



Media Alert

For Immediate Release
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ANNOUNCING IMPLEMENTATION OF “SUNSHINE STARS” PASCO HERNANDO’S QUALITY RATING IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (QRIS)

The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. is proud to announce the implementation of “Sunshine Stars,” Pasco Hernando’s Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS). QRIS is designed to recognize and promote a culture of continuous quality improvement as well as assist parents in understanding how to choose and evaluate early learning programs. The Coalition has 14 committed childcare providers enthusiastic to participate in a Pilot scheduled to begin Summer of 2015.

The goal of Sunshine Stars is to ensure high quality learning experiences for our children by issuing a “star-rating.” Stars will indicate a provider’s level of quality based on easy to understand criteria for both parents and child care providers. Parents will be encouraged to seek providers with a higher rating.

“We need to move from a financially-based initiative to a market-based quality approach meaning the parents of our children need to drive the quality of our early childhood programs”

- Jim Farrelly, Executive Director

As a Coalition we feel that a Quality Rating Improvement System will help us be able to identify strengths and weaknesses within early childhood programs by providing a set of standards that will improve staff qualifications, the learning environment, and teacher-child interactions. QRIS assessments will involve staff coaching to encourage professional development and technical assistance for providers. The goal of QRIS is to offer guidance to professionals, increase family engagement and community knowledge.

For more information about Sunshine Stars, Pasco Hernando’s Quality Rating Improvement System, please contact Kim Borrego at k.borrego@phelc.org or call (727) 233-8291.

For more information about the Coalition and its services, please visit www.phelc.org or call (727) 233-8291.

About the Coalition

The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. is one of 30 Early Learning Coalitions in Florida. Florida’s Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program is for all children who are four-years old on or before September 1st. School Readiness provides subsidized child care for low-to-moderate income working families. The non-profit serves over 9,000 children between infancy and eight years old, working with more than 300 providers in the counties.

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