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MEDIA CONTACT:

Kevin Spears
kevin.spears@ccfhnc.org
(919) 385-0738

Nurse Home Visits for Newborns Now Called Family Connects Durham

Name change reflects growing network of sites inspired by Durham's original model

Durham, [March 14, 2019] – A program that has provided nurse home visits to more than 14,500 Durham families with newborns is getting a new name and a fresh look. Originally launched as Durham Connects in 2008, this innovative approach to positive early childhood outcomes will now be known as Family Connects Durham.

Family Connects is an evidence-based model for supporting newborns and their families, and it is free for every family in Durham County with a new baby. Approximately three weeks after the baby's birth, a registered nurse visits the family at home to check on mother and baby, offer supportive guidance on newborn care, and link the family to community resources based on their unique needs. Nurses may return for follow-up visits, if needed, and they ensure families are connected back to their medical homes for continued care.

The Family Connects model was created by the Center for Child & Family Policy (CCFP) at Duke University in partnership with the Durham County Department of Public Health and the Center for Child & Family Health (CCFH), a community-based provider of family support services.

Ongoing randomized, controlled trials – results of which have been published in the journals *Pediatrics* and *American Journal of Public Health* – have shown the remarkable efficacy of Family Connects. These studies showed that families who received a nurse home visit demonstrated higher quality parenting practices, better maternal mental health, safer home environments, higher quality child care selection, and fewer hospitalizations or emergency room visits for their child, when compared to families who did not receive a nurse home visit.

Based on these strong outcomes, there has been widespread interest in replicating the Family Connects model in communities throughout the U.S. To meet this demand, CCFP and CCFH developed a framework for assessing community readiness, training agencies to deliver the service, and providing ongoing technical support. In 2018, Family Connects International was established at the Duke Center for Child & Family Policy to accelerate the development of new program sites. There are now 16 Family Connects sites actively providing nurse home visits in ten states, and 14 others are in some phase of implementation.

A name change and a new logo for the original program in Durham are part of a strategy to promote greater awareness of the model on a national scale. As each new site launches, Family Connects Durham serves not only as a source of training and clinical expertise, but also as a template for branding, marketing, and communications. Consistent use of the Family Connects name in all locations will underscore the increasing presence of universal nurse home visiting programs throughout the U.S., and a new name for the Durham program retains a strong connection to the community where it all began.

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For more than 20 years, the Center for Child & Family Health (CCFH) has been at the forefront of evidence-based interventions for abuse, neglect, and other childhood traumas. The heart of its work is the compassionate care provided to traumatized children in the Martha S. Urbaniak Clinic. Through its prevention efforts, CCFH equips families of all kinds to create safe, nurturing environments for their children through home visits and other intensive supports. CCFH's practitioner-trainers also teach hundreds of child-serving professionals each year, steadily improving the trauma-informed care available to thousands of children in North Carolina. In 2019, these services will reach more than 2,500 children and their families in Durham and surrounding communities and will have an indirect impact on thousands more throughout the state.

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