

**For immediate release:**

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**Prince George's County Executive, Local Leaders, Local Hospitals  
Launch New Partnership That Provides Families of Newborns with  
Books to Engage Early Reading**

*County use new program to combat issues with kindergarten readiness and promotion  
early childhood education*

**LARGO, MD** – Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker III will be joined by Dr. Monica Goldson, Deputy Superintendent, Division for Teaching and Learning, Prince George's County Public Schools, Prince George's County Memorial Library System, Prince George's County Health Department, Prince George's County Department of Social Services, University of Maryland Capital Region Health, and Medstar Southern Maryland Hospital as they kick-off the Smart Start for Babies program in Prince George's County. The Smart Start for Babies program is designed to promote reading and early childhood education among new families by providing a portable crib, childcare resources, and a monthly book subscription.

"We want to encourage learning as early as possible. Our data shows that many of our children start school not fully prepared for kindergarten," said County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "By encouraging early reading and learning, we believe that we can close the gap and better ensure that all our children are starting school read to learn at grade-level."

**WHAT:**

Smart Start for Babies Program Launch and Press Conference

**WHO:**

The Honorable Rushern L. Baker, III, County Executive, Prince George's County

Dr. Monica Goldson, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Teaching and Learning, Prince George's County Public Schools

Betty Hager Francis, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Health, Human Services and Education

Samuel A. Epps, IV, President, Prince George's County Memorial Library System Board of Library Trustees

Pamela Creekmur, Health Officer, Prince George's County

Gloria Brown Burnett, Director, Prince George's County Department of Social Services

Elana Belon Butler, Director, Prince George's County Department of Family Services

Dr. Sherry Perkins, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, University of Maryland Capital Region Health

Dr. Nahid Mazarei, MD, Chair, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Medstar Southern Maryland Hospital

**WHEN:**

Thursday, May 3, 2018

10:30 a.m.

**WHERE:**

Prince George's County Health Department

Cheverly Health Center Atrium

3003 Hospital Drive

Cheverly, Maryland 20785