



June 2008

Issue No. 12

## Provider News Alert

### Our Mission and Vision

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#### Our Mission

To promote high-quality school readiness, voluntary pre-kindergarten and after school programs, thus increasing all children's chances of achieving future educational success and becoming productive members of society. The Coalition seeks to further the physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs of Miami-Dade and Monroe County children with a priority toward the ages before birth through age 5.

#### Our Vision

To ensure a comprehensive and integrated system providing for all families and their children, beginning before birth to 5 years, the affordable opportunity to enter school ready to learn and succeed in life.

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### President's Message



We are pleased to announce the launch of the Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) program for early care and education providers in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. CCEP will allow centers to provide care for an employee's child at the center and be partially reimbursed for that care by the Coalition.

Similar to the School Readiness grant, this program serves center employees with low to moderate wage-earnings who qualify for the program. The eligibility requirements are the same, with the exception that they can earn up to 200% of federal poverty level. For example, a family of four can earn up to \$42,400 and still be eligible to participate and, at present, there is no wait list for this funding category.

The provider will be reimbursed at 50% of its school readiness rate and may be eligible for a tax credit for the remaining 50% (up to \$50) per month for each child enrolled at the facility (please check with your tax professional). Tax benefits, increased employee morale, and productivity make this an exciting work-life benefit.

It's easy to participate, simply visit our website, [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org), and click on the link in the Announcements box for an application. Once completed, fax the agreement page to

Alina Soto at 786-888-9282. We will send you an informational packet with complete instructions so that you can be on your way to helping your employees.

As always, I am at your service. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information. I welcome you to write to us via e-mail at [info@elcmdm.org](mailto:info@elcmdm.org).

Sincerely,

Evelio C. Torres  
President and CEO

## **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **2008 One Goal Conference**

The Coalition held a raffle on Monday, June 16th, for two providers to attend the 2008 One Goal Conference. Congratulations to Sue Ellen Bennett, Director of the St. James Children's Center, and to Marcia E. Martorell, Director of It's a Small World Learning Center!

### **Department of Human Services Child Development Services Update**

Please note the new locations for the CDS Eligibility office, Mail-in Re-determination unit, and Resource Library. New locations and effective move dates are shown:

Currently open	Miami Lakes Eligibility Office moved to: Miami Gardens Neighborhood Center 16405 NW 25 Avenue Miami Gardens, Florida 33054 Telephone #(305 ) 626-7969 Fax # (305 626-0130
June 30, 2008	CDS Resource Library will move to two new locations:  Frankie Shannon Rolle Neighborhood Service Center 3750 S. Dixie Hwy. Telephone: (305) 442-7881  Edison Little River Neighborhood Service Center 150 NW 79th Street Telephone: (305) 756-4176
July 14, 2008	Mail-in re-determination unit will relocate to: 1251 NW 36th St. Suite A Telephone: (305) 633-1634

### **School Age Process**

Effective July 1, 2008, the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe will implement a new enrollment policy regarding school age children. School readiness services for income eligible families will only be provided to school age children, ages six (6) years to eight (8) years. The termination date is tied to the child's re-determination month. Families of children who are turning 9 years of age and those who are 9 and older, will receive notification 60 days prior to the termination of services and a listing of other child care services available in the community.

Children currently receiving school readiness services who are 9 years of age or older will

continue to receive care through the summer months.

In an effort to assist families in identifying alternative options for care, Miami-Dade County Child Development Services staff will provide a listing of before and after school care providers operating within or close to the family's zip code. Families will receive a joint mailing of this resource listing and the 60-day notification letter. Families may also contact the Child Care Resource and Referral unit at (305-373-3521) to request information regarding child care services.

This policy does not affect children receiving care under the following categories:

- Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP)
- At Risk
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Transitional Child Care (TCC)
- Special Needs Children
- Children Served in Monroe County

### **AWI Updates**

#### **OPPAGA**

The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, better known as OPPAGA, has published their report on the statewide governance of Florida's Early Learning System. The report and the Agency's response can be found at:  
<http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/educ/r08-35s.html>.

