



**Early**  
**Learning Coalition**  
**OF MANATEE COUNTY, INC.**



**2009 – 2010**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**

## MISSION STATEMENT

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 child's first and most important teacher; and to continue to improve the quality of services available in the community.

## 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.

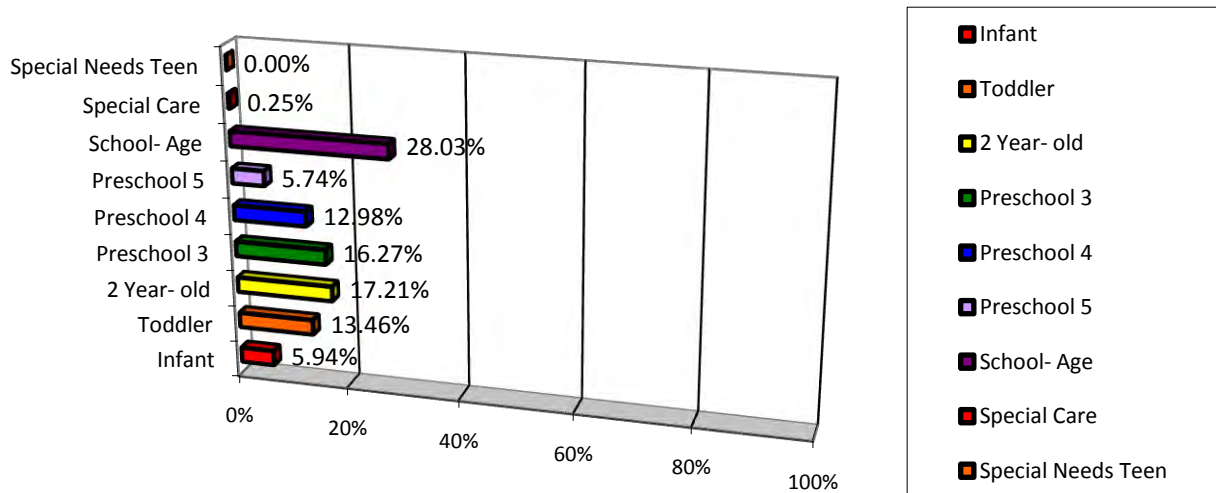
## DATA SUMMARY

The following information is based on data collected from July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010.

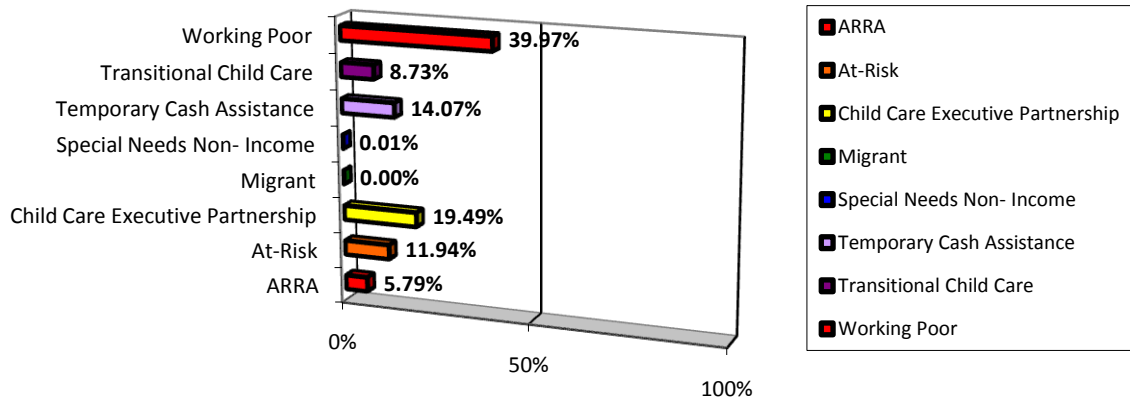
### Number of unduplicated School Readiness (SR) children and families:

SR Children	SR Families
3941	2141

### School Readiness: Percentage of total payments (including match) by care level:



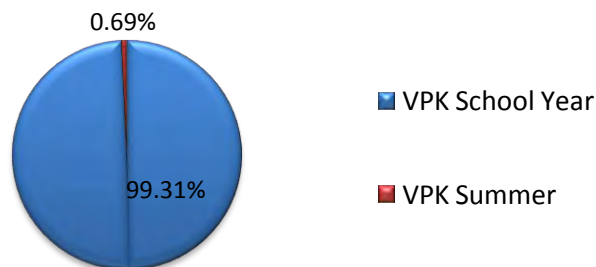
**School Readiness: Percentage of total payments (including match) by funding category:**



**Number of unduplicated Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education children and families:**

VPK Children	VPK Families
2755	2718

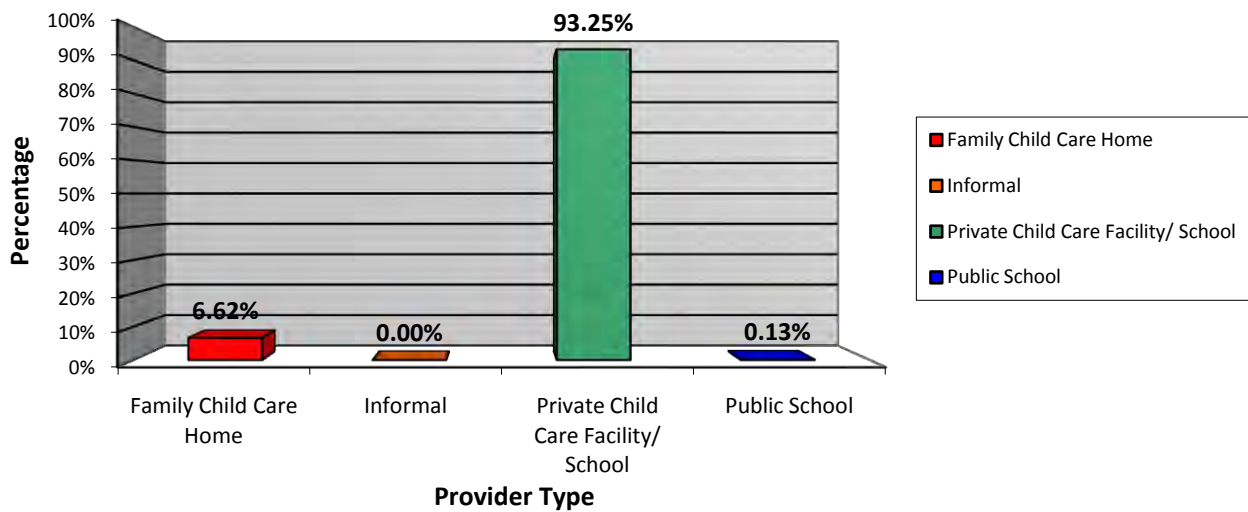
**Total percentage of VPK payments by program type:**



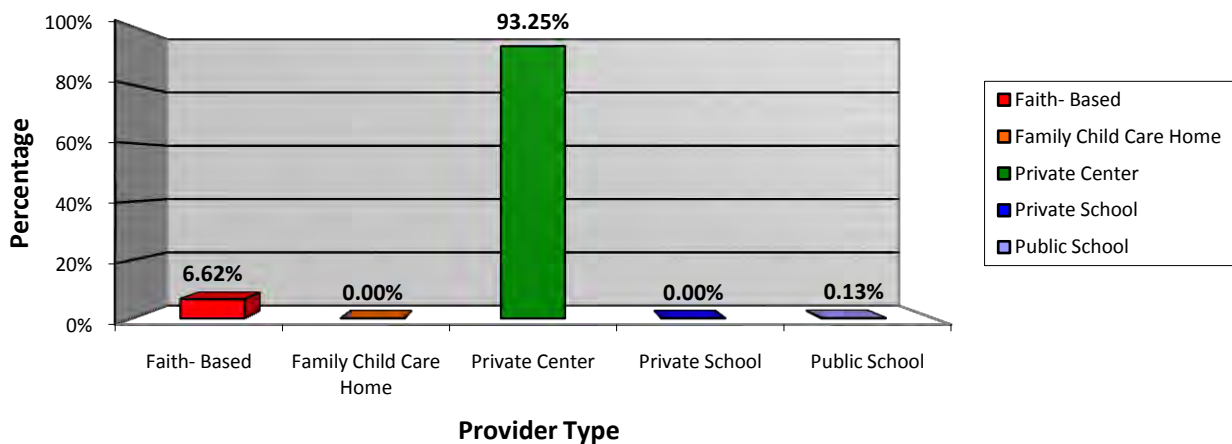
**Total number of providers that participate in the coalition’s early learning programs:**

