



Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida, Inc.

<u>Subject:</u> Provision of Child Care Resource and Referral Services		
<u>Policy #:</u> ELCSWF-EL0007-08	<u>CATEGORY:</u> Resource and Referral	<u>Reference #</u> OEL-EL-220
<u>APPROVAL:</u> Updated 9/27/08	<u>EFFECTIVE DATE:</u> 9/27/08	<u>REPLACES (policy # and date):</u> ELCSWF-SR0007-05 approved 3/17/05, 7/26/06

- I. **PURPOSE:** To establish the provision of Resource and Referral services for Lee, Collier, Hendry and Glades counties, in order to create a seamless system of services.
- II. **REVIEW HISTORY:** This policy replaces any previous written or verbal directives issued in any of the four counties.
- III. **CONTACT:** Chief Executive Officer
- IV. **PERSONS AFFECTED:** Resource and Referral Staff.
- V. **POLICY:** This policy establishes the manner in which Resource and Referral services will be provided.
- VI. **RATIONALE:** Chapter 402.27 of the Florida Statutes mandates a statewide resource and referral network. This is the best source available for coordination of parent awareness and child care providers.
- VII. **CROSS REFERENCES:** Cite: 45CFR98; Chapter 402.27, 411.01, Florida Statutes; and Rule 60BB-4, Florida Administrative Code.
- VIII. **DEFINITIONS:**

"Child care" means the care, protection, and supervision of a child, for a period of less than 24 hours a day on a regular basis, which supplements parental care, enrichment, and health supervision for the child, in accordance with his or her individual needs, and for which a payment, fee, or grant is made for care.

"Child care facility" includes any child care center or child care arrangement which provides child care for more than five children unrelated to the operator and which receives a payment, fee, or grant for any of the children receiving care, wherever operated, and whether or not operated for profit. The following are not included:

 - (a) Public schools and nonpublic schools and their integral programs, except as provided in s. [402.3025](#);

- (b) Summer camps having children in full-time residence;
- (c) Summer day camps;
- (d) Bible schools normally conducted during vacation periods; and
- (e) Operators of transient establishments, as defined in chapter 509, which provide child care services solely for the guests of their establishment or resort, provided that all child care personnel of the establishment are screened according to the level 2 screening requirements of chapter 435. {cite 402.302 (1) and (2) FS}

“Contractor” refers to Coordinated Community Care for Children.

IX. **PROCEDURES:**

1. The Contractor must maintain Resource and Referral service to assist families by providing answers to their questions regarding how to identify quality child care and how to locate a provider that meets the needs of the family.
2. The Contractor will utilize the most current edition of “Child Care Resource and Referral Network Standard Levels of Service” as the guide for the provision of services.
3. Resource and Referral Services shall be provided to any person, regardless of income.
4. Resource and Referral Services will provide families, providers, and local, state or federal organizations with information, data and resources upon request.
5. Resource and Referral Services will be provided via telephone, in person, fax, and email.
6. All referrals will include educational material to assist parents in understanding the difference between facility types, the important elements to look for in choosing a child care program for their child, and how to identify a quality child care program.
7. Parents of children in the School Readiness and Voluntary PreKindergarten (VPK) programs will be provided a full choice of child care arrangements when choosing child care for their child.
8. R&R staff must maintain access to the community resource directory and assist parents through providing them information on resources which can assist them.
9. R&R counselors make sure to provide the parent with their name and telephone number if they need further information for services.
10. School Readiness applicants are also offered access to community services at each eligibility determination. This is captured through the Family Support Needs Assessment Form which must document the client’s interview, needs and follow-up.

11. Resource and Referral will maintain up-to-date provider information in the EFS system of legal child care arrangements which means any homes or facilities licensed, registered or legally exempt from licensure pursuant to Chapter 402.302-319, F.S.
 12. Resource and Referral will advise parents of the Early Learning Coalition child care providers who have signed the Provider Agreement.
 13. Resource and Referral will ensure that all VPK providers are entered into the DCF website, as an identified VPK provider, and ensure that providers who serve as school readiness providers are also identified through the checkbox on the DCF website.
 14. Resource and Referral will assess community needs and obtain information for market rate surveys at least annually.
 15. Resource and Referral will analyze results and report to Coalition, along with a monthly report of activities.
 16. Resource and Referral will conduct client surveys to measure client satisfaction with their services and report regularly to the Coalition.
 17. Complaints from parents, providers, professionals and the public will be documented and referred to the appropriate party for handling and follow-up reporting.
 18. Complaint records must be maintained for five years.
 19. Complaints alleging licensing violations of licensed child care providers will be immediately referred to the DCF Child Care Licensing office.
 20. Resource and Referral will identify gaps in available child care services and continue efforts to recruit potential new providers to fill the gaps in areas with specific child care needs (i.e. extended day, weekend, extended year services, rural or areas absent of needed child care options).
 21. School Readiness applicants are also offered access to community services at each eligibility determination.
 22. Resource & Referral Staff, and other designated staff, will provide information to families regarding centers and family child care homes who are offering Voluntary PreKindergarten classes.
 23. Resource and Referral is responsible for keeping all information updated in the EFS system annually and to accurately capture only the VPK providers who have met all requirements for the existing fiscal year.
- X. **EXHIBITS:** "Child Care Resource and Referral Network Standard Levels of Service" (Revised on October 2008).