Adapted from the School Readiness Program Health and Safety Standards Handbook

The handbook that this is excerpted from is intended to be used in conjunction with Sections 1002.82-1002.88, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 6M-4, Florida Administrative Code.

Introduction The School Readiness program is funded primarily by the federal Child Care and Development Fund Block Grant (CCDBG). The CCDBG Reauthorization of 2014 represents a historic re-envisioning of the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) program. The new law made significant advancements to the protection of children in child care settings by requiring states to define minimum health and safety standards for child care providers, and establishing inspection and monitoring requirements for all providers receiving CCDF funds, including license-exempt providers. [1] As the designated CCDF lead agency for the state of Florida, the Office of Early Learning (OEL) administers the School Readiness Program at the state level. Pursuant to section 1002.82(1), Florida Statutes (F.S.), OEL is required to comply with all lead agency responsibilities pursuant to federal law.

Inspections To ensure consistent statewide application of child care and school readiness health and safety standards established in statute and rule, the Department of Children and Families and the Local Licensing Agencies (if applicable) are designated as the inspection authorities for the School Readiness Program. In accordance with s. 402.311(2), F.S., all school readiness program providers must provide the department or local licensing agency (as applicable) access to facilities, personnel and records necessary to ensure compliance with health and safety standards.

Group Size Children benefit from social interactions with peers. However, larger groups are generally associated with less positive interactions and developmental outcomes. [3] Group size works to raise program quality due to increased individual attention and interaction for each child in care.

1. For infants from birth up to 12 months of age, group size may not exceed twelve (12) children in a single classroom. There must be two designated lead teachers for infant classrooms operating with 9 to 12 children, and two of the three program personnel assigned to that classroom and necessary to meet ratio requirements for this age group must possess at a minimum an active credential pursuant to s. 402.305(3), F.S., as recognized by the Department. There must be one designated lead teacher for infant classrooms operating with 5 to 8 children, and one of the two program personnel assigned to that classroom and necessary to meet ratio requirements for this age group must possess at a minimum an active credential pursuant to s. 402.305(3), F.S., as recognized by the Department. An active credential is not required for the staff member assigned to an infant classroom operating with 4 or less children.

2. For children age 1 year up to 24 months of age, group size may not exceed twelve (12) children in a single classroom. There must be one designated lead teacher for classrooms operating with 7 to 12 children, and one of the two program personnel necessary to meet ratio requirements for this age group must possess at a minimum an active credential pursuant to s. 402.305(3), F.S., as recognized by the Department. An active credential is not required for the staff member assigned to a classroom operating with 6 or less children.

3. For children age 2 years up to 3 years of age, group size may not exceed twenty-two (22) children in a single classroom. There must be one designated lead teacher for classrooms operating with 12 to 22 children, and one of the two program personnel necessary to meet ratio requirements for this age group must possess at a minimum an active credential pursuant to s. 402.305(3), F.S., as recognized by the Department. An active credential is not required for the staff member assigned to a classroom operating with 11 or less children.

4. For children age 3 years up to 4 years of age, group size may not exceed thirty (30) children in a single classroom. There must be one designated lead teacher for classrooms operating with 16 to 30 children, and one of the two program personnel necessary to meet ratio requirements for this age group must possess at a minimum an active credential pursuant to s. 402.305(3), F.S., as recognized by the Department. An active credential is not required for the staff member assigned to a classroom operating with 15 or less children.

5. For children age 4 years up to 5 years of age, group size may not exceed forty (40) children in a single classroom. There must be one designated lead teacher for classrooms operating with 21 to 40 children, and one of the two program personnel necessary to meet ratio requirements for this age group must possess at a minimum an active credential pursuant to s. 402.305(3), F.S., as recognized by the Department. An active credential is not required for the staff member assigned to a classroom operating with 20 or less children.

"Classroom" refers to any well-defined room in which care is provided or classes are held; a room arranged with materials and equipment and set up as a learning space with intent to implement a plan of activities for the school readiness program. The classroom provides a space where learning can take place uninterrupted by outside distractions. If floor to ceiling walls are not present, the classroom walls must be defined by stable barriers, and must adhere to the requirements for such barriers as outlined below.

"Stable Walls or Barriers" refer to the boundaries that define a classroom space. Walls or barriers must be constructed in a sturdy manner and be anchored together, or to floor or walls. Walls or barriers must be stable and secure and must not pose a threat to falling over. The material for the barriers or walls must be nonhazardous and may not be made of materials such as see-thru or plastic curtains, fabric or mesh materials. The stable walls or barriers must be a minimum of 32 inches in height from the floor in classrooms for children ages birth through 2, and must be a minimum of four (4) feet in height from the floor in classrooms for children ages 3 and older. All classrooms must continue to meet fire code requirements for entrance(s) and exit(s) of the classroom.

Children's Ages	Group Size	1 Child Care Staff	2nd staff with Active Credential	3rd Staff with Active Credential	Staff to Child Ratio
Infants	12	4	5 - 8	9 - 12	1:4
One Year Olds	12	6	7 - 12	N/A	1:6
Two Year Olds	22	11	12 - 22	N/A	1:11
Three Year Olds	30	15	16 - 30	N/A	1:15
Four Year Olds	40	20	21 - 40	N/A	1:20
Five Year Olds	50	25	26 - 50	N/A	1:25

18.1 Pre-service Timeframe
All pre-service training requirements listed below must be completed by all program personnel, volunteers and substitutes, within 90 days of initial employment with any provider participating in the school readiness program. This timeframe does not start over if personnel change employment to another school readiness provider within this 90 days. Personnel who have not completed all pre-service training requirements may not be allowed any unsupervised contact with or care of children in a school readiness program.

