

Early Learning Coalition
of Flagler & Volusia

2007-2008 ANNUAL REPORT



Standing for Quality

ELLIE'S STORY

This is Ellie.

She first came to the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler & Volusia (ELCFV) two years ago. Since Mom left, Dad was her primary caregiver. The Welcome Center people were so nice; Ellie and baby brother Josh played in the children's play area while Dad filled out papers.

The Eligibility Specialist explained to Dad that, since he had been laid off and wasn't working, he couldn't receive subsidized School Readiness child care at this time. Dad wasn't turned away, though. He was referred to the Family Involvement Department because Dad had been a long distance truck driver and wasn't confident about his parenting skills.

The next thing Ellie knew, a Family Involvement Specialist (FIS) was visiting every week. Ellie loved her. She gave Dad valuable child development information and Ellie could tell Dad was getting better at being a dad.

The FIS connected Dad with agencies providing job training, food, and other resources. Dad began attending ELCFV Circle of Parents meetings, networking with parents and discussing his fears about raising Ellie and Josh alone.

Thanks to job retraining, Dad found a new job. Now that he was working, Ellie visited the ELCFV again. The Eligibility Specialist had good news! Ellie and Josh were now eligible for School Readiness child care assistance.

The Resource & Referral Department gave Dad a list of contracted child care providers and information on choosing quality care. Dad was serious about finding the right child care setting. Ellie heard him say, "Only the best for Ellie and Josh!"

Soon, Ellie was attending a bright, cheery local preschool where teachers understood how important it is for Ellie to learn through play. Since Dad's sister had moved to the area, the Eligibility Specialist shared information about the relative caregiver option. Aunt Sue became Josh's child care provider.

When Dad picked up his child care voucher, the ELCFV Screening Services Department was conducting developmental, hearing and vision screenings in the lobby. In a very short time, Ellie was screened while Dad completed Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQs) on her and Josh. Dad discovered building Ellie and Josh's fine motor skills was important so the ELCFV staff gathered paints, crayons, art dough, and paper for them to take home. What fun, Ellie thought!

Dad also received a flyer about ELCFV Story Time. The next topic was Teddy bears. Ellie loves Teddy bears and could hardly wait to come to Story Time.

The Eligibility Specialist reminded Dad that when Ellie turned four she would be eligible for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK). So a few months later, Dad brought Ellie to the ELCFV to learn about VPK. Wow! These ELCFV people had been helping Dad for more than half of Ellie's life. While Dad talked, Ellie joined the story hour and song session in the lobby.

Suddenly, Ellie saw a lady from her preschool (Ellie thought she was called a director). She gave Ellie a big hug and told her she was going to have a VPK class. Ellie could go VPK right in her own cheery, bright preschool!

Ellie felt so important when Dad handed her a new back pack full of VPK supplies! Even better, the ELCFV story people gave her a new book. Ellie thought about using it to start a "library" on her own bedroom bookshelf.

As they left, Ellie proudly told the Welcome Center lady she was four and going to VPK. The lady congratulated Ellie on being such a big girl. Dad told the lady he was going to school, too—to college! The lady gave them a big smile, wished them well, and told them to remember to call the ELCFV if they needed anything.

Ellie and Dad thought the same thing: we will call – ELCFV has everything we need!



Standing for Quality

A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIR

Standing for Quality

High quality early education—it's what every child deserves! This year the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia (ELCFV) has definitely made a stand for quality! We used a proactive approach and launched exciting quality initiatives. Child care providers stepped up to the plate, parents participated, and the impact is evident. Children, families, and the entire community have benefited and will continue to benefit as a result.

The following is a sample of ELCFV Quality Initiatives for 2007-2008:

1. **Quality Enhancement Mentoring Program.** Helped early child care programs achieve the highest professional standard of quality possible and resulted in **85% of participating programs showing improvement.** Success was accomplished through mentor role-modeling/interaction strategies, individual and small group meetings, instructional videos, teacher/director self-reflection, and off-site observation of model centers. The "**Stand for Quality**" program requires providers to score a minimum of 3.0 on the Environmental Rating Scale assessment in order to contract with the Coalition as a School Readiness provider. A number of providers improved their scores by two points or more!
2. **Community Outreach Training.** Included 47 parent education/social events which were available to the entire community. Theme-based story times at local branch libraries and *Holidays Around the World* story time for children from our family homes and centers, and education programs on such topics as Child Safety, Infant Massage, and Child Support Enforcement, **brought early learning awareness to the entire community.**
3. **Baby Steps to Success.** This pilot project, designed to **improve overall quality in programs serving children birth to three years of age,** included on-site visits and training. Seventy-five percent of participating programs increased their environmental rating and **100% of participants reached program goals.**
4. **Reading Makes Me Smile.** **Increased parent awareness of child development and the importance of early literacy activities** by utilizing early educators as a link between classroom and home. Families participated in literacy training and family activities resulting in more families reading aloud to their children daily and incorporating library visits into family activities.
5. **All Aboard Inclusion Pilot.** Geared to **increase the number and quality of child care programs serving children of varying needs.** Offered peer mentors, technical assistance, and workshops. Results: 100% of participating providers achieved program goals and the number of providers offering quality inclusive care environments increased by 24%!

Needless to say, our Board of Directors and I are thrilled with the progress made by Flagler and Volusia families and child care providers. I also can't say enough about the eager, innovative approach our ELCFV staff has provided.

With such an enthusiastic response to our efforts, **Standing for Quality** will change our community for the better in years to come!



Sincerely,

Deborah Denys

Deborah Denys, Board Chair
Early Learning Coalition of Flagler and Volusia

A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Quality Staff = Quality Service

It seems unbelievable that it has been a little over a year since our coalition took all services in-house. As we believe that a system of training and mentoring for our child care providers goes a long way to improve quality care for our children, we also invest this same concept with our staff in order to achieve quality service. This past year, our staff of 70 received intensive training in customer service & conflict resolution, time & stress management, and setting priorities & meeting goals.

