



partnershipforchildren

JOHNSTON COUNTY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pictured: More At Four Teachers explore resources for teaching four-year-olds at the Partnership for Children of Johnston County.

JOHNSTON COUNTY – AUGUST 5, 2009 – More than 60 pre-school educators from across Johnston County came together last week to study the best techniques for helping at-risk four year olds reach their full potential. The training sessions, a part of the Partnership for Children of Johnston County’s annual More at Four Professional Development programming, explored teaching strategies like “Meaningful Learning” and Home Activity Kits which can be implemented to enhance the “home to school” connection and involve parents in their child’s early education.

“Getting children to school ready to learn is our number one priority,” said Marilyn Agnew, Coordinator of the More at Four Program for Johnston County. “Measuring what a child knows, and what they need to learn, can sometimes be difficult. Children learn at different rates and come from different backgrounds, what they learn in school may not be practiced at home. Early Childhood Educators are learning to adjust to the individual child by means of assessments and individualized family study kits.”

In order to help a child prepare for kindergarten, the More at Four Program assesses a child four times during the program. The first is a pre-screening – mainly to help detect developmental delays. The other three assessments during the course of the school year measure the child’s mastery of skills in four areas: social, cognitive, motor and language development. The assessments help the educators develop an individual plan for each child. The child is offered a successful task based on the level on which they are working which helps the child progress.

After the first assessment, More at Four educators meet with the parents to help them understand where their child’s development is and to discuss the Home Activity Kits their child will be bringing home. The kits create a consistency for the child between school and home. This kind of consistency has been shown to help a child progress and learn. Parents are their child’s first teachers, and a child is most successful in school when the parents participate in learning activities with their child.

The link between home and school can be the link in the chain of success for a child.

The More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program is a free high-quality pre-kindergarten program that serves children who are at risk and prepares them for success in school. Johnston County currently has 22 More At Four sites and serves 439 children. Although there is a waiting list, applicants are encouraged to apply for the 2009-2010 school year. For more information, visit www.pfcjc.org or call 202-0002.

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