



Early Learning Coalition of Brevard County, Inc. Press Release
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The Early Learning Coalition of Brevard Receives \$1,000 Grant from LongHorn Steakhouse to Provide Supportive Books for Children Experiencing Trauma

The Early Learning Coalition of Brevard today announced it has been selected by the LongHorn Steakhouse in Viera, FL to receive a \$1,000 grant as part of the Restaurant Community Grants program from the [Darden Restaurants Foundation](#), the charitable arm of Darden Restaurants. The annual grants program empowers each of the LongHorn Steakhouse locations to help award a \$1,000 grant to support local community programs. The donation will enable the Early Learning Coalition of Brevard to purchase age-appropriate books that will be provided to children receiving services from the Early Learning Coalition who are residing in foster care, homeless shelters and who have otherwise experienced trauma in their childhood. The books will focus on helping children identify the emotions they are experiencing and easing the transition to a new family or home.

“We are honored to partner with the Darden Restaurants Foundation in this meaningful way. The number of children referred to our organization who are experiencing significant childhood trauma is increasing,” said Sky Beard, Executive Director of the Early Learning Coalition of Brevard. “These books will specifically address the emotions that children are feeling and will not only provide comfort and normalize their emotions, but will also provide an opportunity for the children to talk openly about their feelings which is often difficult to do at such a young age.”

“We’re proud to be able to support the Early Learning Coalition of Brevard through our Restaurant Community Grants program,” said Stephanie Ghertner, Director of the Darden Foundation. “Our team members are incredibly passionate about getting involved in their local communities, and this program enables them to do just that.”

About the Early Learning Coalition of Brevard County, Inc.

The Early Learning Coalition of Brevard serves 3,700 children a month through the School Readiness program which provides assistance with the high cost of quality child care for low- income working families. While families work towards self-sufficiency, their children have access to early childhood education programs which prepare them for future school success. An additional 1,200 children are on the waiting list for such services. ELC also administers the Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) program

which provides access to early learning programs to 4,500 Brevard County 4-year-olds. Through a network of 180 contracted early learning providers, educational services are provided to Brevard's youngest learners to prepare them for future school success. For additional information on the Early Learning Coalition of Brevard please visit www.elcbrevard.org.

The Darden Foundation

The Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation is the charitable arm of Darden Restaurants, Inc. The Darden Foundation's mission is to maintain a spirit of service and community engagement as defining characteristics of Darden's family of restaurants – Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52, The Capital Grille, Eddie V's and Yard House. Since 1995, the Darden Foundation has awarded more than \$71 million in grants to leading nonprofit organizations that align with its mission and community priorities: Recipe for Success[®], Preservation of Natural Resources and Good Neighbor grants. Through the Darden Harvest program, Darden Restaurants has also donated more than 77 million pounds of food to hunger relief agencies across the U.S. and Canada. In 2011, the Darden Foundation introduced the Restaurant Community Grants program that is dedicated to supporting local nonprofit organizations in the hundreds of communities where we live and serve. For more information, please visit www.dardenfoundation.com.

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