



If you have a child who will soon be 4 years old, then you know how curious she is or how much he may already know. VPK is a free educational program that helps your child be ready for kindergarten. VPK helps build a strong foundation for school using educational materials appropriate for different stages in your child's development.

### What are the eligibility requirements for VPK?

Children must live in Florida and be 4 years old on or before Sept. 1 of the current year to be eligible. If their birthday falls from Feb. 2 through Sept. 1, you may wait to enroll your child the following year when they're 5.

### How do I apply for VPK?

You can apply online from a computer, mobile phone or other digital device by visiting [www.familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com](http://www.familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com). You will need an email address, proof of Florida residency and proof of your child's age to apply.

Your local early learning coalition will review your application and email you with further instructions. Once your application is approved, the coalition will provide you with a Certificate of Eligibility you can take to any VPK provider.

### Prekindergarten Matters

Research shows children who participate in high-quality prekindergarten programs<sup>1</sup>



Are better prepared for school.



Perform better on standardized tests.



Have better school attendance rates.



Develop lifelong social and emotional skills.



Are less likely to drop out of school.

<sup>1</sup> Source: The Center for Public Education

# Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program

## Fact Sheet for Families

### What kind of VPK programs are there?

Private, public and charter schools, private child care centers and specialized instructional services providers may offer VPK.

As a parent, you can choose one of the following:

**School-year program**—540 instructional hours. Class sizes of 20 or fewer students. At a minimum, instructors must hold a *Birth through Five Florida Child Care Professional Credential* and complete special training on early literacy and performance standards.

**Summer program**—300 hours of instruction. Class sizes of 12 or less. Instructors must hold a bachelor's degree.

**Specialized Instructional Services program**—hours vary based on services provided. For

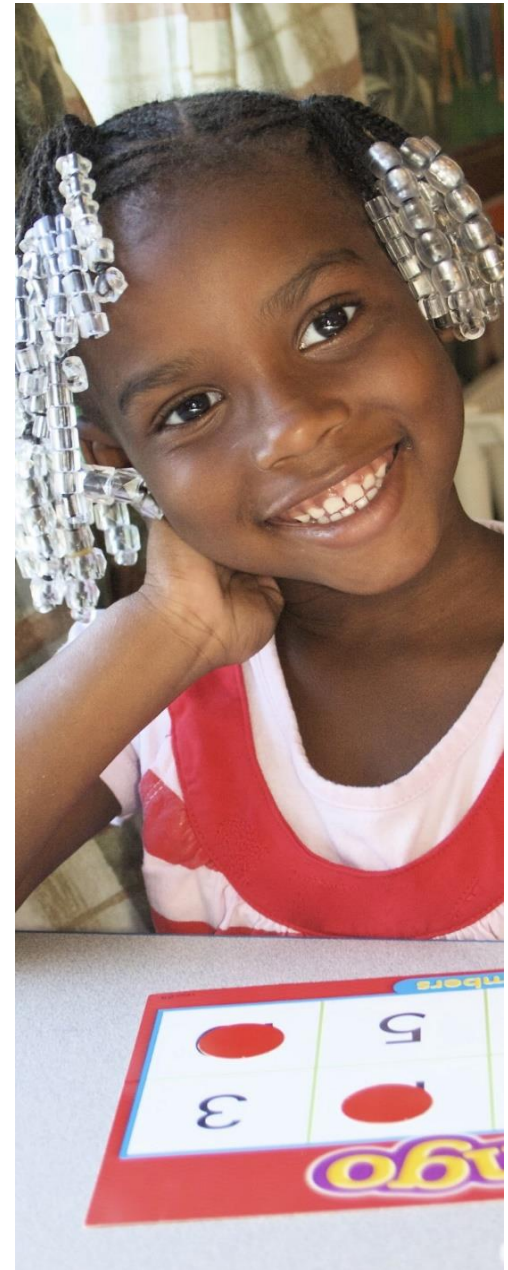
children with disabilities who have current individual educational plans (IEP) developed by local school districts.

### How do I find a VPK provider for my child?

-Contact your local early learning coalition. You will find a map of all 30 coalitions in Florida on the Office of Early Learning website at [www.floridaearlylearning.com](http://www.floridaearlylearning.com).

-Visit the Department of Children and Families website at [www.cares.myflfamilies.com/PublicSearch](http://www.cares.myflfamilies.com/PublicSearch) to view various provider profiles.

-Call your local Child Care Resource and Referral office to receive a customized list of VPK providers. For the number of your local office, you may call the Office of Early Learning toll-free at 1-866-357-3239 (TTY: 711).



VPK emphasizes quality learning from qualified instructors using developmentally appropriate materials.



In the 2018-2019 program, 75 percent of 4-year-olds in Florida attended VPK.



Florida is a national leader in prekindergarten access.



Around 6,452 private, public and charter schools and private child care centers offer VPK.



Kindergarten screenings show that children who complete VPK are more prepared for kindergarten than those who do not.

