



Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc. 2010-2011 Annual Report

Mission Statement:

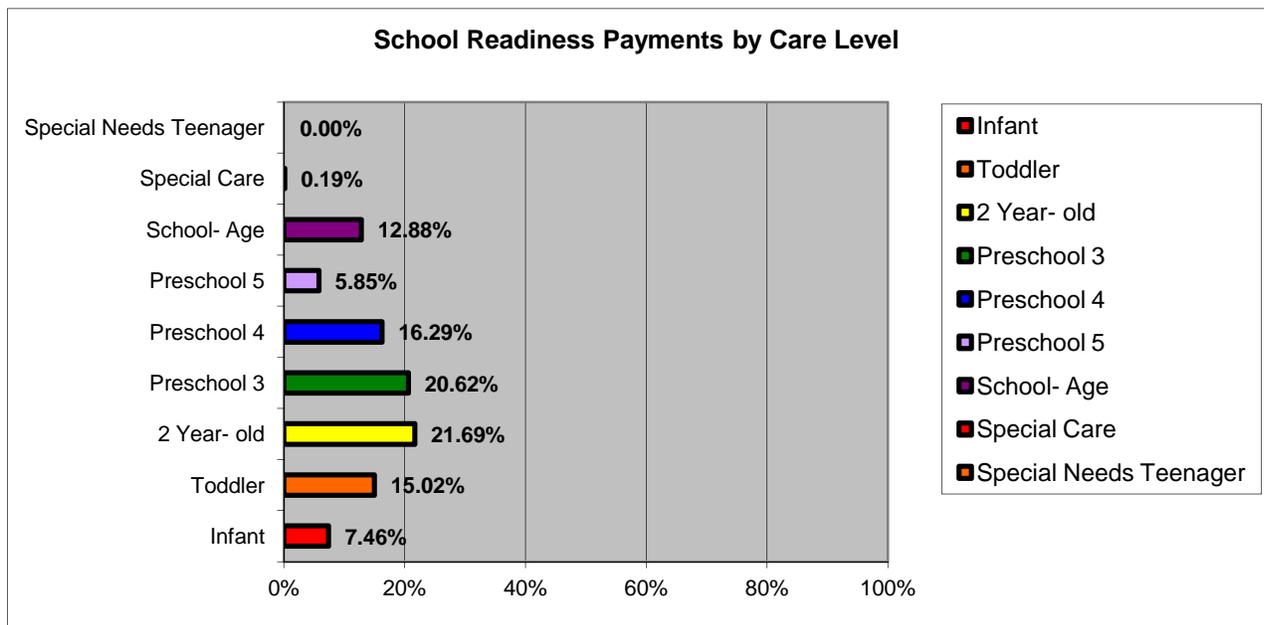
The mission of the Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Heartland, Inc. is to support families and children in accessing high quality early care and education services via School Readiness and Voluntary Pre-kindergarten programs. The ELCFH also serves as a point of access to resources and referrals for health care and family support services.

Data Summary: The following information is based on data collected from July 1, 2010- June 30, 2011.

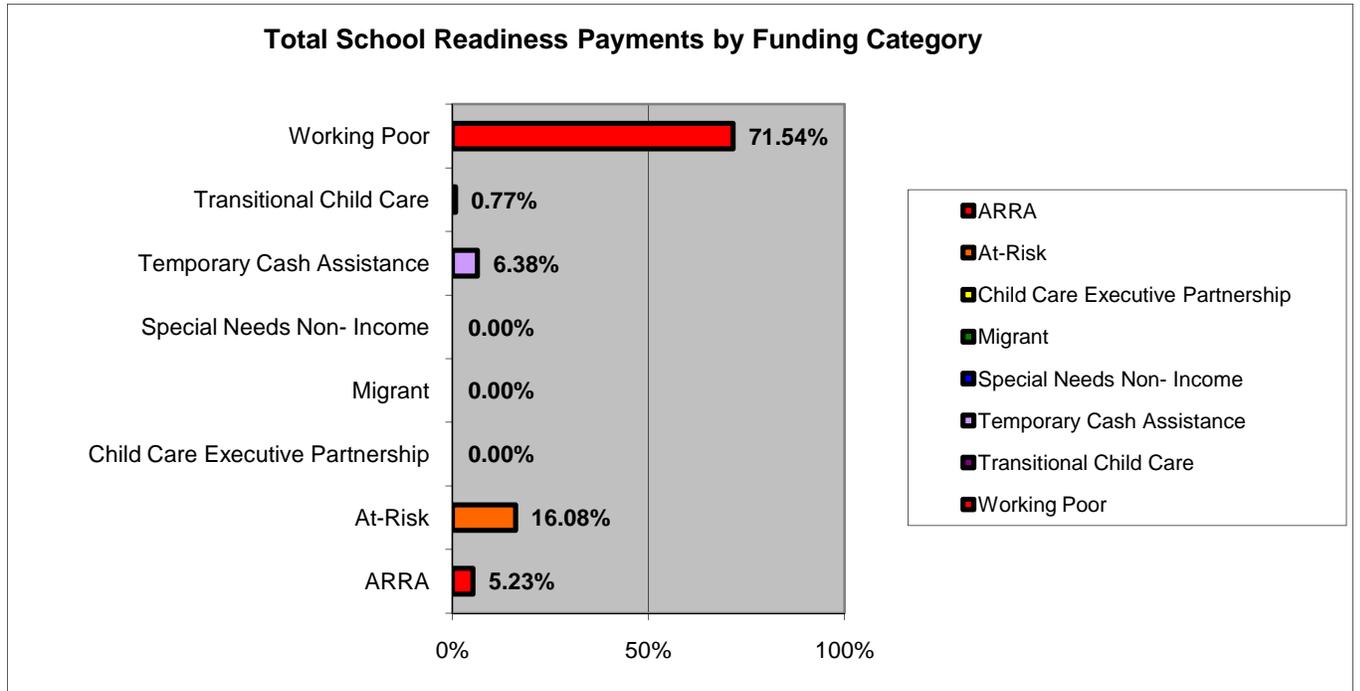
Number of unduplicated School Readiness (SR) children and families:

SR Children	SR Families
2870	1762

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



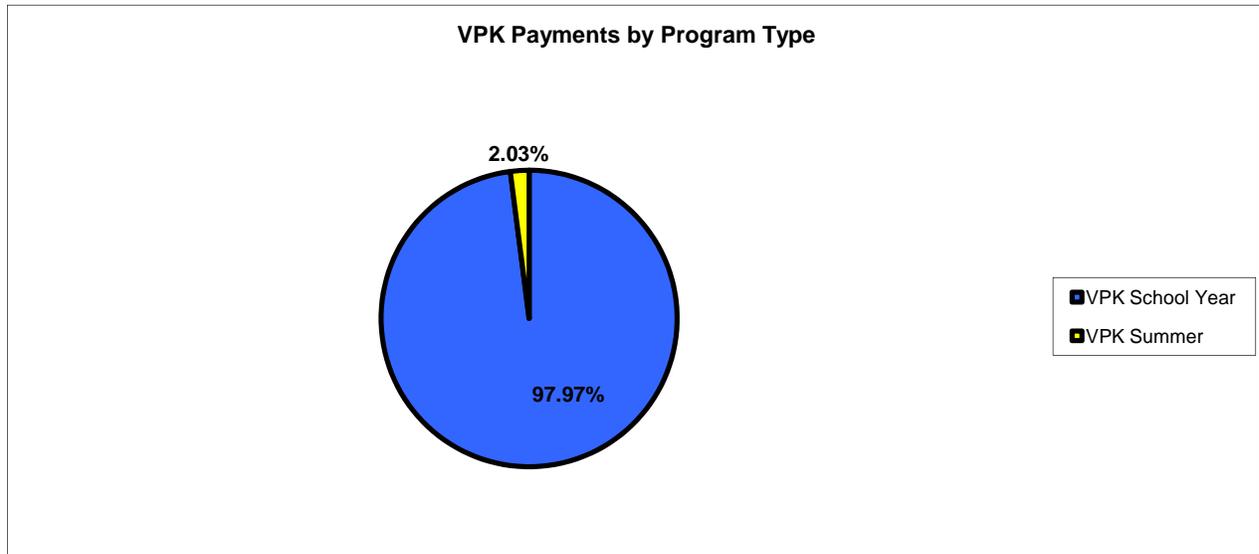
School Readiness: Percentage of total payments (including match) by funding category:



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

VPK Children	VPK Families
2163	2128

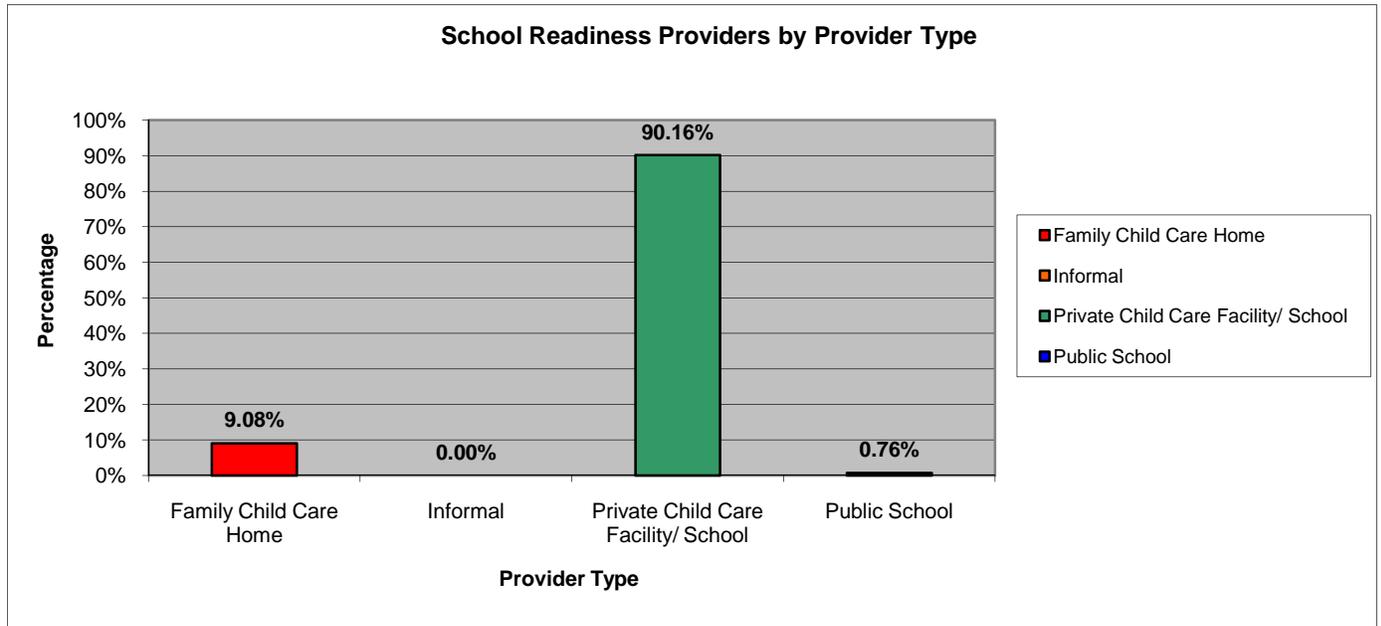
Total percentage of VPK payments by program type:



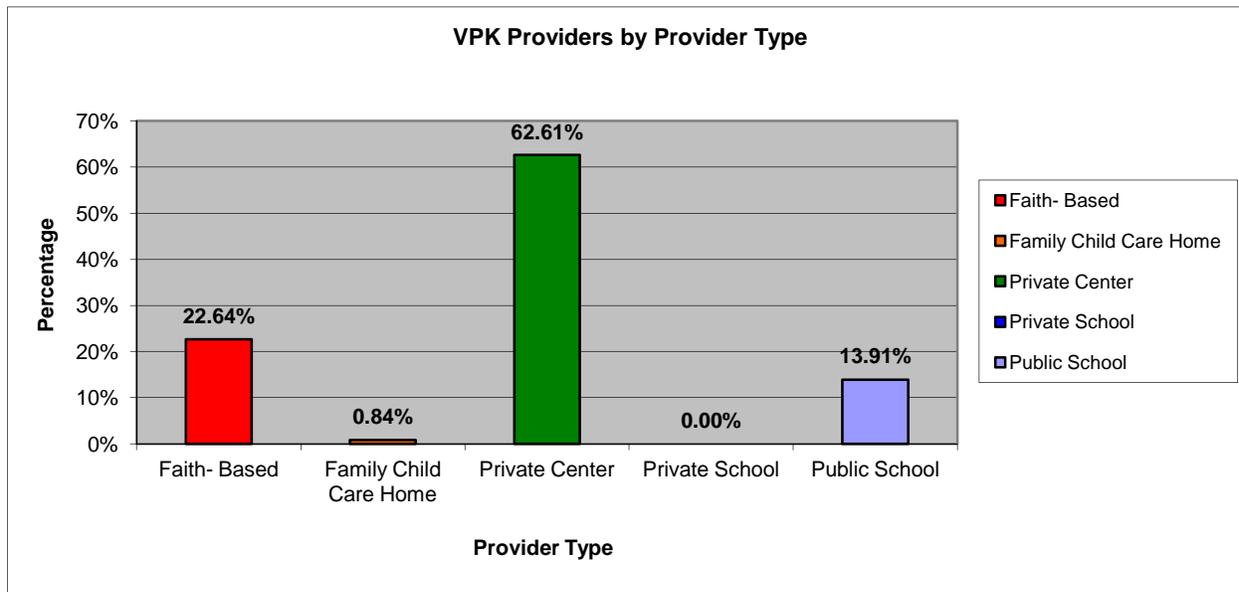
Total number of providers that participate in the coalition’s early learning programs:

School Readiness Providers	Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Providers
158	91

Participating School Readiness providers by provider type:



Participating VPK providers by provider type:



Service Delivery Summary:

In addition to the School Readiness and Voluntary Pre-kindergarten services, the ELCFH received funding from the following organizations to support local programs:

Partner	County(ies)	Funding Awarded for child care slots
Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners	Charlotte	\$57,000
United Way of Sarasota	DeSoto	\$500
United Way of Central Florida	Hardee County	\$45,000
United Way of Central Florida	Highlands County	\$22,500
Wachovia Foundation	Charlotte, DeSoto, Highlands	\$12,000
Wal-Mart Foundation (Port Charlotte)	Charlotte	\$500
Publix Supermarket Charities	Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands	\$6,000
Chatlos Foundation	Charlotte, DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands	\$3,000

United Way of Charlotte County: UWCC awarded the ELCFH \$5,000 to support assessment of children in Charlotte County using the Learning Accomplishment Profile System. Children age birth to five years attending an ELCFH School Readiness contracted provider sites were assessed using the LAP or E-LAP assessment tools.

HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters): The DeSoto HIPPY Program, funded in FY 10-11 for \$72,000 by the University of South Florida, provided in-home educational services to 50 families during FY 10-11. Of these, 22 families completed 20 or more weekly activity packets and 24 successfully completed all 30 packets. Parents also participated in six monthly educational meetings. Topics included Safety, Family Unity, Your Public Library, Fire Safety, Nutrition, Overview of the Early Steps Program, and HIPPY Annual Promotion Ceremony. An average of 17 families attended each meeting and received books for their at-home library.

The DeSoto HIPPY Program screened 47 children enrolled in the HIPPY program using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). Referrals for further evaluation were generated as needed based on the results of the screening.

The Annual Promotion Ceremony was held in May with 41 children in attendance. Six families graduated from the HIPPY five year old program. Of the six that graduated, three families successfully completed a minimum of two years in the HIPPY program and three families successfully completed a minimum of three years in the HIPPY program. Fifteen families were honored with Perfect Attendance Awards.

The Community Foundation of Sarasota provided \$1,000 to purchase needed curricular supplies for families participating in the HIPPY Program. Other community partners who provided donations for the DeSoto HIPPY Program were Wal-Mart, Classy Taxi, Ma's Taxi, Catholic Charities, DeSoto Literacy Council, Domino's Pizza, Gold's Gym of Sarasota, McDonald's, Taco Express, Beef O' Brady's, Domino's Pizza, Wendy's, Chili's, 50's Diner, and Women's Club of Arcadia.

Highlands County Child Health Initiative: The Highlands County Hospital District Board granted \$59,300 to the ELCFH to support the provision of hearing and vision screenings and BMI checks for children receiving child care services through an ELCFH School Readiness contracted provider in Highlands County. There were 1,189 vision screenings, 1,145 hearing screenings, and 1,098 BMI checks facilitated at child care sites. In addition, 13 health and safety trainings were held with 313 parents, providers and teachers participating. Eight health-related trainings for 141 children were facilitated.

Champion for Children Foundation of Highlands County: Funding in the amount of \$10,500 provided free vision screenings to 2,483 children in kindergarten, first and third grade as well as children attending ELCFH non-contracted child care sites. Screenings were also provided at the local public library, YMCA and the ELCFH office.

Reading Is Fundamental (RIF): The RIF grant (\$3,267) encourages early literacy by giving children the opportunity to choose a book to take home from a selection of high quality children's literature. 690 children served by 20 providers in Highlands County directly benefited from this program. A total of 2,069 books were distributed to children.

Heartland for Children: Funding awarded by Heartland for Children (\$2,500) provided health and safety items to 11 child care sites which directly benefited 150 children in Hardee County and to 29 child care sites which benefited 250 children in Highlands County.

Smugglers' Enterprises Foundation, Inc.: An award of \$1,600 was provided to support the ELCFH "Celebrate Early Learning" conference which was held Saturday, March 5, 2011. Approximately 280 child care owners, directors and teachers attended this event which focused on current trends and practices in facilitating high quality early care and education programs.

Winn-Dixie Foundation: \$1,000 was granted to the ELCFH by the Winn Dixie Foundation. These funds were utilized to purchase high quality children's literature for distribution to child care providers participating in the ELCFH "Recipes for Success" program. A total of eight workshops were held in Charlotte, DeSoto and Highlands Counties, each focused on one of the following books: Feathers for Lunch (Lois Ehlert); Who is the Beast? (Keith Baker); and The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Eric Carle). Teachers from a total of sixteen child care facilities attended one or more of the trainings. The children served through these child care providers directly benefitted from the trainings via the high quality children's literature and incorporation of developmentally appropriate classroom activities.

William G. and Marie Selby Foundation: The Selby Foundation provided \$14,500 for the purchase of three tablet computers for the ERS Data System; and software including two TA Modules for desktop computers and three ERS Pro Systems for additional tablet computers. The computers and software are being utilized to assess the quality of child care classrooms for sites contracted by ELCFH using the applicable ERS tool.