School Readiness Providers	Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Providers
192	124

**Participating School Readiness providers by provider type:**



**Participating VPK providers by provider type:**



## **SERVICE DELIVERY SUMMARY**

During the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) of Manatee experienced significant changes brought on by bringing the Eligibility, Reimbursement, and Child Screening and Assessments in house effective April 1, 2009. This transition resulted in all services being handled in-house by the ELC. Staff participated in multiple trainings in order to make the transition from the previous service provider to the ELC as seamless as possible for our families and providers.

As part of the cost savings realized by bringing services in house, the ELC was able to implement a Provider Reimbursement Rate increase for Infant, Toddler, Two and Three year olds. This was the first rate increase in Manatee County since 2005 and was much appreciated by our providers during the tough economic times.

The ELC has actively pursued and been awarded additional grant dollars through the United Way, Manatee County Government, and the Helios Foundation. The ELC continues to look for other avenues of revenue to enhance the programs funded through the Agency for Workforce Innovation. We are building relationships with out of school time providers in Manatee County to provide overlay programs designed to keep school age children in quality care settings. The ELC also received funding from the Manatee County Government this fiscal year to provide child care to the Grandparents as Parents program funded by Manatee Children's Services. This allows the ELC to continue child care services for those families that don't qualify through the Relative Caregiver Program through AWI funding.

The ELC continues our collaborative efforts with many community agencies such as Suncoast Workforce, Safe Children's Coalition, Homeless Coalition, Whole Child, the Manatee Sheriff's Department, Manatee Community Foundation, Manatee Children's Services, Women's Resource Center, HOPE Family Services, Manatee Hope, Community Haven for Adults and Children and other United Way partner agencies.

As part of the Scholastic Literacy Partnership, the ELC donated over 2800 books to law enforcement agencies in Manatee County for distribution to children being removed from the home during protective service investigations. We have also distributed over 1000 age appropriate books to parents during their initial placement appointments with the emphasis on parents as the child's first teacher. The ELC is in the process of collecting survey data from the families to measure the increase in literacy awareness for our families.

The Quality Committee and Quality Initiatives team have worked very hard in developing a quality rating system for providers with a 5 year plan. This was approved by the ELC's Board of Directors in June of 2008 and introduced during this fiscal year. The quality rating system will give parents the opportunity to select child care that meets federal and state quality standards. The Coalition will provide continuous technical assistance and training to help the providers meet their quality goal.

The ELC's current strategic plan expires in 2010. The Board of Director's Strategic Plan committee has been charged with meeting to determine the issues of greatest concern for Manatee families and the areas of greatest impact for the Coalition. One area of concern that the committee is planning to address is the need for a requirement that all Manatee County family child care home providers be licensed by Department of Children and Families licensing department.

