



April/May 2008

Issue No. 10

Provider News Alert

Our Mission and Vision

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Our Mission

To promote school readiness and pre-kindergarten 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.

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

This legislative session has been challenging for the coalition as well as many of our community partners: budget issues looming, a weak economy, and many uncertainties help to add to the frustration. During these very tough times, I continue to be impressed, but not surprised, by your commitment and resolve to educate our children. Through our many exchanges, I know that you agree with me that we must be deliberate in our efforts and work together to find new solutions to old problems. We must also continue our efforts to make sure that our elected officials are well informed of the important work that we do and the short and long term benefits to our children, community and society.

The ELC board of directors, our community partners, several municipalities, the Children's Services Councils, the Children's Cabinet, the Agency for Workforce Innovation, the Association of Early Learning Coalitions and the Early Learning Advisory Council have worked long and hard to inform our political leaders and decision makers, in Washington D.C. and Tallahassee alike, of the devastating effect that any reduction in resources to already underfunded programs will have on our children. The Children's Trust in particular has been instrumental in our advocacy efforts as they work to ensure that ALL of our community's children have a brighter future.

The Agency for Workforce Innovation originally estimated nearly \$6M in budget reductions for Miami-Dade/Monroe. It now seems that the actual reductions will be closer to \$3.02 million effective July 1, 2008. I am by no means classifying this as good news, but at this point we have no other option than to scale down in order to stay within our budget for the next fiscal year. We will keep you posted as to any changes and as to how the reductions will be addressed. Please keep in mind that you have an opportunity to

participate in the decision making process by attending our committee meetings. You can find the schedule and locations on our website.

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 to infor@elcmdm.org.

Sincerely,

Evelio C. Torres
President & CEO

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board of Directors

The ELC Board of Directors is looking for a Private-Sector Business Member. Please contact Vivian Wright at (305) 646-7220 ext. 246 for additional application requirements or click here to see an application.

Provider Appreciation Day is May 9th

The ELCMDM will be celebrating Provider Appreciation Day on May 9th by holding a random raffle. No purchase necessary. Owners, directors, and staff are invited to participate. To enter, simply send your information to Alina Soto at asoto@elcmdm.org. Make sure to include your name, number, center information, and you will be included in the contest. The 6 winners picked will each receive \$50 in movie tickets. Attendance is not required, but should you want to attend, please include an RSVP to Alina Soto when registering for the raffle. It will take place at the Coalition headquarters in Coral Gables at 12:30 pm on May 9th.

Masters in Education from University of Miami

The University of Miami's School of Education is now offering a 1 year program beginning May 14th to receive a Master's Degree in Education with a specialization in Early Childhood Special Education. Classes will be held at the University, and will run through August 2009. Only applicants with Exceptional Student Education (ESE, MR, LD, EH) certification will be considered for admission in May 2008. Up to 90% tuition support is available for those who qualify for admission. For specific information about this program, contact:

Maria D. Papazian
Program Coordinator
Telephone: 305-284-2963
E-Mail: m.papazian@miami.edu

Center Directors Meeting

Center Directors meeting will be held on June 25th at:

Martin Luther King Building
2525 NW 62nd Street, 2nd Floor
Miami, FL 33147
305-514-6000

NOTE: Parking fee of \$4.00 at this location.

The English session will be from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm and the Spanish session will be from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

Attention School Readiness Providers

This is an additional reminder for providers that have not yet been enabled to access the School Readiness providers' website. If you have not chosen a password yet, please, contact Ed Nelson by:

Telephone: (305) 514-6023
or
Email: enelson@miamidade.gov

If you already have chosen a password and have difficulty entering the site, please, verify you have the right website:

<http://egvsys.metro-dade.com:1608/WWWSERV/ggvt/cdsaw000.dia>

1. Double click on the link
2. Click on providers log on at the bottom left of the screen
3. Type your center's tel. # as user name
4. Type your password
5. Click/ press Enter
6. Click on children enrolled

Events

Zoo Day

Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services held their annual Zoo Day on April 25th. Over 1,500 pre-kindergarten-aged children attended the event at Metro Zoo, and enjoyed all the sites: the Bengal tigers, the Cuban crocodile, and the enclosed Aviary, to name a few. Not to mention two moonwalks, plenty of picnic area, and lunch-time story-telling by Department staff members. ELCMDM staff was invited and helped distribute cold water to all attendees. It was a great success.

