

LOCAL NEWS BRIEFS

From staff reports : **The Herald-Sun**  
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**Unwed couples will get help**

CHAPEL HILL -- Enrollment is under way in Durham for a UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work program geared toward strengthening the relationships of unmarried, low-income parents.

"Strong Couples -- Strong Children" is a five-year, federally-funded initiative aimed at creating healthy relationships in fragile families by teaching communication, problem-solving and conflict management skills. Couples will receive free in-home family support services and be linked to resources such as job training, community college and other educational options and affordable housing.

Two Durham County agencies -- Public Health and Cooperative Extension Services -- are recruiting Durham residents to participate in the free classes this summer, including one targeting Hispanic couples.

The project is for unmarried couples who are expecting a baby or have a child under 3 months old and a combined annual income of under \$40,000.

Participants may attend evening or weekend sessions over 12 weeks. Meals, child care and transportation will be provided. Participating couples may also receive up to \$200 in gift cards or other rewards.

Jones hopes to have several hundred unwed couples complete the program over five years.

For more information and/or program enrollment, call Erlene Harvin at (919) 560-7624 or e-mail [ewilliams@ph.co.durham.nc.us](mailto:ewilliams@ph.co.durham.nc.us).