



## Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County, Inc. 2008-2009 Annual Report

### Mission Statement:

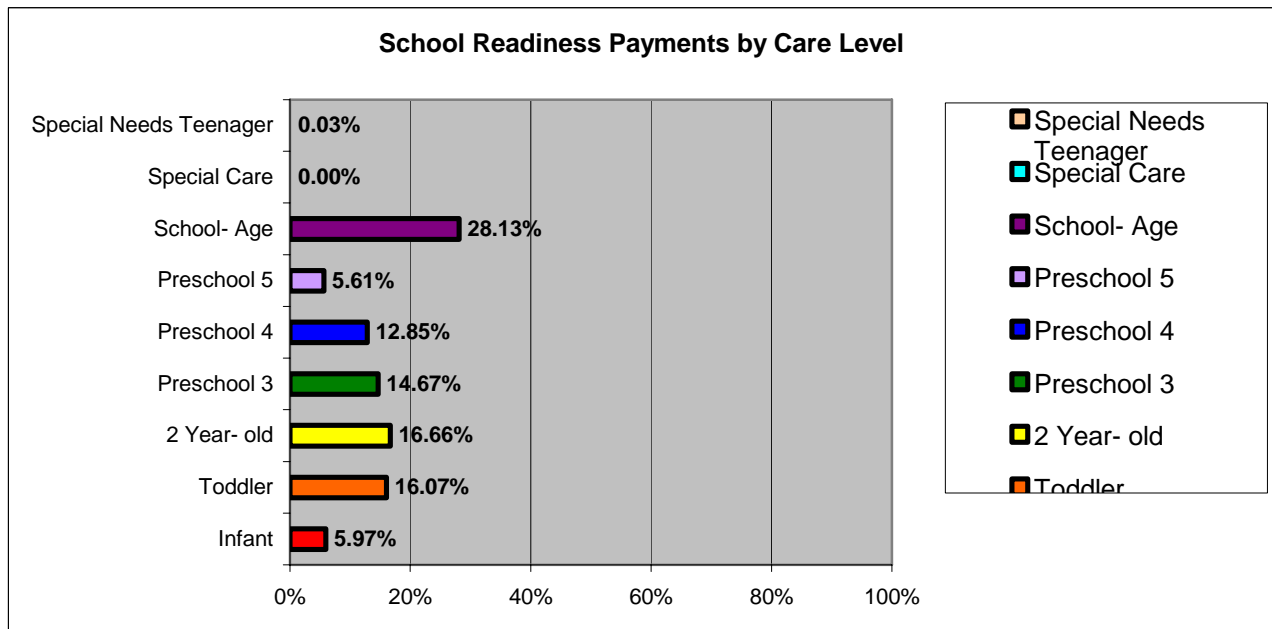
To facilitate an efficient, comprehensive, high quality system of school readiness services, to include early care and education and school-age programs, that enhances the emotional, social, cognitive, and physical development of all children through collaboration with the community, early care providers and families.

