

Early Childhood Court (ECC)

What is ECC?

Early Childhood Court (ECC), also referred to as "Baby Court," is a problem-solving court that serves children under the age of three who are involved in the child welfare system. The goal of ECC is to improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for infants and toddlers. This is done by addressing multigenerational trauma while considering brain science as it relates to the growth of young children.



The ECC approach has a core team that works together and collaborates with families to address the needs of each family. The court team can include community providers, child welfare professionals, mental health therapists, substance abuse providers, caregivers, parents, parent attorneys, and GAL. At the center of the ECC approach is Judicial leadership which creates a specialized docket to review each case and family monthly. Additionally, the Coordinator acts as a neutral party, arranges monthly Family Team Meetings, assists in connecting to services, and explores community resources.



[Hope and Healing Florida's Early Childhood Courts: Hope and Healing 21-min - YouTube](#)

[ECC Florida Training & Webinars Early Childhood Courts - Florida Courts \(flcourts.org\)](#)

[CPEIP \(fsu.edu\)](#)

[Florida Best Practice Standards Early Childhood Court Best Practice Standards.pdf \(flcourts.org\)](#)

Fourteenth Judicial Circuit Court Team:



Magistrate Shannon Lord: Presides over ECC cases in Bay, Jackson, Calhoun, Washington, Gulf, and Holmes Counties



Crystal Ebersole: Early Childhood Court Program Coordinator for Circuit 14