



A Message From Our Chief Executive Officer

In the pages of our Annual Report, you will find information about the many programs and initiatives the Coalition undertook during Fiscal Year 2018-2019. I encourage you to read this annual report for more information about the Coalition, its activities, and to gain a better understanding of how we wisely spend your hard-earned tax and donated dollars. You may view and access other valuable information about our Coalition and all our programs at our website www.elc-manatee.org.

Over the years we have established partnerships with the Bradenton & Sunrise Kiwanis Clubs as well as the Lakewood Ranch Rotary Club and we are extremely proud of our united accomplishments. The Rotary Club's Books for Kids Program is an opportunity to volunteer to read to students in Title I schools, engaging them in discussions about the subject, and providing books for them to take home to their families to share the love of reading.

The Kiwanis Club's gracious donations have taken mobile learning to a new high in Manatee County by funding our ever-growing fleet of refurbished school buses that have been transformed into mobile class rooms and S.T.E.A.M. machines. Our Coalition now can go out to the far reaches of Manatee County and help children find the joy in reading and provide them with free books. Please look at the listing included in this annual report which outlines the numerous organizations that the Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County has supported and partnered with over the years.

Our staff has worked with the Office of Early Learning to test and implement the state-wide portal system for determining eligibility and provider payments, and we are pleased to report that although sometimes challenging, School Readiness and VPK programs and provider payments are now done online through the Portal. This allows those clients who lack transportation the ability to engage our services from a computer where they are located.

Every organization has many components that make it successful. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to our volunteer Board of Directors and thank them for their years of valuable service. Their leadership and guidance are what ensures the Coalition's mission and vision for Manatee County's children is attainable.

Along with our outstanding Board of Directors, these goals are accomplished by our staff who work day in and day out to help the families and especially the children of Manatee County to get prepared to attend school. Our subsidized child care allows parents to go off to work each day knowing their child is not only safe but learning at the same time. Our VPK entitlement program gives a special boost to four-year-old children just before entering kindergarten.

Finally, as you read our annual report please notice that less than five percent of the Coalitions budget goes to the administrative cost of our organization. The Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County sets itself apart from other Coalitions in the fact that we implement so many unique and impactful programs plus go above and beyond in finding ways to fund these important programs.

If you, or an organization that you know of, wish to invest in the Early Education of Children, please be assured that any donation or grant to our Coalition will be very well spent and truly will make a difference for the children of Manatee County.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Sharff
Chief Executive Officer



**Early Learning
Coalition**
OF MANATEE COUNTY

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600 8th Avenue West, Suite 100
Palmetto, Florida 34221



*The information contained in this annual
report is based on data collected from
July 1, 2018- June 30, 2019*

What's New & Exciting?

Play and Learning Strategies (PALS)

Play and Learning Strategies - also known as PALS - is a research-based program that supports parents in their role as their child's first and most important teacher.

Trained PALS coaches meet with parents, providing in-home early childhood education services that empower parents to successfully support their child's social-emotional, cognitive, and language development.

This results in a strengthened parent-child bond and a strong foundation for learning for the child. This foundation will prepare him/her for success in school. PALS I is designed for children 4 to 15 months. Weekly sessions are provided on topics related to early childhood including understanding children's signals, responsiveness, reading with infants, and daily routines. PALS II is designed for children 18 to 48 months.

The PALS II weekly sessions expand on PALS I topics. PALS II also adds additional sessions related to the toddler's increased independence and limit-testing behaviors. The program is open to families in Manatee County with children ages 4 months to 48 months. There is no charge for services. PALS serves 70 families each year.



FLAEYC Support Services

Adding to our shared services contracts this year, the ELC of Manatee County is now providing administrative and event support to FLAEYC – the Florida Association for the Education of Young Children. FLAEYC is a specialized community of more than 3,000 early care and educational professionals from Florida that promotes quality in early education and provides its members with a strong, united voice.

A membership organization dedicated to serving children and families by providing leadership, advocacy, and development for early childhood professionals, FLAEYC is an affiliate of both the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA).

In addition to providing communications support including website, social media, and email coordination, ELC staff worked with the FLAEYC Executive Director, Board, and volunteers to implement this year's FLAEYC Annual Conference. Following the postponement of the original 2019 Annual Conference in September due to Hurricane Dorian, the 2019 FLAEYC Conference took place October 24th – 27th, at Renaissance Orlando at SeaWorld® in Orlando, FL.