City of Punta Gorda: Funding of \$2,000 awarded by City of Punta Gorda provided health screenings to children enrolled in ELCFH contracted child care sites. There were 147 hearing screenings, 160 vision screenings and 129 Body Mass Index (BMI) for a total of 436 screenings conducted at child care sites.

Quality Activity Summary:

Activity	Narrative
<p>What opportunities are offered by the Coalition for comprehensive consumer education?</p>	<p>Client Services Specialists are blended positions that provide client eligibility services and Child Care Resource and Referral Services. Family needs assessments are offered during appointments and resources and contacts are provided as needed. The needs assessment generates information on housing, WIC, early intervention services, assistance with utilities, KidCare and other community agencies that offer support to families. The needs assessment is also offered at the time of redetermination or as needed via phone/email. Customized Child Care Resource and Referral information is provided when requested, either in person, by phone, fax, email or regular mail. Resource and Referral services were provided in response to 3,407 inquiries. The ELCFH's website family section provides additional links and current information that support parents in making educated decisions about child care.</p>
<p>Provide a list of grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards.</p>	<p>Family Child Care Home Start-Up Mini Grants assisted two new family child care homes in meeting the cost of opening their businesses. These grant dollars were awarded through an application process followed by a site visit. Grant dollars were used to cover start-up costs such as background screenings, fire extinguishers, and fencing.</p>
<p>Describe the process for monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements.</p>	<p>In FY 10-11, 158 providers signed the School Readiness Provider Contract with the ELCFH to provide quality child care to the children of eligible families.</p> <p>A total of 91 private providers and two school districts within the four counties delivered the 540 hour school year VPK program. Twelve private providers and all four school districts were approved to deliver the 300 hour summer 2010 VPK program.</p> <p>Over 90% of contracted school readiness providers within the four county service area had a contract monitor visit during FY 10-11. Contracted providers outside of the four county area were monitored by their respective Early Learning Coalition. The monitoring tool used focused directly on the ELCFH provider contract. The four core areas were Quality Benchmarks, Assessment and Screening, Family Involvement & Cultural Continuity, and Provider Responsibility.</p> <p>All licensed-exempt providers in the ELCFH service area have regular health and safety checks as part of the contract monitor. Any identified deficiencies were addressed by an ELCFH Quality Specialist with the provider.</p> <p>The Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) is conducted annually on all contracted school readiness programs. If expected outcomes are not achieved, an improvement plan is written, and a follow-up visit is made to these sites. Scores can range from 1.0 to 7.0 and all providers are expected to demonstrate improvement each year. ERS baseline scores were established for all contracted sites throughout the ELCFH. The scores ranged from 2.03 to 6.88. Each contracted provider has agreed to diligently work towards establishing a minimum score of 5.0.</p>

