



Linking Parents to Early Childhood Success

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with us!



Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
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November 2013 Parent Link

ELC and You

Dear Friends,

I can think of no better message for this edition of the news alert than the speech given by Dave Lawrence this month before the Florida Council of 100 in Palm Beach. Dave makes five important points that touch on all the things that we hold dear and can fully support.

It is a profound speech. Please take a few moments to [read it](#) and feel free to share it with your friends. I know you and they will enjoy reading it as much as I did.

Enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday.

Sincerely,

Evelio C. Torres
President & CEO

Luchando por Nuestros Hijos

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe has partnered with the **Advocacy Institute for Children** to engage parents meaningfully in the areas of advocacy, evaluation, program development and outreach.

This initiative is in alignment with the **Parent Leadership Ambassador Training (PLAT)** commissioned by the Florida Office of Early Learning on behalf of the Florida State Advisory Council on Early Education and Care.

One of the most exciting pieces of this initiative is a weekly radio show brought to you by the Early Learning Coalition and The Children's Trust and hosted by Senator Rudy Garcia, who served in the legislature from 1984 to 2010.

"Luchando por Nuestros Hijos" features segments on health, education, child development, safety, family life and much more. I encourage you all to tune in to Univision America on [WQBA 1140 AM](#) each Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. to hear from Senator Garcia and his special guests.

Luchando por Nuestros Hijos

A weekly radio show with Senator **Rudy García**

**Every Tuesday at
11:30AM**



**Children's Health
Education
Safety
Family Life
And much more!**

As parents, let us keep "Luchando por Nuestros Hijos"

Brought to you by:





"When I served in the State Senate, fighting for our children and families in Tallahassee was a key part of my agenda, and it continues to be. Now that I am a father to three children, it's even more important to me." - Senator Rudy Garcia

Important Information about Redetermination Packets

Redetermination packets are sent to families by the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe before their eligibility expiration date. Inside each packet is a **self-addressed (not stamped)** envelope that should be used to mail the packet back to the Early Learning Coalition. Some parents/caregivers have attempted to return these time-sensitive documents without a stamp or with insufficient postage. In some cases, they have tried to reuse the original envelope with the used postage from the ELC.

These packets are either returned to the families as undeliverable or sent to the Dead Mail Facility in Atlanta, GA, by the post office.

Parents/caregivers must add the appropriate amount of postage to the envelope in order for the packet to be delivered to the ELC.

Please note that if families send the packet without postage, with insufficient postage, or with used postage, those packets will not be received by the Early Learning Coalition, and their eligibility will be terminated.

If you would like to print a redetermination packet before your expiration date, please [download it from our website](#). The complete packet can be mailed to the Early Learning Coalition at 2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Suite 500, Coral Gables, FL 33134.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Article Published by the Council for Exceptional Children

Bethany Sands, Director of Inclusion and Assessment for the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, coauthored an article published by the [Council for Exceptional Children](#).

The article, titled "**Patterns of Referral Recommendations for Ethnically Diverse Children in Subsidized Child Care**," stated how important it is for researchers and practitioners to understand how early referral decisions are made in communities and the long-term consequences of an at-risk child being referred (or not) to an agency for evaluation and intervention.

To read the full article, please visit our [website](#).

On the Web: Dr. Toy

Need a little help making developmentally appropriate decisions on children's gifts this holiday season? [Dr. Toy](#) has the answers. Stevanne Auerbach, Ph.D, gives advice as one of the nation's and world's leading experts on play, toys and children's products. Visit this site to find educationally oriented, developmental and skill building products from the companies.



From the Desk of Dr. Hughes

Each month in Parent Link, Christine Hughes, Ph.D, Director of Research and Evaluation for the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe will offer insight 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. Her research has focused on the development of at-risk infants and children in early intervention.

Holidays: A Time to Be Thankful

Holidays for several major religions are coming up soon, as is Thanksgiving. As we gather together with our families to celebrate and observe the traditions that are important to us, we should also think about how we can incorporate our young children into these events.

One idea central to every religion around the world, and one that the focus of the Thanksgiving holiday, is gratitude. No matter who we are or where we may be in life, there are things, experiences, and people that we can feel grateful to have in our lives. This is an important trait for children to develop early in life, because the more often a person feels grateful, the more compassionate they tend to be towards others.

Being kind and thoughtful towards others is something that parents struggle with teaching their children, especially the 1, 2, and 3-year-olds who are naturally more focused on themselves than others. Take some time over the next few months to be a good model for your child, because children learn from what they see their families do.

Here are some suggestions for how to encourage your child to be thankful for the good in their life:

- Say "thank you" and explain why you are thankful for people in your life (like your partner, family members, or friends) in front of your children. Seeing gratefulness in action will be a powerful learning experience for them.
- If you have several children, encourage them to recognize each time their sister or brother does something helpful or kind to them, and also what they can do to be helpful or kind to their sibling.
- Make a routine out of it! Pick a time of day, like bedtime, to talk about something good that happened today, and who or what the child is thankful for. Children who are more grateful tend to also be more helpful towards others, have more self-control, and have fewer behavior problems.
- Give what you can. Talk with your children about what clothes or toys they can give away to children who may need them more than you and your family. This will help them remember there are always people to help.

