



Early Learning Coalition
of Miami-Dade/Monroe



In This Issue

[Important Announcements](#)

[Children's Movement of Florida](#)

[Team Member Spotlight](#)

[Miami-Dade County News Briefs](#)

[Monroe County News Briefs](#)

Quick Links

[Early Learning Coalition](#)

[VPK](#)

[Agency for Workforce Innovation](#)



Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

Board
Monday, April 4
8:00 a.m.

[Forward to a Friend](#)

[Donate Now](#)

ELC News Alert

Issue 4
April/May 2011

President's Message



Dear Friends,

The Early Learning Coalition celebrated Children's Week at the Miami Children's Museum on Friday, March 18th with 2,134 guests in attendance--a true testament to the importance of children, their well-being and future success. This year we wanted to have a variety of community partners collaborate with us on the event so that families could learn firsthand about the many community services and resources available to them. We welcomed local partner non-profits, corporations, government agencies, philanthropic foundations and of course parents and children to participate in the day's fun-filled activities.

Families excitedly explored all of the museum's kid-friendly exhibits free of charge, enjoyed tasty ice cream, and participated in story-time provided courtesy of the City of Miami's Department of Fire-Rescue. Children's Week is 'one voice for children' and it's clear that South Florida's voice is a strong and united one. On behalf of the board of directors and staff, thank you for joining us in this important celebration of children.

Sincerely,

Evelio C. Torres
President & CEO
Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

Important Announcements

[The Important Role that Early Education Plays in Correcting Economic Inequality](#)

In a fascinating article, "The Economics of Inequality: The Value of Early Childhood Education" (*American Educator - Spring 2011*), James. J. Heckman, Henry Schultz Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago and Nobel Memorial Prize Winner in economics, discusses educational equity and the vital role early childhood education and parental involvement play in correcting economic

Board Room

Program & Strategy
Tuesday, April 26
3:30 p.m.
Board Room

Finance
Wednesday, April 27
8:00 a.m.
Board Room

Audit
Wednesday, April 27
9:00 a.m.
Board Room

Board
Monday, May 2
8:00 a.m.
Board Room

Provider Services
Thursday, May 12
1:00 p.m.
Board Room

Finance
Wednesday, May 25
8:00 a.m.
Board Room

Program & Strategy
Tuesday, May 31
3:30 p.m.
Board Room

For a complete list
of upcoming
Coalition meetings
and events,

please visit our
website at
www.elcmdm.org.

inequality that originates at or before birth. Investing in our children early prevents achievement gaps and disparities before they occur and helps eliminate costly remediation in the future. To read the article, please visit <http://www.elcmdm.org/download/Heckman%20in%20American%20Educator.pdf>.

Celebrate Young Children with Miami-Dade County Public Schools

Celebrate the Week of the Young Child, April 11 - 17, 2011 with Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) to highlight the importance of early care, education and literacy. This year M-DCPS will host the celebration on Friday, April 15th in the School Board Administration Annex Building at 1500 Biscayne Blvd. in Miami. Fun activities will be planned and food and information will be distributed! For more information, please visit <http://www.elcmdm.org/downloads/events/WeekYoungChild2011.pdf> or call 305-995-7646.

Bibi Hack is an Honored Recipient of a 2011 Terri Lynne Lokoff National Child Care Teacher Award

The ELC would like to congratulate Bibi Hack from the REM Learning Center. Ms. Hack is a 2011 recipient of an esteemed Terri Lynne Lokoff National Child Care Teacher Award for her project, "The Listening Center." The Teacher Awards recognize exemplary educational and age-appropriate classroom projects as well as the importance of the early care and education profession.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

To heighten public awareness of child abuse prevention, Prevent Child Abuse Florida and its partners, Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida and the Florida Department of Children and Families, are launching the Pinwheels for Prevention® campaign. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and Pinwheels for Prevention changes the way we think about prevention, the result of which is a better understanding of child development, positive parenting practices and community action.

One important aspect of the campaign is highlighting local community events and activities that make children a top priority. Please visit <http://www.ounce.org/capevents.html> to find an event in your area.

The United Way Center for Financial Stability

With the economy's recent challenges in mind, the United Way Center for Financial Stability was founded to assist working individuals and families in their journey toward achieving long-term economic independence and stability.