This year's conference focused on "Best Practices in Early Learning for Florida's Children" with special events, keynote presentations, and breakout sessions highlighting this topic. Despite the postponement, the conference was a big success – with a tremendous attendee turnout and a great time had by all!

flaeyc Florida Association for the Education of Young Children

advocating

improving quality

networking

Your Professional Membership Network
www.flaeyc.org

About the Early Learning Coalition

Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County, Inc.

Our Mission

To provide and coordinate the services of School Readiness programs in an efficient manner, in order to help all children develop the skills needed to achieve future educational success; to support the role of parents as their children's first and most important teachers; and to continue to improve the quality of services available in the community.

Our Vision

To provide and support high-quality school readiness opportunities for all children and their families, understanding that it is in the first years of life that a child's future educational success is determined.

The Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County is a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency that in the years since its creation, continues to mature and evolve in many aspects: organization, fiscal management, visibility, and strength and involvement of board members.

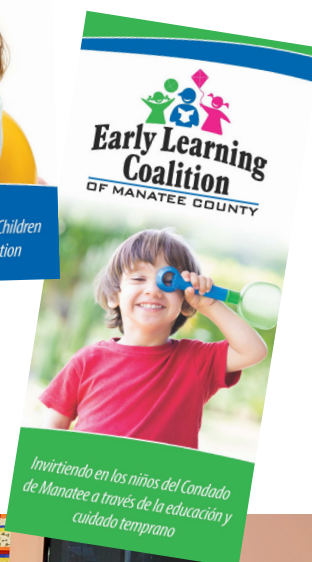
The growth of the Coalition as the leader in early education and care in Manatee County is reflected in the decisive steps made by the Board: strategic planning to foster goals and objectives, innovative programs, and a continual emphasis on improving the education and care provided to our children.

Our Programs and Services:

- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)
- School Readiness
- Early Literacy Initiatives
- Quality Initiatives
- Professional Development
- Developmental Screening & Intervention
- Family Engagement and Parenting
- Inclusive Child Care
- Community Outreach



Find out more about the Early Learning Coalition and its services and programs by picking up our brochure in English or Spanish at the ELC Office.



The ELC lobby is open, airy and inviting to families. The open space and variety of toys, books, and games provides a safe place for children to play and interact with each other.



Our Programs & Services

Child Care Resource and Referral

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) is the "front door" to the Early Learning Coalition's services. It is a service available to assist all families seeking quality and affordable child care options and local community resources. CCR&R can also be used as a free marketing tool for legally operating providers in Manatee County, as the information they provide is updated immediately in our database. Parents are educated on how to identify quality care, informed about different types of care, and are encouraged to continue looking for quality when placing their children in a child care facility. These services are provided at no charge.

While CCR&R helps families find child care, it also provides information about other valuable community resources. This information is available in our lobby, on our website, and at NUMEROUS community events in which the ELC participates.

Promoting Early Literacy

As part of the initiative for Family Literacy Opportunities, the Coalition received over 32,000 low cost books from grant opportunities through First Book.

A book is given to every child that comes to the office and at every community event that the Coalition participates in. Bookmarks labeled with "I'm a Reader" are provided with each book. Parents receive a "Reading Tips for Parents of Preschoolers" that offers fun ways they can help their child(ren) become happy and confident readers.

Children's books are present in the lobby of the Coalition office for parents to read to their children while they wait for their appointment. Other literature is present in the lobby and staff offices encouraging the development of literacy at home.

Over 30,000 books were distributed during Every Child a Reader and Literacy for the Holidays; at outreach events such as the Manatee County Fair and Lakewood Ranch Halloween Boofest; to Manatee County School District as part of the Grade Level Reading program; and to United Way to help with the summer learning loss program.

The Early Literacy Coordinator continued the Raising a Reader program at eight early learning centers and RCMA (Redlands Christian Migrant Association) serving 250 children, providing support to early childhood teachers and directors, and providing information to parents. Raising a Reader is an evidence-based early literacy and family engagement program that helps parents build the habit of book sharing. Each week a child brings home a bag of high-quality books. To help sustain the habit of borrowing and sharing books, at end of the program families are connected to their local library.

Fairytale Follies

ANOTHER highly successful "Fairytale Follies" event took place in the past year as part of the ELC's partnership with the Manatee Performing Arts Center (MPAC).

On December 13th, almost 600 excited children, most of whom were VPK students, attended a stage production of Disney favorites, such as Beauty and the Beast and Frozen – complete with artificial snow falling from the ceiling at the grand finale. Books and backpacks were given to each child.

ELC would like to thank the event sponsor Achieva Credit Union and everyone at MPAC for partnering on these fantastic events that give many of the children their first opportunity to attend the theater.

