



Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast

Serving Citrus – Dixie – Gilchrist – Levy – Sumter Counties

Provider Alert #83

Date: May 12, 2010
Subject: Rilya Wilson Act Reporting

In 2003, the Rilya Wilson Act was passed into law. The law recognizes the need to protect children ages three to five who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or abandonment through the reporting of absences (1 day unexcused, 7 consecutive days unexcused) from mandated attendance in licensed early education or child care programs. A memo from Eleanor Sobel, (Florida's House of Representatives) dated 09-29-2003 indicated that it was never the legislative intent to exclude children aged from birth to three years of age in the reporting requirements.

The Rilya Wilson legislation requires coordination by Department of Children and Families and its sub-contracted agencies (e.g. KCI, The Centers, Partnership for Strong Families) with local Early Learning Coalitions and licensed early education or child care providers. Reporting in the Nature Coast service area has historically occurred via direct contact between the School Readiness provider and the child's referring agency caseworker, by telephone (excluding voice mail) and/or fax.

When the Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast took eligibility services in-house in June 2009, Rilya Wilson fax reporting forms were created for Citrus/Sumter Counties (ELCNC-205) and Dixie/Gilchrist/Levy Counties (ELCNC-222). Effective immediately, ELCNC-205 and ELCNC-222 are WITHDRAWN. It is recognized that reporting of Rilya Wilson absences occurs directly between the School Readiness provider and the referring agency. ELCNC-205 and ELCNC-222 have been replaced on the Coalition's website (www.elc-naturecoast.org) with SAMPLE reporting forms. School Readiness providers are encouraged to develop their own forms for Rilya Wilson absence reporting.

Please note that The Rilya Wilson Act (f.s.39.604) requires School Readiness providers to report any unexcused absence by the end of the business day following an unexcused absence or seventh consecutive excused absence, for children under this category of care.

The Early Learning Coalition of the Nature Coast recommends provider reporting responsibilities (outlined in brief above) are applied to any child enrolled, in a family with a child/children aged three to five years and under protective services. For example, if the family has one child age four under the Rilya Wilson Act, and also has a school-age child and an infant, it is recommended that the absences of ALL children in the family be reported according to the procedures for Rilya Wilson reporting.

The sample Rilya Wilson Absence Reporting forms referenced in this Provider Alert are attached. Please note that they contain current referring agency DISTRICT SPECIFIC fax numbers. Providers are responsible for verifying the fax number with the referring agency, prior to submitting an absence report.

Further information in regard to Rilya Wilson absence reporting will be shared at the upcoming Provider Retreat (June 24, 2010).

If you have questions in reference to this Provider Alert, please contact the Client Services Manager for your area: Citrus County (352) 563-9939 x238, Dixie/Gilchrist/Levy Counties (352) 490-5855 x410, and Sumter County (352) 793-5430 x313.