**Data Summary:** The following information is based on data collected from July 1, 2008- June 30, 2009.

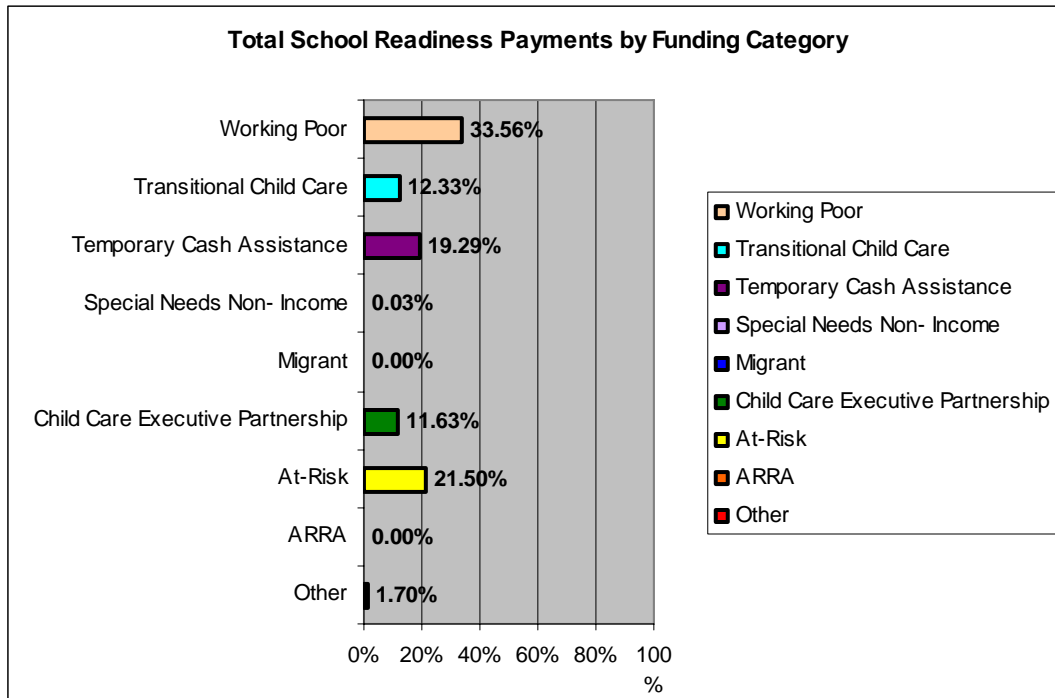
### Number of unduplicated School Readiness (SR) children and families:

SR Children	SR Families
12,829	7,771

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



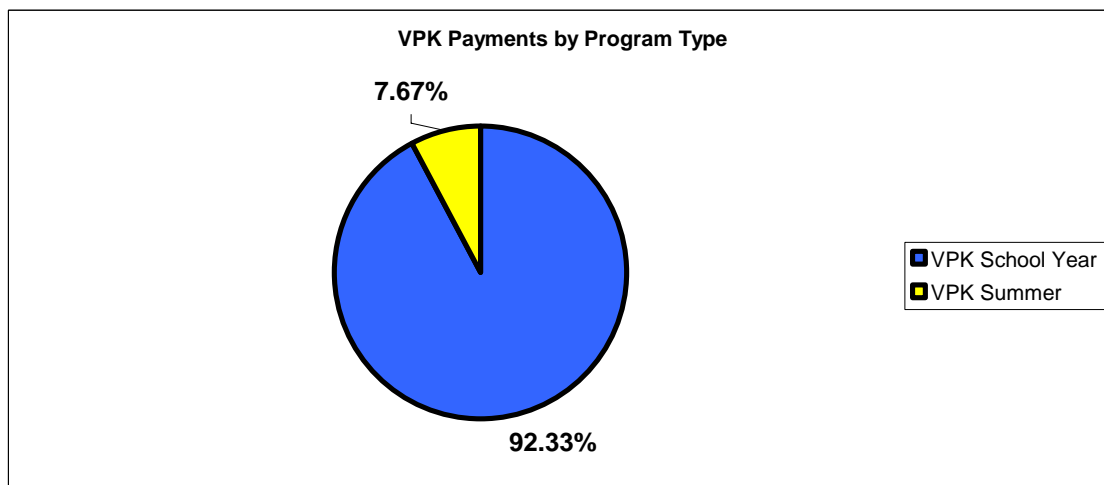
**School Readiness: Percentage of total payments (including match) by funding category:**