Those We Serve

In the 2018-2019 fiscal year the Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County provided 1,286 child care referrals



Our Programs & Services

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) is a free program designed to prepare four-year-old children for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success. VPK is available to all four year old's born on or before September 1st that reside in Florida, regardless of family income.

The VPK program is designed to provide four-year-olds access to quality prekindergarten educational experiences and prepare Florida's children for kindergarten by developing the emotional, intellectual, and social skills they need to become successful students.

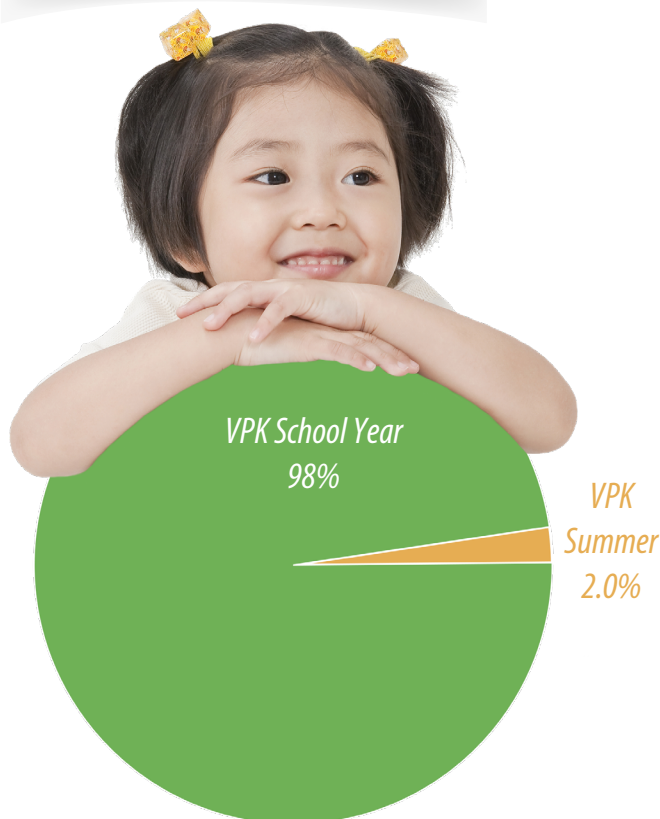
VPK includes standards for literacy skills, strict accountability, appropriate curricula, substantial instruction periods, manageable class sizes, and qualified instructors. Parents have the option of enrolling children in a school-year program, consisting of 540 instructional hours, a summer program, consisting of 300 instructional hours, or a Specialized Instructional Services (SIS) program which takes place outside the traditional classroom setting and is designed for 4-year-olds with special needs.

Those We Serve

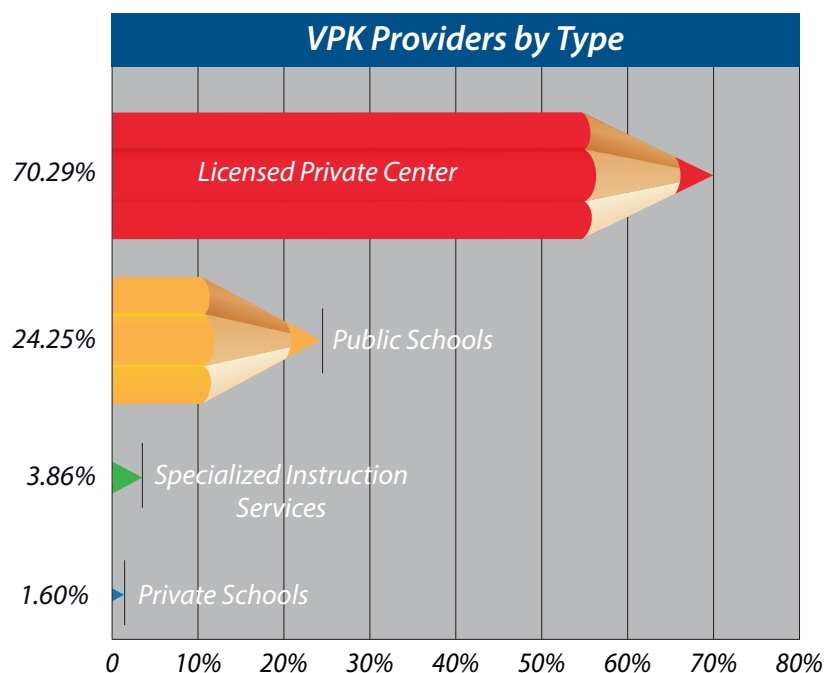
*In the 2018-2019 fiscal year,
the Early Learning Coalition
of Manatee County served
2,968 Children
122 VPK Program Providers*



*Find out more about
the Early Learning Coalition and
its services and programs by
picking up our brochure in English
or Spanish at the ELC Office.*



Total Percentage of VPK Payments by Program Type



Our Programs & Services

School Readiness - (SR) Child Care Funding Assistance

The School Readiness Program offers financial assistance to low-income families for early education and care so families can work towards becoming financially self-sufficient and their young children can be successful in school.

