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2012 Sales Tax Holiday, August 3rd through August 5th

It's that time of year again! Florida Law has approved the no sales tax weekend for August 3-5, 2012. The law directs that no sales tax be collected on sales of clothing, footwear, and certain accessories selling for less than \$75. This also applies to certain school supplies selling for \$15 or less. Below are just a few of the items that will be tax free and those that are not.

Note: Books are NOT exempted from tax during the 2012 sales tax holiday

CLOTHING

Tax Exempt

- Wearing apparel
- Handbags
- Ties
- Wallets
- Baby clothes
- Book bags
- Blouses
- Employee uniforms
- All footwear (except roller blades, and skates)



[Miami-Dade Parks & Recreation](#)

[Miami-Dade Public Library System](#)

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[The Parent Academy](#)

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Taxable

- Watches
- Watchbands
- Jewelry
- Umbrellas
- Handkerchiefs
- Sporting equipment

Tax Exempt

- Pens, pencils
- Erasers
- Crayons
- Notebooks
- Notebook filler paper
- Legal pads
- Binders
- Lunch boxes
- Construction paper
- Markers
- Folders
- Poster board
- Composition books
- Poster paper
- Scissors, glue, rulers



Taxable

- Computer paper
- Correction tape, fluid or pens
- Jump drives and flash drives
- Masking tape
- Printer paper
- Staplers
- Staples
- Toner and ink cartridges

For a complete list of tax-exempt and taxable items during tax-free weekend, click [here](#) or visit www.myflorida.com/dor.

To speak with a Department of Revenue representative, call Taxpayer Services, weekdays, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., at 1-800-352-3671.

Reference: *Tax Information Publication-*
<http://dor.myflorida.com/dor/tips/pdf/tip12a01-02.pdf>.

Free Nutritionally Balanced Meals Offered to Children During the Summer Recess

The Miami-Dade Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD) will be providing meals to children at program sites throughout Miami-Dade County, as part of the 2012 Summer Food Service Program.

The program will operate from June 11, 2012 through August 17, 2012. Nutritionally balanced meals will be provided to all children regardless of income, race, color, sex, disability, age, or national origin during summer vacation when school breakfasts and lunches are not available.

All children 18 years old and younger are eligible for meals at no cost. It is the policy of Miami-Dade County that all children will be served without discrimination. The program sites are only approved in geographical areas where 50 percent or more of the children qualify for free and reduced price meals during the school year.



Program sites are located throughout Miami-Dade County in recreational centers, summer camps, churches, and community based organizations that provide services to children during the summer recess.

A list of the participating distribution sites is available to be downloaded from the Miami-Dade County web portal at www.miamidade.gov/socialservices.

For additional information about the Summer Food Program, please contact Ruthe White at (786) 469-4692 or Rani Panchanathan at (786) 469-4789.

Phone App for Baby Milestones and Development

Technology plays an important role in our daily lives, so it is no surprise application developers have created child development and milestone apps for our smart phones. These apps, which may vary from Apple and Android devices, can help you track your child's development from birth to toddler, record and analyze your child's growth, and even connecting with other moms.

Here are some apps you may want to check out:

App Name: Milestone

Developer: Ventio Technologies Inc.

Description: Using Milestone, you can enter the date when your baby achieves a milestone. Rotating your iPhone, you can see a milestone chart with average age ranges. This chart also shows that your baby may reach a milestone earlier or later than the average age shown on this chart. Remember, each child develops differently and this application is mainly for recording your baby's precious moments. If you feel your child is behind in several areas of development, contact your pediatrician for advice.

Phone System: iPhone

Cost: \$1.99

App Name: What to Expect Baby Tracker

Developer: Everyday Health

Description: Between feeding and sleeping sessions (plus the diaper changes that follow), new parents are constantly on the move - and in need of a parenting guide that's on-the-go too. A personalized approach to staying on top of your little one's schedule, getting month-by-month advice on baby care and development, and staying connected with other new mamas.



Phone System: iPhone and Android

Cost: Free

App Name: Right on Track

Developer: Developmental Guide (www.ecctampabay.org)

Description: The Right On Track Child Development Guide was developed by the Early Childhood Council of Hillsborough County, Inc. as a quick and easy to use resource for parents of young children who want to track some of the key milestones that their child(ren) should be reaching at calculated ages. This application calculates your child's age, taking prematurity into account when appropriate. You will then be prompted to view milestones appropriate for the calculated age. In addition, information related to specific developmental concerns will be provided. Observations of these concerns would be worth discussing with your child's pediatrician.

