Henderson County Local Government
Public Information Office
www.hendersoncountync.org

Contact: Kathryn Finotti, PIO
(828) 694-5003 (O)
(828) 989-4737 (C)
pio@hendersoncountync.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Henderson County Public Library's Babies Into Books Project Launches This Week

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The first gift that many babies will receive before leaving the hospital is from the Henderson County Public Library. Because research has shown that the more books a child has to call his or her own, the better reader he or she will be. To help parents start early literacy activities from birth, the library is reaching out to new babies and their parents with the Babies into Books Project, funded by the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act as administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of the Department of Cultural Resources.

 Parents who attend a prenatal class at Pardee Hospital or Park Ridge Health Center are likely to hear about the project from a Henderson County Public Library librarian. Parents will be told that there are about 2000 days from the time their baby is born until he or she begins kindergarten and how important it is for parents to read to their child on a regular basis. After their baby is born at the hospital, parents will be given a bag filled with early literacy information and an English/Spanish copy of *Goodnight Moon*. There will also be a coupon in the packet for parents to bring to any library branch in Henderson County to receive a second board book to share with their baby and to help build their child's home library. The ultimate goal of the program is to help raise the number of children in Henderson County entering kindergarten ready to read and to learn.

For more information on this program and other Henderson County Public Library children's programs, please contact Kathy Kirchoefer, Youth Services Coordinator at (828) 697-4725 ext. 2313.

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