



## **Smart Start Will Implement Tri-Share Pilot Program, Increasing Access to High-Quality Affordable Child Care**

*Smart Start Will Implement Tri-Share Pilot Program in Three Regions*

The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) is partnering with the Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) to award funding to three Smart Start Local Partnerships for implementation of the Tri-Share Child Care Pilot. Tri-Share is a program that creates a public/private partnership to share the cost of child care equally between employers, eligible employees, and the state.

State lawmakers allocated \$900,000 for NCPC and DCDEE to divide among three Regional Hubs (Local Partnerships) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-2024 and FY 2024-2025. Through a Request for Proposals process, NCPC and DCDEE selected the Cleveland County Partnership for Children and Families to serve Cleveland, Rutherford, Henderson, Lincoln, and Gaston Counties; the Martin-Pitt Partnership for Children to serve Martin and Pitt Counties; and Partners for Children and Families of Moore County, to serve Moore, Chatham, Cumberland, Hoke, Montgomery, Richmond, and Scotland Counties.

These Partnerships will serve as regional hubs to pilot Tri-Share and will provide the ground-level work of launching Tri-Share with NCPC providing backbone administrative support. The goals of Tri-Share implementation include making high-quality child care affordable and accessible for working families, helping employers retain and attract employees, and supporting the stabilization of child care businesses across the State.

“Tri-Share decreases the burden on families to pay for child care and increases access to needed care and education. By using this Pilot as an example that we can hopefully scale up in the future, we can create further positive and lasting changes for children and families and enhance employer recruitment and retention efforts across North Carolina,” said Angela Lewis, NCPC’s Early Care and Education Manager.

Families that qualify for participation in Tri-Share will be:

- Employed by a participating business
- Have a household income between 185% and 300% of the federal poverty level.
- Otherwise ineligible for other subsidized child care

The Cleveland County Partnership for Children, Martin-Pitt Partnership for Children, and Partners for Children and Families of Moore County were selected to lead Tri-Share regions because of their strong ties to their community, particularly regarding workforce relations; leadership within early care and education, and their strong relationships with other Smart Start Local Partnerships. Additionally, these partnerships are geographically and demographically diverse, representing many

### **The North Carolina Partnership for Children**

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children and families throughout the state. Martin-Pitt Partnership for Children is also in a Tier 1 County, a requirement of the Tri-Share Pilot appropriation. Additional counties may also join these regions as the Pilot grows.

Each region will recruit businesses and child care providers to participate in Tri-Share and manage funds from employees, employers, and the state.

Michigan was the first state to launch the Tri-Share model in 2021 and is now serving 59 of the 83 counties in the state. "We have learned a lot from Michigan, as well as from other states working to plan for and launch similar initiatives. One key recommendation from Michigan was to have a dedicated intermediary agency within each region to support streamlined implementation and data collection to show both regional and collective state impact. NCPC is well-positioned to take on that role", said Mary Scott, Strategic Initiatives Director at NCPC.

"I'm excited about this opportunity," says Amy Cabbage, President of NCPC. "We have an early care and education crisis, and Smart Start Local Partnerships are ready and able to work in innovative ways to make a difference. We must find a solution."

Employers interested in participating in the Tri-Share program should contact their local Smart Start partnership. For a list of Smart Start Local Partnerships go to [www.smartstart.org/smart-start-in-your-community/](http://www.smartstart.org/smart-start-in-your-community/).

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### **About Smart Start**

*[Smart Start is a network of 75 nonprofit local partnerships](http://www.smartstart.org/smart-start-in-your-community/) that serve all 100 North Carolina counties. This network is led by The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) that ensures fiscal and programmatic accountability and coordinates the statewide network to create better outcomes for children and families. For more information, please visit <http://www.smartstart.org/about-smart-start/>.*

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