The program considers a child's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; involves parents as their child's first teacher; prepares children to be ready for school; and gives parents information about child development and other topics of interest.

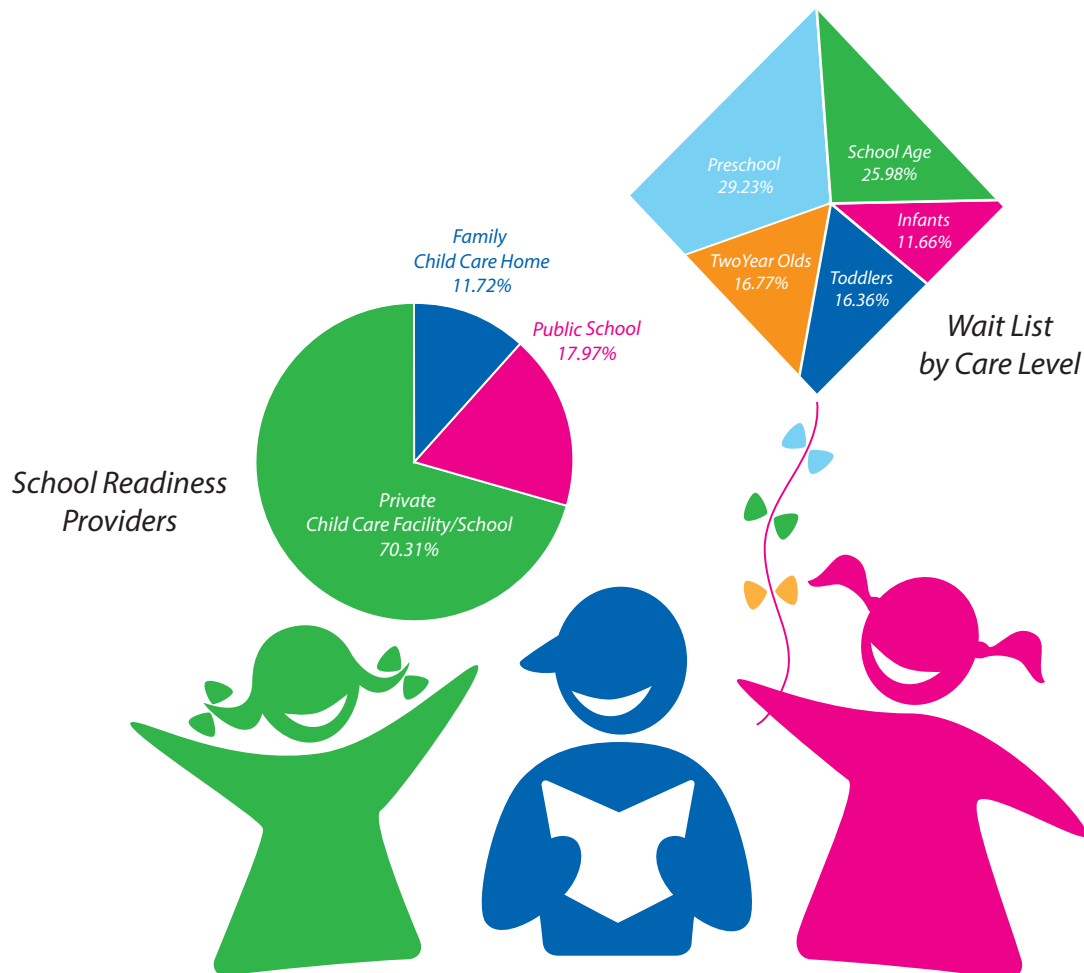
Family Portal

In 2015 the Office of Early Learning (OEL) introduced the Family Portal, which is a comprehensive statewide system where parents can apply for VPK and School Readiness online. The Family Portal can be accessed using any smart phone, tablet, or computer with internet access. Families can upload documents supporting eligibility, sign applications electronically, manage their waiting list status and revalidation for school readiness, and print out VPK certificates of eligibility, allowing the entire application process to be completed online.

A computer resource room is available within the ELC office to assist families with the process. The resource room has eight computers, a scanner, and a wireless printer. The room also includes a community resource bulletin board along with a reading nook for children.