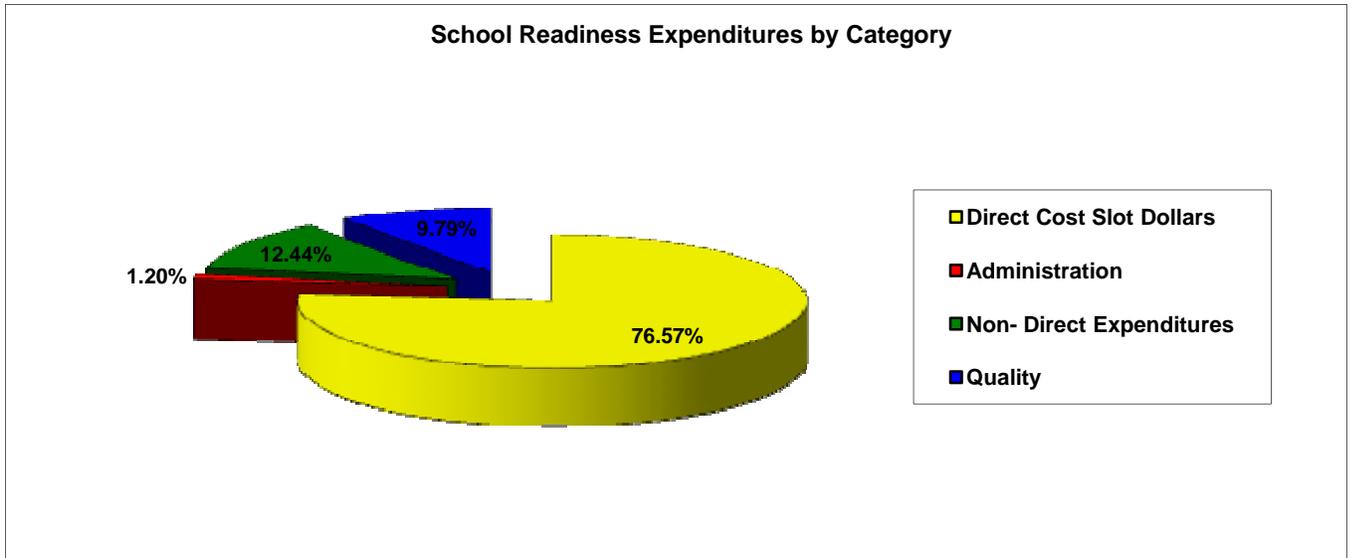
	<p>VPK monitors were completed during August, 2010 through May, 2011, on 100% of the ELCFH contracted VPK programs. The school district sites provided monitoring reports as requested by the ELCFH. Letters of commendation for full compliance were sent to 80% of the VPK programs; with follow up letters to the remaining VPK providers. The monitor follow-ups required additional on-site visits and/ or proof of requested documentation that brought them to full compliance within 30 – 45 business days of the on-site monitor. Additional VPK monitors were scheduled within the fiscal year as needed.</p>
<p>Provide a list of available professional development opportunities that the coalition offers, including training, education, and technical assistance</p>	<p>The ELCFH supported those seeking FCCPC credentials or higher degrees through partnering institutions by providing scholarship reimbursements for successful completion of class work. Two participants submitted paperwork for reimbursements for successful completion of college course work.</p> <p>Five providers achieved accreditation or re-accreditation in FY 10-11 with the support from the ELCFH. At the end of the fiscal year there were five programs pending validator visits and an additional two providers were registered in the program and are conducting self studies.</p> <p>The ELCFH offered numerous in-service trainings including First Aid /CPR and Universal Precautions. The highlights of the scheduled trainings offered by staff and presenters were Growing Healthy Kids, Henry the Hand (hand washing & health), Recipes for Success, Infant Mental Health, Jumping into Literacy, Outdoor Play Safety, and Creative Lesson Planning. CEU's were offered to the providers when they attended trainings that were over five hours.</p> <p>The ELCFH held its 3rd conference ("Celebrate Early Learning") for early learning professionals on March 4 – 5, 2011. The March 4th evening event focused on "the hero within" and was attended by 76 directors and family child care providers. The March 5th all-day conference was attended by approximately 280 early childhood educators and provided a myriad of early childhood relevant workshop sessions. The ELCFH received funding from local partners to support the provider conference: Smugglers' Enterprises Foundation, Inc (\$1,600) and Kaplan (\$1000).</p> <p>Provider Roundtables were offered in Charlotte County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Director's roundtable is designed to provide specific information of interest to program directors and an opportunity for networking. • The School-age provider roundtables were scheduled during morning hours to better serve staff serving school age programs. The focus was specifically on activities and topics of interest to after school programs.
<p>Describe initiatives by the coalition to improve salaries and other compensation for child care providers.</p>	<p>The ELCFH did not undertake this activity during FY 10-11.</p>

<p>Describe activities to support a Quality Rating System.</p>	<p>The ELCFH did not undertake this activity during FY 10-11.</p>
<p>Provide information on activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development.</p>	<p><i>ELCFH FY 10-11 Literacy Programs</i> The following literacy programs were offered in at least one of the four counties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Jumping into Literacy</u>- two hour workshop highlighting the importance of literacy in fun and exciting ways, focused on infants and toddlers. • <u>Recipes for Success</u> – consisted of three 2 hour workshops focused on how to promote literacy with cooking experiences and children’s literature. • <u>Integrating the Standards with Phonological Awareness</u> – consisted of a 2 hour training teaching practical tools for teaching phonetic sounds and alphabetic knowledge. • <u>VPK Emergent Literacy</u> – consisted of a 10 hour hands-on training that focused on developmentally appropriate literacy skills for children in VPK programs. <p><i>ELCFH FY 10-11 Pre- Math and Science Programs</i> The following pre-math and science workshops were offered in at least one of the four counties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>New VPK Standards</u> - three hour workshop that introduced VPK teachers to the standards and how to use the book as a guide and resource in planning their curriculum activities to ensure opportunities for children to learn expected concepts and skills. Strong emphasis on math and science. • <u>Cup Cooking</u> – onsite modeling of skills which taught math concepts using cooking experiences in which each child goes through every step of the cooking process and created an individual serving of a nutritious snack.
<p>What activities has the coalition implemented to promote inclusive child care?</p>	<p>The Quality Specialists across the four counties maintained the “warm line”, which providers can call for technical assistance in working with children with special needs. On-site technical assistance visits to provider sites for further inclusion support were also facilitated.</p> <p>Trainings addressing effective provision of child care services for children with special needs were provided in the four counties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Lesson Planning</u>- two hour workshop designed to assist staff in writing developmentally appropriate lesson plans using standards and results of child assessments. • <u>Beyond Behavior Management</u> – training that promoted appropriate behavior/ classroom management using sensory materials. • <u>Challenging Behaviors</u>- two hour workshop focused on strategies to deal with common behaviors that teachers find to be a challenge. • <u>Working with Children Through Play</u>- two hour workshop designed to assist children who have difficulty interacting with others. <p>The ELCFH distributed Inclusion Brochures in the four county service area. These brochures provided parents and community members with important information about inclusion and the services offered by the ELCFH.</p>