In addition, each department had program-specific training such as procurement and internal controls; environmental rating systems for assessing child care providers; child assessments (I-PAS); family involvement (Parents as Teachers®); professional development initiatives in training and setting up a professional registry; IT and data management; and public relations/marketing to name a few.

We are very proud of where we've come in such a short time, but we still have a long way to go. We work towards continuous quality improvement. To assist us, we are asking parents and child care providers to fill out surveys and make recommendations/suggestions for improvements.

A special thanks to all of you who continue to give encouragement, motivation, and support to staff. It goes a long way in assisting us to help those who desperately need our services.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victoria Stark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Victoria Stark
Executive Director



Early Learning Coalition of Flagler & Volusia Team



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OUR MISSION

In partnership with families, the ELCFV will enhance readiness opportunities for children birth to kindergarten effectively utilizing community resources.



OUR HISTORY

The School Readiness Act (s.411.FS) brought about local Coalitions for School Readiness with a goal of preparing preschoolers to be ready to learn upon entering school.

2004/2005: Passage of Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten legislation (House Bill 1A) brought about implementation of VPK. At the same time, Coalitions for School Readiness became Early Learning Coalitions.

2005: The Flagler & Volusia Early Learning Coalitions merged to become the Early Learning Coalition of Flagler & Volusia (ELCFV).

2007: The ELCFV assumed all services previously contracted to Child Care Resource Network, moved all operations to 230 N Beach St. in Daytona Beach, and opened satellite locations.

2008: The ELCFV took a "Stand for Quality," setting minimum score standards for child care providers on the Environmental Rating Scale and implementing a mentorship training program to help them achieve this goal.

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive Committee

- Deborah Denys**, Governor Appointed Chair, Private Sector Business
- Betsy Lewis**, Vice Chair, Dept. of Children and Families Dist. 12 Appointee
- Jonathan Davies**, Treasurer, Private Sector Business
- Rufus Johnson**, Secretary, Nominating Committee Chair, Private Sector Business
- Mary Anne Rodgers**, Provider Forum Committee Chair, Community College Representative
- Dr. Henry Martin**, Outreach Committee Chair, Private Sector Business
- Ann Williams**, Quality Committee Chair, Private Sector Business

Members

- Bob Abbott**, Board of County Commissioners Appointee
- Carole Belavek**, Private Sector Business
- Pamela Buckham**, Licensing Agency Representative
- Sharon Cummings**, Representative of Center-Based Child Care Providers
- Andrew Dance**, Private Sector Business
- Mary Gilbert**, District Superintendent of Schools Designee
- Jim Grogan**, Private Sector Business
- Barbara Harrison**, County Health Department Designee
- Bill Kelly**, Private Sector Business
- Robin King**, Regional Workforce Development Board Representative
- Judi Maloy**, Director, Mid Florida Community Services, Inc. Head Start
- Sharman Moore**, Representative of Private Child Care Providers
- Joel Rosen**, Private Sector Business
- Patricia Stickford**, Representative of Program for Children with Disabilities under IDEA Legislation
- Deborah Wyman**, Representative of Faith-Based Child Care Providers



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Back Row: Bill Kelly, Bob Abbott, Andy Dance, Deborah Denys (Chair), Dr. Henry Martin (Outreach Committee Chair), Barbara Harrison, Rufus Johnson (Secretary), Jonathan Davies (Treasurer).

Front Row: Deborah Wyman, Sharman Moore, Mary Gilbert, Betsy Lewis (Vice Chair), Mary Anne Rodgers (Provider Forum Chair), Judi Maloy, Joel Rosen, Sharon Cummings.

Staff Kneeling: Lara Glaser, Victoria Stark.

Absent: Carole Belavek, Pamela Buckham, Jim Grogan, Robin King, Patricia Stickford, Ann Williams.

Members who served during the year: Ken Sexton, Jennifer Tinstman.

HOW WE HELP CHILDREN

The ELCFV goal is to prepare preschoolers to be ready to learn when they enter school. A good start in a quality early care and education environment provides a basis for happy, healthy, successful children who strive to reach their potential.

Taking a **Stand for Quality**, the ELCFV Board of Directors this year required providers to score a minimum of 3.0 on the Environmental Rating Scale assessment in order to receive a School Readiness Pre-Qualifying Contract.

Child Screening & Assessment Services

The Screening and Assessment Team coordinated and completed developmental screening for 100% of School Readiness children, birth to five. Children received a Level 1 age appropriate, developmental screening upon ELCFV enrollment or via their early childhood educators. Children identified on the Level 1 screening as needing further assistance received a follow-up Level 2 screening and/or Level 3 screening.

Parents and child care providers received all screening and assessment results. Parents of children identified on either Level 1 or level 2 screening as needing additional services were contacted and provided referral information. More children were identified and recommended for referrals for additional services (Level 3) than ever before.

The team researched child assessment instruments. Experts on child development, local, statewide, and beyond, were consulted, and gave input on child assessment. This led to approval of the Infant-Pre-school Play Assessment Scale (I-PAS), to be implemented as the new child assessment tool for children birth to five in 2008-2009.

A Child Tracking Database system was successfully implemented to track children for screenings, assessments, and referrals for additional services.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: 30% of children in sample group will show growth as evidenced by pre and post assessments.

Results: 93% showed growth.

Inclusion & Health Services

Inclusion and Health Services promoted increased provider/ community awareness on the importance of serving all children, regardless of their abilities. The program coordinated and provided vision and hearing health screenings to ensure early identification.