## QUALITY ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Activity	Narrative
<p>What opportunities are offered by the Coalition for comprehensive consumer education?</p>	<p>ELC staff attends numerous seminars and collaborative meetings to both disseminate information and to learn about community programs that could benefit children and families. The Coalition staff conducts one-on-one education in the office; provides literature in the lobby; and participates in many community events such as the Children’s Summit, the Health Fair, Job Fair, Pride Park Fall Festival and Children’s Parade.</p>
<p>Provide a list of grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards.</p>	<p>A number of grant programs were in place during the 2009-2010 year to support providers in meeting or exceeding state and local standards for continuing education. These programs included: a college scholarship program that paid for providers to earn their Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC), their Director’s Credential, and/or their Associate’s degree at the State College of Florida (SCF). In-service trainings were also offered free of charge throughout the year. Another grant program, the Textbook Loan program, allowed providers to check-out the needed textbooks for their coursework at SCF each semester, free of charge. The Coalition provided professional development reimbursements up to \$100.00 per person for accessing opportunities outside of SCF and the Coalition.</p>
<p>Describe the process for monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements.</p>	<p>Individual monitoring reports from DCF Child Care Licensing are reviewed by the Compliance team for any non-compliance reports for safety reasons made on registered family day care homes, license-exempt accredited programs and non-licensed programs. ELC staff also performs on-site monitoring in every program care-group using a set of monitoring tools that were a loosely based composite of minimum standards level (“3”) of the Environment Rating Scales, developmentally appropriate practices and the Florida Child Care Assessment Tool, among others. The tools rate environmental indicators including health and safety concerns. The Coalition has implemented strategies which include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regular meetings with DCF Child Care Licensing.</li> <li>2. Increased accountability for minimum health and safety standards by review of licensing records, notice to programs of serious non-compliance issues perhaps affecting their agreement status, and progressive enforcement, up to and including termination of agreement.</li> <li>3. Developed a health and safety checklist based on licensing standards that has been used in non-licensed and license exempt programs. Two checklists were incorporated into the 2009-2010 School Readiness Provider Agreement.</li> <li>4. Establishing a baseline of scores on the Environment Rating Scales for all School Readiness Programs.</li> </ol>
<p>Provide a list of available professional development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandatory School Readiness and VPK Provider Orientations</li> <li>• On-site technical assistance to providers</li> </ul>

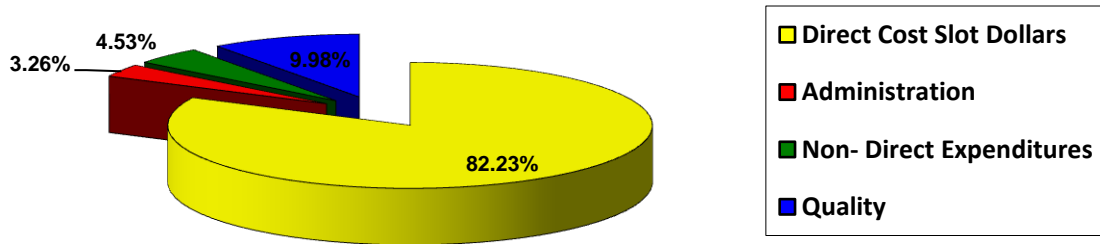
<p>opportunities that the coalition offers, including training, education, and technical assistance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-site provider Environmental Rating Scale training</li> <li>• Curriculum trainings</li> <li>• FCCPC scholarships</li> <li>• Director’s Credentials scholarships</li> <li>• Scholarships for providers seeking a college degree in Early Childhood Education</li> <li>• Annual Early Childhood Conference for Providers</li> </ul>
<p>Describe initiatives by the coalition to improve salaries and other compensation for child care providers.</p>	<p>In addition to the continuing education programs, scholarships and the Gold Seal Rating incentive, the Stay-put Stipend program rewarded continuity of care and continued education by providing a supplement to teachers’ salaries. The PIE (provider incentive earnings) program purchased quality learning materials for classrooms by allowing teachers to earn “points” for continued education coursework and parent and staff meetings. These points were redeemed for early learning classroom materials. The Resource Library (with over 200 quality early childhood and school age materials) was also made available to providers to check-out, free of charge, for their classrooms. The Coalition added an Ellison Die Cut roller machine and a 27” laminator to the Resource Library, along with monthly Make ‘n Take workshops. The PIE program and Resource Library both strived to make more quality learning materials available to providers.</p>
<p>Describe activities to support a Quality Rating System.</p>	<p>The Quality Team assessors achieved rating reliability for the individual tools of the Environmental Rating Scales by the end of the 2009-2010 fiscal year. The Coalition continued training sessions for providers on use of the different Environment Rating Scales. The ELC uses ThinkPad™ notebook computers for the Quality Team and purchased licenses for the Environment Rating Scale Data System, thus streamlining the assessment and reporting process. This system was used throughout the year 2009-2010. By FY 2012-2013 providers will be expected to receive a score of 3 or better on a scale of 1 to 7. The Coalition also honors the Gold Seal licensing accreditation and has started a process of working toward licensing of all family child care homes in Manatee County. The original proposal was withdrawn, however discussion has continued throughout the year and another attempt is anticipated in the fall of 2010.</p>
<p>Provide information on activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development.</p>	<p>The Resource &amp; Referral department publishes and posts an on-line parent newsletter which includes information on literacy, math, science, etc. The Coalition also developed and maintains a Resource Lending Library containing materials that support activities in these areas. The materials are available for check out by School Readiness and VPK providers to use in early childhood classrooms to assist in developing these skills in young children. The Coalition has two staff members who are approved to teach the instructor-led Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors course, which teaches participants about enhancing the emergent literacy skills of four-year old children. The ELC newsletter, <i>The Education Enquirer</i>, is a monthly publication filled with activity suggestions that support skill development in all of the above mentioned areas. The Coalition staff provides technical</p>

