

## MISSION STATEMENT

To identify and meet the needs of children and families to lay the foundation for lifetime success by: maximizing each child's potential, preparing children to enter school ready to learn, and helping families achieve economic self-sufficiency.

### TO SUPPORT THIS MISSION, THE COALITION UPHOLDS THESE VALUES

- 1) School readiness programs shall prepare children for success in school.
- 2) School readiness programs shall involve parents as their child's first teacher and support family skill building.
- 3) School readiness programs shall be an integrated and seamless system of services and shall be implemented by the local coalition working with partnering agencies and programs.
- 4) School readiness programs shall be coordinated and public funding integrated to achieve effectiveness and efficiency.
- 5) Early learning programs shall be supported in their efforts to expand professional development and promote program quality.



Parents are a child's first teacher.  
Parental Involvement is an important factor in every child's life.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Roger Thompson	DCF Licensing Supervisor
Trena Webb	County Health Department Designee
Carolyn Williams	Provider Representative
Edna Williams	Private Sector
Lori Winterberry	Provider Representative

# 2010-2011 ANNUAL REPORT

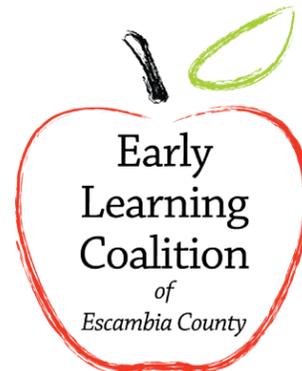
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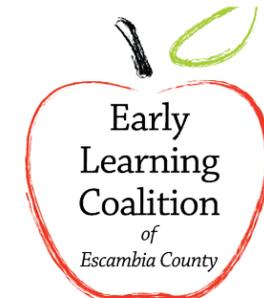
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Florida's  
Office of  
Early Learning

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# Service Areas . . .

## SUPPORTING FAMILIES & CHILDREN

### School Readiness (SR) - Subsidy Child Care Child Care Assistance for Low-Income Working Parents

The Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County (ELCEC) operates this service in a variety of ways: appointments, walk-ins, and drop off/pick up for paperwork. We have partnered with the local workforce board to make available specific times for their clients to visit our location without appointments to alleviate duplicate travel and paperwork issues. This process has proven to be beneficial to both agencies and our mutual clients. Follow-ups of client issues have diminished and workflow has been aligned to more closely match client needs. Within the eligibility appointment, we offer child care resource and referral services, community needs information, family guidance, and general family well-being services. This has been met with great enthusiasm. At the conclusion of our clients appointment we encourage literacy by offering an age appropriate book to all children via the "Word Garden". This literacy wonderland has been furnished and decorated to appeal to adults and children alike.

Escambia County Children Served	Monthly Average
SR Children Enrolled	4697
VPK Children Enrolled	2564
Escambia County Providers	Monthly Average
School Readiness Providers	214
VPK Providers	101

### Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

#### Florida's Free Early Learning Program for 4 Year Olds

The ELCEC operates this program in two ways, School Readiness appointments and on-sites specifically for VPK clients. An invitation was extended to Providers to collect and initiate the eligibility process, which was very successful for the upcoming 2011/2012 year. These methods allow easy access for parents with little or no wait time and alleviate inaccuracies with paperwork.

### Child Assessments & Screenings

The ELCEC partnered with the Escambia County School District (ECSD), to administer and assist providers with screenings and assessments. This has proven to be an invaluable partnership, thus ensuring children are identified early in the learning process to help prevent learning failures. It is our intention that early notice and intervention will allow greater success for our children. Our community is working together to bridge the gap sometimes faced within fluid communities by tracking and following students to elementary status in case issues are present requiring intervention. The Coalition will be transitioning to an on-line ASQ screenings for the upcoming 2011/2012 year and have invited the ECSD to continue to assist us with the follow-up to those children deemed at risk for delays. It is understood by all that intervention is the key.

### Parent Involvement and Skill-Building

The Coalition has partnered with the Department of Children and Families, Circuit One, to coordinate the Strengthening Families program in our community. Early childhood staff are being introduced to the five protective factors that support families. Staff have created, and offered a parenting program model, "Family Café". This program supports families touched by incarceration, families with young children and families who have schoolage children.

