

## Working with Community Partners

### **Okaloosa-Walton Child Care Services-**

(850) 833-9330 (Okaloosa), (850) 892- 8560 (Walton)

Parent service specialists work with parents to find quality child care & determine eligibility for subsidized childcare, while trainers educate providers on maintaining improved programs.

### **Early Steps- (800) 281-1845**

Early Steps offers early intervention services for families with infants & toddlers (birth to 36 months) who have developmental delays or an established condition likely to result in a developmental delay.

### **Healthy Start- (850) 833-9284**

The Healthy Start Coalition of Okaloosa & Walton Counties is part of a statewide system of coalitions that provide services to pregnant women & their babies, based on their need & the resources of the community.

### **Department of Children & Families- (850) 833-3852**

The Florida Department of Children & Families works in partnership with local communities to ensure safety, well-being, & self-sufficiency for families. They serve as the child care licensing agency within both counties.

### **TeenAge Parenting Programs (TAPP)- (850) 259-4568**

Provides School-based services for pregnant teenagers, including counseling, parenting classes, transportation, and child care.

### **Jobs Plus- (850) 833-7587**

A one-stop center for all employment needs, including vocational counseling, training, testing, job listing, welfare transition, unemployment compensation information, etc.

### **Family Advocacy Program-**

(850) 882-9060(Eglin), (850) 881-5061(Hurlburt)

Exceptional Family Member Program- for members with physical, emotional, or educational needs.

Family Advocacy Outreach Program- for prevention of maltreatment and exceptional medical-educational conditions.

New Parent Support Program- nursing services, counseling and education for families with newborns or expecting a baby.

**Okaloosa County School District- (850) 833-3100**

**Walton County School District- (850) 892-1100**



Serving the needs of families and communities with children under five years of age.

**Mission:** All children in Okaloosa and Walton Counties will enter school fully prepared for educational success.

**Vision:** To promote a collaborative school readiness and early childhood service system, to deliver an integration of cognitive, social/emotional and physical development experiences that increase children's opportunities for success.

### **Contact Us:**

Mon. - Fri. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Okaloosa Phone: (850) 833-3627

Walton Phone: (850) 951-0588

Fax: (850) 833-3632

Website: [www.elc-ow.org](http://www.elc-ow.org)

**KIDLINE: (850) 833-9333**



# School Readiness Programs



## Preparing Children for Successful Futures

## What Is School Readiness?

In 1999, the Florida Legislature passed the "School Readiness Act". This bill created the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and called for the creation of local School Readiness Coalitions.

The Legislature recognizes that School Readiness programs increase children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society. It is the intent of the Legislature that School Readiness programs be:

- ★ Developmentally appropriate
- ★ Research-based
- ★ Involve parents as the child's first teacher
- ★ Serve as preventive measures for children at risk of future school failure
- ★ Enhance the educational readiness of children
- ★ Support family education



## What Does "Readiness" Really Mean?

Research tells us that school readiness is about children's ability to adjust to the demands of school. Beyond basic abilities and knowledge in language and math, children need broader underlying cognitive, social and emotional skills, and the capacity to continue to learn and gain understanding.



## A Child Who Is "Ready" For School:

- ☑ Has immunizations and other health requirements as necessary
- ☑ Has appropriate physical development
- ☑ Complies with rules, limitations and routines
- ☑ Has the ability to perform tasks
- ☑ Interacts with adults and peers
- ☑ Has the ability to cope with challenges
- ☑ Has self-help skills
- ☑ Has the ability to express his/her needs
- ☑ Has verbal communication skills
- ☑ Has problem-solving skills
- ☑ Is able to follow verbal directions
- ☑ Can demonstrate curiosity, persistence, and exploratory behavior
- ☑ Has interest in books
- ☑ Can pay attention to stories
- ☑ Participates in art and music activities

## Who Are The School Readiness Providers In Okaloosa And Walton Counties?

### Center Based Programs

Child Care Centers in Okaloosa and Walton Counties may provide full and/or part-day services for children birth through school-age, with planned educational activities in a group setting. Privately operated centers must be licensed through the State of Florida, which ensures certain health, safety, and staffing requirements.

Other facilities may operate under exemption from licensure based on Florida Statute.

### Family Child Care Home Programs

Home based care is regulated care that takes place in a caregiver's home. Group size may vary according to the caregiver's preferences and state/local regulations.

Ages often vary as well, with some caregivers servicing only specific age groups (i.e. infants, toddlers, or preschoolers).

