EACH \$20 GIFT** certificate purchase will register your name into the **Winner's Choice Raffle** (prizes listed at RISEforsyth.org).

**snob**  
shop



### Did you know:

- Family Services has managed the care and facilities of the Women's Shelter since the 80s and that our Shelter was the first in North Carolina?
- Our 24-hour Crisis Lines are operated by 26 volunteers and 19 staff members seven days a week?
- Family Services needs community support to operate the Women's Shelter year-round at full capacity?
- The Winston-Salem Police Department reported 5,917 incidents of Domestic Violence (76% of the victims were female).

### Because of donors like you, last year:

- We provided safe shelter to 45 women and 78 children with an average stay of 53 days.
- Our staff and volunteers handled 1,170 Crisis Line calls.
- We saw 1,162 victims for crisis intervention, safety planning, and support groups.
- 1,037 victims sought our assistance in filing a protective order against spouses or partners.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH CALENDAR

#### OCT. 3 — 5:30 -7 p.m.

**Survivor Advocacy Group.** A free monthly meeting for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and/or elder abuse. Family Services, 1200 S. Broad Street.

#### OCT. 4 — Noon -1 p.m.

**Day of Unity.** A commemorative celebration honoring survivors and victims of domestic violence homicide at Family Services, Broad St.

#### OCT. 5 — 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**SNOB Shop Free Family Fun Day.** Shopping, food, door prizes, NASCAR simulator, bouncy house, and more! A percentage of all sales will go to Family Services. Snob Shop, 1020 Burke Street.

#### OCT. 8 — 6 - 8 p.m.

**Free screening of The Empathy Gap,** followed by a Q&A session with the director Dr. Thomas Keith. Wake Forest University, Annenburg Auditorium, 1834 Wake Forest Road.

#### OCT. 19 — 2 p.m.

**FemFest at Monstercade.** Year 6! FemFest is an annual benefit concert to raise awareness against domestic violence and sexual assault. Monstercade, 204 W. Acadia Street.

#### OCT. 23 — 6 - 8 p.m.

**Private Violence film screening** and panel discussion of an Emmy award winning documentary film by the same director of A Chef's Life, followed by a panel discussion including Kit Gruelle, an advocate from the film. a/perture, 311 W. Fourth Street.

#### OCT. 29 — 5:00 -7:00 p.m.

**RISE Event at Trouvaille,** VIP gift certificate holders will be invited to a fun night at Trouvaille, with appetizers provided by Mozelle's, a silent auction, door prizes, and the grand prize drawing! Trouvaille Home, 938 Burke Street.