	<p>assistance and on-site in-service training sessions to assist providers in developing these skills in the children they serve. The Coalition purchased developmentally and age appropriate children’s books and began distributing them to the families who come in for new enrollments and certificates. Children’s books are present in the lobby of the Coalition offices for parents to read to their children while they wait for their appointment. Other literature is present in the lobby encouraging the development of literacy at home.</p>
<p>What activities has the coalition implemented to promote inclusive child care?</p>	<p>The ELC designated one person as its inclusion contact. The staff participates in regular monthly conference calls. Staff has attended the “Addressing Challenging Behaviors” Conference where the program professionals were trained on delivery of training using Positive Behavioral Support program (CSEFEL materials), and attends sessions on supporting children with autism and children with communication difficulties. Staff attends “Bridging the Gap” quarterly multi-county interdisciplinary interagency meetings hosted by the Community Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH). The Coalition offers at least two large group training sessions quarterly, along with many additional on-site training sessions that are provider specific. The ELC staff has also disseminated information about the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ELC Inclusion Specialist is a member of the Board of Directors of the Family Network on Disabilities for Sarasota and Manatee Counties. Coalition team members actively participate with providers, parents and the community at-large to promote inclusive early childhood settings. All parents of special needs children are informed of our inclusion services when they go through Resource &amp; Referral.</p>
<p>How does the coalition conform to Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children?</p>	<p>The ELC-Manatee screens all School Readiness children for vision and hearing. The ELC recently expanded the developmental screenings (ASQ) services to include all Manatee County children age 0-5, based on need and parent consent. The Battelle Development Inventory is utilized to assess children from birth to five years old. The ELC-Manatee also has a newsletter distributed quarterly. In addition, the Coalition lobby contains information for the public on the Kid Care program. The Environment Rating Scales (ERS) defers to <u>Caring for Our Children</u>, the guide book of standards for Healthy Child Care America, when any question about health and safety procedures arises. Enhancements made to the ASQ process have resulted in quicker response times from the ELC to parents of children who are in need of referrals and additional activities to promote their development.</p>
<p>Please describe other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care. (§98.51(a)(1) and (2))</p>	<p>Parents are educated on how to identify quality care; informed about different types of care; and are encouraged to continue looking for quality once their children are placed in a child care facility. School Readiness parents who wish to use a provider who is not contracted with the ELC are encouraged to discuss quality and types of care with the provider. The legally operating Family Child Care Home providers in a rural area of our county were contacted and encouraged to consider signing a School Readiness Agreement, as this area lacks providers.</p>

