

TYPES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE

INFORMAL CARE

- **Informal Care (Unregulated)**

Informal Care is unregulated care that takes place in a caregiver's home. Care may be provided by relatives, neighbors and/or friends. One adult cares for one family's children other than their own. This type of care has no state guidelines or inspections.

- **Co-ops (Unregulated)**

Co-ops are set up by parents with group size determined by the members. Adult/child ratios may vary and most have a parent advisory board and require volunteer help from parents. This type of care has no state guidelines or inspections.

- **In-Home Care (Unregulated)**

In-Home Care is care that takes place in the child's own home. It may be an independent arrangement between parent and caregiver or formal arrangement between parent, caregiver and/or Au-pair agency. This type of care has no state guidelines or inspections.

FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

- **Family Child Care Home (Licensed or Registered)**

Family Child Care is regulated care that takes place in a caregivers home.

Group size may vary according to caregiver preferences and state/ local guidelines and regulations. State law also recognizes large family child care homes with two adults providing care. Ages of children in care often vary, although some caregiver's service only a specific age group (e.g., infants, toddlers or preschoolers).

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS (CHILD CARE CENTERS)

- **Child Care Center (Licensed or Exempt)**

Child care centers are usually located in spaces adapted for child care purposes. These include stand-alone centers and those located in businesses, apartment complexes, universities, schools, hospitals, churches, etc. Children are often age-grouped and group size may vary as long as the adult/child ratios are maintained.

VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN (VPK)

- The Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten website (<http://www.vpkflorida.com/>) has available a child and provider pre-application. The pre-application will serve as a tool benefiting both parents and providers in assessing the needs of parents, offering initial contact information for Early Learning Coalitions and data gathering for Early Learning providers. Information from the pre-applications will be electronically forwarded to the Early Learning Coalitions (**See Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida.**)
- Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten legislation, signed into law by Governor Bush on January 2, 2005. Every Florida child who is four years old by Sept. 1, 2005 is eligible to attend the program in the fall of 2005 with applications submitted by parents through the Early Learning Coalitions.
- The Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten program is designed to help Florida children develop the skills they need to become good readers and successful students. Early Learning Coalitions will administer the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten program at the local level, register providers and provide applications and information to parents.

The Agency for Workforce Innovation is the state's lead workforce agency and directly administers the state's Labor Market Statistics program, Unemployment Compensation, Early Learning and various workforce development programs. The agency served as the administrative and fiscal entity for Florida's school readiness system since 2000.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE

- **School-Age Child Care and Summer Care (Licensed or Exempt)**
The setting for a School-Age Child Care or Summer Care program may be a school, child care center, family child care home, church, or community/recreation program. Group size may range from 10 to 25 or more children, depending on the type of program and the ages of the children served. Programs may be open full days, open summer only, open before and/or after school, or a combination of the above. The following programs are exempt from school-age care licensure, but must meet city/county health and safety regulations (**exempt programs are not government inspected**): Private and Public Schools (provided a majority of the children enrolled are five years old or older) operating school-age care programs, Summer camps

(residential day camps), Resort child care, Programs that are an integral part of a church or parochial school, City/County Parks and Recreation Programs