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

VPK Children	VPK Families
6581	6440

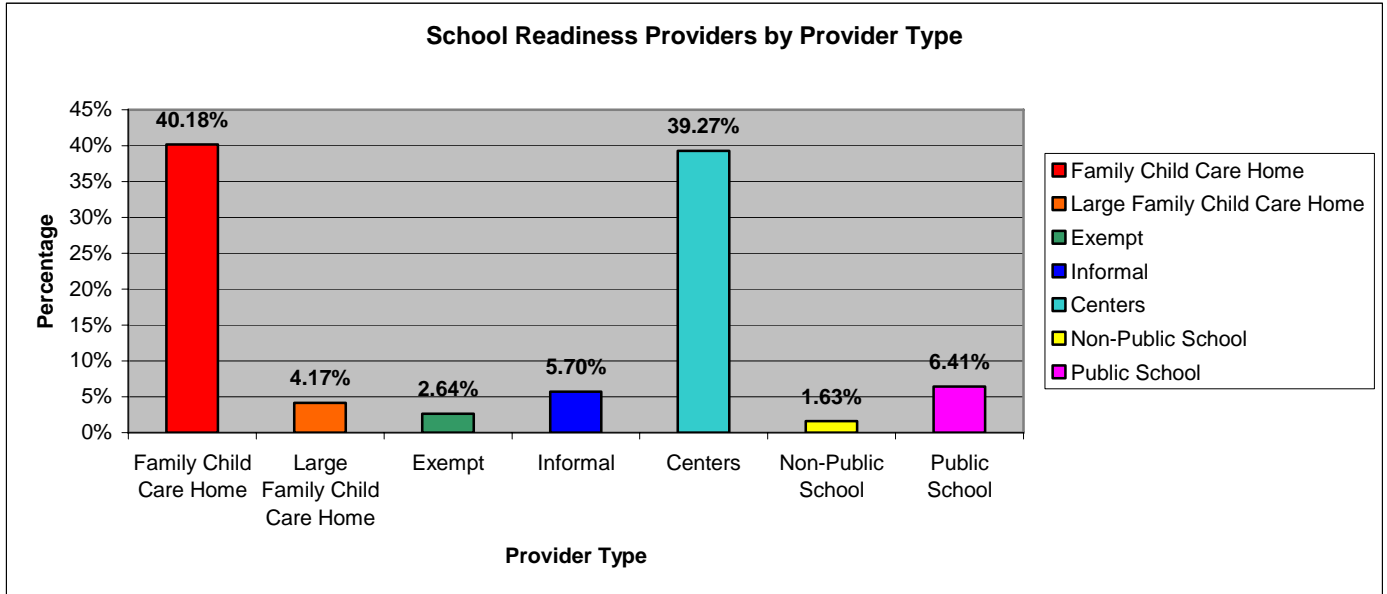
**Total percentage of VPK payments by program type:**



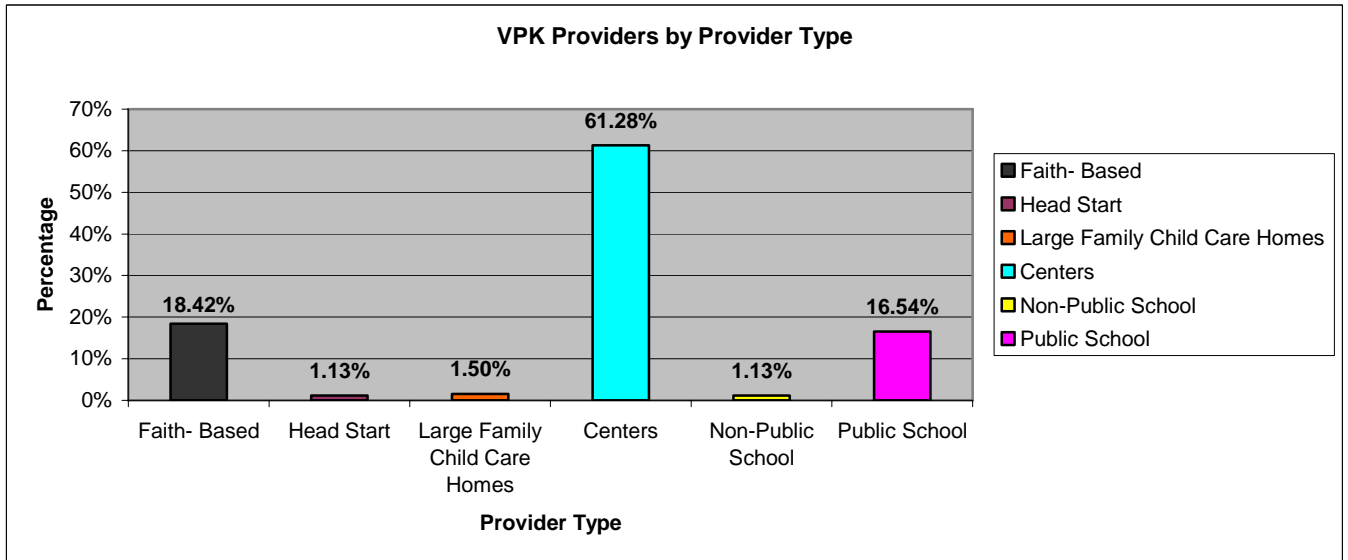
**Total number of providers that participate in the coalition’s early learning programs:**

