

**DID YOU KNOW??**

The Family Portal is well on its way and it will be important that our office has a valid email address for every family on file.

The Portal will be transferring information from our current database to send notifications to families via email. If you would like to update your information or you believe the email we currently have on file is not valid, feel free to contact our office and request an email update form be sent to you. Specialist emails are below:



Jimmie McFall: [jmcfall@elcalachua.org](mailto:jmcfall@elcalachua.org)

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UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING

There are a few changes to the Florida Administrative Rule. The Eligibility Department will be making great strides in ensuring that the implementation of these changes will be smooth both for our families and for our office. Here's a rundown of those changes and how it may affect your care:

- 1. Transfer of School Readiness Services:**  
A family shall continue to receive school readiness services during the 12-month eligibility period due to a change in residence within the state to a different coalition service area.

How does this affect you? If you move to another county in Florida, you may be eligible to transfer your services at the time of relocation. You will need to contact our office and let us know the county you will be relocating to. Once our office has the necessary information, we will contact that Coalition for exchange of information and transfer of your SR application.

- 2. Documenting Eligibility for the School Readiness Program Education.** Each applicant requesting services in order to attend an approved educational activity in accordance with Section 1002.81 (16), F.S. shall provide an official school schedule and proof of enrollment from an accredited education institution.

How does this affect you? All students will now be required to submit enrollment verifications along with all other required education documents at new and recertification interviews, this including Recertification by Mail. Typically, this can be retrieved by accessing your student account online. For example, if you are a UF student, you can go to the UF student self-service website and click on Enrollment Verification. This process may vary depending on the Academic Institution.

- 3. Documentation required for school readiness services eligibility. During the initial determination and redetermination, an applicant must submit documentation, as applicable, to verify compliance with eligibility requirements. Re-determining applicants shall submit required documents prior to the redetermination date. The coalition shall determine edibility within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of documentation.**

How does this affect you? Recertification packets should be submitted prior to your recertification date. Our office asks that packets are submitted 30 days in advance to avoid a lapse in services should additional documents be required or a packet is incomplete. Once a packet or change is submitted and considered completed, our office should determine eligibility within 10 days from the date of drop off.

**ADDITIONAL CONTACTS**

**Child Care Resource & Referral:**  
Contact Lynda Bowie at (352) 375-4104 or email at [lbowie@elcalachua.org](mailto:lbowie@elcalachua.org)

**Child Development Services:**  
Contact Toby Hunter at (352) 375-4087 or email at [thunter@elcalachua.org](mailto:thunter@elcalachua.org)



Florida's School Readiness Program is funded by state, federal and local funds. Approximately seventy-four percent (74%) of this initiative is funded through federal dollars in the amount of \$7,608,958; 23% is funded through Florida state funds in the amount of \$2,403,356; and 3% is funded through local dollars in the amount of \$285,667"

Supported by the Alachua County Board of County Commission's Community Agency Partnership Program" to be added to all published material, announcements and websites. Use of logo must be approved by the County's Communication Office.

Supported by the Alachua County Board of County Commission's Children's Services Advisory Board" to be added to all published material, announcements and websites. Use of logo must be approved by the County's Communication Office.



## UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING CONTINUED

4. For all applicants other than those who are self-employed, each source of earned income, at a minimum, shall be documented by hours of employment and rate of pay based on:
- I. Four (4) weekly, two (2) biweekly, two (2) semi-monthly and one (1) monthly paystubs that are current and consecutive, or
  - II. A signed statement by the employer dated within 4 weeks of applying for SR childcare funding, or
  - III. A signed contract for employment that has a termination date of not less than 9 months from the date of applying for SR child care funding

What this means is, parents no longer are required to submit six (6) weeks of income, rather four (4) as outlined in section I above. Section II states that for new employment, a parent can submit a Verification of Employment form or statement from their employer on company letter head dated within four (4) weeks of completing a School Readiness application. Section III states that if you have employment that is, for example, on a grant or contract in which the position has an estimated end/termination date, a parent's employment cannot terminate less than 9 months from the date of submitting a SR application.

5. When a school age child, who is authorized part time care during the school year, attends a full time day on a school holiday or school closure, the parent shall pay the part time co-payment but the provider is reimbursed at a full time rate. During the summer break, if a school age child attends full time, the parent shall pay the full time co-payment and the provider shall be reimbursed at a full time rate.

If you have a school ager and they attend on any given school break or holiday, you, the parent will only be charged the part time co-payment. The only time you should be charged at the full – time co-payment is during summer break.

## STRENGTHENING FAMILIES APPROACH

*"We often think that admitting struggle is a sign of weakness, but we all struggle sometimes. We all get overwhelmed sometimes. We need help sometimes. Acknowledging this is not a sign of weakness, but struggling alone is a choice to grow weak."*

– Lori Deschene

Strengthening Families focuses on building and enhancing five protective factors that foster optimal child development. Those factors are (1) parental resilience, (2) social connections, (3) knowledge of parenting and child development, (4) concrete support in times of need and (5) social-emotional competence of

children. Through these factors, parents are able to maintain stability, be calm and provide nurturing support despite difficult or challenging circumstances. This framework will be implemented in our interviewing process at both new and redeterminations to further guide our interactions with the families we serve.

The Strengthening Families form that is provided to you at new and redetermination is offered with the concept of referring families to resources that mitigate risk and promote healthy development and well-being. By offering community resources and support, it helps families build resilience and develop skills, characteristics, knowledge and relationships in the community that contribute to both short and long term positive outcomes.

For more information on Child Care Resource and Referral, contact Lynda Bowie at (352) 375-4104.

## FINDING NEMO EASTER EGGS



Time: 1 Hour

What You'll Need:

- Hard-boiled eggs
- Egg-coloring kit
- Rubber Bands
- Wooden egg
- Orange Paint
- White paint

How to Make It:

1. Hard-boil eggs. Place in refrigerator until ready to color.
2. Place 2-3 rubber bands around eggs.
3. Dip eggs into blue and green dyes. Let dry.
4. Remove rubber bands to reveal pattern.
5. Paint wooden egg orange. Let dry.
6. Paint white stripes on top of orange to create a Nemo-inspired design.
7. Hide eggs around the house and yard on Easter. Remind your little ones that one of the eggs is extra special. They'll love finding Nemo!