Phone System: Android

Cost: .99 cents

App Name: WebMD Baby

Developer: WebMD

Description: The new WebMD Baby app has quick access to trusted and physician-approved baby health and wellness information anytime, anywhere. Personalized for a baby's specific age, the WebMD Baby app delivers timely physician-approved guidance, helping parents stay informed and one step ahead of their baby's growth and development.

Phone System: iPhone and Android

Cost: Free

Things to keep in mind:

-Apps are constantly being created so check your phone's app store for the latest applications and updates.

-Charges may apply and vary according to your cell phone plan and service. Please review your cell phone plan before downloading any apps to your phone or internet usage.

News and Updates: Summer is Here! Look Before You Lock Your Vehicles

Summer is now in full swing, and we are all surely feeling the heat. Did you know that on a regular sunny day it can reach up to 110 degrees Fahrenheit inside your vehicles?

Young children are at great risk for hyperthermia which can lead to seizures, organ and brain damage, stroke and death.

Never leave children in a parked vehicle, even with partially open windows. No amount of time is okay to leave a child alone in a vehicle.

Here are some tips to prevent such a tragedy:

- When leaving your car, check to be sure everyone is out of the car. Do not overlook any children who have fallen asleep.

- Make a habit of looking inside the vehicle, front and back, before locking the door and walking away.



- Placing your purse, briefcase or something else you need in the back seat so that you will have to check the back seat when you leave the vehicle.

- If you see a child alone in a vehicle, call the police.

For more information on the Early Learning Coalition's *Look Before You Lock* campaign, please visit www.elcmdm.org.

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 Ph.D. 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: VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate Website

The **VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate** website provides information about Florida's **Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program** to VPK providers, parents and other interested parties. The State Board of Education (SBOE) sets the minimum readiness rate for all VPK providers.

Parents can find out the readiness rate for their VPK provider by visiting: <https://vpk.fldoe.org/InfoPages/ReportCriteria.aspx> and searching by provider name or county. The minimum readiness rate for 2010-11 was set at 70 and providers who score 69 or lower are designated Providers on Probation (POP).

Providers on probation are required to submit an improvement plan in order to continue to provide the VPK program. Those who did not submit improvement plans are not eligible to deliver the VPK program for the Fall 2012-13 school year.



If you are concerned that you have selected a provider who may not be eligible to provide VPK or if you think you may have submitted your VPK certificate of eligibility to a provider who is ineligible, please contact Roseline Philippe at extension 222 or rphilippe@elcmdm.org or Jackye Russell at extension 324 or jrussell@elcmdm.org for assistance.

Local Events for the Whole Family!

Starting late July and through August, community organizations and county commissioners will be hosting back-to-school events. Here are some to check out!

Back-to-School Backpack Giveaway

Hosted by Miami-Dade County Commissioner (District 8) Lynda Bell. Backpacks containing school supplies will be given to residents with tickets provided by the commissioner's office. There will also be a Resource Fair with activities for kids to enjoy and a raffle.

When: Saturday, July 28, 2012

Time: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Where: South Dade Park
28151 S.W. 164 Ave.
Miami, FL 33170

Cost: FREE

For more information, call 305-378-6677.

Sixth Annual Fun Day Bookbag Drive and Health Fair

Hosted by Miami-Dade County Commissioner (District 3) Audrey Edmonson. There will be giveaways and information from local organizations.

When: Saturday, August 4, 2012

Time: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Where: Jefferson Reaves Park
3090 N.W. 50 St.
Miami, FL 33142

Cost: FREE

For more information, contact Jessica Lopez, jlopez1@miamidade.gov.

Third Annual Back-to-School Supply Giveaway

ASPIRE To, Inc. will provide the underserved youth of the community with backpacks, school supplies, health screenings, educational materials and more.

When: Saturday, August 11, 2012

Time: 9 a.m.

Where: Liberty Square Community Center
6304 N.W. 14 Ave.
Miami, FL 33147

Cost: FREE

For more information, call Shenetra Mack at 305-742-3564.

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