

Employee Child Care Guide

Child Care Tips and Resources

December 2021



Need Help Finding Child Care?



Contact your local [Early Learning Coalition](#) or call (toll-free) 1-866-357-3239.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Specialists can help parents find child care based on individual family needs (e.g., near work, near home, or to keep siblings together).

- Need help finding child care for a special needs child?
- Need help in finding child care during non-traditional hours (like evenings or weekends)?
- Looking for a Pre-K program, summer camp or, after-school program?

CCR&R specialists can help. Staff work with families to understand their needs and desires, and to help parents make informed decisions. Contact your [local Early Learning Coalition](#) to have CCR&R experts help you today!

Are you taking advantage of federal and state tax credits to help make child care more affordable?

- There is a federal tax credit for child care expenses that allows a modest credit against individual/family taxes owed.
- There is a business employee benefit that enables employees to set-aside money for child care tax-free that can be used to reimburse some child care expenses.

Need help affording the cost of child care?

For low-income families, child care subsidies are available based on family income. To find out more about the [School Readiness program](#) that helps low income families afford quality child care, contact your local [Early Learning Coalition](#). Eligible families can earn up to about 150 percent of the federal poverty level and still potentially qualify for child care subsidies.

For more information about the School Readiness program:

<http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/family-resources/financial-assistance>

To apply for the School Readiness program: <https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com/>

Why should parents look for high-quality programs?

It's hard for parents to compare child care settings and to know the differences among settings. Parents want their children to be safe. Parents also want settings that will promote the healthy development of their children.

Child care programs that participate in Florida's School Readiness program are required to have a program assessment and meet a minimum score before signing a contract. The program assessment is an on-site observation of the quality of the program including:

- Responsive caregiving
- Emotional and behavioral support
- Support for learning and classroom organization, and
- Instructional support

These observations review the interactions between caregivers and children. Learn more about what a **CLASS score** means for your child's early learning experience. More than 200 research studies have shown that these interactions promote healthy child development and school readiness among children. Florida also has a **Gold Seal program** that recognizes programs that have achieved accreditation through a national accrediting entity such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National association for Family Child Care (NAFCC).

The Division of Early Learning has a **web page** to help parents understand quality components and questions to ask when looking for child care.

Early Learning and Long-Term Impact. Research has found that the quality of care children receive in their child care settings dramatically affects their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Research has also shown, even into the teen years, that high quality settings during the early years of life, have made a difference in social and emotional development and school performance (in both the short-term and the long-term).

Parent Tips:

Tips on finding child care – it's as easy as 1, 2, 3! ([Look, Check for, Ask!](#)):

Choosing [Quality Child Care Checklist](#)

Looking for child care for a special needs child? Find out more about available [resources](#).

Questions? Call your local [Early Learning Coalition!](#)