## LOCAL INITIATIVES

### Quality Initiatives

The Quality Initiatives Committee supported several projects to include: Infant Toddler Quality Improvement classroom materials based on ITERS (Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scales) ratings results to 15 homes, Car Seat Safety Technician certification for 2 new technicians bringing the total to 4, and a Parent/Child Summer Reading program called "Reading Stars". The Coalition continues its work in funding educational scholarships, provider mini-grants, regional conferences, printed materials for community distribution, nursing supports and trainings. The Coalition coordinated with Unite Escambia's Education Solutions team to create and implement a VPK data system to share information between VPK teachers and kindergarten teachers, a great step towards VPK success.

### Community Literacy Projects

Our Coalition remains active in the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. As a result of those efforts more than 1900 local children under the age of 5 receive books each month. The Coalition Board adopted the Dolly Parton Imagination Library as a five year project to promote early literacy. To support early learning staff, the Coalition has created comprehensive lessons plans covering all developmental domains for each books. Copies of the lesson plans are provided to early learning programs for their use. A parent tip sheet also accompanies each book to engage parents in being their child's first teacher.

### Inclusion Behavioral Services

Coalition contracts with the Escambia County School District to provide Warm-Line services to parents and providers within the community. Inclusion Specialists provide assessments, referrals, and provider support based on child need. Trainings are collaborated with community partners, subsidy/non-subsidy providers and national organizations. The Coalition also supports a Behavioral Specialist who offers on-site and telephonic consultation to enable classroom teachers and program directors to support children with unique needs. These two support positions have enabled many children to be better supported in early learning programs.

### Health Screenings and Education

The ELCEC partners with the local health department, the Escambia County Health Department (ECHD), to administer height, weight, hearing, vision and BMI screenings, as well as, health/nutritional classes. This service also provides timely information by local, state, and federal agencies during high health stress times, i.e. H1N1, normal flu, and other localized health outbreaks. This has proven to be very instrumental in the prevention of current and future health crisis. The Coalition began conversations with the ECHD to deliver their services in two manners: Provider sites and the Subsidy office site. We believe this will deliver our services in a more budget-friendly manner, while still maintaining the high level of service we feel our community deserves.

### Child Care Food Program

The ELCEC partners with the Department of Health to provide our services to promote, monitor, reimburse, and train local, licensed child care homes with their children's nutritional needs. We staff 1.5 FTE positions to provide these services to a three (3) county area to ensure the community children have healthy, nutritious meals and snacks. We reimburse providers approximately \$20,000 monthly for their meal preparations and ingredients. In some cases, these are the only nutritious meals these children receive.

## LOCAL OPERATIONS

### Provider Training & Technical Assistance

Staff development and training were offered to 30 programs for child assessments utilizing Creative Gold and Galileo. An Infant Toddler Quality project was initiated with 10 registered family child homes to assist them to becoming licensed with intentional training accompanied by individualized technical assistance. A Faith Based Conference for was held for religious exempt centers to assist in adding new ideas to faith based curriculum. Five trainers completed the Outcomes Driven Training Train the Trainer. The ELCEC initiated the planning and implementation of a local Quality Improvement Rating System (QRIS). QRIS is a collaborative effort with a provider task force who helped create the framework for intentional quality improvements. This effort lead to the creation of a tool in which License Exempt monitoring can begin.

### Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) A Free Parent Information Line

The ELCEC operated this service in multiple venues by contracting with United Way to facilitate and handle calls specific to our Coalition. During the middle of the year the organization transitioned to a 211 system. Once the client is assisted with CCR&R they are furthered questioned to ensure their other needs, not just with the initial request. We have found that those clients requesting CCR&R normally have additional questions which 211 has ready access to the appropriate answers. This partnership is greatly valued and recognized throughout the community. Our eligibility department also assists clients with parenting information and community solutions when they are in the office for child care assistance. Multiple questions are fielded with great success, especially with our newest Family Support Specialist staff member.



### Fiscal

Providing affordable, accessible, and quality early care and education to eligible children is the top priority for the Coalition, as well as, administering the state VPK program. With combined expenditures of \$19,376,388, administrative costs were 1.85% for School Readiness and 4.16% for VPK. A portion of required local match was provided by the Escambia County Commissioners and the United Way.

### Summary of Success

Coalition Board members and staff continue to represent the Coalition in many agencies, clubs, organizations, and other venues in our community. Through board member involvement in bi-monthly board meetings, committee meetings, workgroup meetings and special activities, our Coalition board vision is helping to reshape our community. Collaborations with local agencies: United Way, ECSD, ECHD, Workforce and others enables our message to be heard throughout the community.