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.



MOVE IT! with Maggie

Each month in Parent Link, Maggie Thomas, Nemours Program & Policy Analyst for the Early Learning Coalition, will offer simple ways for creating healthy environments for families. Maggie holds a Master of Business of Administration in Management from Nova Southeastern University and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Miami. She has played a critical role in increasing awareness in injury prevention and obesity prevention in diverse and hard to reach communities. Maggie has experience in providing training, consultation, and technical assistance to early learning centers throughout Miami-Dade County.

Healthy, Active, and Fun Holiday Celebrations: Making the most of holidays through active role-modeling

The holiday season is fast approaching, and with it comes festivities, family gatherings, cooking and eating. Without a doubt, there will be plenty of holiday foods, desserts, and beverages that will be shared between you and your loved ones. For parents, not only is it a time to practice traditions, it also presents a wonderful opportunity to teach healthy habits to children. Here are a few ways to make your holiday celebrations healthy, active and most importantly fun.

- **Make healthy habits part of your celebration.** There is no denying that food is an important part of celebrations, but it doesn't have to be the center of the occasion. Instead shift the focus to family time. Introduce a new family tradition and make it an active one, such as a holiday tug of war challenge. Not only will these create wonderful and rich memories for you and your children, but this will also allow family members of all ages to get moving and have fun at the same time.
- **Offer thirst quenchers that please.** Fill an ice cube tray with 100 percent juices or offer water in a new way by adding slices of fruit. This is another simple activity in which you can involve your child when preparing.
- **Be sure to include plenty of fun opportunities to get people moving.** This can be achieved through playing active games like Limbo or doing the Conga Dance - turn on the music and have guests and children dance in a line, placing hands on the waist of person in front of them

and following the leader. Being physically active makes people feel good and happy. Remember this saying by George Bernard Shaw: "We do not stop playing because we get old; we get old because we stop playing."

- Use ChooseMyPlate.gov for ideas on various ways to include the different food groups in your meals. Offer a spicy bean dip and veggie tray, whole grain crackers, or fruit kabobs. Include children in the planning process as well.
- **Shop smart to eat smart.** Buying healthy foods shouldn't have to take a toll on your wallet. Planning in advance is the key to buying foods that fit within your budget. Start early and be on the lookout for coupons for fruits and vegetables that are in season - they cost less and taste better.
- **Involve others in keeping active and moving.** Ask family for help with cleaning up. Find age appropriate tasks for your children to complete when cleaning up. It can be something as simple as clearing the table or getting you a garbage bag.

Be a "cheerleader" for healthy habits this holiday season. It's never too early to start setting the example, and remember the children are always watching- even at parties!

Sources:

www.usda.gov

www.choosemyplate.gov

www.letsmove.gov

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Local Events for the Family!

Ice Palace Dolphin Mall

Beginning Nov. 7, visitors to Dolphin Mall are transported to a winter wonderland when they step inside the spectacular holiday Ice Palace.

When: Saturday, Nov. 9, through Tuesday, Dec. 24

Time: Mall Hours

Where: Dolphin Mall

11401 Nw 12th St.

Miami, Florida 33172

Cost: FREE

More: To learn more about this event, please click [here](#).

Palm Center Clinic Health Fair

Free Health Fair in Hialeah. Meet our primary care doctors, obtain help signing up for the Affordable Care Act, and take advantage of free blood pressure screenings, healthy Snacks, \$25 flu shots and more!

When: Saturday, November 23

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

Where: 60 E. 3 St.

Hialeah, FL 33010

Cost: FREE

More: For more details, please call 305-572-7199.

Children's Holiday at North

Three stages provide continuous live entertainment, educational pavilions feature agriculture,

environmental, careers, technology, storytelling, science, holidays around the world, and much more.

When: Saturday, Dec. 14

Time: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Where: Miami Dade College North Campus
11380 N.W. 27th Avenue
Miami, FL 33167

Cost: FREE

Target Free Friday at the Miami Children's Museum

Explore hundreds of bilingual, interactive exhibits related to arts, culture, community and communication for FREE!

When: Friday, Dec. 20

Time: 3 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Where: Miami Children's Museum
980 MacArthur Causeway
Miami, FL 33132

Cost: FREE

More: For details, please visit <http://www.miamichildrensmuseum.org/>.

New World Symphony Wallcast Concert: Holiday Concert

The NWS WALLCAST™ concerts allow you to experience select events throughout the season at Miami Beach SoundScape through a striking use of visual and audio technology on a soaring, 7,000-square-foot projection wall. Bring a blanket, share a picnic dinner and enjoy the sights and sounds of the New World Symphony with friends and family!

When: Saturday, Dec. 21

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Where: 500 17th St.
Miami Beach, FL 33139

Cost: FREE

More: For details, please visit <http://www.nws.edu/Wallcasts.aspx>



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 prekindergarten 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.

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.