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June Parent Link



"My father didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it."

-- Clarence Budington Kelland

Too often the fathers in our community are overlooked because traditional views on parenting favor a mother as the primary caregiver.

Our work in early care and education has given us a front row seat into the everyday lives of some of the thousands of parents - including mothers and fathers - who work hard to provide the best for their child.

This Father's Day, we salute all the Dads who are helping to make a difference in their child's life.

Happy Father's Day!

*Evelio Torres, President & CEO
Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
www.elcmdm.org*

Major Victory for Children on Florida Medicaid Suffering from Autism Disorders

By: Monica Vignes-Pitan, Esq., Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc.

On March 26, 2012, U.S. District Judge Joan Lenard ordered the State of Florida to cover Applied Behavior Analysis for all children enrolled in Medicaid who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is an effective therapy for the behavioral problems associated with autism. The case was brought on behalf of three children enrolled in Medicaid who needed ABA therapy to treat their severe behavioral problems due to Autism. They were represented by attorneys from Legal Services of Greater

[Resource and Referral](#)

[The Children's Trust](#)
[United Way of Miami-Dade](#)
[Miami-Dade Parks & Recreation](#)
[Miami-Dade Public Library System](#)
[Miami-Dade County Public Schools](#)

[The Parent Academy](#)
[Legal Services of Greater Miami](#)



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Miami, Inc., Florida Legal Services and Alderman & Kodsi.

If parents have questions about getting ABA for their children, they should speak with their child's doctor. If the doctor determines that ABA is medically necessary, the doctor should complete the required prior authorization form.

The completed form and required supporting medical records should be submitted to their local Medicaid office. For Miami-Dade and Monroe, the office is located at 8333 NW 53 Street, Suite 200, Doral, Florida 33166, and the phone number is 305-593-3000.

Once Medicaid processes the request, the parent will receive a letter either approving or denying the therapy. If approved, the parent will receive a letter with instructions to contact the local Medicaid office for a list of ABA providers. If denied, the parent has a right to file an appeal of the denial.

Families that are having difficulty accessing therapy or need legal representation in appealing a denial of ABA, should contact Legal Services of Greater Miami, Inc., for information on free legal assistance at 305-576-0080.

Teething Relief Gel May Cause Harm to Children Under Two Years Old

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has warned parents against the use of **benzocaine**, a local anesthetic found in over-the-counter products such as Anbesol, Orajel, Baby Orajel and other mouth and gum pain gels and liquids.

"Benzocaine gels and liquids for mouth and gum pain can lead to a rare but serious, and sometimes fatal, condition called methemoglobinemia, a disorder in which the amount of oxygen carried through the blood stream is greatly reduced," stated the FDA.

They advise children under the age of 2 should not use benzocaine unless supervised by the family physician.

"Symptoms can occur within minutes to hours after benzocaine use," said Mary Ghods, an FDA pharmacist. "They can occur after using the drug for the first time, as well as after several uses."

For the complete article, [click here](#).

Reference:

Drug Store News: FDA warns parents on using benzocaine to relieve pain of teething babies- <http://www.drugstorenews.com/article/fda-warns-parents-using-benzocaine-relieve-pain-teething-babies?ad=regulatory-and-washington>

Checklist for Selecting Your Child's Summer

Camp

Summer Camp Checklist

(Provided by *Bright Horizons Family Solutions*)

Keep this checklist on hand as you search for a suitable summer camp for your child.

Application Process

- What is the camp schedule?
- What are the hours of operation?
- What are the camp's opening and closing dates?

Tuition and Fees

- What is the tuition and registration fee?
- Are scholarships available?
- How and when is tuition paid? By week, month, or session?

Health and Safety

- Who licenses the camp? Is the license current?
- How does the camp accommodate children who have special needs, such as asthma, diabetes, or allergies?
- If transportation is involved, what vehicles are used and how often are they inspected?
- Who drives the vehicles and what training do drivers have?

Environment

- Where do the children leave their belongings?
- Is the environment secure to prevent children from leaving or strangers from entering?
- Are there adequate supplies and equipment?

Meals

- Are lunches provided by the day camp?
- Are snacks provided during the day? What kind and when?
- Are special meals available for children with allergies or special needs?

For more information on Bright Horizons Family Solutions, visit www.brighthorizons.com/.



News and Updates: Early Learning Information System

Over the next 12 months, the **Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe** will undergo a transition from its current computer system to a new and innovative technology, called the **Early Learning Information System** or **ELIS**, which will become the new statewide computer



system used by Florida's Office of Early Learning and all 31 Early Learning Coalitions.

ELIS will replace the Enhanced Field System (EFS), the state's current computer system. ELIS will have a direct impact on your child's early care and education - including registration for Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) and getting information about child care centers near your residence.

During the transition to ELIS, the ELC will keep parents informed of the latest developments regarding ELIS.

Other benefits and key factors about the ELIS implementation:

- ELIS will be used to administer a \$1.1 billion early learning budget where currently no interconnected technology system exists
- In a feasibility study completed in December 2008, a third-party vendor estimated a cost savings of more than \$20 million per year due to enhanced efficiencies in program operations
- The \$20-plus million a year in cost savings could potentially be used to fund an additional 7,000 children each year in the School Readiness program
- ELIS will streamline administrative processes including attendance tracking, eligibility processing, and provider payments
- ELIS will reduce potential fraud and overpayments
- ELIS will provide data sharing capabilities between educators, parents, providers, and state agencies
- ELIS will provide parents with easy online access to Child Care Resource and Referral services, as well as a wealth of information on child development and early education.

For more information, please visit the Office of Early Learning's [website](#).

