

In This Issue

[Important Announcements](#)

[Children's Movement of Florida](#)

[Team Member Spotlight](#)

[Miami-Dade County News Briefs](#)

[Monroe County News Briefs](#)

[Quality Counts](#)

Quick Links

[Early Learning Coalition](#)

[VPK](#)

[Agency for Workforce Innovation](#)



Upcoming Board and Committee

[Forward to a Friend](#)

[Donate Now](#)

ELC News Alert

Issue 8
August/September 2011

President's Message



Dear Friends:

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 2011-2012 School Year! This time can be both exciting and challenging for parents, students and providers alike. As kids feel the excitement of their first day of school, they will be making new friends and meeting new teachers.

We have ahead of us another opportunity to mold young minds through quality care and quality education. Together we can give our children the tools they need to become the stars we know they can be.

The fall is a hectic time for childcare providers, but it is also a time for new adventures and new opportunities for growth. The Early Learning Coalition is by your side to help you stay focused on what is most important to all of us: making high quality education a reality for our children. Education is a group effort. Remember that a strong partnership between educators and parents can make the transition back into the classroom a smooth one. Assure parents that teachers and staff are always available to address any concerns that may come up about their child.

The ELC wishes you a happy, healthy and successful school year.
Sincerely,

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

Meetings

Board

Tuesday, Sept. 6

8:00 a.m.

Board Room

Program &
Strategy

Tuesday, Sept. 27

3:30 p.m.

Board Room

Finance

Wednesday, Sept.

28

8:00 a.m.

Board Room

For a complete list of upcoming Coalition meetings and events, please visit our website at www.elcmdm.org

Contact us

Miami-Dade
2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., 5th Floor
Coral Gables,
FL 33134
305.646.7220
305.447.1608 (fax)

Monroe
1100 Simonton
Street, Suite 1-204
Key West,
FL 33040
305.296.5557
305.296.5588 (fax)

www.elcmdm.org

Join Our Mailing List!

Important Announcements

President & CEO of The Children's Trust Nominated to Presidential Advisory Commission



Please join the Early Learning Coalition in congratulating Modesto Abety-Gutierrez, President and CEO of The Children's Trust, for his nomination to the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. This appointment represents a great honor for our entire community and our State. Mr. Abety-Gutierrez will be working collectively with other members of the commission in order to address the education issues faced by Hispanic-American students.

In a press release from the White House, President Barack Obama stated, "I am grateful these accomplished men and women have agreed to join this Administration, and I'm confident they will serve ably in these important roles. I look forward to working with them in the months and years ahead."

Congratulations, Mr. Abety-Gutierrez!

Mayor and Commissioner Visit Centro Mater Head Start Program

On August 23, Evelio Torres, CEO of the Early Learning Coalition, joined Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez, Commissioner Rebeca Sosa and members from various Miami-Dade agencies on a visit to Centro Mater East in Little Havana. The purpose of the visit was to examine the operation of independent Head Start agencies with good ratings on the Quality Counts Star rating scale.

The Early Learning Coalition is pleased to work with agencies like Centro Mater who take the early education of the community's children seriously.



Visitors to Centro Mater East included Dr. J. Abilio Rodriguez, program administrator at Centro Mater West; Jane McQueen, director of the Head Start/Early Head Start Program; Miriam Roman, executive director of Centro Mater Child Care

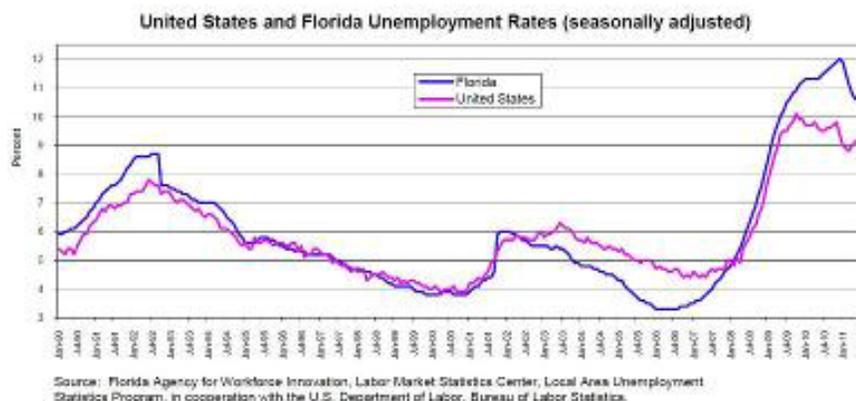
Services; Madelyn Rodriguez, program administrator at Centro Mater East; Miami-Dade Commissioner Rebeca Sosa; Julie Edwards, director of the

Community Action Agency; Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez; and Evelio Torres, president and CEO of the Early Learning Coalition.

For more information, call 305-545-6049 or visit catholichealthservices.org/. To read the complete story, visit <http://www.miamiarch.org/>.

Florida Releases its Employment Figures for July

For July 2011, Florida's Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) reported that the State's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 10.7 percent. This rate is 0.8 lower than last year's rate of 11.5 percent. The nationwide unemployment rate for July is 9.1 percent. Monroe County has the lowest unemployment rate in the state with 6.6 percent.



To read more about the current state of Florida's labor force, please visit <http://www.floridajobs.org/>.

*Source: Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) press release, "Florida's July Employment Figures Released - August 19, 2011; 10:00 AM."

