



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Choosing a quality child care program that meets the needs of your child and family is an important decision. The Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend Region (ELC) assists families with identifying child care programs based on the whole family's needs. The ELC serves Gadsden, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla counties. You can find the addresses and hours of operation for our six offices on our [website](#). In addition to helping families identify a quality child care program, we offer other services, which include the [School Readiness Program](#), [Voluntary Prekindergarten Program](#) and [child development screening](#).

There are many factors to consider when selecting child care, including location, cost, and whether there are openings for your child. It is also important to think about which type of care is best for your child, what curriculum best meets your child's needs, and the staff's training and experience. Please know that the ELC does not license, endorse, or recommend any particular provider. Only you can best determine the program that is right for you and your child based upon your family's and your child's unique needs.

Here are some helpful resources:

- Help Me Grow
 - <https://www.helpmegrowfl.org/>
 - <https://www.elcbigbend.org/Providers/Developmental-Screenings>
- Provider Inspection Reports & Information
 - Department of Children and Families – 1(866)352-2842 or 1(866)762-2237 or visit <https://cares.myflfamilies.com/PublicSearch/>
- Health & Safety Requirements for School Readiness Child Care Providers
 - <http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/statewide-initiatives/health-safety>
- Submitting a Complaint About a Child Care Provider to the Department of Children and Families Child Care Licensing and Regulation Division
 - <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/complaint/>
- Submitting a Complaint Through the Florida Abuse Hotline
 - Department of Children and Families – 1-800-962-2873 or <http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/abuse-hotline/report-online>

If you need additional child care listings or community resources or would like more information about the Voluntary Prekindergarten or School Readiness programs, please contact us at 850-385-0504 or toll-free at 1-866-973-9030. You can also visit our website at www.elcbigbend.org.

Sincerely,

Child Care Resource and Referral

Note: You can access an electronic version of this letter with active hyperlinks on our website