Training was conducted with families and child care providers, and technical assistance was given upon request via the Warm Line, a specially designated phone line to receive "inclusion related" calls. The line is open to the public and includes local and toll free numbers. Information, referrals and technical assistance services regarding inclusion and behavior were provided via on-site visits, phone calls, faxes and mail-outs. Child observations were conducted upon request and referrals made for additional services.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: Monthly reports will reflect that 100% of children with special needs referred through the inclusion program & screening and assessment, are served through child care or through referral services.

Results: 100% of children with special needs received a referral or received child care.

Child Screenings/Assessments	Volusia	Flagler	Total
*Level I Screen:			
Level I child screenings administered	3471	412	3883
*Level II Screen: Developmental, Speech, Vision, Hearing, or Individual Learning Plan (I.L.P.)			
Level II child screenings administered	512	70	582
*Level III Screen: Recommend Referral for Additional Services – Partnering Agency			
Level III referrals to partnering agencies	210	35	245
Child Assessments			
Number of providers participating in child assessments	36	3	39
Pre-assessments administered	268	24	232
Post-assessments administered	159	18	177
Percentage of children showing gains in readiness skills at post-assessment			92.85%
Hearing Screenings:			
Hearing Screenings administered by ELCFV	103	25	
Total Number of Hearing Screenings	103	25	128
Vision Screenings:			
Vision Screenings administered by ELCFV	5	14	
Vision Screenings administered through Lion's Club collaboration:	235	114	
Total Number of Vision Screenings:	240	128	368

Coalition Plan

Outcome: Increase the number of children receiving hearing screening by 10% by June 30, 2009.

Results: Hearing screenings increased by 29%.

2007-2008 All Aboard Inclusion Pilot Project

Inclusion & Health Services program goals were met with the development and implementation of the All Aboard Inclusion project. The six month pilot began mid-year and ended in June.

Project goals were:

- to increase the number of providers who offer quality inclusive care environments
- to serve more children of varying abilities
- to raise the quality within these programs.

Five School Readiness providers participated in the project, four in Volusia and one in Flagler County. An Inclusion Checklist, developed by the Department of Education Office of Special Education, was used as a pre and post program assessment to identify program needs, establish goals, and measure quality improvements.

Inclusion Pilot data:

- 100% of providers successfully achieved their program goals
- 100% of providers received technical assistance and information on The Americans with Disabilities Act
- 80% of providers attended trainings specific to Inclusion
- 60% of providers agreed to serve as peer mentors
- A 24% increase was achieved, in the number of providers offering quality inclusive care environments, to serve children of all abilities, from the previous year

Child Care Executive Partnership Program (CCEPP)

The Child Care Executive Partnership Program is a public/private partnership program that helps employers meet the needs of working parents. This program matches private sector business dollars with state funding to provide School Readiness services to participating families earning under and up to 200% of the federal poverty level.

This year, \$74,447 in local match dollars came from the local businesses, the United Way of Flagler/Volusia and the County of Flagler; this amount generated an additional \$74,447 in state match, for a total of \$148,894. This reflects a 6.5% increase over FY 2006-07.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten

The ELCFV provided Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) to 3,952 children (635 in Flagler and 3,317 in Volusia). The ELCFV exceeded the State's projected number of 3,588 VPK children served by just over 10% with 364 additional participants; 142 VPK providers delivered services in Flagler and Volusia Counties.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: 100% of children in School Readiness have received an age-appropriate screening.

Results: TOTAL Screened = 100%.

The Result of Helping Children: VPK Readiness Rates

The Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) administered by the Florida Department of Education (DOE) measures each kindergartner's school readiness in seven areas: language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, social and personal skills, physical health and fitness, and the creative arts.

Kindergartners are screened each fall. The Readiness Rate for 2006/2007 was set by the DOE at 211 out of a possible 300 points.

The tools selected by the DOE for measurement were:

- Early Childhood Observation System (ECHOS): Based on teacher's observation of the child's performance on a maximum of 19 benchmarks across seven (7) development areas.
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) – Letter Naming: Measures a child's proficiency in naming uppercase and lowercase letters.
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) – Initial Sound: Determines a child's ability to recognize the beginning sound(s) in an orally presented word.

County District Results

	Flagler	Volusia	State
ECHOS	(906)	(4,153)	(180,351)
Consistently Demonstrating,			
Emerging/Progressing	90%	85%	88%
Not Yet Demonstrating	10%	15%	12%
DIBELS – Letter Naming	(898)	(4,147)	(177,996)
Above Average, Low Risk	73%	72%	72%
Moderate Risk, High Risk	27%	28%	29%
DIBELS – Initial Sound	(888)	(4,105)	(173,214)
Above Average, Low Risk	67%	64%	64%
Moderate Risk, High Risk	33%	36%	35%

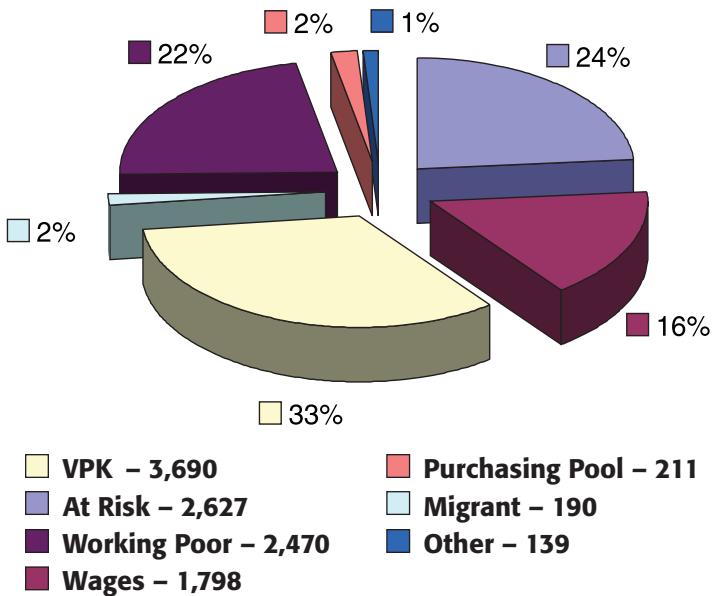
Standing for Quality

Children are the beneficiaries of high quality early care programs and ELCFV child care providers understand the importance of taking a stand for quality. It is through their dedication that positive results are achieved. The number of ELCFV child care providers is as follows:

PROVIDER TYPE	FLAGLER	VOLUSIA	TOTAL
Gold Seal Providers	2	22	24
Licensed Centers	20	176	196
Licensed Exempt Centers	12	68	80
Licensed Family Child Care Homes	12	103	115
Registered Family Child Care Homes	2	22	24
Informal Providers	7	22	29

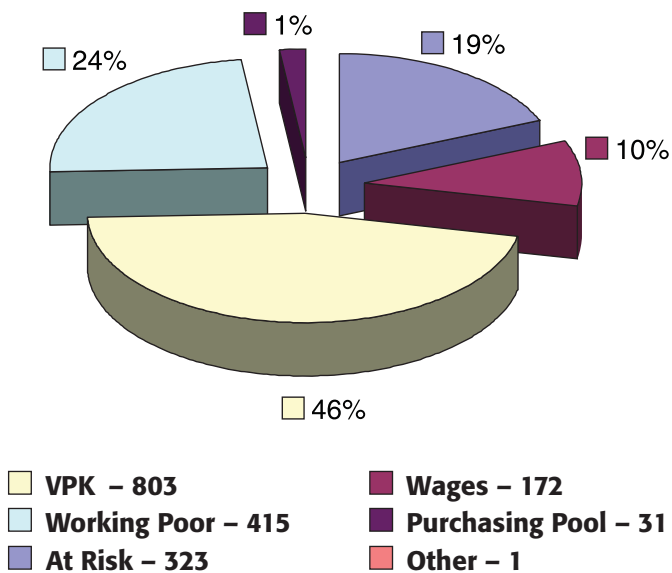
Count of unduplicated Children Served for 2007-2008:

Volusia County: 11,125



Total School Readiness: 7,435
Total VPK: 3,690

Flagler County: 1,745



Total School Readiness: 942
Total VPK: 803

Flagler and Volusia Counties Combined

Total School Readiness: 8,377
Total VPK: 4,493



Hope & Brooks Receive Help for Hearing Loss

We rejoice as Hope who was barely sitting up at a year of age is now walking, running and climbing stairs. Due to corrective surgery, she has regained 80% of her hearing and her speech is improving daily. We are happy for Brooks as he will soon be receiving intervention services for hearing loss.

Fiscal Year 2007-2008

Total School Readiness Budget

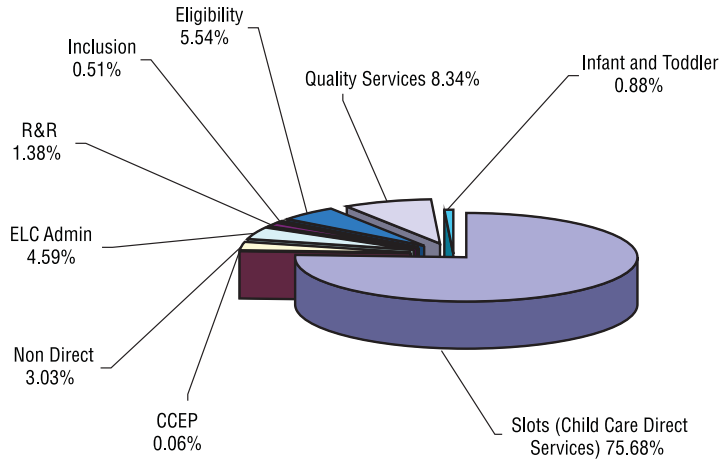
\$1,333,974 Flagler County

\$13,380,805 Volusia County

School Readiness

The Coalition fiscal year-end report reflects a 97.13% utilization of total dollars budgeted and slot utilization totaling 96.71% of slot dollars budgeted. Only 4.59% was spent on Administrative expenditures.

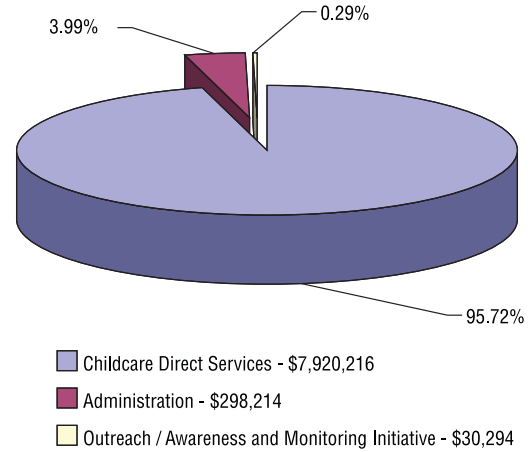
School Readiness Total:



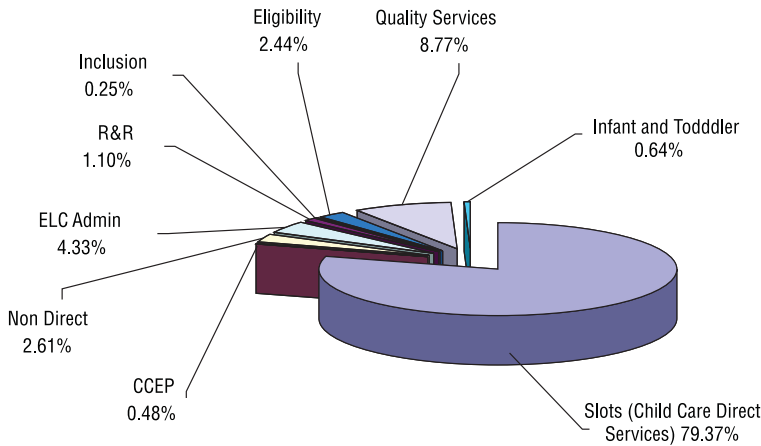
VPK

Expenditures for Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten occurred in two principle areas: the Coalition fiscal year-end report reflects Provider Reimbursements at 95.72% and Administrative expenses at 3.99%.