#### **Rule Development**

There are three rule development workshops currently scheduled. These are:  
June 23rd from 2:00-5:00 B-49 and conf. call line 1-888-808-6959, code 9213186. Topics for this workshop are:

Performance Standards and Outcome Measures  
School Readiness Plan Requirements

June 30th from 2:00-5:00 B-40 and conf. call line 1-888-808-6959, code 9213186. Topic for this workshop is:  
ELC Quality Funding Template

July 10th from 2:00-5:00 B-49 and conf. call line 1-888-808-6959, code 9213186. Topic for this workshop is:  
ELC Annual Reports

If you would like more information regarding rule development for Early Learning Coalitions, you can access the Florida Administrative Weekly notice directly at  
<https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ChapterHome.asp?Chapter=60BB-9>.

#### **FLKRS Data**

As per AWI, the Department of Education has been working to provide the data, but it has been a challenging process. The data exist in multiple forms as it moves from raw FLKRS scores to the calculation of the Readiness Rates.

Once the data is in-house, AWI will begin working with the coalitions to determine an appropriate course of action. The receipt and processing of the 2005-2006 data is expected to take place this summer.

### **Legislative Updates**

#### **The Family Tax Relief Act of 2008**

A bill introduced in the Senate marks an important step towards making child care more

affordable in these tough economic times.

The Family Tax Relief Act of 2008 (S. 3079), introduced by Senators Gordon Smith, R-Ore., and Blanche Lincoln, D-Ark., will improve the federal Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. It will help parents, especially low- and moderate-income parents, afford the child care they need to be productive at work while their children develop the skills they need to succeed in school.

More information about the bill is available from the National Women's Law Center at <http://www.nwlc.org/pdf/Smith-LincolnExpandedChildCareCredit.pdf>.

\*Courtesy of Joan Entmacher, Vice President for Family Economic Security at the National Women's Law Center.

## Board Committees

**In an effort to encourage participation, we are providing you with descriptions of each Board Committee's responsibilities. If you are interested in attending any of these meetings or becoming involved, please refer to the Upcoming Events section of this News Alert or check our website at [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org) for upcoming meetings.**

**Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee is responsible for providing leadership for the Board. This is accomplished by setting policies to encourage effective governance, administration, and legal representation; reviewing and recommending legislative proposals at all levels of government; and resolving conflicts among committees and between the Coalition and other partners.

**Nominating Committee:** The Nominating Committee is responsible for nominating Officers and Members, and nominating replacement Officers when there are vacancies on the Board.

### **Program Policy and Strategy Committee:**

The Program Policy and Strategy Committee is responsible for evaluating Coalition programs, formulating strategy, and making policy recommendations to improve the quality of early care and education in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.

**Provider Services Committee:** The Provider Services Committee is responsible for addressing the issues and concerns of both School Readiness and Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) early care and education providers in Miami-Dade County.

**Governance and Bylaws Committee:** The Governance and Bylaws Committee periodically reviews the Coalition's Bylaws, policies and procedures. They are responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding policies that provide specific guidance and direction to the Coalition and its leadership concerning all significant aspects of governance.

**Audit Committee:** The Audit Committee meets to discuss audits carried out by outside independent entities to make sure the Coalition is in accordance with State Statutes and Laws as governed by the Agency for Workforce Innovation.

### **Finance Committee:**

The Finance Committee is responsible for providing oversight of the Coalition's financial operations, for reviewing compliance with Coalition policies, procedures and applicable laws and regulations

**Legislative Advocacy Committee:** The Legislative Advocacy Committee is responsible for working with legislators in order to educate and promote funding and support for early

care and education.