<b>School Readiness Providers</b>	<b>Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Providers</b>
983	266

**Participating School Readiness providers by provider type:**



**Participating VPK providers by provider type:**



## Service Delivery Summary:

### School Readiness

The School Readiness program provides scholarship assistance to low income families, families entering the workforce (welfare to work) and children at risk of abuse, neglect or abandonment. School Readiness services are provided at 154 licensed facilities and 286 licensed homes. An additional 50 programs provide school-age care. A small percentage of children receive informal/relative care. Certificate/voucher care is also available throughout the community. A total of 12,897 unduplicated<sup>1</sup> School Readiness children were served during the year. Children served are birth to 13 years of age.

### Voluntary Prekindergarten Program

The Voluntary Prekindergarten program provides free quality Pre-K experience for every 4 year old residing in the state of Florida. The School Year program is 540 hours and most providers offer a 3-hour day. The summer program is 300 hours long and most providers offer a 7- to 7.5-hour day.

Year four of the Voluntary Prekindergarten program continued to be a success in Pinellas County with 6,103 children served during the 2008-2009 school year and summer programs (5,633 school year and 470 summer session). 6,103 children out of 6,470 slots available represent an achievement of 111% to goal. 246 providers offered the Voluntary Prekindergarten school year program and 27 offered a summer program.

The Department of Education identified 20 low performing Voluntary Prekindergarten providers in Pinellas County. These included 3 public schools and 17 private schools. 1 private school closed and 4 did not reapply to provide VPK. The remaining programs all submitted Improvement Plans and continue to offer the program.

**Quality Activity Summary:**

Activity	Narrative
<p>What opportunities are offered by the Coalition for comprehensive consumer education?</p>	<p>The Coalition through contract with Coordinated Child Care of Pinellas, Inc. offers consumer education and referral to all families in Pinellas County through Child Care Resource &amp; Referral. CCR&amp;R attended 37 community outreach events throughout the year. Events may include health fairs, safety fairs, neighborhood celebrations, etc... CCR&amp;R processed 15,026 service requests with a 100% client satisfaction rating.</p> <p>Families eligible for School Readiness scholarships are also informed of their care options and provided guides for choosing quality child care.</p> <p>CCC provides a single point of entry for parents to gain information on eligibility requirements, finding child care and coordinating family support services through subcontract with Suncoast Community Mental Health's Total Family Strategies program.</p> <p>Both the Coalition and CCC websites provide information and resources for parents on behavior concerns, nutrition, social/emotional development, developmental screenings, KidCare health insurance and links to further resources. The <i>Choosing Quality Childcare</i> video produced in partnership with the Juvenile Welfare Board Children Services Council of Pinellas County is also shown in the waiting room at each intake office. A link to this video is also available on the Coalition website.</p>
<p>Provide a list of grants or loans to providers to assist in meeting State and local standards.</p>	<p>5 Star Quality Improvement – Offered to participating providers to assist in quality improvement activities associated with 5 Star and the Environmental Rating Scales.</p> <p>Family Involvement – Offered to providers participating in a longer term professional development program to assist in funding family involvement events.</p>