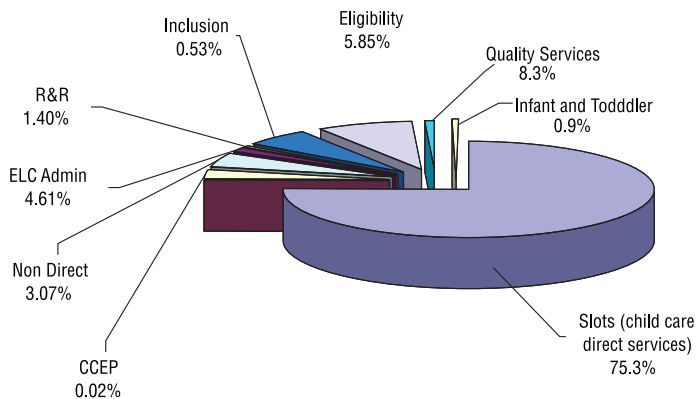
An additional \$26,423 was received for VPK Outreach, Monitoring and Awareness initiative, representing .29% of expenditures.



School Readiness Flagler County:



School Readiness Volusia County:



High Waiting List Causes Coalition to Plan a Phase Out of School Age Care

As of June 30, 2008, 1,393 children remained on the waiting list for School Readiness services. Since state legislation mandates that the ELCFV prepare preschool children to be ready to learn upon entering school, the ELCFV Board of Directors implemented a plan which will, over the course of two years, phase out School Readiness Services for school age children.

The ELCFV has not forgotten the need for quality care for school age children and has been working with a variety of funders and child care providers to develop community-based options to address these needs.

HOW WE HELP CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Standing for Quality means helping each contracted child care provider offer the highest quality early care program possible. Our commitment to our providers is evident through the support, training, and professional development opportunities we offer. We're thankful for providers who are motivated to learn and implement new techniques, strategies, curriculums and best practices to enhance program quality.

Quality Initiatives

Quality Enhancement Mentoring Program

A mentoring program was developed to assist child care providers in their pursuit of program quality. The goal was to create a concrete foundation for providers to follow in their programs as they strived to encompass quality needs.

Through an initial screening process, the needed 76 of 242 providers received the ERS assessment. The mentoring program went into full swing building relationships of mutual trust and respect with early childhood educators to ensure that early child care programs achieved the highest professional standard of quality possible. This was done through the implementation of developmentally appropriate practices in quality learning environments where all children grow and learn.

Early childhood mentors were assigned to clusters of 13 to 15 early child care providers throughout Flagler and Volusia Counties. Mentors worked with providers and their staff to determine improvement goals and develop action plans and timelines needed to achieve those goals.

Direct technical assistance was provided through role modeling lessons and interaction strategies, individual and small group meetings, instructional videos, teacher and director self-reflection activities, and off-site observation of model centers in the community. Mentors provided support and professional development to teachers, staff, and program administration to enhance the learning environment, improve implementation of developmentally appropriate practices and administrative techniques while increasing staff qualifications.

A total of 51 of 60, or 85%, of early child care providers who completed the mentorship program showed improvement. Fifty-one successfully scored a 3.0 or higher allowing them to receive a School Readiness Pre-Qualifying Contract for the following year. Remaining programs either chose to close their business or not participate in serving School Readiness children due to the higher standards. An anticipated 250 programs will be assessed by June 30, 2009.

The FCCERS-R (Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale-Revised) was administered on the family care providers; the ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised) and the ITERS-R (Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised) was administered in the child care centers.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: At least 85% of providers participating in the Mentorship Program will demonstrate improvement in program quality.

Results: 77% of providers participating in the Mentorship Program demonstrated improvement as of June 30. However, of those completing the Mentorship Program, 85% demonstrated improvement.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: 85% of providers participating in the Provider Mentor sample group will show evidence of developmentally appropriate curricula as evidenced by curriculum sections of the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-R or Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale-R assessment tools.

Results: 88% of providers demonstrated use of a developmentally appropriate curricula.

Provider Mentors Celebrate Success

Efforts Result in High Provider Achievement

The ELCFV conducted an Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) assessment for a new child care provider. The overall score was a very low 1.41. The owner/director had little knowledge of early childhood growth and development or of the materials needed for each age level. She joined the mentorship program with a goal of becoming a quality program through intense training, modeling, and mentor/staff interaction.



Initially, the staff was bit resistant—until they saw I was willing “get dirty” helping with room arrangement and cleaning. I offered reasons for needed changes. After that they trusted me and were excited to have my help. The director was available to help with room arrangement, coaching, and conversations on topics of child development, developmentally appropriate practices, and professional growth.

The director had many questions regarding ERS materials. I coached her on the proper materials needed for the different ages of children in each classroom. Since child care providers have limited funds, the director went “on the hunt” for affordable materials visiting consignment shops, dollar stores and tag sales.

I taught her to use the ERS materials; the director and staff now use the tools to evaluate themselves and each other. The director still calls to ask questions now and then and is extremely thankful for ELCFV support and the mentorship program.