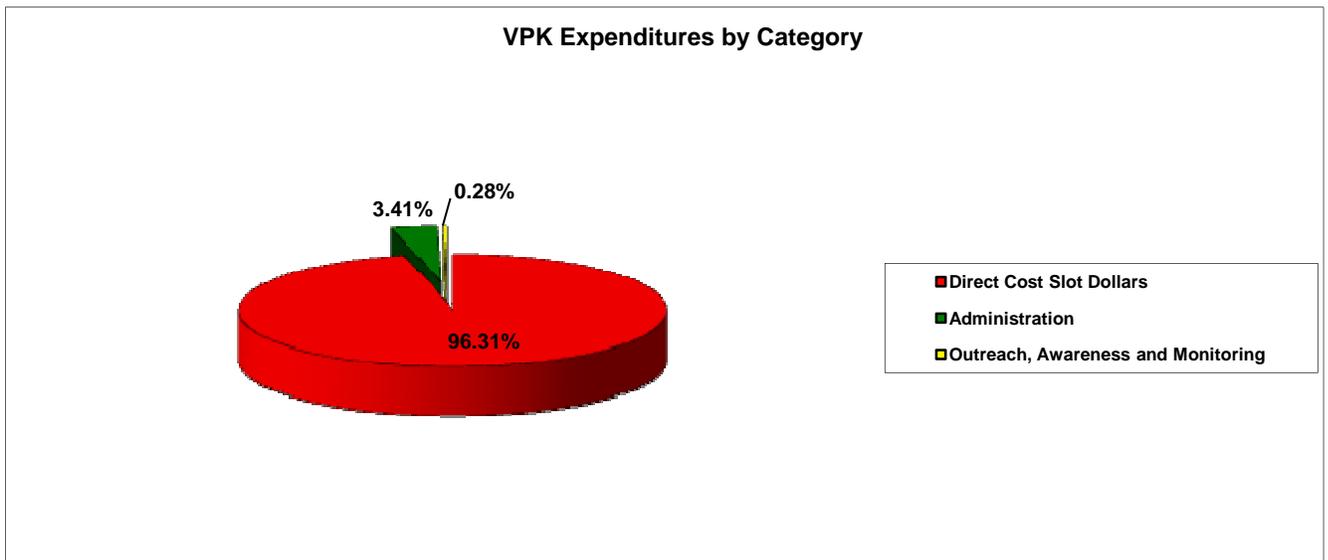
<p>How does the coalition conform to Healthy Child Care America and other health activities including those designed to promote the social and emotional development of children?</p>	<p>Children at contracted school readiness sites received free developmental assessments using the E-LAP or LAP-3. During FY 10-11 the ELCFH Quality staff provided trainings and on-site TA across the ELCFH service area for providers. On-site technical assistance was provided to ensure that providers understand how to access and use the E-LAP/ LAP-3 website as a tool to enhance their lesson planning. All four counties now have access to the E-LAP/ LAP-3 website.</p> <p>During FY 10-11 a total of approximately 2820 unduplicated children in the four county service area received pre/ post assessments. Of these, 36 children (1%) were referred to partner agencies (FDLRS or Early Steps) for further evaluation. Classroom activities to support child development were available to providers via ELCFH Quality staff and the Red-e-Learner (LAPs) website.</p> <p>In addition, the Ages and Stages Questionnaire Screenings were utilized as needed by the ELCFH to support the process of early identification of children’s special needs. Children were referred for further evaluation based on the outcomes of the screenings in tandem with the LAPs assessment.</p> <p>Workshops focused on healthy child development and the social emotional needs of children were facilitated in the four county area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Growing Healthy Kids</u>- free collaborative, preschool nutritional, gardening, cooking and physical activity program provided by All Faiths Food Bank • <u>ERS Series</u> – four part workshop that focused on understanding the Environment Rating Scales • <u>Behavior Management</u>- training to promote appropriate behaviors in the classroom using sensory materials. • <u>Second Step</u>- training using a violence prevention curriculum to help practitioners discover how to help children learn to share, care, and communicate with others. • <u>Universal Precautions</u>- strategies for combating illness in the child care setting. • <u>Birth to Three Standards</u>- two hour training to introduce practitioners to the newest Florida School Readiness Standards. • <u>Infant and Toddler Diapering and Hand washing</u>- prevention of disease and contamination through proper diapering and hand washing procedures required by the ERS. • <u>Outdoor Safety Training</u>- two hour training includes information about safety issues pertaining to supervision and equipment for outdoor play. • <u>First Aid/ CPR Training</u> • <u>Henry the Hand: Hand Washing Workshop</u>- practitioner training was followed with classroom modeling of proper hand washing techniques. <p>Vision/ hearing screenings and/or BMI checks were facilitated with over 3,734 children age birth to five years attending contracted School Readiness programs in the four county service area. Screening results were provided to each child’s parent. The ELCFH Health Specialists were available to parents with questions regarding the screening results. The ELCFH received funding from local partners to support child health screenings in Charlotte and Highlands Counties: City of Punta Gorda (\$2,000) and the Highlands County Hospital District Board (\$59,300).</p>
---	---