Those We Serve

*In the 2018-2019 fiscal year,
the Early Learning Coalition
of Manatee County's
School Readiness served
4,713 Children
141 Program Providers*



Our Programs & Services

Developmental Screening and Early Intervention

Early Intervention Outcomes

Child Screenings	2,243
Child Assessments	1,684
Community Referrals	15

Early detection of potential developmental delays allows children to reach their fullest potential and enter kindergarten ready to learn.

The ELC helps to expand child care options for children with disabilities and their families by supporting the inclusion of children with special needs in early childhood settings. Services are available to early care and education providers to increase staff knowledge and competence in serving children with disabilities or behavioral challenges. These services include training, onsite technical assistance, community resource information and environmental adaptations.

A toll-free Warm Line is available to parents and early care and education providers needing information related to the disability or special health care needs of children, birth to five years of age.

Coalition staff participates in the Healthy Start Manatee community meetings. The ELC Inclusion Specialist is a Certified Passenger Safety Technician and participates in car seat safety checks. An ELC staff member is a member of the Florida Association of Infant Mental Health. The ELC partners with the Manatee County School Board and local agencies to participate in community events.

Screening & Assessment staff completed 2,243 Ages and Stages Questionnaires developmental screenings. Of these screenings, 971 demonstrated potential development delays and families were provided with Individual Early Care Plans which include age and skill specific activities for families to use at home. The families of 15 children identified as needing further evaluation were aided in coordinating referrals to other community agencies.

Professional Development

The Coalition offered school readiness program providers, staff, and parents training and technical assistance in the following areas:

- Early Learning Standards
- Child Screenings and Assessments
- Developmentally Appropriate Curricula and Character Development
- Teacher-Child Interactions
- Age-Appropriate Discipline Practices
- Health and Safety
- First Aid/CPR/AED
- Relationship Building

Highlights of professional development activities included:

- One session of Best Practices in Inclusive Early Childhood Education to discuss making a child care center more inclusive for all children
- One session of Understanding Behavior in Children to discuss challenging behavior in the classroom
- One Session of When You Think of Inclusion, Think of Me*
- One session of Sanford Harmony Social-Emotional Learning*
- One session of Come Play with Me! Loose Parts Play*

- One session of Creating a Responsive Classroom with Leo Leonni Books*
- One session of Author's Chair in the Preschool Classroom*
- One session of Inspiring Play with Loose Parts*
- One session of Story Stretchers & Brain Builders*
- One session of Stonework Play*
- Two sessions of Handle with Care
- One session of Positive Play, Positive Kids (and staff) *
- One session of Effects of Domestic Violence on Children
- One session of Using Tech to Save Time, Money & Enhance Parent Communication*

Trainings with an asterisk indicate topics presented at our annual local conference, the Manatee Conference on Young Children (MCYC).

2018-2019 Professional Development Statistics:

- 149 sessions provided on 62 individual topics
- 1594 student contacts
- **350.25 training hours**

STEAM Machine

'The STEAM Machine' has been visiting early learning centers providing one-hour sessions that focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. Promoting STEAM education gives children the opportunity to attain essential skills to connect ideas and integrate knowledge across disciplines, all the while capturing their attention.

The ELC has partnered with the School District of Manatee County as 'The STEAM Machine' program continues to grow. The ELC visited 87 classrooms serving 1269 children this year.

Nemours Reading BrightStart! Program (NRBS!)

Nemours Reading Bright Start! (NRBS!) is a supplemental literacy intervention curriculum developed by the Nemours Foundation and dedicated to the prevention of reading failure in young children.

The ELC implemented its Practice-Based Coaching program using NRBS! in November 2015. Teachers complete implementation training. Each classroom is provided with a complete curriculum, and each teacher is assigned a coach. The coach makes regular visits to each classroom to ensure the fidelity of the implementation, to facilitate professional learning, and to coach for teaching-practice improvement.

During the 2018-2019 year, ELC served 47 teachers in 45 classrooms in 19 programs. The participating teachers indicated overwhelmingly that they enjoyed use of this program. ELC pre- and post-screened 524 children using the Get Ready to Read-Revised Screening Tool. Results of the post-screening found that 93% of the three- and four-year-old children scored as being on target to be ready for kindergarten.

Deputy Friendly

The Deputy Friendly program began in January 2016 as a pilot and continues to expand. This collaboration with the Manatee County Sheriff's Department, is designed to humanize children's perceptions of law enforcement and their work and improve rapport between children and law enforcement.