WLRN Earth Day Workshop

The ELCMDM took part in a special WLRN workshop created to generate awareness for Earth Day. The event took place on April 22nd, at WLRN studios in the Biscayne Corridor, and hosted nearly 100 pre-kindergarten children from various private providers. The Coalition brought in an array of arts and crafts materials that were used by the children to make bookmarks, notecards, and invitations commemorating Earth Day.

Take Your Child To Work Day

The ELCMDM celebrated this day of education to our children by providing a fun-filled and educational experience on Take Your Child To Work Day on April 24th. The children were given identification badges with their names, they were treated to pizza and smores, they colored ceramic pots in which they planted a seed that they would take home and help grow, and they were given a tour of the Coalition to educate them on the different departments and roles that we play in the organization. The day was a tremendous success, and all the kids learned about the wonderful world at the Coalition - even if we do not paint pots everyday.

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 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:

Program & Strategy Committee	May 6	1:00 pm	ELCMDM Board Room
Spending Plan Meeting	May 19	10:00 am	ELCMDM Board Room
Finance Committee	May 20	8:00 am	ELCMDM Board Room
Curriculum Task Force	May 21	10:00 am	ELCMDM Board Room
Board of Directors	May 27	8:00 am	ELCMDM Board Room
Provider Services Committee	June 4	12:00 am	Hialeah City Hall
Finance Committee	June 17	8:00 am	ELCMDM Board Room

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Provider Services Committee meeting has been rescheduled from June 6th to June 4th. Please make this note on your calendars. Meeting is scheduled for 12:00pm, and will be held at the Hialeah City Hall, 501 Palm Ave., Hialeah.

ELC Knowledge Center

School Readiness Project

The Knowledge Center sponsored a special presentation of a 5-year study conducted by Dr. Charles Bleiker and Dr. Adam Winsler. The findings of their School Readiness

Assesment/ Intervention project were presented through 3 sessions county-wide in an effort to inform teachers, providers, and educational professionals with vital information concerning early childhood education.

English Standards Training

English Standards Training will be held on May 14th, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm, at the ELC Headquarters: 2555 Ponce De Leon Blvd., Suite 5, Coral Gables, FL 33134.

You must pre-register. Call Lizzette at (305) 646-7220 ext. 229.

Preference will be given to:

- VPK Directors who are completing their VPK Director Endorsement. Those individuals need to fax a copy of their Director Credential to (305) 443-9107, along with a cover sheet with your center's name, your name, and contact information.
- Teachers who will be employed for 2008 summer VPK.

Parking validations will not be provided. Attendees will need to park at the 2525 Building next door, or find metered parking on the street. **Anyone who is more than 15 minutes late will not be admitted.**

Miami-Dade County News Briefs

VPK School Year Registration

PLEASE NOTE: Beginning Monday, May 5, 2008 registration sites and hours of operation will be:

**Monday-Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm,
Wednesdays until 6:00pm**

Joseph Caleb Center
5400 NW22nd Avenue
3rd Floor
Miami, FL 33142

South Dade Government Center/ Cutler Ridge
10710 SW 211th Street
Miami, FL 33189

Culmer/ Overtown Center
1600 NW 3rd Avenue
Miami, FL 33136

Miami Lakes Office
15910 NW 57th Avenue
Miami, FL 33014

VPK Updates

VPK Providers: Applications for the 2008-2009 year are now being accepted. Remember if you want to enroll in prepayment, your complete package must be submitted by May 30, 2008. Ensure that the application is completed as per requirements, and don't wait until the final deadline to submit your application.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Form 11 - All sections need to be completed. Providers must submit all staff information for "Qualifying Credential" and "Highest Degree," in boxes #11 and #16 using the codes located at the bottom of the first page of the form. In the "Classroom Language" box, #23, you need to indicate the primary language spoken in the

VPK classroom. Do not indicate more than one language.

VPK Directors: Anyone that did not obtain the Director Credential prior to January 1, 2007 must now get a VPK Director endorsement. For the endorsement to be valid, the provider must submit the following to us:

- Copy of DCF Director Credential certificate
- Copy of VPK Standards certificate
- Copy of VPK Emergent Literacy certificate
- Copy of the VPK Director Endorsement Course certificate

New requirement for VPK Directors: Please submit your level 2 background screening with your Form 10 beginning with the 2008-2009 application.

Providers Needing Assistance: New providers needing help with their VPK applications can call for an appointment. Please note that no appointment will be made after 2:00 PM. All other providers must make appointments with their assigned Certification Specialist. The staff cannot review your package upon drop off. Please call Liz Quesada at (305) 646-7220 ext 229 to make an appointment.

