The Children's Movement of Florida



Early Childhood **Impacts Florida's Future**

Key facts every leader should know

A child's brain is

85%

of its adult size by age 3
—making the first three years a critical window for building the foundation for lifelong learning, health, and success.

68%

of Florida children under age five live in homes where all adults work.
Parents need child care to join and stay in the workforce.

75%

of children who start kindergarten behind never catch up. This shows up in 3rd grade reading and beyond.

When children have the support they need in their first five years, they are more likely to **succeed in school, contribute to the workforce, and strengthen our communities**.

FLORIDA INVESTS NEARLY

$1.6 billion

annually in early learning through state, federal, and local dollars. **Yet many families still struggle to access affordable care.**

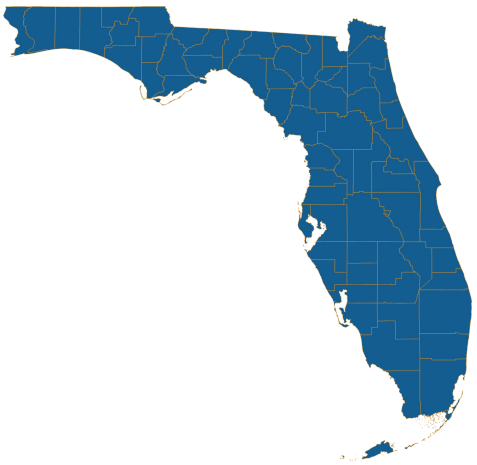
Strong foundations. Brighter futures.



Strong Families + Quality Early Learning + Healthy Children = Kindergarten Ready Children

Children & Families Snapshot

Florida



Statewide data

1,154,060
Children under age 5 (2026 estimate)

70%
of children under age five live in homes where all adults work

$74,568
Median household income

$14,230
Average annual cost of center-based infant care

CHILD CARE ACCESS



Only 87% of children under 5 have a licensed child care slot available.

Early Learning Options

- Child care centers
- Family child care homes
- School-based early learning programs
- Head Start and Early Head Start

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

SCHOOL READINESS (SR)

33%

of potentially eligible families receive early learning tuition assistance

VOLUNTARY PRE-KINDERGARTEN (VPK)

66%

of 4-year-olds participated in VPK

OUTCOMES THAT MATTER

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

44%

of children are ready for kindergarten

3RD GRADE READING SCORES

60%

of children scoring at or above grade level

2030 Goal: 100%

The Children's Movement of Florida is a nonprofit, nonpartisan movement of Floridians advocating for the policies and investments that help each child in Florida thrive in their first five years.

LEARN MORE & CONNECT

ChildrensMovementFlorida.org

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Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2020-24 ACS), Florida Department of Children and Families (School Readiness Data Portal), Florida Department of Education (VPK Data Portal & Kindergarten Readiness Dashboard, 3rd Grade ELA FSA). Florida Market Rate Survey 2024

Data reflects most recent available as of May 2025.