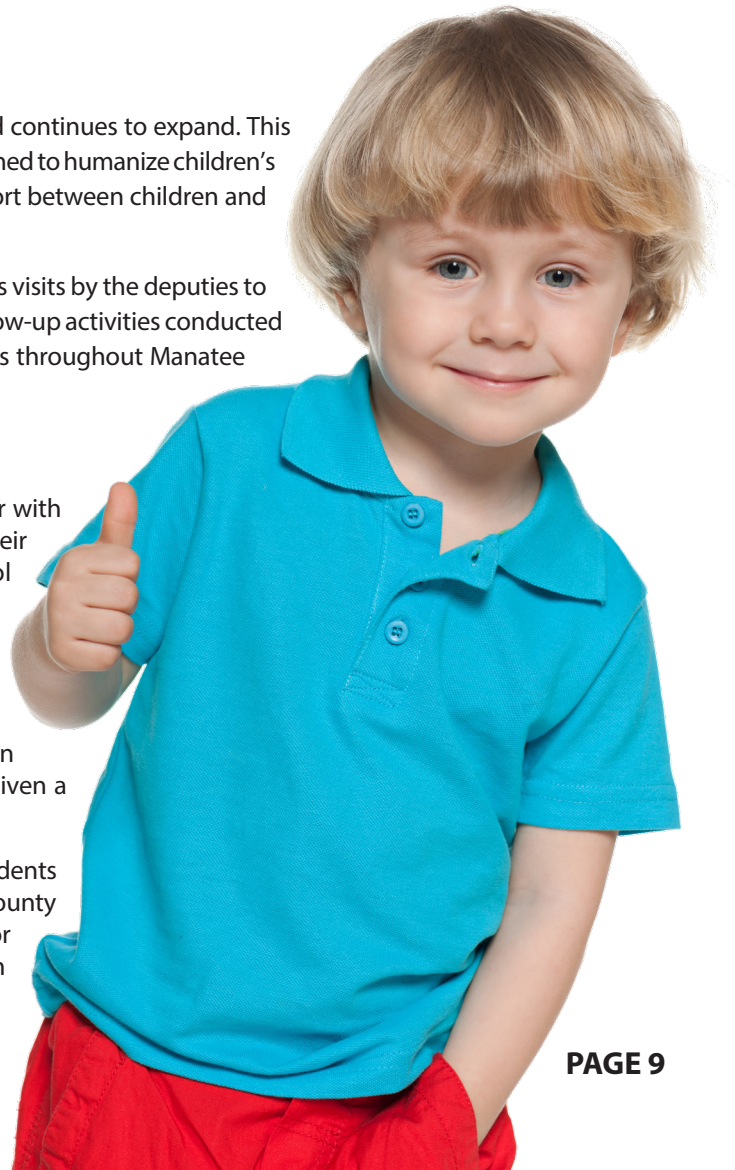
The program is designed for children aged three to five and involves visits by the deputies to school classrooms, a book for centers to add to their library, and follow-up activities conducted by the teachers. Deputy Friendly continues to reach 24 classrooms throughout Manatee County.

Books For Kids

The ELC of Manatee County was excited to partner again this year with Books For Kids, a project of the Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch. Their mission is to raise the reading levels of local elementary school students by helping with reading comprehension and by providing "Books For Kids."

Their team of more than 125 community volunteers are professionally trained to go into Title 1 schools, read to children, and engage students in book discussions which foster reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. Each student in the classroom is then given a book to take home.

This year, volunteers from Books For Kids plan to visit about 2,500 students in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade classrooms in Manatee and Sarasota County schools and distribute more than 17,000 books. Last year, Books For Kids surpassed the 50,000-book distribution mark and is now well on its way to 100,000 books distributed.



Our Programs & Services

SOAR In 4

Soar in 4 is designed to ensure children from families of all races, ethnicities, incomes, abilities, and languages have the opportunities and support they need for success in school and beyond. The program also strives to create a network of parents, community organizations, and neighborhood businesses that plan and carry out activities and opportunities that support young children's healthy growth, development, and school readiness.