Poverty Symposium Reminder

SAVE THE DATE

SYMPOSIUM ON POVERTY

"Engaging Key Partners in Addressing Poverty"

Thursday, October 6, 2011

8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Miami-Dade College, Wolfson Campus Auditorium

300 Northeast 2nd Avenue

Miami, Florida 33132

Presented by



Community Action Agency & The Florida Association for Community Action

For additional information call (786) 469-4600

The ELC will sponsor 10 providers to attend the Symposium on Poverty. To be considered, please email your name, center name, and contact information to info@elcmdm.org no later than the close of business on Wednesday, September 28th. Please make sure that "Symposium on Poverty" is typed in the email's subject line. The first 10 applicants will be sponsored by the ELC and will be notified shortly thereafter.

CEO Visits Children's Christian Schoolhouse

On August 26, Evelio Torres and Blythe Robinson from the Early Learning Coalition visited the Children's Christian Schoolhouse, a high quality, faith-based childcare and education center located in Hialeah. At an invitation from Ileana Echevarria, the center's owner and director, the ELC representatives visited and took books to distribute to the children. They were able to meet the children from the center, who are the reason we all work so hard to make a difference.



Mr. Torres was presented with a banner created by the children as a special token of their appreciation for his dedication.

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

Oderay "Ody" Veliz joined the Early Learning Coalition team on Nov. 15, 2010. Her position as the Quality Counts Implementation Coordinator allows her to work with team members and field staff to perform the actual star ratings on Quality Counts programs and ensure excellence in facilities. Ody loves working in the field and cites volunteering at ELC events as one of her favorite things about her job. "I really enjoy going out to the schools to read to the children."



Before joining the ELC, her previous positions included coaching educational specialists for RCMA; directing Head Start programs; working as a curriculum specialist; and helping students prepare for the GED as an instructor at Barry University. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education and hopes to one day receive a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership. "Education is very important to me," she said. "It's the one thing they can never take away from you."

When she's away from the office, Ody loves spending time with her family. She enjoys playing basketball, football, hide-and-seek and swimming with her three boys, aged 16, 7 and 2.

Miami-Dade County News Briefs

School Readiness (SR)

Last Call for ASQ-3 Trainings and Kit Distribution

Beginning October 2011, all providers serving School Readiness children will need to have their ASQ-3 kits in order to fulfill their Provider Agreement mandate.

The final trainings will be one-hour long, for owners/directors ONLY and conducted at the Early Learning Coalition as follows:

September 7th, Wednesday:

English

8:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

Spanish

1:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.

September 8th, Thursday:

Spanish

8:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

English

1:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.

September 9th, Friday:

English

8:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

Spanish

1:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

3:00 p.m.

For questions, please email Bethany Sands at bsands@elcmdm.org or call 305-646-7220 ext. 281. NO registration necessary. Address:

Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd. /5th Floor
Coral Gables, FL 33134

Monroe County News Briefs

2011-2012 Monroe VPK School Year Program Update

Twenty-five (25) public school and private providers have been approved to offer VPK during the 2011-2012 VPK School Year Program. We are pleased to add a new VPK provider, Kreative Kids Christian Academy in Marathon, which is offering two VPK classrooms.

Demand for the VPK program continues to grow as the number of Certificates of Eligibility issued to date totals 498 (compared to 448 issued at the same time last year). Several VPK providers have additional VPK classrooms this program year to meet the demand. Parents who have not already registered their children for VPK should be directed to the nearest Wesley House office in their area.

For additional information, please contact 296-5557 or 809-5000.

Children's Movement Officials Meet with Monroe County Steering Committee

Dave Lawrence, Sergio Bendixen and regional coordinators recently met with the Monroe County Steering Committee at Wesley House in Key West hosted by local chair, Alan Eckstein. This was the 17th and last stop in the statewide Listening Tour to discuss the next steps for the Children's Movement. Attendee John Padgett, Key West resident and member of the State Board of Education, announced that board's approval of two recommendations to support VPK (i.e., establishing a pre-assessment during the VPK program year and provision of educational materials to VPK providers) that will be taken to the legislature. Monroe County attendees also discussed issues of concern locally and how to best align with the Children's Movement. A high priority in Monroe County continues to be working toward the establishment of a Children's Services Council. Dave Lawrence offered his support and assistance in working toward this goal.

To read the Children's Movement blog , which includes a message from Monroe County Superintendent, Dr. Jesus Jara, visit [the Children's Movement Blog](#).

Quality Counts

QC Team Welcomes New Member



Christina Sabater was recently hired as the QC Navigator for the Quality Counts Program at the Early Learning Coalition. In her role, she will serve as a guide for providers for various processes including application/selection, self-study, and yearly renewal. In addition, she will assist in generating baseline ratings, star ratings, and star rating certificates. Her main objective is to facilitate the timely completion of all QC related activities.

Upon completing her B.A. in Psychology at Benedictine University, she moved from Chicago to Miami and began working with the Miami-Dade County State Attorney's Office. She spent a year serving as a Victim/Witness Counselor in the Misdemeanor Domestic Violence Unit. Prior to joining the Quality Counts team at the ELC, Christina was hired to supervise a temporary licensing project with the Department of Children and Families in Miami-Dade County. This fall she plans to enroll in the MBA program at Nova Southeastern University and continue working in the non-profit sector.

Since working with the Early Learning Coalition, Christina believes that the work we do for the children of Miami-Dade County will positively impact their transformation into adulthood. This is something she is very proud to be a part of: belonging to an organization that makes it a point to change the course of children's lives for the better.

"I look forward to working with and getting to know everyone involved in this program," she said. "Quality Counts serves a great purpose in our community and I am very proud to be a part of it."

Early education. Lifelong success.

