

*****Important News for Miami-Dade and Monroe Providers*****

State Budget Reduction Exercise Update

On June 29, 2007, each state agency received a memo issued jointly by the Florida Senate, the Florida House of Representatives and the Executive Office of the Governor to address the projected revenue shortfalls for the 2007-2008 Fiscal Year.

The Governor's Office of Policy and Budget then provided each agency with target reduction amounts. The Agency for Workforce Innovation's (AWI) target amount totals \$76 million and is broken down as follows:

- General Revenue Fund - \$17,588,121
- Welfare Transition Trust Fund - \$21,003,974
- Other Trust Funds - \$38,092,052

In response, AWI conducted a thorough analysis of the agency's budget. Throughout this exercise, the Agency's guiding principles to meet that target reductions were: 1) limit the dis-enrollment of current program participants, 2) retain and hold harmless the ability to draw down federal funding, and 3) maintain the Agency's ability to effectively and efficiently deliver services now and in the future. The potential reductions range from 4 - 10%. For Miami-Dade and Monroe County, the proposed reduction is in the range of \$2.1 million.



Florida KidCare offers health care insurance to eligible uninsured children through the following components:

- Medicaid for children – ages birth through 18
- MediKids – ages 1 through 4
- Healthy Kids – ages 5 through 18
- Children's Medical Services Network – ages birth through 18 for children with special health care needs

Please help us remind parents of this opportunity to obtain affordable health services for their children. Families are encouraged to apply online at www.floridakidcare.org. Families may also call the **KidCare Information Line toll-free at 888-540-5437** to have an application mailed to them. **Let's spread the word about Florida KidCare and encourage families to put their children's health care coverage at the top of their back-to-school checklists!**

Beware of Playground Fires: Helpful Prevention Tips

CNN has been reporting recently on two playground fires in Texas. Authorities believe the fires were caused by the wood mulch used as playground surfaces being moistened by rain and then rapidly drying due to excessive temperature increases. Eventually, this mulch bursts into flames due to spontaneous combustion. **You can help prevent these dangerous fires by following the tips listed below:**

- Use a sprinkler or hose to water the mulch, along with playground equipment, during extreme heat.
- Routinely rake the mulch after it rains which helps combine the moist mulch with the dry, and helps the surface to dry more evenly after sun exposure.

-more-

Providers: Enter to Win a Scholarship to an Upcoming Conference!

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is giving away **one (1) scholarship** to each of the following conferences:

- **The 37th Annual Conference for the National Black Child Development Institute, October 21-23, 2007 in Chicago, IL and;**
- **The 2007 Annual Conference and Expo for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), November 7-10, 2007 also in Chicago, IL.**

Scholarship awards include round-trip airfare, hotel, conference fees and a \$36 per-diem stipend for food. **One (1) scholarship** per conference will be awarded, and providers must select **one (1)** participant to represent their center on the entry form. Miami-Dade and Monroe School Readiness (subsidized child care) providers are eligible to enter. Winners will be notified after September 10, 2007.

To enter the lottery, please fill out the form below and either **Email it to info@elcmdm.org, fax to 305-447-1608 or mail to the ELCMDM Office at 2555 Ponce de Leon Boulevard, Ste. 500, Coral Gables, FL 33134, Attn: Communications Department.** Entries must be received no later than 5:00 PM on September 6, 2007; entries received **after** this date will **not** be eligible.

ELCMDM Conference Scholarship Give-Away 2007: Entry Form

Center Name _____

Participant Name _____

Center Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Center Phone _____ Center Fax _____

Center Email (if available) _____

Conference (**check only one**):

- The 37th Annual Conference for the National Black Child Development Institute, Oct. 21-23, 2007*
- The 2007 Annual Conference for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Nov. 7-10, 2007*

Reason for attending conference: _____

Please submit entry form NO LATER than September 6, 2007!

-more-

Provider Visits

The ELCMDM staff has been very busy recently visiting a variety of providers in both Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. We would like to extend a **big thank you** to the following centers who opened their doors for a visit:

Our Little Ones Learning Center, COPE Center North, Brownsville/Bethume Center, Small World Montessori of North Miami, A Better Foundation Learning Center, Many Faces Academy, Family Support Program at Homestead Air Force Base, Little School 4 Little People, Inc., Island Preschool, BOLA Childcare Center, Burton Memorial CDC, Florida Keys Children's Shelter, Community Co-Op, Banana Cabanna Academy, Temple Israel, Wonderland Child Care, Tutor Me Daycare Academy, Centro Mater East, and Centro Mater West.