## FISCAL SUMMARY

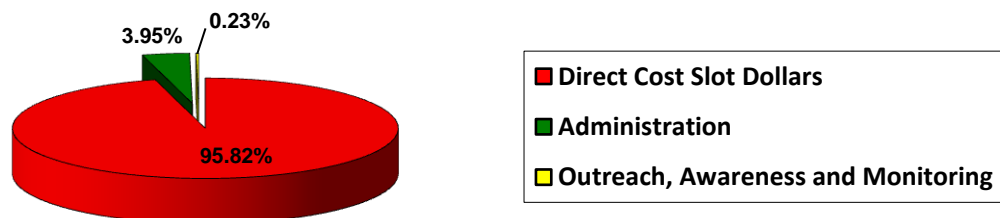
During the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the coalition's total **School Readiness Program** operating budget was \$10,625,257.00. Below is a breakout of expenditures by category.

### School Readiness Expenditures by Category



During the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the coalition's total **Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program** operating budget was \$6,834,215.00. Below is a breakout of expenditures by category.

### VPK Expenditures by Category



## **PROGRAM YEAR SUMMARY**

### **Parenting:**

- 1) Teen Age Parenting Program (TAPP) – 80 classes were held at two schools with an average of 10 parents per class
  - 99% indicated they have “a better understanding of my child’s behavior and growth”
  - 100% indicated they have “learned more activities to enhance my young child’s development”
  - 99% indicate that they have “learned more about the Forty Developmental Assets”
  - 100% of parents in the program for more than 6 sessions indicated they were using what they learned
  
- 2) Parent Child Activity Group (Musical Motion) – 60 total sessions (at three locations) with an average of 9 parents and 12 children participating
  - 99% reported a better understanding of the growth and development of their preschool children
  - 99% reported learning and using new ways to set limits on their child’s behavior
  - 98% reported learning new activities to enhance their child’s development and learning abilities
  
- 3) Parenting Partner Program (In Home Parenting) – total of 304 home visits with 20 participating parents
  - 100% reported and demonstrated increased knowledge of child development
  - 100% demonstrated a minimum of 5 new, effective parenting skills
  - 100% no longer scored above a “T” score of 60 on either of the ECBI subtests

### **Program Participant Feedback:**

- I have learned “more patience, knowing there are ways to help an over-active child. She has given me a lot of information on child behavior, which has been helpful.” (Parent Partner Program)
- “She has been a wonderful support person and been very compassionate...She is understanding, warm and easy to talk to. I always look forward to her visit.” (Parent Partner Program)
- “How to positively discipline a two and a half year old.” (Musical Motion program)
- “The behavior of my 2 year old is normal. Try to be patient. They are just two and they still are learning.” (Musical Motion program)
- “In many ways, how to be a good Dad.” (Parent Partner Program)
- “How to raise my child with limits and understanding even though I am a teenager.” (TAPP program)

## **Provider Education:**

### 1) Technical Assistance (TA)

- 100% of school readiness providers were offered technical assistance opportunities through on-site visits, quarterly newsletters, telephone calls, quarterly training calendars, emails, and mail correspondence
- Technical assistance was given 548 times during the 2009-2010
- Education Enquirer newsletter is disseminated on a quarterly basis
- 11 Provider Orientations (April 2010 – June 2010) with 123 attendees
- 27 individual in service training sessions and 9 series (32 total sessions) attended by 456 providers
- 3 Curriculum Development Classes attended by 67 students
- 8 Provider Meetings with 161 total attendees; one meeting with guest speaker State Representative Bill Galvano
- Second Annual Training Conference: 138 ELC of Manatee County SR Providers attended

