

## **Childcare services for Pinellas emergency workers**

*Pinellas ELC continues supporting families as community responds to coronavirus*

PINELLAS COUNTY, Fla. (April 9, 2020) -- The **Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas** (ELC), working with the Florida Department of Education's **Office of Early Learning**, is providing financial assistance to **first responders** and **healthcare workers** for child care services.

This expansion of the School Readiness program provides Emergency Childcare Scholarships for up to 3 months for children birth-to-age-13. There are **no income requirements** and parent co-pays are temporarily waived. Eligibility for the program includes:

- Child(ren) are US citizen(s) or legal resident(s)
- One or both parents is/are a first responder or healthcare worker
- Child Care Application & Authorization form completed by employer
- Attendance at a contracted School Readiness provider
- Florida residence

**Families** can obtain a Child Care Application & Authorization form from their **HR department**.

**Employers** can contact **Ken Buchanan**, Family Services Manager, at [kbuchanan@elcpinellas.org](mailto:kbuchanan@elcpinellas.org) for more details.

To find an open childcare provider or learn more about programs/services, visit [elcpinellas.org](http://elcpinellas.org) or call Child Care Resource and Referral (**CCR&R**) at **727-400-4411** (option 3, then option 3).

"Access to childcare is essential for our most essential workers. Their children need care while they are caring for others," said **Lindsay Carson**, CEO of the Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas. "When children don't have care, parents can't work. If first responders and healthcare workers can't work, everyone suffers."

Child care facilities that remain open must comply with CDC guidelines for reduced group sizes and social distancing. Providers serving emergency workers will receive additional compensation to cover the increased cost of care.

To contact ELC staff with general **questions/concerns**: **727-548-1439** or [info@elcpinellas.org](mailto:info@elcpinellas.org).

*The **Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County** is a nonprofit agency focused on high-quality early care and education – working with families and childcare providers to prepare children to enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life. **New website coming soon**. Follow [Facebook.com/ELCPinellas](https://www.facebook.com/ELCPinellas) and the ELC's [Coronavirus Updates](#) webpage for current information and resources.*