We look forward to visiting more centers in the months to come!

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY NEWS BRIEFS



Gold Seal Provider Status News

The Data Quality Staff of the Office of Early Learning under the direction of the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) recently conducted a review of Gold Seal providers paid through the February, 2007 reimbursement period and found that some of them did not have all of the appropriate accreditation information in EFS (Enhanced Field System). Each coalition must now affirm and/or correct Gold Seal accreditation information entered into EFS to validate provider payments.

In an effort to update and correct this information, we are asking **all Gold Seal providers** to verify that you have a **Gold Seal Certification approved by the Department of Children and Families (DCF)**, and that it has been submitted to Miami-Dade County's Department of Human Services Child Development Services Resource and Referral Division. **Please fax all pertinent documentation to 305-573-2230.**

Please Submit Your Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) Summaries!

For the months of July, August and September, the ELC and CDS have teamed up to begin a new assessment initiative. CDS is now conducting trainings throughout the county to teach all early care and education staff how to administer and score the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). All teachers of 3 and 4-year-olds must sign-up and attend training on the ASQ, although teachers will be receiving questionnaires for all children between the ages of 3 months and 5 years of age. Teachers previously trained in the spring are invited to attend as a review.

Teachers will be given the ASQs to assess their own students. After 2 weeks, CDS assessors will collect the Summary sheets from your school. **Please have your ASQs ready when your assessor comes to pick them up.** We need to complete this initiative by **September 28, 2007**. Please do your part to make this happen. For questions, please call MDC Department of Human Services Child Development Services in the **North at 305-953-6007** or in the **South at 305-270-2905**.

Early Care and Education Training Available at a Miami Dade College Campus Near You!

The State of Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Care Certification Program is available at **all Miami Dade College campus locations** this fall. For course descriptions, schedules and registration information, please visit www.mdc.edu/ce.

-more-

MONROE COUNTY NEWS BRIEFS

Save the Date

The next meeting of the **Monroe County Advisory Committee** will take place on **Wednesday, September 12, 2007** at **1 PM** at the Monroe County School District Board Room in Key West. Participation via videoconference or conference call will be available. More details to follow...

FLKRS Informational Programs Available

Monroe VPK providers interested in viewing a recent taping of two programs related to the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS), including an introduction to the ECHOS and DIBELS assessments, may **contact Mary Williams** at the Monroe Coalition Office at **296-5557**. These programs are produced by the Florida Education Channel and made available through a partnership with the Monroe County School District.

Important Early Care and Education Trainings Offered by Wesley House Family Services

A variety of child care training courses, including the FCCPC certificate trainings, are being offered by Wesley House Family Services this fall. Please contact **Michele Morgan**, Training Coordinator, at **292-7150** for more information.

Monroe County Child Care Task Force Welcomes Child Advocate David Lawrence

The Monroe County Child Care Task Force met on August 22, 2007 in Key West to continue the community's discussion of the critical status of child care availability, affordability and accessibility. The task force has created an economic/legislative committee to explore legislative relief at the state and Federal level and a marketing/economic development committee to explore sustainable funding sources and promote public awareness. The task force meeting was **co-chaired** by Evelio Torres, CEO, Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and Doug Blomberg, CEO, Wesley House Family Services.

Special guest, **David Lawrence**, Chair of The Children's Trust in Miami-Dade, shared his expertise on the process of establishing a publicly-funded special taxing district for children's services. Commending the diversity of the assembled group (including task force members, city and county government officials, community service organizations, school district and child care provider representatives), Mr. Lawrence offered his assistance and encouraged attendees to take up this important challenge to improve the quality of life for all children in the Monroe County community. The **next Task Force Meeting** will take place on **Friday, October 5, 2007** at 9:00 AM at Wesley House Family Services, 1304 Truman Avenue in Key West.



David Lawrence addresses Task Force participants on Aug. 22, 2007.



Monroe County Child Care Task Force meeting participants with David Lawrence and Evelio Torres.