

Provider News Alert

Black History Month



February is Black History Month. What we now call Black History Month was originated in 1926 by Carter Godwin Woodson. Here are a few websites you can visit for activities and to learn about historical facts:

- Time line of civil rights events, history, contemporary issues:

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/bhm1.html>

- African American History and African heritage:

<http://k6educators.about.com/cs/blackhistorymont/a/blackhistorymon.htm>

- Slideshow - civil right leaders, inventors:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bhistory/>

- History, coloring pages, activities:

<http://fun.familyeducation.com/black-history-month/holidays/32871.html>

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/black-history-month/teacher-resources/6602.html>

<http://www.eduplace.com/monthlytheme/february/bhm.html>

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READINESS RATES!!

The final 06-07 Provider Readiness Rates will be posted on February 15, 2008. They can be viewed at vpk.fldoe.org. The State Board of Education will set the minimum rate on February 19, 2008.

Managed Enrollment for School Readiness

Families wanting to apply for School Readiness services can obtain information by contacting Resource and Referral at 305-373-3521. Families may also register for the Wait List (not yet determined eligible) online at <https://spe.schoolreadiness.org/pe/>. Families on the Wait List will be served as funding continues to be available. Please be reminded that having an appointment or being on the Wait List **does not guarantee enrollment** because of limited funding. If slots are not available at the time of the eligibility appointment due to funding limitations, families will have their eligibility determined and placed on the Ready Pool if eligible. As soon as slots are available families will be called back in the order they were placed on the Ready Pool to receive their enrollment certificate. Families have 10 days from the eligibility date to register their child or the eligibility certificate becomes void.

Quality Counts Event

The Quality Counts Launch Event on January 29th was a great success! The excitement was in the air and it was felt by more than 700 people that attended. It was an honor to have David Lawrence Jr. as our keynote speaker. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of everyone that has been working so hard towards improving quality of early care and education, Quality Counts is off to a great start.

Quality Counts will begin working with the first group of providers in February with more than 200 applications already received thus far. This is just the start of the path to success for Miami-Dade County's young children.

For more information and to see the overview training schedule, please visit www.elcmdm.org.

"Buckle Up For Life" Training

The "Buckle Up For Life" training is an educational, 1 hour class for parents and caregivers and is geared at increasing car safety awareness by understanding what happens in a crash and the proper use of seat belts, car seats and boosters. These trainings will be held at the agencies locations with one hour long sessions in English, Creole or Spanish. Refreshments will be provided!!



Following the training, parents and care givers can have their car seats checked by a Certified Passenger Safety Technician and will learn how to install their seats correctly. Those who need a car seat or booster seat will be able to acquire them for a donation. Families that receive training are asked for a \$10.00 donation, and those who do not will be asked for a \$20.00 dollar donation.

For more information, please contact Leslie C. Jauregui from the Injury Free Coalition for Kids of Miami at 305-243-3928.

Upcoming Events

"Feria De La Salud" Health Fair, sponsored by the Early Learning Coalition, is a free admission event taking place on Saturday, February 23, 2008. Free services include but are not limited to immunization, glucose tests, blood pressure tests, therapeutic massages, blood donations, and CPR trainings. Doors open to the public from 9:00 A.M. - 9:00 P.M. in the Grand Ballroom at the Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel located at 7707 NW 103 Street; Hialeah Gardens. For more information, please visit www.laferiadelasalud.com or call 1-800-618-7028.

"Fun & Fit" Gather your brood and head to Jungle Island on either Saturday or Sunday,

February. 23 or 24, to enjoy exercise, healthful eating and plenty of together time-all in the name of improving your lifestyle habits. Celebrity chefs include Rachael Ray and Jamie Oliver with the opportunity of plenty of hands-on, interactive excitement-cooking demos, food labs for experimenting in and much more. **FREE TICKETS** are still available, and each admission includes the wildlife shows and animal exhibits that make Jungle Island a family favorite. To reserve tickets under your school name, please call 305-646-7220. Tickets can be picked up at door on the day of the event. For more information, visit www.funandfitasafamily.com.

Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings:

Finance Committee	February 22	8:00 a.m.	ELCMDM Board Room
Board Meeting	February 25	8:00 a.m.	ELCMDM Board Room
Program & Strategy Committee	March 11	1:00 p.m.	TBA
Spending Plan	March 18	10:00 a.m.	ELCMDM Board Room
Finance Committee	March 21	8:00 a.m.	ELCMDM Board Room
Board Meeting	March 24	8:00 a.m.	ELCMDM Board Room

Funding Formula Update

The Agency for Workforce Innovation has submitted the approved funding formula to the Legislature and the Governor. The funding formula establishes how new dollars will be distributed among Coalitions. The formula is performance and equity based and provides a minimum of one percent of the base allocation to each Coalition. For Miami-Dade/Monroe Counties the one percent is just over one million dollars. Once the one percent minimum has been allocated to each Coalition, the formula will be applied for the distribution of the remaining dollars. The conditions under which the Association for Early Learning Coalitions agreed to the formula are as follows: 1) formula would only be applied to new dollars allocated by the legislature; 2) no Coalition would lose any of their existing base allocation unless there was an across the board/statewide reduction in the overall School Readiness budget; 3) the formula would only be applied to the Agency for Workforce Innovation's 2008 legislative budget request of \$15 million; 4) the Association for Early Learning Coalitions would continue to work with AWI to refine the formula.

English Language Learners VPK Classroom Learning Module

Having the skills and competencies related to maintaining a high quality, culturally sensitive educational environment is essential for providers and teachers of VPK Education Programs. To facilitate this, the Department of Education has developed a self-paced training titled *English Language Learners in the VPK Classroom*. This training is now available at **no cost** and accessible at www.flvpkonline.org/ELL/. The ideas presented in this learning module are designed to provide a better understanding of the characteristics and language learning experiences of colleagues, staff, children and families who are English language learners. All early childhood educators are encouraged to participate in the training.

Gold Seal Quality Care Certificates Information

The Florida Department of Children and Families Child Care Program office entered into a contract agreement with the Children's Forum (www.thechildrensforum.com) to assist the Department with the issuance of Gold Seal Quality Care certificates to providers who have met Gold Seal standards.

In addition, the Children's Forum provides technical assistance to callers who are inquiring about Gold Seal designation, becoming a Gold Seal Quality Care Accrediting Association or about the status of their Gold Seal certificates or their Gold Seal Quality Care Accrediting Association

application. Questions regarding Gold Seal can be directed to Christian Winterbottom at cwinterbottom@thechildrensforum.com or call (850) 681-7002.

Monroe County News Brief

Monroe Provider Rate Increase At the January 25th meeting, the ELC board approved the Monroe provider rate increase effective February 2008. The new full time center and family child care home rates are as follows

	Current Full Time Rate	Approved Full Time Rate (Effective Feb. 2008)	Increase per week
Infant	122.00	125.00	3.00
Toddler	111.00	120.00	9.00
Two Yr Old	110.00	115.00	5.00
Preschool	98.00	102.00	4.00
School Age	82.00	90.00	8.00

*Note: There is no change to the part time rates.

For questions, please contact the Monroe ELC Office at 296-5557 or Wesley House office at 292-7150.

Monroe Quality Initiative Package At the January 25th meeting, the ELC board approved a comprehensive quality initiative package for Monroe providers totaling \$325,000. Through this initiative, Wesley House Family Services will be providing mini grants, training stipends, additional training options and related support to providers. Additionally, initial planning for a quality rating system will seek providers' input through focus groups to develop a plan for increasing and supporting quality early care and education in Monroe County.

Monroe Child Care Provider Representative- Sue Ellen Bennett Sue Ellen Bennett, Director of St. James Children's Center, has graciously agreed to fill the position on the Monroe County Advisory Committee vacated by Sandi Kloza (who has relocated to Central Florida). Sue Ellen will represent the early education and care provider community at the quarterly meetings. Providers may contact Sue Ellen at 852-2161 to bring forward any issues and concerns. Sue Ellen is also the president of the Child Care Provider Association of the Fabulous Florida Keys. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated advocate for the providers and children in our community.