



First 2000 Days Summit To Be Held in Wilmington

Local Faith Leaders Organize Event to Highlight Importance of Early Childhood Investments

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WILMINGTON, NC— A First 2000 Days Summit will take place in Wilmington on February 17, 2014 at the First Baptist Activity Center from 10am to Noon. The event is free. Local faith leaders have been meeting over the last several months to plan this summit to highlight the importance of investments in early childhood to community leaders, educators, parents and concerned citizens.

Dr. Sharon Cooper, M.D., a developmental pediatrician and retired US Army Colonel will be the keynote speaker for this event and will share fascinating information about early childhood brain development. **Lisa Finaldi** from the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation will also provide a brief overview of the First 2000 Days and the impacts that are made by providing quality experiences during these critical first days of a child's life.

There are only 2,000 days between the time a baby is born and when that child shows up for the first day of kindergarten. Experiences during these 2,000 days have a lasting impact on later learning, health and success. That is because children's earliest experiences literally determine how their brains are wired; lay the groundwork for future health; and form the foundation of the social and emotional skills needed for academic and workplace success.

"As a father of three, I loved seeing the sparkle in my children's eyes as they learned new things. Every child deserves that sparkle," said Clifford Barnett, a representative of the Wilmington First 2000 Days Committee and pastor of Warner Temple AME Zion Church. "To me it is an easier fix than building more prisons," he continued.

Research shows that high quality early experiences provide lasting positive results such as higher graduation rates, prevention of violence and crime, job and military readiness, and higher earnings and better jobs.

The public is invited to this free event. To register, call 815-3731, or send an e-mail to Wilm2000daysinfo@gmail.com.

Smart Start of New Hanover County is part of Smart Start, North Carolina's Early Childhood Initiative. Smart Start of New Hanover County acts as a local leader in the development of a comprehensive, collaborative approach to serving the needs of all children, birth to 5, in New Hanover County.

Smart Start, a network of nonprofit local partnerships led by The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. (NCPC), creates innovative solutions to measurably increase learning and the healthy development of children birth to five. Smart Start gives local communities the freedom and responsibility to determine how to increase the health, well-being and development of their children based on the needs and resources of their local communities. NCPC establishes measurable statewide goals and communities determine the best approach to achieving them. For more information, visit www.smartstart.org.

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