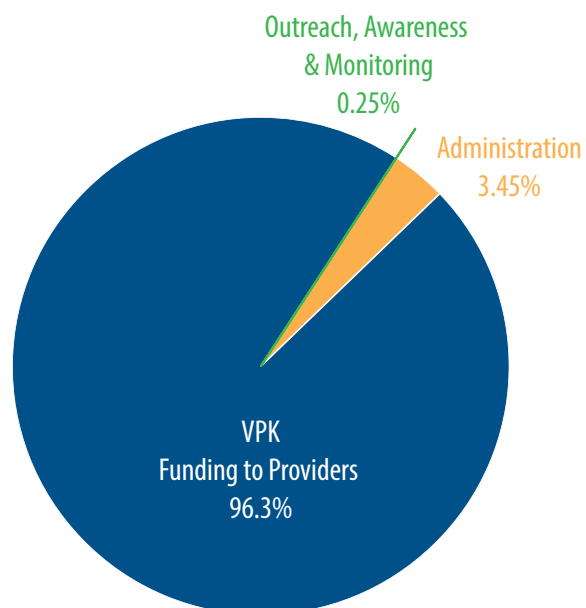
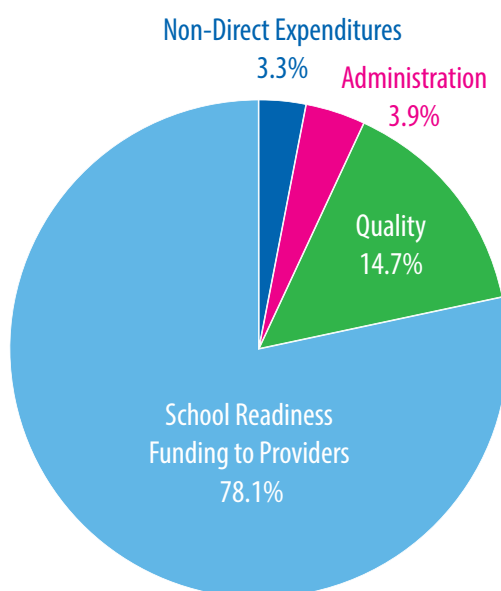
The ELC participated in 11 Soar in 4 evenings over the past year, hosted at The Bishop Museum of Nature and Science, ArtCenter Manatee, and the Manatee County Central Library. These evenings prepare early learners and their families, from Title 1 schools throughout Manatee County, for school success.



Grant Expenditures

2018-2019 Total Funding

The Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County (ELC) received federal and state funding of \$17,000,000 during this fiscal year. Over 78% of School Readiness funds and 96% of Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) funds were spent directly on child care services through our local child care providers and school district. Our overall administrative costs for these programs were 3.9% and 3.45% respectively. *The ELC was awarded additional local grant dollars of \$1,440,000.*



A Heart Felt Thank You To Our Community Partners

American Red Cross
Angus Graham Family Foundation
Anna Maria Oyster Bar
BMO Harris Bank
Bradenton Police Department
BrightHouse/Spectrum Network
CareerSource Suncoast
Children's Forum
Children's Medical Services
Community Foundation of Manatee County
Community Foundation of Sarasota County
Department of Children and Families Child Care Licensing
Drug Free Manatee
Early Childhood Court
East Coast Migrant Head Start
Easter Seals of Southwest Florida
Family Network on Disabilities
Feeding Tampa Bay
First Book
Florida Association for the Education of Young Children
Florida Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
Florida Department of Education
Florida Department of Health in Manatee County
Florida Family Child Care Home Association
Florida Occupant Protection Resource Center
Florida Office of Early Learning
Florida Prepaid College Board
Florida Sheriff's Youth Ranch - Sarasota-Manatee
Florida Winefest & Auction
From Cradle to College™ Foundation
FSU Autism Institute
Gulfcoast Early Steps
Healthy Start Coalition
Hernando DeSoto Historical Society
Home Child Care Providers Association of Manatee County
HOPE Family Services
Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital
Kiwanis Club of Bradenton
Lakewood Ranch Community Fund
Lions Club of Bradenton
Manatee Children's Services
Manatee Community Foundation
Manatee County Chamber of Commerce
Manatee County Chapter of Florida Association for the Education of Young Children
Manatee County Children's Services Advisory Board
Manatee County Housing Authority
Manatee County Juvenile Justice Strategic Planning Committee
Manatee Educational Television (METV)
Manatee Education Foundation
Manatee Hope
Manatee Infant Mental Health Association
Manatee County Public Library System
Manatee County Sheriff's Office
Manatee Performing Arts Center
Manatee Sunrise Kiwanis Club
MCR Health
Michael Saunders & Company Foundation
MLK Day of Service
Palmetto Police Department
Parenting Matters
Patterson Foundation
People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) Coalition
Pinellas County Schools Child Care Worker Training Program
Pittsburgh Pirates Organization/Bradenton Marauders
Police Athletic League of Manatee
Raising a Reader Network
Rays Baseball Foundation
Redlands Christian Migrant Association
Rotary Club of Lakewood Ranch
Safe Children's Coalition
Safe Kids Florida Suncoast
Save the Children Network
Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization
School District of Manatee County
Service Club of Manatee
SOLVE House
Southeastern Guide Dogs, Inc.
Southern Early Childhood Association
South Florida Museum
State College of Florida and the Foundation for SCF
Step Up Suncoast
Suncoast Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
Suncoast Partnership to End Homelessness
Take Stock in Children
The Giving Partner
Training and Technical Assistance Support Center, UCF
Turning Points /Galvano One Stop Center
Twiga Foundation
UF Lastinger Center
United Way Suncoast
Van Wezel Performing Arts Center
Volunteers of America
Whole Child Manatee
William G. & Marie Selby Foundation
Women's Resource Center