	<p>Community of Readers – Grants to support child and family literacy initiatives. Activities may include reading events or on-site libraries available for family checkout.</p> <p>Infant Toddler- Participants of the Infant Toddler program are eligible for grants to purchase materials and resources to implement <i>Beyond Cribs and Rattles</i>.</p> <p>Caring For Kids- Offered minigrants to new providers working to become licensed. The program targeted areas with lower capacity. Additionally, minigrants were provided to established providers in order to maintain and improve quality.</p> <p>Step Up Scholarships – college scholarships provided to 95 early childhood educators. 80 seeking an associate’s degree; 6 seeking CDA renewal; 9 seeking renewal of a director credential.</p>
<p>Describe the process for monitoring compliance with licensing and regulatory requirements.</p>	<p>The Coalition and Coordinated Child Care work closely with the Child Care Licensing Program at the Pinellas County Health Department. CCC is notified of all fines issued by Child Care Licensing. The Coalition’s School Readiness Compliance Policy for Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes describes the corrective action process. Meetings are held monthly between Child Care Licensing, Coordinated Child Care and the Coalition to review unique cases and evaluate the effectiveness of the policy. Providers who fail to meet the basic health and safety requirements are placed on a Service Improvement Agreement with corrective action as outlined in the School Readiness Compliance Policy for Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 providers were placed on Service Improvement Agreement for licensing infractions</li> <li>• New enrollments of School Readiness Scholarships were suspended for 5 providers</li> <li>• School Readiness Agreement or Contract was terminated at 1 provider.</li> </ul>

	<p>Provider Consultants at Coordinated Child Care also work with Informal Child Care providers to implement the School Readiness Compliance Policy for Informal Providers. Provider consultants conducted health and safety reviews and provided technical assistance to ensure providers met basic health and safety requirements. Informal providers were also required to obtain first aid and CPR certification.</p>																										
<p>Provide a list of available professional development opportunities that the coalition offers, including training, education, and technical assistance</p>	<p>The Coalition along with our community partners offers a variety of professional development opportunities throughout the year.</p> <p>In-service training opportunities are provided in each of the following categories:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="639 877 1224 1360"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Attendees</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Child Development</td> <td>578</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Building Relationships</td> <td>994</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Assessment</td> <td>726</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Teaching and Learning</td> <td>2282</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Professionalism and Leadership</td> <td>95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Health, Safety and Nutrition</td> <td>636</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Program Management and Administration</td> <td>1049</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Coalition also hosted 4 major conferences:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="639 1449 1224 1671"> <thead> <tr> <th>Conference</th> <th>Attendees</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Infant Toddler</td> <td>264</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Early Childhood</td> <td>233</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Directors</td> <td>58</td> </tr> <tr> <td>School Age</td> <td>400</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Step Up Scholarships – college scholarships provided to 95 early childhood educators. 80 seeking an associate’s degree; 6 seeking CDA renewal; 9 seeking renewal of a director credential.</p>	Category	Attendees	Child Development	578	Building Relationships	994	Assessment	726	Teaching and Learning	2282	Professionalism and Leadership	95	Health, Safety and Nutrition	636	Program Management and Administration	1049	Conference	Attendees	Infant Toddler	264	Early Childhood	233	Directors	58	School Age	400
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	<p>The Coalition offers Continuing Education Units for all applicable trainings and conferences. CEUs are required to renew a CDA/E which is the minimum requirement for VPK Instructors. The Coalition awarded 436.7 CEUs.</p> <p>The Program for Inclusive Early Care and Education (PIECE) is an initiative funded through a grant awarded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. Participants of this program receive intensive training on <i>Positive Behavioral Supports</i> and <i>Response to Intervention</i>. This intensive training is supported with onsite coaching throughout the year. Ten early care and education sites participated, impacting 134 teachers and approximately 633 children. The program was very effective with all sites reporting zero expulsions since entering the program.</p> <p>The Coalition also offers, through Coordinated Child Care, an infant toddler program including training, coaching, resources and a lending library that assist infant and toddler educators to provide developmentally appropriate activities and materials for the children in their care.</p>
<p>Describe initiatives by the coalition to improve salaries and other compensation for child care providers.</p>	<p>The Coalition strongly supports salary increases for early child care educators in addition to advocating for professional development including support directly to Rep. Long for her proposed legislation to have all early childhood educators attain bachelors' degrees- within a reasonable timeframe. Higher education and higher wages in this field would naturally elevate the quality of education to our youngest citizens. Currently it is not possible to offer market rate increases to providers without greatly decreasing the number of slots we are able to offer to families who qualify for school readiness scholarships.</p>