Through determination to raise the quality of care, this provider dramatically increased her score. The follow up assessment scored 3.86 – an overall improvement of 2.45! This child care center was recognized at the Provider Appreciation Dinner for Most Improved Provider. The director's message to others: be open to opportunities offered by the ELCFV, and be willing to go the extra mile to improve.

– ELCFV Mentor

Infant/Toddler Baby Steps to Success Pilot Project

This project, successfully piloted for six months, was designed to improve overall quality in programs serving children birth to three years of age. The program assessment tools Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R) for centers and the Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised (FCCERS-R for homes), were used to help develop individual program goals and specific action plans in partnership with each provider. Technical assistance along with on-site visits and training were administered to help providers reach their goals. Post-assessments were conducted to measure program quality improvement. At completion, ELCFV staff met with participants and conducted exit interviews to discuss progress and future needs and to deliver the remaining program materials.

Final program outcomes show 100% of participants met the pilot goals for overall quality program improvement.

Pilot outcome data:

- 8 School Readiness participants; 3 Family Home Child Care & 5 Centers
- 112 hours on-site technical assistance given
- 18 hours training administered; 18 participants
- 6 participants improved their Environment Rating Scale score by 2.00 points
- 1 participant improved their Environment Rating Scale score by 1.00 point
- 1 participant improved their Environment Rating Scale score by .5 points
- 100% of participants met the program goals and received materials to enhance their environments for infants and toddlers



Coalition Plan

Outcome: Of those attendees to infant/toddler training, 50% will show improvement in knowledge base of pre/post training.

Results: 63% of attendees shows improvement in knowledge.

Professional Development and Education – Training

The ELCFV Professional Development and Education Department offered 76 trainings to Flagler and Volusia County child care providers, with a total of 1,129 participants attending. Training topics included child screening and assessment, inclusion, curriculum, Environmental Rating Scales (ERS), VPK Education Standards, health and nutrition, social and emotional development, brain research, and staff retention and motivation.

As an alternative to traditional training, the ELCFV utilized quality dollars to provide online training classes through ChildCare Education Institute. Providers selected from over 120 online courses offered in English and Spanish. Participants received .1 CEU for each one-hour course completed. The 100 program participants completed 634 hours of online training from December 1 to June 30.

The Professional Development and Education Department initiated a Regional Director's Collaborative to provide support to child care directors and administrators. The Collaborative offered updates on ELCFV activities, trainings relevant to the Early Care and Education business administration, networking, and time to share ideas and concerns. Meetings were held on a four-area rotation cycle in Flagler, West Volusia, East Volusia, and South Volusia. Training topics remained the same for each cycle and directors/administrations attended one meeting every 4th month.

Trainings, workshops, conferences, and meetings were advertised via the ELCFV's *Kite Tales* monthly newsletter, mailed to over 592 child care facilities, and were on the ELCFV website and online training calendar.

Trainings and trainers were approved by ELCFV. In collaboration with Flagler County School District, Adult and Community Education granted Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for approved training courses.

Professional Development Initiative (PDI)

In an effort to improve provider competency and enhance child school readiness the ELCFV, with the contributions, support, and partnerships of community stakeholders, worked to create a Professional Development Initiative. Work continues on the PDI, which will include a continuum of training and follow-up activities; a systematic design, sequence, and implementation of activities; opportunities for ongoing evaluation; a clearly articulated philosophical framework based on a core body of knowledge; and a method to tie in a system of licensure, credentialing, and certification.

VPK Training

Through collaboration with the Department of Education's Regional Facilitator, the ELCFV offered supportive services to VPK providers through Provider Forums and VPK trainings such as: VPK Standards, Emergent Literacy and It's Okay to Play in VPK. Provider forums and training gave providers an opportunity to share and discuss with peers what is required to increase the number of children prepared to enter school ready to learn.



The ELCFV offered 33 VPK related trainings with 563 providers attending. To accommodate the needs of providers, VPK trainings were hosted by providers making trainings geographically conducive for attendees.

VPK Monitoring

Minimum elements of VPK programs were monitored to ensure compliance and quality i.e., VPK instructors, class size, attendance, literacy and overall environment. This process occurred in two phases: Phase I involved a desk top monitoring to verify VPK provider documentation accuracy. Phase II involved a follow-up on-site visit to confirm program compliance.

VPK Readiness Rates-for Providers

Forty-five percent of ELCFV VPK providers scored higher than the state average of 244.

Provider VPK Readiness Rate Scores out of a possible 300

Average Flagler & Volusia: 240.43
 Highest Flagler Rate: 300
 Highest Volusia Rate: 295

Warm Line

The Warm Line offers providers a toll-free access to assistance and consultation regarding children with disabilities and special needs into their programs. Warm Line topics included: curriculum, strategies, child development, health, environmental adaptations, and laws and regulations.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: Increase the percentage of Early Childhood Educators accessing the Warm-Line by 15%.

Results: 268% increase in number of calls (Flagler=20 calls; Volusia=170 calls).

Inclusion Services Data

Warm Line calls received & attended	216
Warm Line hours of technical assistance provided	89
Child observations conducted	25
Referrals made for additional services (for inclusion)	46
Trainings conducted	7
Hours of training provided	12.5
Number of training participants	130

Discovering the Joy Conference

The ELCFV, in partnership with Daytona State College and Flagler County Schools Adult and Community Education, held the 3rd annual *Discovering the Joy* conference at Daytona State College on April 12. This one-day conference included an inspirational keynote by Dr. Clarissa Willis and interactive musical performances by Jack Hartmann.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: Increase the percentage of Early Childhood Educators receiving technical assistance for incorporating curriculum/strategies for children with special needs by 10%.

Results: 45% increase in number receiving technical assistance.

- Flagler = 35 providers received technical assistance.
- Volusia = 71 providers received technical assistance.