**Source: Florida's Office of Early Learning:*

http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/_SysDev_ELIS.html

Read to Learn Book Club Offers Free Books to 3-Year-Old Children in Miami-Dade County



All 3-year-old children who live in Miami-Dade County are eligible to receive a free book each month through The Children's Trust **Read to Learn Book Club**.

When registering for the Book Club, children will receive

books in the mail each month for one year of fun and learning.

"No child should want for a book in Miami-Dade County, and this book club is just one tool in the comprehensive Read to Learn strategic plan," Modesto E. Abety-Gutierrez, president and CEO of The Children's Trust, said in a statement.

The Read to Learn Book Club is funded and administered by The Children's Trust, the Miami-Dade Family Learning Partnership and the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe.

Read to Learn is a community-wide initiative with the goal that all children read at or above grade level by the third grade.

To register a child for the Book Club, complete the online [registration form here](#).

For more information about the Read to Learn Book Club, click [here](#).

Readers Encouraged to Send Questions to Ask Dr. Hughes, ELC's Child Development Expert

Each month in the *Parent Link*, Christine Hughes, Ph.D., a research and evaluation analyst for the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe will answer your questions about child development (from birth to 5-years-old) on a variety of topics, such as language, social skills, play, behavior, motor skills, learning habits, and more.

Dr. Hughes earned her B.A. in psychology from the University of Miami, where she currently teaches part-time. Her research has focused on the development of at-risk infants and children in early intervention.

Please email your questions to info@elcmdm.org with *Ask Dr. Hughes* in the subject line. Also, include the city or location of your residence in Miami-Dade or Monroe County (e.g., Coconut Grove, Kendall, Key West).

Please note that questions may be edited, and not every question received will be answered in the newsletter. To protect the privacy of individuals and maintain confidentiality, names will not be printed, but we may refer to individuals by area (for example, "A mother in Miami Beach asked...").

The information provided in this column released by the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, courtesy of Dr. Hughes, is not intended to be used as psychological, mental health or medical evaluation or service.

As laws, details and personal situations vary from person to person and state to state, articles and content contained in the newsletter are not and cannot be used as a substitute for legal, parental, health, mental health, or any other advice.

The column is not intended to be a solicitation of business or the furnishing of self-help advice. Readers are strongly urged

to consult independent and qualified professionals before making any decisions. The views expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe.

ELC and You: 2012 Summer Waves of Learning Initiative

Now that the academic school year is officially over, the **Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe** would like to remind parents and legal guardians of the educational options available to children this summer.

Registration is already underway for many summer programs and there is still space available.

We encourage you to register your child as soon as possible for one of these exciting programs. One of the most talked about is the 2012 Summer Waves of Learning Initiative being offered through Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

The 2012 Summer Waves of Learning Initiative will address the academic needs of students at all grade levels through traditional and virtual learning.

Through the infusion of technology and interactive programming, students will engage in inventive and enjoyable learning experiences at school and at home.

The focus will be on stimulating readiness skills, strengthening reading proficiency, and escalating web-based digital learning.

Launching a new era of continuous learning, this initiative will help to reduce the digital divide while complying with federal and state mandates through research-based curriculum and individualized programs.

For more information and a list of the participating programs, visit <http://summerschool.dadeschools.net/> or call 305-273-2830.

Local Events for the Whole Family!

Fathers & Families Fest

The Fatherhood Task Force of South Florida and other partners are bringing you a free event with interactive activities, sports, building projects and more.

When: Saturday, June 16, 2012

Time: Noon - 5 p.m.

"Fathers for Children" Award Ceremony 3:30 p.m.

Where: University of Miami's Field House

1245 Dauer Drive

Miami, FL 33146

Cost: FREE

For more information, call 305-812-4000 or visit www.FTFSF.com.

Big Truck Weekend at Miami Science Museum

Join Miami Science Museum in celebrating Father's Day for two full days of big truck fun!

When: Saturday June 16, 2012

Sunday, June 17, 2012

Time: Noon - 5 p.m.

Where: Miami Science Museum

Cost: Free admission for fathers. Regular museum for adults and children.

For more information, visit www.miamisci.org.

Free Early Childhood Field Trips at HistoryMiami

FREE field trips are available to 500 local students enrolled in early childhood programs this summer. To participate, visit your early childhood center teacher to learn more.

FREE admission is available only for the first 500 students registered.

For more information, please contact Griselda Chavarria, Education Register, 305-375-1625 or gchavarria@historymiami.org.

Living Well, Living Healed Health Fair & Family Festival

The event will offer educational workshops on employment resources, bullying and violence prevention and more. In addition, food, live demonstration, games, and entertainment.

When: Saturday, June 30, 2012

Time: 10 a.m.

Where: 1895 N.W. 75 St.
Miami, FL 33147

Cost: FREE

For more information, call 305-573-3784 or email destrada@westcare.com.

Old Fashioned Fourth of July Picnic

Kids can make their own kites, toy boats, and paper dolls in order to understand how different children's lives were 100 years ago.

When: July 4, 2012

Time: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Where: The Barnacle Historic State Park
3485 Main Highway
Coconut Grove, FL 33133

Cost: \$5 for adults; \$3 for ages 6 through 11; free for ages 5 and under

For more information call 305-442-6866 or visit <http://www.floridastateparks.org/thebarnacle>.

About the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring high-quality early care and education for children in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Through a variety of affordable and

innovative early education and voluntary pre-kindergarten programs, the Coalition serves more than 50,000 children ages birth to 5-years-old and their families. Founded in 2000, the Early Learning Coalition is among 31 similar organizations in the State of Florida established following the enactment of the School Readiness Act, which consolidated Florida's early learning services into one integrated program. For more information, visit www.elcmdm.org

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