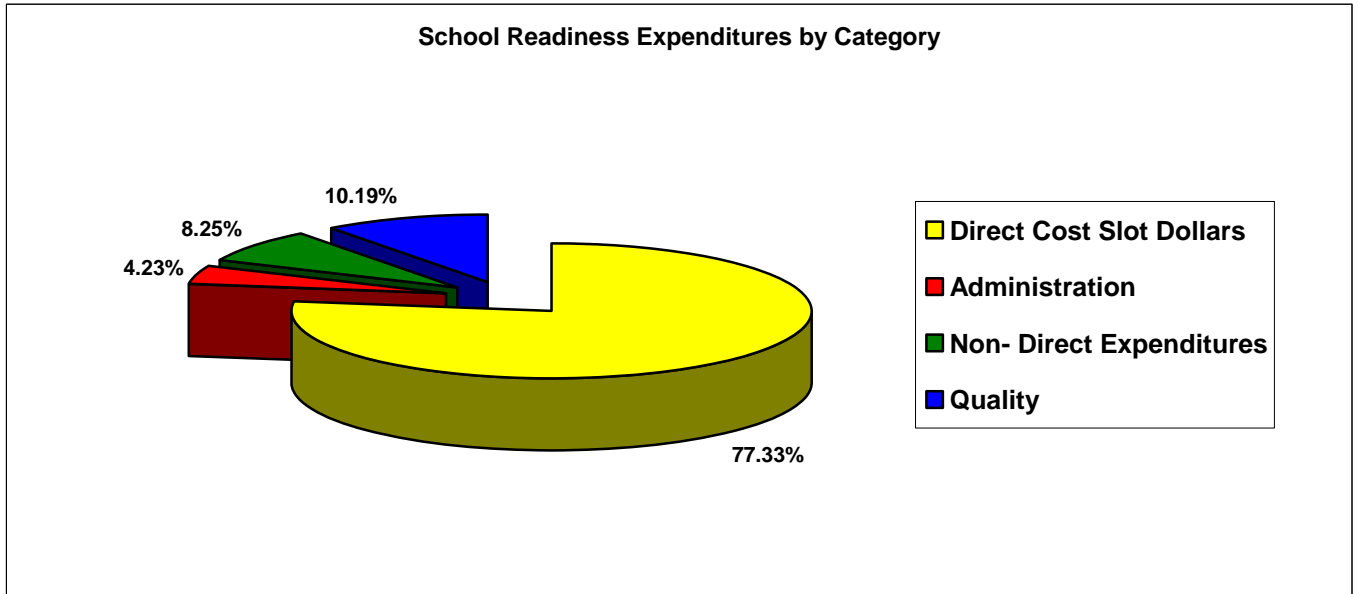
	<p>The Coalition also sponsors a free job posting listing for contracted school readiness providers. An ad is run monthly in the St. Petersburg Times advertising child care employment opportunities and directs applicants to the Coordinated Child Care website. Providers may post their job listings a no charge. 108 jobs were posted saving providers approximately \$48,974 during 08-09.</p>
<p>Describe activities to support a Quality Rating System.</p>	<p>The Coalition has partnered with the Juvenile Welfare Board Children’s Services Council of Pinellas and Coordinated Child Care to implement the 5 Star Quality Rating System. Providers are assessed using the Environmental Rating Scales. Technical assistance and improvement grants are offered to assist providers in improving the quality of their programs. 278 providers participated in the 5 Star Program including 108 family child care homes, 74 child care centers and 96 school age sites.</p>
<p>Provide information on activities in support of early language, literacy, pre-reading, and early math concepts development.</p>	<p>Training for child care providers is provided on each topic on an ongoing basis. All trainings are advertised to providers in the <i>Training Times</i> which can be found on the Coalition website.</p> <p>The Coalition funds Florida First Start through the Pinellas County School Board. Through this program, families with high risk infants and toddlers are guided in working with their children to develop early literacy, language and early math concepts. 158 children between the ages of birth to five years were served during the 2008-09 program year. This represents 106 families served. 2,876 Home Visits were completed. Families are also invited to attend playgroups where these skills are further developed. 553 parents and 653 children attended one of 53 playgroups held in 2008-2009.</p> <p>The Coalition supports the Born to Read program at the Pinellas Public Library Cooperative. The Born to Read program engages families in high risk areas to promote reading at home. Parents are taught the importance of reading to children and receive a free book. These</p>

