



Guadalupe Center earned a five-star rating from the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida, and 94 percent of its students meet or exceed kindergarten readiness measures. Pictured from left to right are 2018 pre-kindergarten graduates Ruben Valdez, Abraham Romero, Malik Johnson, Noah Ponce and Luis Gamez.

Guadalupe Center earns five-star rating from Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida

NAPLES, Fla. (Aug. 15, 2018) – Guadalupe Center again has earned a five-star rating from the Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida, an assessment signifying the Immokalee center is offering a safe, high-quality learning environment for children.

The coalition's Southwest Florida Stars program is a voluntary rating system, much like an accreditation, that evaluates childcare providers in Collier, Lee, Hendry and Glades counties through on-site visits and data collections.

“Guadalupe Center is the only preschool in Collier County to earn a five-star rating for four consecutive years,” said Dawn Montecalvo, Guadalupe Center president. “A strong early childhood education program sets students up for success once they reach elementary school, and we’re extremely proud of the fact that 94 percent of our students meet or exceed kindergarten readiness standards.”

Guadalupe Center, which has a mission of overcoming poverty through education for the children of Immokalee, is among just a handful of Southwest Florida providers to earn a five-star rating in 2018. According to the Florida Department of Children and Families, there are 654 registered providers operating in Southwest Florida, although not all pursue ratings through the Early Learning Coalition.

The Early Learning Coalition evaluates childcare centers in six primary areas: health and safety; professional development and staff qualifications; learning environment and classroom interactions; screening, assessment and curriculum; family and community relationships; and professional responsibility. Rating teams visit each site and evaluate data to formulate results.

The five-star rating enables Guadalupe Center faculty to take advantage of free specialized training, personalized support, access to educational scholarships, discounts on continuing education courses and memberships to professional organizations.

“The Southwest Florida Stars top rating is earned by child care providers who voluntarily demonstrate a commitment to excellence in their services to children and families,” said Susan Block, the Coalition’s chief executive officer. “Participation in this quality improvement and rating system assures distinctive care and education for children, family support and engagement, and an overall commitment to knowledgeable, informed programming. Programs that strive to achieve the five-star rating are to be commended for their dedication to the profession.”

Guadalupe Center has 307 children from infancy through 5 years old in its Early Childhood Education Program, which includes The Martin Family Foundation Campus at Lake Trafford Elementary School, and has a waiting list that exceeds 500 children. The newly expanded SmartStart Program also provides weekly services for 50 children under the age of 3, along with their families.

About Guadalupe Center

[Guadalupe Center](#) is a purpose-driven, nonprofit organization with proven results in creating endless possibilities for the students of Immokalee through education and fostering personal and academic success that leads to economic independence. With a focus on breaking the cycle of poverty through education, Guadalupe Center is proud of the children's accomplishments: 94 percent meet or exceed kindergarten readiness measures, 100 percent of Tutor Corps high school seniors graduate high school and are accepted into college, and more than 90 percent graduate with a post-secondary degree.