In response to the one-third of Americans who face difficulty in meeting their long-term plans due to financial hardships, the UW Center of Financial Stability utilizes a personalized approach and a three-step framework to assist clients in realizing longstanding financial stability. These three steps are: increasing income (step 1), building savings (step 2), and gaining and sustaining assets (step 3). Each client receives an initial financial assessment and a customized financial stability plan.

Additional services include:

- *Financial education workshops, seminars and trainings
- *Free tax preparation and benefits enrollment

Contact us

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2555 Ponce de Leon
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Coral Gables,
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305.646.7220
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Key West,
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www.elcmdm.org

Join Our Mailing List!

- *Credit counseling and debt management
- *Employment services - job training, interviewing skills and resume building
- *Individual development accounts
- *Home ownership services
- *Small business services
- *Other asset building services

To seek financial assistance and/or to learn more detailed information, please visit <http://www.unitedwaymiami.org/financialstability.asp>. Assistance is available in English, Spanish and Creole.

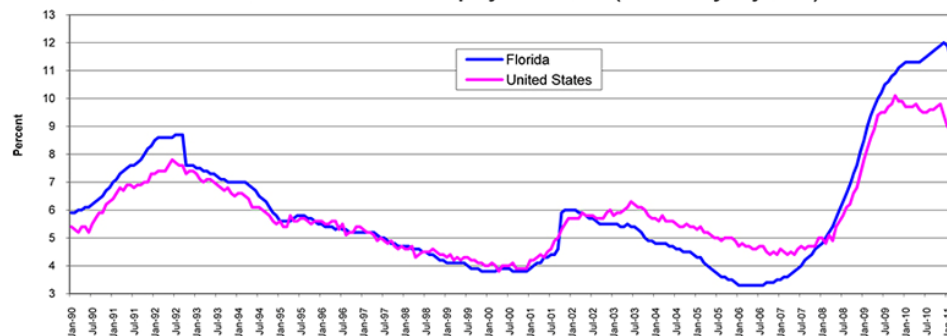
United Way Center for Financial Stability
11500 NW 12th Avenue
Miami, FL 33168 305-688-3551
Monday - Friday
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Florida Releases its Employment Figures for February

For February 2011, Florida's Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) reported that the State's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 11.5 percent which is slightly below the January 2011 rate of 11.9 percent.

Agency for Workforce Innovation Director Cynthia R. Lorenzo believes that while Florida's unemployment figures are still unacceptably high, the positive signs that employers are beginning to hire and consumers are feeling more optimistic about the State's economic recovery show the workforce system is getting back on the right track.

United States and Florida Unemployment Rates (seasonally adjusted)



Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics Center, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

To read more details about the current state of Florida's labor force, please visit http://www.floridajobs.org/publications/news_rel/LMS%20Release%2003-25-11.pdf.

*Source: Agency for Workforce Innovations (AWI) press release, "Florida's February Employment Figures Released - March 25, 2010, 10:00 AM."

Children's Movement of Florida

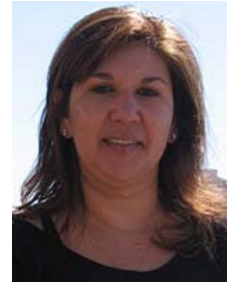


The Children's Movement of Florida is a statewide, citizen-led, non-partisan campaign with the objective of educating political, business and civic leaders - and all parents in Florida - about the urgent need to improve the way we care for our children, making the well-being and education of our youngest and most vulnerable

citizens, Florida's highest priority. To learn more about the movement, please visit www.childrensmovementflorida.org.

Team Member Spotlight

Magda Castro has been serving the Coalition as the finance fiscal analyst since July 31, 2009. In her position Magda's primary duties include reviewing and processing all invoices for payment. "With the help from my co-workers in Finance, my position has become more efficient since we've been able to streamline most of my daily duties," she says.



Prior to her tenure at the Coalition Magda was employed by Norwegian Cruise Lines for 13 years. Initially she began her tenure as an accounts payable clerk and within a year she was promoted to team leader. Through hard work and perseverance Magda continued her ascent up the professional ladder culminating in her final position at the cruise line as the accounting department's finance assistant.

At the ELC Magda is inspired by the important work the organization accomplishes for young children and the community, "Knowing our organization helps families and that we can address their needs--I'm grateful to be a part of the great team at the ELC. It's been a great privilege to be a part of distributing books to the children at our centers and seeing their smiles. I look forward to many more years here," Magda says.