Twenty-two workshops and presentations offered by 21 presenters covered various topics in early childhood including: Science, Math, Language, Early Literacy, Sign Language, Nutrition, Behavior, Environment, VPK Education Standards, and Screening and Assessment.

Our community's dedication to early childhood education was evident in the overwhelming response to this year's conference: 509 child care professionals attended, a 42% increase over last year's event.



*Barbara Renner,
ELCFV's Volunteer
of the Year*

*Provider Appreciation Dinner & Awards—
Spotlight on Early Educators*

The second annual Provider Appreciation Dinner & Awards banquet, held May 15, was hosted by the ELCFV Board of Directors as part of the national Provider Appreciation Week.

"Oscar" greeted more than 400 child care providers, local dignitaries, Board members, guests, and ELCFV staff, in golden glory May 15, as the Hilton Daytona Beach Oceanfront Resort was transformed into an exciting "set". *Spotlight on Early Educators* recognized early childhood educators for their hard work and dedication to caring for our community's children. An evening highlight: a video presentation which showcased the 17 providers who obtained and/or maintained Gold Seal Accreditation (these providers received trophies) and the ten Reading Makes Me Smile participants (who received certificates and curriculum baskets).

Special thanks to our 34 event sponsors whose donations ranged from \$25 to \$3,500. The ELCFV also received over \$12,000 in gifts and gift certificates from local in-kind sponsors.

HOW WE HELP PARENTS

The ELCFV is committed to helping parents, as their child's first teachers, expand their understanding of child development, become skilled at choosing quality child care, and learn to help their children reach their potential.

Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)

CCR&R was provided to all families requesting services regardless of family income. CCR&R included child care consumer education and information regarding choosing quality child care, explanation of child care options, types of child care, quality indicators, eligibility for financial assistance, and referrals to community resources.

Families received up-to-date provider information based on individual needs and at least five unbiased computer-generated referrals. Resource & Referral Specialists assisted 233 new families in Flagler County and 1,928 in Volusia County for a total of 2,161 first time families assisted with child care referrals. Thirty-seven families in Flagler and 383 families in Volusia requested additional child care referrals. Families were informed how to look for quality child care providers, check provider violations and how to reach the local DCF licensing and AWI/OEL CCR&R Network offices.

Resource & Referral Specialists assisted 412 families in Flagler County and 3419 Volusia County families with referrals for food, clothing, shelter, transportation, employment opportunities, and training regarding professional development. All families interested in School Readiness services were screened for eligibility.

Although the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) and the Office of Early Learning (OEL) require Level I competency, ELCFV CCR&R staff obtained Level II competency.

Single Point of Entry/Unified Wait List (SPE/UWL)

The web-based Single Point of Entry is a user friendly application that may be accessed at www.schoolreadiness.org or directly at <https://spe.schoolreadiness.org/pe/> and directs families to either navigate through the process privately for VPK and/or School Readiness Services or call their local CCR&R office for assistance. The SPE site gives parents the opportunity to apply for VPK in English, Kreyól, or Spanish.

Reading Makes Me Smile (RMMS)

The RMMS quality enhancement program successfully partnered with early educators as a link between parents and the classroom. Child care providers were challenged to implement literacy programs in preschool classrooms and increase parental awareness of child development and the importance of early literacy activities.

RMMS is based on the literacy component of the Florida Birth to Three Learning and Developmental Standards (by the Florida Institute of Education and the Florida Partnership for School Readiness) and the Florida Voluntary Pre-kindergarten Education Standards (by the Florida Department of Education). Promoting involvement in literacy activities with the families they serve, providers make a positive impact, increasing the number of families utilizing community resources such as libraries and story times.

RMMS provider participants received program materials and resources along with assistance from ELCFV staff.

RMMS Program Participants:

The RMMS program consisted of child care provider participants, selected at random and representing center based and family home child care programs from all areas of Volusia and Flagler counties. Ten participants successfully completed the program and received certificates and award baskets at the Provider Appreciation Dinner and Awards banquet. One-hundred-twenty parents and children participated.



Four-year-old, Jocelyn Edwards, proudly displays *Having Fun at the Beach*. She wrote the story as part of the Reading Makes Me Smile program at Little Explorers Montessori in Edgewater.

RMMS Program Activities:

Participating providers offered:

- Literacy trainings for children and families
- Family activities to complete at home and share at school
- Assistance in securing local library cards
- Ongoing information about early literacy, including ideas on how to make reading fun for the entire family.

Providers received points for completing activities such as creation of classroom books, enlisting guest story readers, and promoting "at home" family reading programs. Points were redeemed for resources upon successful completion of the RMMS program.

RMMS Program Summary:

All program participants had favorable comments regarding RMMS involvement, rating the program from good to excellent. They reported curriculum enhancement materials were easy to implement and enjoyable for children. Providers found most parents responded well to program involvement and children had fun with the activities and

Coalition Plan

Outcome: Families will show gains in family literacy as evidenced by pre and post tests of parents involved in the Reading Makes Me Smile Initiative.

Results: 40% of parents able to be tracked showed positive family literacy gains.

- Most notable gain: Family now visits library at least once per month with their children.
- Other gains seen: Families now reading aloud to their children daily; families now making reading important and fun.

became excited about reading. A parent survey indicates many were unaware of how much they could help their children become ready to read and learn.

Based upon the continued success of RMMS, the ELCFV will again offer this program in the fall of 2008.

Family Involvement Services & Community Outreach Training Quality Initiative

Over 350 children were enrolled in our Family Involvement Program during 2007-2008. Certified parent educators provided weekly and bi-weekly visits to families utilizing the Parents as Teachers® National Curriculum. An average of 32 children from an average 27 families received direct in-home family visitation services each month with a total of 277 home visits being conducted by Family Involvement staff.