### **Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Program & Strategy Committee	8-Jul	1:00 PM	ELCMDM Board Room
Spending Plan/ Enrollment	17-Jul	10:00 AM	ELCMDM Board Room
Finance Committee	28-Jul	8:00 AM	ELCMDM Board Room

## **ELC Knowledge Center**

Welcome to the ELC Knowledge Center. This section of our News Alert serves to provide parents, educators, and caregivers more accessible information about services in addition to the programs administered by the ELC. The Knowledge Center is a place where you can learn about upcoming trainings, special reports on early education and care, and other issues, like inclusion and special needs services, that are related to early childhood education and care. We welcome you to contact us, or any of the partner organizations for more information.

### **Early Childhood Reports**

Collaborating with the Every Child Matters Education Fund, Robert G. Lynch, Chair of the Department of Economics at Washington College, published a study: **Enriching Children, Enriching the Nation - Public Investment in High-Quality Prekindergarten**. Dr. Lynch highlights that "long-term studies of ECD[Early Childhood Development] participants have consistently found that investing in children has several lasting, important benefits for the participants, their families, and society at large including taxpayers." Beginning on June 30th, a copy of the report will be made available on our website, [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org). Click on the Knowledge Center button.

### **Inclusion and Special Needs**

For more about inclusion programs and services for children with special needs, the Coalition and Miami-Dade County Child Development Services have partnered together to create a warm-line telephone number. You can call this number for provider information on special needs and referral services:

**Warm line: 305-953-5166**

Call us with your questions regarding finding early care and education for your child or visit our website, [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org), and click on the Knowledge Center link on our homepage. You will be guided to a page that includes a link titled Inclusion and Special Needs, which provides more information that can help you and your children.

We look forward to hearing from you and hope to answer your requests through this new column. Or you may fax us at:

**Fax: 786-888-9281**

Let us celebrate the uniqueness of every child!

### **VPK Standards Training**

The following dates are for VPK Standards Training. All the sessions will be held from 1:00 to 4:00 pm at the Coalition. The sessions are limited to 30 participants, so it is necessary to reserve your space by calling 305-646-7220 ext. 229 and registering with Simona Beltran. **No one will be allowed after 1:15 pm to take the training.** If you have

already taken this training, there is no need to enroll.

The parking garage for the coalition can be accessed on Andalusia, but validation will not be available. There is also metered parking on the street.

#### **Dates**

Wednesday, July 9, 2008

Tuesday, July 22, 2008

Monday, August 4, 2008

Thursday, August 14, 2008

## **Miami-Dade County News Briefs**

### **Hearing, vision, and speech screenings**

The Coalition will sponsor hearing and vision screenings for approximately 3000 school readiness children in Miami-Dade. 770 speech screenings will also be available. Hearing and Speech of Florida, Inc. will provide the screenings at no charge to the school or the children. Please help get the necessary parental consent forms when Hearing and Speech call to set up an appointment for your site. Screening will begin in late August once school has officially started. FDLRS and Miami Children's Hospital also have screening programs and the ELC is collaborating with them to maximize the number of children receiving screenings. Enrollment is up! Registrations for Certificates of Eligibility are up this year. To date, 13,589 children have been registered versus last year at this time when there were 11,850 registered.

### **VPK Updates**

**If you have not submitted your application, you must do so as soon as possible in order to start on time for the 2008-2009 School Year program.** Reminder: Providers must reapply each school year in order to provide the VPK program. You will receive a letter with a certificate from our office once you have been certified. It is not necessary to call to follow-up on an application you have submitted. **Only new VPK providers will be seen to review the VPK application package. Please remember you must make an appointment if you need to see a Certification Specialist.**

### **2008-2009 VPK Provider Rates**

- Effective July 1, 2008, the new VPK provider rate for the School Year Program is \$2,666.11 (or \$4.93 per hour) for the 540 hour program.
- The new rates affect the 2008 Summer Program as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, with the new VPK provider rate of \$2,666.11 (or \$8.88 per hour) for the 300 hour program. Providers will be paid \$9.05 per hour for programs operating in May and June, and \$8.88 per hour for the months of July and August. The VPK provider rates were reduced during the recent legislative session.