	<p>families are invited to join the library to better ensure children have access to books and other literacy opportunities such as story time on an ongoing basis. Seven hundred and six new families enrolled in the program and over five hundred new library cards were issued to <i>Born to Read</i> families. Additionally, over 2,200 books and parenting materials were distributed at 27 outreach events in the 2008-2009 program year. 741 families participated in Born to Read and 677 were issued a public library card.</p> <p>The Community of Readers program administered by Coordinated Child Care assisted child care providers in developing family literacy opportunities at the child care site. Providers were offered grants and training to establish on-site libraries and activities to incorporate literacy in the curriculum and family involvement programs.</p>
<p>What activities has the coalition implemented to promote inclusive child care?</p>	<p>Information about the Coalition’s Warm Line for inclusion is provided at a variety of trainings and meetings throughout the year. Additionally, this service is advertised on the Coalition website. The Inclusion Specialist assists providers in implementing accommodations and inclusive strategies to ensure each child is able to maximize their potential in the least restrictive environment. 685 consultations via phone or onsite were conducted. Additionally, the Director of Inclusion provides training for providers throughout the year.</p> <p>The Coalition also revised the School Readiness Screening Program. The Coalition continues to administer the Ages and Stages Questionnaire on all School Readiness children under 5 years old. However children identified with a possible concern are no longer administered a “Second Level Screening”. Instead the Coalition has established a Parent Advocate who reviews each failed screen and consults with both providers and parents to determine appropriate referral or interim interventions. The new</p>

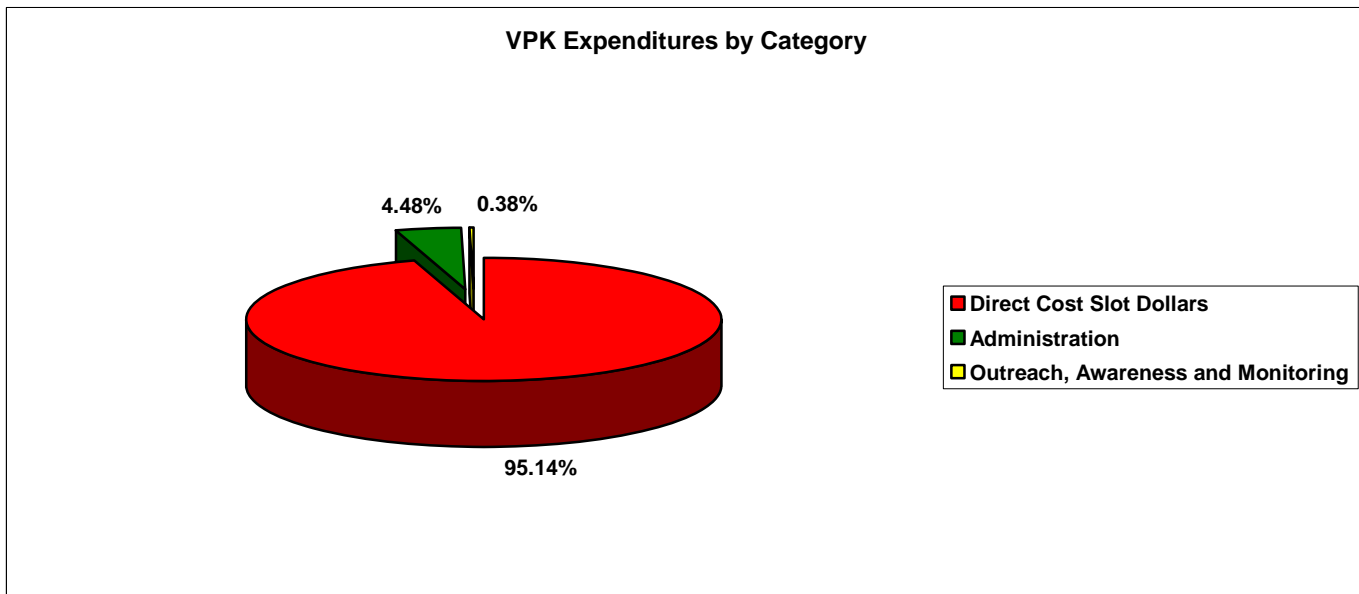
	<p>process has proven to be very effective in identifying children truly in need of evaluation and engaging parents as the child’s first teacher. The Coalition routinely meets with community partners including West Central Early Steps of All Children’s Hospital (Part C), Florida Diagnostic Learning Resource Services Gulfcoast and the Pinellas County School District to monitor the implementation of the changes.</p> <p>The Coalition was also awarded a grant from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Developmental Disabilities and the Florida Developmental Disabilities Council, Inc. for Inclusive Early Care and Education (PIECE). Participating providers receive training on Positive Behavioral Supports and Recognition and Response. Providers also receive intense on-site coaching and resources needed for a successful inclusion program. This \$75,000 grant is used to support 10 sites, 134 teachers and approximately 633 children. Zero children were expelled from any of the participating sites.</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>As participating agency on the Kid Care Committee of Pinellas, the Coalition has collaborated in outreach efforts for the Kid Care Insurance. Information about Kid Care is provided with all CCR&amp;R packets and at eligibility interviews.</p> <p>The Coalition contracts with the Pinellas County Health Department to provide vision and hearing screenings to preschool children throughout the county. During 08-09 4,961 children were screened. 607 children were referred for vision and 731 were referred for hearing concerns.</p> <p>The Coalition hosts the Early Childhood Mental Health Committee which also serves as the local chapter of the Florida Association for Infant Mental Health. The group planned a regional conference to take place on July 31, 2009 in partnership with All Children’s Hospital. All local agencies that provide services to children and families</p>