<p>Please describe other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care.</p>	<p>During FY 10-11, the ELCFH distributed promotional materials with the ELCFH logo and "It's ok to play in VPK". These materials were made widely available to the public at various community events and fairs.</p> <p>The ELCFH "Parent Communicator" went out to all School Readiness families on a quarterly basis. The communicator gives clients important information about their provider options, activity ideas to try at home with their children, and pertinent information about the School Readiness Program.</p> <p>The ELCFH sponsored a Community Event Sponsorship which provided funding support for the following community events and activities: Healthy Families of DeSoto/Hardee to support prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and domestic violence; South Florida Community College provider conference presentation on sign language in the preschool classroom; Charlotte County Healthy Start Coalition educational baby shower for new moms; Champion for Children Foundation of Highlands County for community resource guide; Charlotte County Association for the Education of Young Children for professional development presenter on "Why Kids Act the Way They Do".</p>
--	---

Fiscal Summary: During the 2010-2011 fiscal year the coalition's total **School Readiness/ARRA Program** operating budget was \$9,723,371. Below is a breakout of expenditures by category.



During the 2010-2011 fiscal year the coalition's total **Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education/ARRA Program** operating budget including the **Outreach, Awareness and Monitoring Initiative** was \$5,117,858. Below is a breakout of expenditures by category.



Program Year Summary:

Family Success Stories.....

March 2011/ Charlotte County Our office received a call from a School Readiness client who wanted to share that she was graduating from school and had secured new employment. The salary for her new job exceeded the income guidelines and she would no longer need SR services. The client was effusive in her appreciation of ELCFH services stating that not only was she able to finish school but also able to keep her children in a quality childcare program.

April 2011/ Hardee County A young couple had six children, one with special needs. With a family of eight, meeting monthly expenses was a significant challenge. Both parents work very hard to meet the needs of their family, holding down full-time jobs, with dad routinely working 47 to 50 hours per week, for a company that leases construction equipment and earning \$13.00 an hour. Mom also works full-time, as a caregiver in a childcare facility, making \$7.25 an hour.

Some time ago, mom came by to tell us that she had been accepted to the University of South Florida! She also told us that she had obtained a grant to pay for her education, the beginning of realizing her dream of becoming an engineer. Now, she is a full-time student, working part-time the few days she has off from school. A month or two ago, mom was able to obtain an internship with the MOSAIC company, so now she is temporarily working with them - gaining great experience related to her field - and making a higher salary. She continues with her education at the USF.

These parents are working hard for the betterment of their family, insuring that their children have the same opportunities for success. Once mom graduates from USF, SR services may not be needed, and it makes the ELCFH proud to have been able to support them towards self-sufficiency as they move forward in their educational and career goals.

And a Provider's Success Story.....

Robin's Nest

The presence of a new child care provider in a small community always draws attention. The arrival of Robin's Nest in Hardee County was certainly the center of interest. The owner, Linda Gibson, ventured into opening a new child care center to provide high quality early learning experiences for children in the community, offering both School Readiness and Voluntary Prekindergarten. The daunting task was complicated by starting with a less-than-prime building. The previous program occupying that building had lost their contract with the ELCFH the year before, due to poor program practices. Numerous complaints of health and safety concerns had been documented for a significant period of time.

The first obvious change was the clean appearance with fresh paint inside and out! Walking through the front door, one is greeted, not only by a lovely entry, but also with a welcoming smile. The transformation of the building itself, without much in the way of remodeling, is astounding. Old materials and outdated or unsafe furnishings were removed and replaced with appropriate and functional ones. The expectation for professional appearance extends not only to the facility, but to the staff. Their focus on meeting the needs of each child in the class has been evident, with outreach to ELCFH staff to assist with developmental concerns or questions and assurance of a developmentally appropriate, high quality, child centered program.