### **Staff Credential Verification Form (#5206)**

If your staff has "Formal Education " listed on their verification form from DCF but the form does not list the specific degree, we are asking for the back-up documents, such as a copy of the evaluation of the degree (if from another country) or a copy of the actual degree (if issued in the U.S).

### **VPK Director Endorsement**

You must have all of the following in order for the VPK Director Endorsement to be valid:

- A DCF Director Credential certificate
- A VPK Standards certificate
- A VPK Emergent Literacy certificate
- A VPK Director Endorsement course certificate

**The VPK Director Endorsement course certificate is different from the VPK Director Endorsement.**

## **Monroe County News Briefs**

### **Monroe Comprehensive Child Health Screening and Follow-Up Medical Care Project**

For the 4th year, the ELC has partnered with the Florida Keys Area Health Education Center (FKAHEC) to provide comprehensive child health screening to approximately 450 School Readiness children, ages birth to five, on-site in centers and family child care homes Keys-wide. The Monroe ELC office and FKAHEC provide advance notification to providers and parents when screenings are to be scheduled throughout the program year.

The comprehensive health screening conducted by the FKAHEC team (including nurses, UM medical students and other health practitioners) includes:

#### **Vision**

#### **Hearing**

#### **Ear/nose/throat**

#### **Oral/dental**

#### **Skin/scalp/hygiene**

#### **Asthma/respiratory**

#### **Nutrition, height weight**

#### **Medications review, injury review and immunization review**

As funding permits, financial assistance is available to parents who are uninsured or underinsured or where Medicaid providers are unavailable to ensure that children receive necessary follow-up medical and/or specialty care. Funding for this project is provided through a grant to FKAHEC from the Human Services Advisory Board of the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners. The 08/09 project will be supplemented by funding from the ELC to ensure that the project may continue to be offered Keys-wide.

### **Monroe Quality Enhancement Project Totals \$325,000**

The Early Learning Coalition awarded a quality enhancement funding allocation to Wesley House in March. These funds enabled Wesley House to provide additional trainings and training stipends for child care providers across the county, support for the Annual Conference, Creative Curriculum materials and provider mini grants.

Approximately \$198,000 has been provided in mini grants to 34 agreement providers (21 centers and 13 family child care homes) for program enhancements and to meet health and safety requirements. This year's mini grants were based on the needs identified during the annual environmental assessment and on items identified on a provider "wish list" during an interview with directors. Mini grant items funded include: playground equipment and playground surfacing, multi-cultural toys and books, puzzles, music, manipulatives, tricycles, curriculum and literacy materials, book shelves, play station, computer software and child furniture. Health and safety items funded include air conditioning, fans, a shade sail and a water cooler.

### **"Play is Learning" Recycling Workshop a Success!**



Fifty-three (53) providers participated in the Saturday, June 14th workshop in Marathon. Trainer Michele Rosen of the ReThink and ReUse Center educated participants on the use of recyclable products that are safe for use in the classroom. Common materials such as commercial ice cream cartons, wood and PVC pipe end cuts may be used to develop math, science, literacy and social skills in young children. Participants had the opportunity to get creative with an interactive floor play with

recycled materials provided by Ms. Rosen. An afternoon make and take session provided an opportunity to take donated recycled materials back to their classrooms. An enjoyable learning experience was had by all.

## Quality Counts

### Quality Counts Quality Rating Improvement System Training Hotline

The Training Hotline is a recorded message with information on all offered trainings both in English and Spanish. To learn more about upcoming trainings, please feel free to call The Training Hotline at 305 631-7658 or 1-888-506-9898.

Not involved with Quality Counts yet? It's never too late to make a difference! A simple two step process can get you on your way to giving the quality care that makes the difference in the lives of the children and families of Miami-Dade/Monroe County.

1. Attend a Quality Counts Overview Training
2. Submit a Quality Counts application

For more information or to download an application please visit the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe website:

<http://www.elcmdm.org/qualitycounts/index.htm>

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