	<p>including child protective services agencies, sheriff's office, Judge Irene Sullivan, local pediatricians and physicians, the Juvenile Welfare Board and many other agencies were personally invited to attend. During the afternoon, a community action planning session was scheduled to bring this multi-agency group of decision-makers together to identify community needs and gaps that will form the beginning of a community action plan.</p>
<p>Please describe other quality activities that increase parental choice, and improve the quality and availability of child care. (§98.51(a)(1) and (2))</p>	<p>The 5 Star Quality Rating System offers parents a guide in identifying quality programs. The Coalition also began working closely with informal school readiness providers to meet basic health and safety requirements. Monitoring and technical assistance was provided. The Caring for Kids program provided technical assistance and minigrants to new providers working to become licensed. The program targeted geographical areas with low capacity. Additionally, minigrants were provided to established providers in order to maintain and improve quality.</p>

**Fiscal Summary:** During the 2008- 2009 fiscal year the coalition’s total **School Readiness Program** operating budget was \$33,091,253. Below is a breakout of expenditures by category.



During the 2008- 2009 fiscal year the coalition’s total **Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program** operating budget was \$14,986,751. Below is a breakout of expenditures by category.



### **Program Year Summary:**

- Established a Professional Development Department within the Coalition as the ELC begins the transition of bringing training and coordination of community training in-house.
- Began offering CEUs for community and ELC trainings for providers.
- Professional Development Department coordinated and held the first annual Directors' Conference with an entire day of training and breakout sessions specifically for center directors. Participants included providers from Pinellas and surrounding counties.
- Program for Inclusive Early Care and Education year two saw the addition of 5 new child care centers and homes. Total number of sites served with this program is now 10. Number of providers trained is 134. Number of children that benefit from the program 633.
- Screening Eyes and Ears of Kids (SEEK) program offered through the ELC's contract with the Pinellas County Health Department received an additional \$10,000 in 2008-2009 that provided funding for an additional 400 kids to be screened.
- Child Care Executive Pool (CCEP) program was expanded to include Category One funding through a collaborative effort with R'Club, a local multi-site child care provider.
- Voluntary Prekindergarten enrollment reached 6,103 children representing 111% of the goal set by the Agency for Workforce Innovation.