In her time outside of the office Magda enjoys spending quality time with her family.

Miami-Dade County News Briefs

School Readiness (SR)

ASQ Screening Reminder

Providers: Please be sure you are returning your ASQ screenings to Miami-Dade County in a timely manner. ASQs are due back at the end of respective children's birthday months (for example, if a child's birthday is May 9th then his or her ASQ must be returned by May 31st). If you have any questions about the required screening of each School Readiness child, please contact one of the following:

North area - Ivy Martinez at 305-260-1240 ext. 244

South area - Iliana Acosta at 305-270-2913

Early Learning Coalition - Bethany Sands at 305-646-7248

Provider Contracts Must be Returned by May 15th

The 2011-12 Provider Contracts (Agreements) have been mailed to providers. The contracts are due back to the Coalition by May 15. A new policy approved by the Coalition Board of Directors requires all providers receiving school readiness funding to be licensed as of July 1. The exceptions to this requirement are Miami-Dade County Public School programs that are operated and supervised by school personnel; religious exempt programs and informal providers. Additional information on this policy and an additional new policy for SR providers may be found at http://www.elcmdm.org/our_services/SchoolReadiness.html. For specific

questions regarding licensing, please contact the Department of Children and Families Child Care Licensing office at 305-377-5509.

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

VPK Summer 2011

If you are a current VPK provider for the school year program all you need to submit are AWI VPK Forms 11 A & B. If you are a *first-time applicant* this school year you must submit AWI VPK Forms 10, 11 A & B, and the Provider Agreement. We strongly encourage providers to submit their applications by email to their respective VPK certification specialists at the ELC. Further instructions will be provided at a later date as we develop your online account.

VPK School Year 2011-2012

ALL VPK providers for the school year program should submit the new AWI VPK Forms 10, 11 A & B, Provider Agreement, and Attachment A. We strongly encourage providers to submit their applications online. Look for more information in the next news flash regarding the application period and upcoming trainings on completing the forms.

Final 2009-2010 Readiness Rates Have Been Released

2009-2010 final Readiness Rates can be viewed at <http://vpk.fldoe.org>. Any provider with a score below 140 is listed as an LPP. To complete an acknowledgement of your score, please log into the website using your ID and password. Please note that the survey is only regarding your VPK program and not your business as a whole.

You will also be required to complete an improvement plan. You can obtain additional information and/or clarification by attending one of the following meetings for Low Performing Providers. Please contact Elizabeth Machado at 305-646-7220 ext. 229 to reserve a space at one of the sessions.

Trainings for LPPs

LPPs must attend a training at the Early Learning Coalition's Coral Gables office. Please consult the schedule below for the session that is most appropriate for you and your center.

First-time LPPs

Wednesday, March 30th - 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 30th - 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Year 2 LPPs (2 years in a row)

Thursday, March 31st - 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Year 3 LPPs (3 years in a row) and ALL others

Tuesday, April 5th - 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Tuesday, April 5th - 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Monroe County News Briefs

[2011-2012 VPK School Year Registration begins in April](#)

Registration for the upcoming 2011-2012 School Year Program begins with a series of round-ups:

Saturday, April 9; 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Wesley House Family Services, 1304 Truman Ave., Key West

Saturday, April 16; 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Murray Nelson Government Center, 102050 Overseas Hwy., (MM 102 Bayside), Key Largo;

Saturday, April 16; 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn Express, 13201 Overseas Hwy., (MM 53 Oceanside), Marathon

Ongoing registration for the School Year Program begins on Monday, April 18 at all Wesley House locations from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Monday - Friday in Key West and Tavernier; Tuesday and Thursday in Marathon). Children must be 4-years-old on or before September 1, 2011 to participate in the 2011-2012 School Year Program.

2011 VPK Summer Program Registration is Underway

Registration for the Summer Program is ongoing at all Wesley House locations from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Monday - Friday in Key West and Tavernier; Tuesday and Thursday in Marathon). Children who have not previously participated in VPK and will be entering kindergarten in the upcoming 2011-2012 school year are eligible for the Summer Program. The 300-hour Summer Program runs from June 14 - July 26 from 7:45 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

The three potential Summer VPK sites are Key Largo School, Marathon High School and Poinciana School in Key West. Parents must provide transportation.

For additional information, please contact Mary Williams at 296-5557 or Val Taylor at 809-5000.

Early education. Lifelong success.

