



Early Education Connections:

Helpful Connections for Parents



Publicly Supported Early Childhood Development Programs

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CCAP)

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) helps low-income families to pay for child care while working or attending school or training and is administered through the Department of Children and Family Services.

Monthly payments are based on the number of hours the parents work or attend school or training, as well as the amount charged by the child care provider, family size and household income. Parents can select any Class A child care center, school-based before and after school program, licensed child care center determined by the Department of Defense, registered Family child Day Care Home, or In-Home provider that is active in the CCAP provider directory.

For additional information and to apply for child care assistance, please follow the link or contact the department below:

<http://www.dss.louisiana.gov/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&nid=169&pnid=0&pid=300>

DCFS Customer Service Center: 1-888-524-3578
627 N. Fourth Street Baton Rouge, LA 70802

QUALITY START CHILD CARE RATING SYSTEM

As parents, you want the very best for your children. That's what Quality Start is all about. A Quality Start member child care center is a center that is among the finest in the state. Quality Start is a voluntary program for licensed child care centers, designed to recognize, support, and increase the quality of child care throughout Louisiana. Participating centers can earn up to five stars. Quality Start also offers training and incentives to child care providers to help increase their rating. Important new quarterly bonuses and tax credits are also available to parents who choose a Quality Start center.

Where Can I Get More Information?

- Contact the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services - Child Development and Early Learning Section at (225) 342-0694 or 1-800-680-9098.
- To find the Child Care Resource and Referral agency in your region see *Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies* listing at the end of this document.

HEAD START

Head Start is a federal program that promotes the school readiness of children ages birth to five from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Head Start programs provide a learning environment that supports children's growth in the following domains: language and literacy; cognition and general knowledge; physical development and health; social and emotional development; and approaches to learning.

Head Start serves preschool-age children and their families. Many Head Start programs also provide Early Head Start, which serves infants, toddlers, pregnant women and their families who have incomes below the federal poverty level.

Head Start programs offer a variety of service models, depending on the needs of the local community. Programs may be based in:

- centers or schools that children attend for part-day or full-day services;
- family child care homes; and/or
- children's own homes, where a staff person visits once a week to provide services to the child and family. Children and families who receive home-based services gather periodically with other enrolled families for a group learning experience facilitated by Head Start staff.

To find and apply to a Head Start program in your area, please follow the link below or contact the administrators below:

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>

Kahree Wahid, *Director*
Office (225)342-1292
Cell (225)571-7242
kwahid@la.gov

Eugenia Lenore, *Assistant to the Director*
(225)342-1290
eugenia.lenore@la.gov

State Supported Pre-K Programs

THE NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (NSECD)

Established in 2001, the Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development Program (NSECD) provides tuition reimbursements to parents who send their children to state-approved private preschools.

To qualify, families must meet the income requirement, which is 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The program is open to students statewide and serves about 1,000 students annually.

The NSECD programs offer at least 6 hours of regular instruction per day, with up to 4 hours of before- and after-school care. <http://www.doe.state.la.us/offices/literacy/childhood.html>

- Petrouchka Moise, *Program Director*
225-342-0425
petrouchka.moise@la.gov

CECIL J. PICARD LA4 EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

As Louisiana's largest preschool program, the Cecil J. Picard LA4 Early Childhood Program provides economically disadvantaged children with early childhood education during a six-hour-a-day program and before- and after-school enrichment.

The program, established in 2001, is offered in nearly all school districts and several independent public charter schools.

Four-year-olds who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch are eligible to attend the program, although children from families with higher incomes are also eligible, using district-provided funds or paying tuition.

The LA4 program has consistently been shown to be effective at making a positive impact on the academic success of our at-risk students. In fact, students typically enter the LA4 program start with standardized test scores below the 10th percentile in language and math skills, but upon completing the program their skills jump to the 50th percentile. Since the program's inception, enrollment has increased eight fold.

While the LA4 program is Louisiana's main preschool program, school districts can also use other funding sources, such as Title I funds or other district resources to fund preK classes.



THE 8(G) STUDENT ENHANCEMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

The 8(g) Student Enhancement Block Grant Program preschool program was established in 1993 to serve students who are at risk of not being prepared for Kindergarten. Priority is given to students from economically disadvantaged families. More than 3,000 students are annually served by the program.

8g is part of the Louisiana Quality Education Support Fund established in 1986, administered by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).

*Contact your local school district to obtain more information about district sponsored preschool in your area and to obtain an application.
For more information on state programs, call toll free (877) 453-2721.*

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- Mary Louise Jones, Ph.D. *Director, Early Childhood*
(225)342-0576
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State-wide Resource & Referral for Parents

CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL AGENCIES

This statewide network can assist parents in locating child care in their region and provide guidance in many areas of child development and well-being.

Region	Agency
Region 1 Orleans	Agenda for Children/Child Care Resources 1-800-486-1712 or 1-504-586-8509 Fax: 504-586-8522
Region 2 Baton Rouge	VOA/Partnerships in Child Care 1-888-926-8005 or 1-225-926-8005 Fax: 225-926-8023
Region 3 Covington	Agenda for Children/Child Care Resources 1-800-486-1712 or 1-504-586-8509 Fax: 504-586-8522
Region 4 Thibodaux	Agenda for Children/Child Care Resources 1-800-577-8052 or 1-985-446-8330 Fax: 985-446-8255
Region 5 Lafayette	The First Three Years 1-337-332-8551 or 1-866-374-9460 Fax: 337-332-0310
Regions 6 Lake Charles	The First Three Years 1-337-332-8551 or 1-866-374-9460 Fax: 337-332-0310
Region 7 Alexandria	NSU Child and Family Network 1-800-796-9080 or 1-318- 484-2184, ext 117 Fax: (318) 487-5953
Region 8 Shreveport	NSU Child and Family Network 1-800-796-9080 or 1-318-677-3150 Fax: (318) 677-316
Region 9 Monroe	Child Care Connections 1-877-206-0819 or 1-318-323-4522 Fax: 318-323-1150