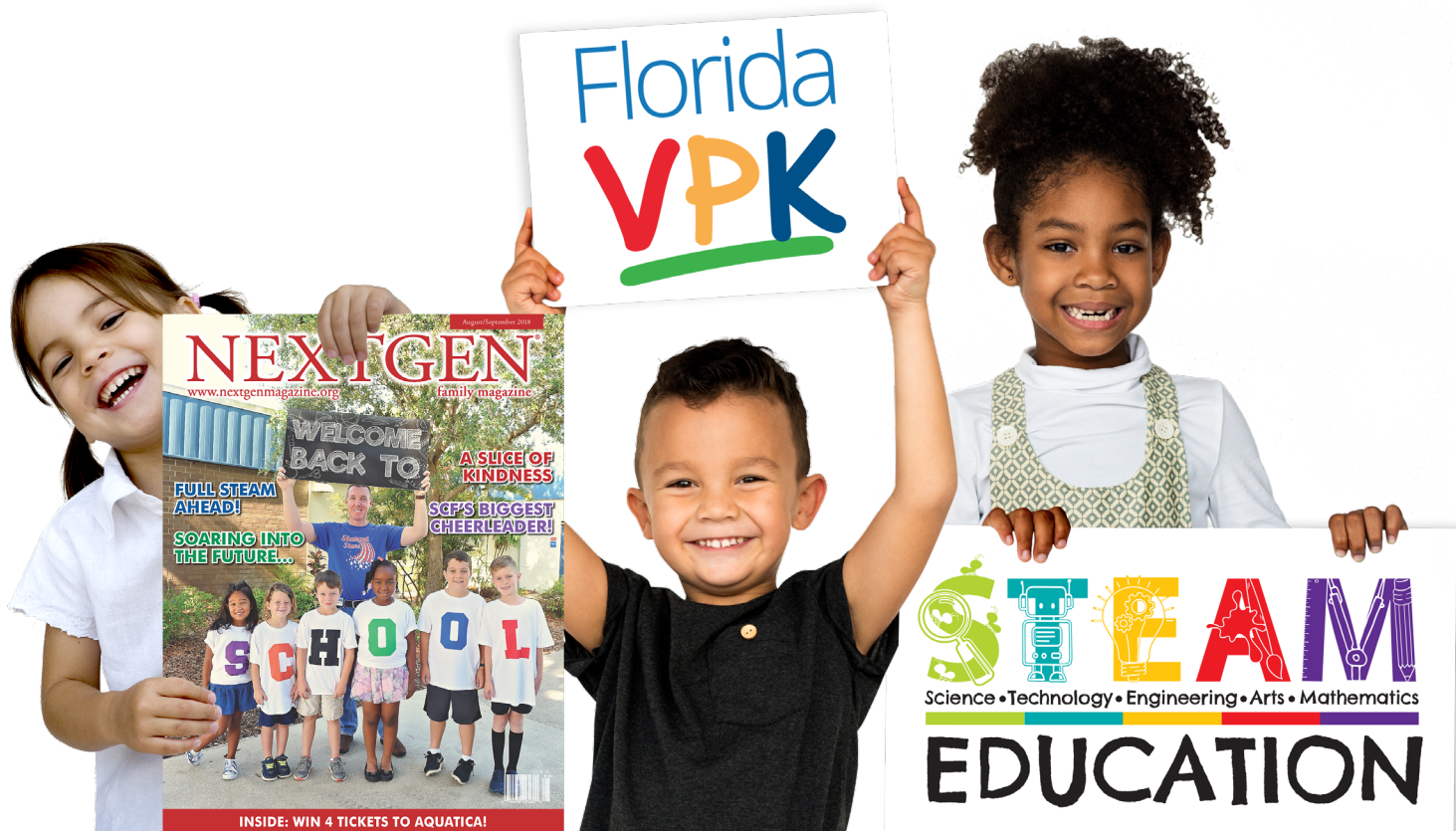
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