



Media Alert

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

15506 County Line Road
Spring Hill, FL 34610
Phone: 727.233.8291
Fax: 727.857.0151

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Contact: Katie Nelson,
Communications Specialist
Phone: (352) 442-5132
k.nelson@phelc.org

EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF PASCO AND HERNANDO COUNTIES PROVIDES MORE THAN 200 CHILDREN WITH LUNCHBOXES AT “EAT SMART FOR A HEALTHY START” EVENT

The Coalition teamed up with local child care providers and agencies to celebrate the start of a new and healthier school year

The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. (PHELC) distributed brightly colored lunchboxes filled with healthy snacks and goodies to over 200 children at the free **Eat Smart for a Healthy Start** event.

PHELC, with local childcare providers, educated families about health and wellness, and provided families with tools to make healthy nutritional choices.

Eat Smart for a Healthy Start would not be possible without the support of community partner UPS. The Coalition received a \$600 community outreach donation from UPS to help with the cost of lunchboxes.

The Coalition also received a generous \$500 donation from Kohls of 8333 Little Rd., New Port Richey. Five of Kohls' employees served as volunteers at the Hudson Library event, welcoming families and distributing lunchboxes.

For more information about Eat Smart for a Healthy Start, please contact Sharon Hayes of the Early Learning Coalition at (727) 233-8291.

The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. is one of 31 Early Learning Coalitions in Florida. It works to ensure that programs and services are available to assist families with young children during their formative years. Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program is for all children who are four-years old on or before September 1st. School Readiness provides assistance for low-to-moderate income working families by paying a portion of the childcare costs on a sliding fee schedule. Starting as separate organizations in 2000, Pasco and Hernando counties joined forces to form the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and

Hernando Counties in 2005. The non-profit serves over nine thousand children between infancy and five years old, working with over 300 providers in the counties.

For more information about the ELC and its services, visit www.phelc.org.

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