



# School Readiness Coalition Of Sarasota County, Inc.

## *Newsletter*

### *April 2003*

***Hello to all providers!***

*It was requested that the Coalition create and distribute a monthly newsletter to keep providers informed of the activities of the School Readiness Coalition. So here is the first one!*

One of the goals for the coalition is to be more directly involved with the childcare providers. We have started to hold a ***series Provider Focus Groups*** to hear your concerns and to find out how the Coalition can further assist you in your efforts to educate and care for young children. We hope to develop a working committee focused on provider issues. We had the first meeting last month in Venice. **The next Provider meeting will be later this month on April 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM at The Landings, Blue Awning Building, Room 101. This is at the School Board Complex, 1960 Landings Blvd.** We will provide light refreshments. All providers are welcome to attend! Please join us there!

#### **Other news:**

We are in the process of **recruiting a new Faith Based provider representative** to serve on the coalition. The current representative, Nancy Lindsley, of First Presbyterian Church, is leaving her position in June. We have sent a separate mailing to all Faith Based providers with an application for coalition membership. If you or anyone you know could serve in this capacity, please let us know!

**The coalition has some funds available for quality related activities.** These funds must be used for activities that are geared toward improving the quality of your center. For example, activities used for staff training and development, the purchase of equipment and materials, items needed to work toward accreditation all qualify for these funds. We have included with this newsletter an application format to be used to request these funds. If you have accepted school readiness scholarship children this year and have not had any licensing violations during the past two years, you can apply for these funds. You must submit this request no later than May 2, 2003 to be eligible for these funds. (Please note, however, if you have already submitted a request for a mini grant through the YMCA for this year, you are not eligible for these funds. The coalition will assist the YMCA in funding those requests).

**The School Readiness Coalition has sponsored a pilot project this year** to ensure that children in need of therapeutic services can receive them and that the providers can receive support in working effectively with these children. The project has many components designed to work together. It starts with the ASQ's that you all are doing in conjunction with the YMCA staff that are crucial in identifying concerns early on. It continues with the services coordinated by Children's Development Services, which is actually a collaboration of CDC, Easter Seals and Children's Therapy Works. Everyone in turn, coordinates and collaborates with EIP and FDLERS. Everyone working together ensures that the child gets the services, and that you, the providers get the support you need. The project is still fairly new and we are looking at ways to improve the service. Please feel free to let us know what else is needed.