Finding a Quality Child Care Provider
in Hillsborough County

STEP 1: Get a list of quality providers near you. <u>For relative/nonrelative caregivers:</u> make an appointment for intake with the School Readiness Office. <u>For foster parents:</u> call the Child Care Resource and Referral Line (813-744-8942).

These sources can give a list of providers with the quality characteristics you ask for.

- Give the requested information so they can match your needs with their list of providers. Then, ask:

  - ☐ Are there any providers near me that are:
    - Gold Seal Accredited?
    - Quality Counts for Kids?
    - Head Start/Early Head Start?
  - ☐ Are there any providers near me that have received training in teaching children with challenging behaviors?
  - ☐ Do any of the providers near me have teachers with at least an associate's degree in early childhood education?

STEP 2: Call the providers on your list. Ask if they have an opening for your child and what additional fees (i.e. registration fees) they charge above the School Readiness parent fee.

STEP 3: Visit the providers and complete the quality checklist. Given by School Readiness, or access it here: http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/sites/www/Uploads/files/Parents/QualityCheckList_ENG.pdf

STEP 4: Check for licensing violations and abuse reports at: 3152 Clay Mangum Ln., Tampa 33618. Or, view some licensing records online at: http://sanswrite.hillsboroughcounty.org/public/

STEP 5: Choose a provider. <u>For relative/nonrelative caregivers:</u> enroll your student through the School Readiness Office. <u>For foster</u>

*If you have trouble finding a provider or getting services for your child, please contact the School Readiness Office at 813-744-8941.

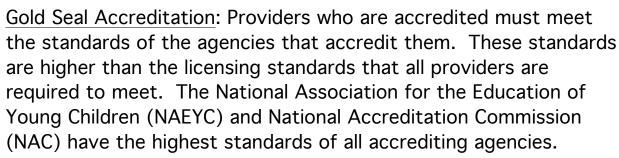parents: find enrollment info on http://earlychildhood.mysdhc.org/foster-parents or call: (813) 744-8941 ext. 272 or 254.

STAY INFORMED!

Talk to your child's teacher regularly. Ask them:
- ☐ Is my child on track developmentally?
- ☐ Are there recent screenings or assessments to discuss with me?
- ☐ Is there anything I can do at home to help my child?
- ☐ Are there services you think my child needs?

QUALITY CHILD CARE PROGRAMS IN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Gold Seal Accreditation: Providers who are accredited must meet the standards of the agencies that accredit them. These standards are higher than the licensing standards that all providers are required to meet. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and National Accreditation Commission (NAC) have the highest standards of all accrediting agencies.
- ☐ For more information, go here: http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/goldseal

Quality Counts for Kids Program: Providers who choose to participate are committed to improving the quality of their program and are supported in doing so. The providers who participate are given 1 – 5 stars based on their quality, with 5 being the best.
- ☐ Go here: http://www.elchc.org/quality_counts.html
- ☐ Click on: "QCFK Participating Providers" link (on the right side)

Head Start: A comprehensive provider of quality early education for 3-5 year old children. NOTE: requires an application instead of going through School Readiness.

- [ ] For full day, full year providers, go here:
  http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?nid=283
  - Click on: "Locations"
  - Or, call: 813-272-5140
- [ ] For providers that follow the school day and calendar, go here: http://headstart.mysdhc.org/
  - Click on: "Sites" (On the top of the screen)
  - Or, call: 813-740-7870

Early Head Start: A comprehensive provider of quality early education for children from zero up to their third birthday. NOTE: requires an application prior to their second birthday instead of going through School Readiness.
- [ ] For center-based and family childcare home providers, go here:
  - http://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/index.aspx?nid=283
  - Click on: "Locations"
  - Or, call: 813-272-5140