Forty-seven parent education and social events were held, including theme-based Story Times at the ELCFV and branch libraries. *Holidays from Around the World* was a special treat for children who visited the ELCFV in December. Parent education topics included, but were not limited to, Child Passenger Safety, Infant Massage and Child Support Enforcement.

Family Involvement staff received over \$6,000 in in-kind donations. Each child participant received materials to develop literacy, fine motor, and dramatic play skills, as well as items to help meet personal needs. In addition, 590 referrals were made to outside agencies to meet needs in service areas not met by ELCFV: insurance (Medicaid, Florida Kid Care), emergency assistance, housing, food, employment and legal aid.

In April, the ELCFV Family Involvement Department merged with the Child Development Services Department, allowing the addition of a Community Training Coordinator who provided education and training to parents and early childhood professionals.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: Parent involvement and skill building increased by 25% as evidenced by the Parents as Teachers® Logic Model.

Result: 90% of parents have demonstrated increases in parent involvement and skill building.



Coalition Plan

Outcome: 50% of parents who are in transitional housing participating in training and mentoring demonstrate an increase in knowledge as evidenced by the Parents As Teachers® Logic Model.

Results: 58% of parents who are in transitional housing demonstrated an increase in knowledge.

Star Center Partnership Helps Homeless Center Residents

In order to reach unique populations, Family Involvement staff work directly with the STAR Center (homeless assistance) to provide story times and mentoring to the residents to increase parenting skills and provide other supports as needs arise.

Direct work with parents at the STAR Center increased parent knowledge 58% according to pre and post test evaluations, and using the Parents as Teachers® Logic Model on the topics of child development, behavior management, budgeting, and child support enforcement.



Family Involvement Department Celebrates Success

ELCFV Family Involvement Specialists share and rejoice each time one of our children reaches a major milestone: rolling over, standing, taking the first step, or saying their first word. For many children, these things are taken for granted; for children diagnosed with physical, mental and emotional disabilities, they are major milestones.

Many of these children live in environments in which most parents would not choose to raise a child. It is a success when a parent realizes that nothing replaces the importance of his or her time and positive attention, even in adverse circumstances.

Moms Pursue Education & Careers

Trinecia Still registered at Daytona State College to pursue her education in nursing. Angela Soto received an AS in Human Services. Valencia Gregory, received her GED.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: Parents will show gains towards economic self-sufficiency by demonstrating an average annual increase in income of 2%, as evidenced through the re-determination process.

Results: Parents have shown a 3% average increase in income (average annual income = \$19,629).

Parents Founded Down Syndrome Association

Samantha and Erik Elledge founded the Daytona Beach Down Syndrome Association; their daughter Skylar transitioned to public school Special Education classes.

Subsidized Care Allows Homeless Mom to Work

Sheila Miranda and her two young children lived in the homeless shelter. Thanks to subsidized child care, Sheila began a new job working 40 hours a week.

Young Parents Achieve Self-Sufficiency

Young parents Katie and Dylan and baby Lukas moved into an apartment. Dad is working in construction and mom stays home with Lukas. They are currently self-sufficient.

Coalition Plan

Outcome: The Coalition will increase the number of extended day programs by 5% over the number listed as of June 1, 2006.

Results: Though the increase in the number of extended day programs was less than five percent, 100% of requests for extended care were met through referrals to child care.

Reach Out to Child Care Providers & Community

The ELC used a variety of strategies to reach parents and the community. The following recaps Outreach Department accomplishments:

Community presentations included (but weren't limited to):

- Daytona Beach Kiwanis
- STAR Center (homeless assistance shelter)
- County of Volusia and County of Flagler Commissioners, and United Way Volunteers local match presentations
- Table top displays at various venues to promote School Readiness Child Care Services and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

Participation in community events included:

- Downtown Daytona Beach Street Bar-B-Que
- Flagler Chamber of Commerce Family Faire at the Volusia Mall
- Abilities Expo hosted by Easter Seals at the Port Orange YMCA
- United Way Volusia County Employee Social Service Exhibition
- Health & Human Services Summit
- Safe Kids of Volusia & Flagler tabling event at Cypress Park
- Halifax Area Chamber of Commerce Expo at the Volusia Mall

VPK outreach included reaching parents of four-year-olds in creative ways:

- Public service announcements and press releases
- Banners
- Bus ads
- Direct mail postcards
- Yard signs for child care providers
- Posters
- Bus shelter ads

- Celebration of VPK's 2nd year with a "VPK Birthday Bash" held jointly with the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI).



Children's Week

Partnering with Healthy Start, Community Partnership for Children, United Way of Flagler/Volusia and One Voice for Volusia, the ELCFV co-hosted the first local Children's Week event at the Volusia County Kelly Administrative Building in DeLand.

The partners received a "Celebrating Parents and Children of Volusia County" proclamation at the March 20, County Council Meeting. Hands, created by local child care centers, homes, VPK programs, and Head Start, were displayed in the County Rotunda. A "PBJ Luncheon," held in the courtyard, included a tabling event of local Volusia County agencies. Master of Ceremonies Jack Levine, founder of 4 Generations Institute of Tallahassee, shared an inspiring message; entertainment followed the introduction of dignitaries.

The colorful hands were then delivered to Tallahassee for inclusion in the Statewide Children's Day Celebration held April 5-12.



Children's Week PB&J Luncheon at the ELCFV

Reaching out to Child Care Providers

Kite Tales, the ELCFV's monthly newsletter, was distributed to approximately 600 child care providers and the community at large. Two months (current/previous) of the newsletters were made available on ELCFV's website for downloading and printing.

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qual-i-ty \ˈkwä-lə-tē\ **noun** **a:** degree of excellence, **b:** a distinguishing attribute, **c:** an acquired skill

“Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives.”

–William A. Foster



Early Learning Coalition
of Flagler & Volusia

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