### 2) Resource Library

- 25 childcare providers utilized the Resource Library materials
- 30 visits were made by the childcare providers, checking out a total of 113 resources
- 3 two hour Make 'n' Take training sessions were provided as an introduction to the Resource Library materials and providing curriculum support
- Ellison Die Cut Machine with varied dies and a 27" laminator were added to the library

### 3) Credit Classes

- 92 Scholarships awarded (276 credit hours funded) for Early Childhood Education classes at State College of Florida

## **Training Participant Feedback:**

### Training: How Does Your Environment Rate?

"There was just enough. Not too little, and definitely not too much. (I) learned a lot of helpful things for my classroom and environment at work."

### Training: Responding to Families Under Stress

"I thought the info was great and so important and appropriate for the state of the economy and the way it is affecting us all. My school will benefit by more communication among our director and teachers, and among our teachers, parents and children."

### Training: Creative Curriculum

"I think it was the correct amount of material in a good amount of time. Any more material introduced would have felt rushed. I will be more aware of family differences and the different learning styles of the children. I will focus more on the topic at hand when making or reviewing lesson plans."

**Child Care Resource and Referral:**

- Number of Referrals:

<u>Quarter 1</u>	<u>Quarter 2</u>	<u>Quarter 3</u>	<u>Quarter 4</u>	<u>Total</u>
333	274	280	384	1271

**Community Outreach:**

- Attendance at numerous networking events and community collaborative meetings
- Participation in the Children’s Summit
- Participation in the DeSoto Grand Parade
- Sponsorship of the Take Stock In Children local event
- Participation in Children’s Week activities in Tallahassee
- Sponsorship and participation in the Children’s Parade and the Party in the Park
- Participation in the Pride Park Fall Festival, Bradenton Marauders Community Event, Coalition for the Homeless Stand-down, quarterly community screenings and Health Fairs
- Advertising Resource & Referral and VPK services on bus benches and banners in high traffic areas, as well as distribution of VPK flyers to large employers and public locations in Manatee County
- Utilization of newspapers and television news stations, as well as an educational television station – VPK Public Service Announcements aired on METV (Manatee Education Television) and Bright House Networks
- Listing of ELC services in community resource data bases such as: 211, Whole Child Project, Homeless Coalition, Manatee Connects, etc.



**Health & Development Screenings and Assessments:**

1) Number of ASQ Screenings:

	<u>Quarter 1</u>	<u>Quarter 2</u>	<u>Quarter 3</u>	<u>Quarter 4</u>	<u>Total</u>
Screenings	913	1008	814	863	3598
Referrals	27	30	36	28	121

2) Number of Battelle Assessments:

- 253 Pretests administered; 93.7% passed
- 174 Post tests administered; 100% passed
- 100% of children assessed were ready for school

3) Vision Screenings:

- 729 with 105 referrals

4) Hearing Screenings

- 768 with 50 referrals

**Provider Monitoring:**

1) Agreement Monitoring

- 212 sites monitored
- All programs monitored were in substantial compliance with agreement with 47 receiving corrective action plans that were resolved prior to the start of the 2010-2011 agreement year.

2) Environment Rating Scale Monitoring

- 241 ERS observations were performed at 131 sites

**Client Feedback:**

- "I am very satisfied with the services I have received and just want to say thank you for being so nice at every one of my visits here and thank you for your services."
- "My services were fast and well managed. All my questions were completely answered and I was offered many programs for my kids and family."
- "The service I rec'd was exemplary. Very professional and courteous. I was extremely happy with my appointment and the way I was treated."
- "Very knowledgeable and professional. Very nice environment."
- "Everything was great and wonderful. Everything was explained and answer to me."
- "I believe the ELC is a great organization and has helped me thoroughly."
- Muy contenta por que me atendiero muy bein. Gracias
- I'm thankful for the services of childcare for Ella. Thank you.
- The staff was professional, respectful and were on time and helped me with my questions and concerns. Overall the service was great!



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