18.2 Training Courses
All program personnel, volunteers and substitutes must successfully complete one of the following sets of pre-service training coursework:

1. Completion of the department-approved child care training courses listed below, as evidenced by successful completion of competency based examinations

- ✓ Health, Safety and Nutrition;
- ✓ Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect;
- ✓ Child Growth and Development; and
- ✓ Behavioral Observation and Screening.

2. Completion of the below listed Early Learning Florida – University of Florida (ELFL) health and safety modules, as evidenced by successful completion of competency based examinations offered by ELFL.

    a. Each of the following:
- ✓ Health and Sanitation;
- ✓ Safety of the Environment;
- ✓ Precautions in Transporting Children (if applicable);
- ✓ Safe Sleep Practices (not required for school-age only programs);
- ✓ Child Safety and Prevention;
- ✓ Planning for Emergencies; and
- ✓ Prevention of Child Abuse and Supporting Children in Trauma.

b. One of the following developmentally appropriate practices modules:
- ✓ Supporting the Social-Emotional Development of Infants/Toddlers;
- ✓ Supporting the Social-Emotional Development of Preschool Children; or
- ✓ Supporting the Social-Emotional Development of Mixed-age Group Care.

Child Discipline
The word discipline means to teach and guide. Discipline is not a punishment but rather an opportunity to teach. Program personnel should guide children to develop self-control and appropriate behaviors in the context of relationships with peers and adults. Caregivers should care for children without ever resorting to physical punishment or abusive language. Discipline should be an ongoing process to help children learn to manage their own behavior in a socially acceptable manner, and shouldn't just occur in response to a problem behavior.

1. Each school readiness program must have written policies and procedures regarding discipline and **expulsion of children in care.** A copy of the current policies must be available to the inspection authority to review.

2. Such policies must include standards that prohibit children from being subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating, frightening, or associated with food, rest, or toileting, and should include positive behavioral intervention models to reduce the occurrence of expulsion. Positive techniques are used within a safe, connected environment to guide the behavior of children by setting appropriate limits, teaching missing or developing skills, and encouraging children to choose positive behaviors.

3. Verification that the program has provided the parent or guardian a **written copy of the disciplinary and expulsion policies** used by the program must be documented in the child's file with the signature of the custodial parent or legal guardian.

4. All personnel must comply with the program's written disciplinary and **expulsion policies**.

5. Active play must not be withheld from children as a form of discipline or consequence for misbehavior.

6. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment must not be administered by any personnel. Rough or harsh handling of children is prohibited, including but not limited to: shaking; lifting or jerking by one or both arms; pushing; pulling; forcing or restricting movement; lifting or moving by grasping clothing; or covering a child's head, whether associated with discipline or not.

Broward County Child Care Licensing & Enforcement

Child Care Facilities Provider Meetings

Broward County Child Care Licensing & Enforcement (CCLE) will be hosting Child Care Provider Meetings. The targeted audience for these meetings are child care personnel. There will be three separate meetings conveying the same information for the convenience of our guests. Check-in will be held thirty minutes prior to the commencement of each event. *In service points will be awarded to Child Care Providers who pre-register and attend.* Topics that will be addressed include the following:

- **65C-22 Florida Administrative Code Updates**
- **School Readiness**
- **Safe Sleep Environment / Broward County Child Care Ordinance Updates**

Please note, immediately following each presentation, there will be a limited number of computers that can be reserved to take the newly required CCLE approved safe sleep course called **the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) - Reducing the Risk of SIDS and SUID in Early Education and Child Care**. This course is <u>free</u> and <u>accessible</u> <u>on-line</u> at https://shop.aap.org/reducing-the-risk-of-sids-and-suid-in-early-education-and-child-care/

The successful completion of the course will be required by all child care personnel who provide care to infants. Reserving a computer will be required if you choose to take the course immediately following the presentation.

Schedule of Child Care Provider Meetings for Facilities

Date/Time: **Tuesday, March 27, 2018 at 12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**
Location: **Broward County Main Library**
100 S. Andrews Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301
Register online for the presentation at http://conta.cc/2InzQCA – March 27, 2018 (12:30 – 3 p.m.)
Register online to Reserve a Computer at http://conta.cc/2p87I44 (3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Date/Time: **Monday, April 2, 2018 at 9 a.m. -11:30 a.m.**
Location: **North Regional Library on Broward College Campus**
1100 Coconut Creek Blvd.
Coconut Creek, FL 33066
Register online for the presentation at http://conta.cc/2FFi5Nn - April 2, 2018 (9:00– 11:30 a.m.)
Register online to Reserve a Computer at http://conta.cc/2HwZW4O (12:30 – 2:00 p.m.)

Date/Time: **Friday, April 27, 2018 at 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**
Location: **African American Research Library**
2650 Sistrunk Blvd.
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311
Register online for the presentation at http://conta.cc/2IqwFKI – April 27, 2018 (10:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.)
Register online to Reserve a Computer at http://conta.cc/2Is8Jq7 (1:30 – 3:00 p.m.)

If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact Deborah A. Hosey, Human Services Administrator of Child Care Licensing & Enforcement, at 954-357-4800 or by email at dmeidingerhosey@broward.org or Luisa Reiter, Child Care Supervisor at lreiter@broward.org.

We look forward to seeing you at these important meetings!

Our Best.
BROWARD COUNTY
Nothing Less.