Second year Low Performing Providers: In order to provide VPK for the 2008-2009 year, you must show that you have satisfied the necessary curriculum requirement. Please call Roseline Philippe or Kerry Allen to schedule a meeting when you are ready to submit your 2008-2009 application. Certification will not process your application without clearance from Ms. Philippe or Ms. Allen.

VPK Payment for May and June: As it has been procedure in previous years, there will be no pre-payment made for the months of May and June. Payments for these months will be made when each provider delivers their attendance form at the end of each month. We thank you for your cooperation.

VPK website: We are pleased to announce that the VPKHELP.org website has been revamped! It is now much easier to use, and includes the most current information, forms, and policies. Please visit the site at www.vpkhelp.org to get all the new forms needed.

Monroe County News Briefs

VPK Updates

English Language Learners in the VPK Classroom: Co

urse is available free on-line at the following website:

http://www.flvpkonline.org/ell/section_1/1a.htm. This Department of Education course was recommended by VPK Regional Facilitator, Kerry Allen during her recent VPK training sessions in Monroe County. The facilitator for this course is a center director from South Florida with many years of experience working with English language learners. This course will assist you in creating a supportive classroom environment where English language learners are able to develop and gain confidence while learning to communicate in English. Additionally, the need for purposeful planning and strategies are included to promote learning and language development for your English language learners.

2008-2009 School Year Registration: Begins May 5th at all Wesley House locations from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (Monday - Friday in Key West and Tavernier; Tuesday and Thursdays in Marathon). Evening hours are available by appointment. Providers are asked to remind parents to bring their child's proof of age (birth certificate, passport, certificate of baptism, immunization record, etc.) and proof of residency/physical address (utility bill, bank statement, pay stub, government document, etc.). The child's Social Security number is requested, if available, at the time of registration.

2008 Summer Registration: Continues at all Wesley House locations from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (Monday - Friday in Key West and Tavernier; Tuesday and Thursdays in Marathon). Evening hours are available by appointment.

2008 Summer VPK Program: Will run from **May 8th - July 18th** and will be offered at Gerald Adams Elementary on Stock Island, Stanley Switlik School in Marathon and Key Largo School. The Summer VPK Program is a free, full day 300 instructional hour program and is available to children who have not previously participated in the VPK program and will be entering kindergarten in the upcoming 2008-2009 school year. Parents will receive the schedule information at the time of registration (as schedules vary by school site).

For additional information regarding VPK registration or program information, please contact 296-5557 or 292-7150.

School Readiness Annual Provider Satisfaction Survey

Monroe County School Readiness providers will be receiving the satisfaction survey as part of the Coalition's annual monitoring of the services provided by Wesley House. Providers will receive a self addressed, stamped return envelope along with the survey form. Providers are strongly encouraged to complete and return the anonymous survey form. Your feedback assists us in determining how we can best meet your needs and support the important work you do in providing early care and education for our community's children. For additional information or questions, please contact Mary Williams in the ELC Monroe Office at 296-5557.

Upcoming Trainings

10 Hour Infant/Toddler Appropriate Practices: Course is scheduled for Saturday, May 3 and Saturday, May 10th from 8:00am - 1:00pm at Burton Memorial Child Development Center, 93001 Overseas Highway, Tavernier. Additionally, this course is also scheduled for Thursday, May 8th from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm and Saturday, May 10th from 8:00 am - 3:00 pm at Wesley House, 1304 Truman Ave., Key West. The course cost is \$50 per person. For additional information or to register, please contact Michele Morgan at 292-7150 ext. 236.

Provider Workshop: Scheduled for Saturday, May 17 from 8:30 am - 3:30 pm at the First Baptist Church, 200 62nd St., Marathon. Topics to include: *New Rules and Regulations for Child Care Providers*, presented by Lisa Barry Toth, DCF Licensing Specialist, and *Buffet of Fun Ideas for the Classroom with Make N Take*, by Val Taylor, Wesley House VPK Specialist. Lunch will be provided by the Provider Association of the Fabulous Florida Keys. Additional information to follow.

Infant/Child/Adult CPR and First Aid: Course is scheduled for Saturday, May 31st from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm at Wesley House, 1304 Truman Ave., Key West. The course cost is \$50 per person. For additional information or to register, please contact Michele Morgan at 292-7150 ext. 236.

Quality Counts

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe in collaboration with the United Way of Miami-Dade is proud to announce the launch of the 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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