



Early Learning Coalition
of Miami-Dade/Monroe



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Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

Nominating
Thursday, March 3
4:00 p.m.
ELC Room TBD

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ELC News Alert

Issue 3
March/April 2011

President's Message



Dear Friends,

Children's Week - "One Voice for Children" is an activity-filled, week-long reminder to our elected officials and advocates about the importance of making Florida's children our top priority. At the end of March through the beginning of April, supporters throughout our state including non-profits, corporations, government agencies, and philanthropic foundations come together as a collective voice on behalf of children and their well-being. Each event promotes the strengthening of Florida families while also highlighting the many statewide programs and local efforts that advance children's health, safety, and future success.

I encourage your attendance at our own celebratory event for children which will be held on Friday, March 18th at 4:00 p.m. at the Miami Children's Museum. I hope you will join us in our continued advocacy of Florida's children.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership.

Sincerely,

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

Board
Monday, March 7
8:00 a.m.
ELC Board Room

Program & Strategy
Tuesday, March 29
3:30 p.m.
ELC Board Room

Finance
Wednesday, March 30
8:00 a.m.
ELC Board Room

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

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

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

Audit
Wednesday, April 27
9:00 a.m.
ELC 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

Important Announcements

[Learn How to Effectively Navigate the Juvenile Court System: Read Judge ELC Board Member Cindy Lederman's Book, *Child-Centered Practices for the Courtroom & Community*](#)

Child-Centered Practices for the Courtroom & Community: A Guide to Working Effectively with Young Children & Their Families in the Child Welfare System addresses the most effective ways to work through the court-system, enhance child-parent relationships, and plan interventions for vulnerable young children and their families. As you already know, the ELC serves many families involved with the child welfare system and works closely with the Department of Children and Families, and Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, our local community-based care (CBC) lead agency.

The book was written by three child safety and well-being experts:

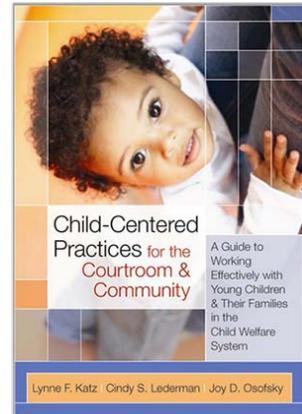
- **Lynne F. Katz, Ed.D.**, Research Assistant Professor, University of Miami Department of Psychology with a secondary appointment in Pediatrics; Director, Linda Ray Intervention Center, University of Miami
- **Judge Cindy S. Lederman**, Circuit Court Judge, Eleventh Judicial Circuit, State of Florida
- **Joy D. Osofsky, Ph.D.**, Department of Pediatrics and Psychiatry, Louisiana State University

The authors have been collaborating for more than a decade on local and national efforts directed at improving child welfare practice and outcomes for abused and neglected children. Please read *Child-Centered Practices for the Courtroom & Community* and recommend it to others who may be interested in this important subject matter and Judge Lederman's work.

[ELC Partner, University of Florida College of Education's Lastinger Center for Learning, is Honored with the Distinguished Program in Teacher Education Award](#)

One of the ELC's many great partners; the University of Florida College of Education's Lastinger Center and School of Teaching and Learning was recently honored by the Association of Teacher Educators with the 2011 Distinguished Program in Teacher Education Award for its job-embedded master's degree program.

This is the first time a graduate education program for practicing teachers has received the award. Don Pemberton, Director of the UF Lastinger Center for Learning, believes the honor is a significant recognition for colleges of education and their impact on reinventing graduate studies and professional development, as well as improving teacher practice and student learning particularly in vulnerable schools. Warm congratulations to the UF College of Education and Lastinger Center!



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305.296.5588 (fax)

www.elcmdm.org

Join Our Mailing List!

Enjoy a Fun-Filled Hoops Experience Your Kids Will Never Forget!

Check out the Harlem Globetrotters when they make a stop on their 2011 world tour at the American Airlines Arena on Sunday, March 13, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. Save up to \$8 per ticket when you visit the AAA Pre-Ticket Sale Store at <http://heatlife.com/websell/Default1.aspx?promcode=hggroup118&ms=Group-corp&Password=SSentinel>.

The National Women's Law Center Tax Credits Toolkit

The National Women's Law Center has released a tax credits toolkit intended to educate families on their eligibility to acquire benefits and assistance for the 2011 tax filing season. Comprehensive information on tax credits, particularly for low- and moderate-income families is provided in this valuable resource guide. To download and review the toolkit, please visit our website at <http://elcmdm.org/downloads/TaxCreditToolKitNWLC.pdf>.

Celebrate Children's Week with the ELC and Miami Children's Museum

When: Friday, March 18, 2011

Time: 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Where: Miami Children's Museum - 980 Macarthur Causeway, Miami 33132

Special Guests/Participants: City of Miami Fire-Rescue and Todo Frio Ice Cream

Help Raise Awareness of Child Abuse Prevention by Hosting your Own Event

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. 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.

Community activities and public policies are emphasized that prioritize prevention from the start to ensure child abuse and neglect never occur. One important aspect of the campaign is highlighting local community events and activities that make children a top priority. To promote and share these events and provide a forum in which event details and information can be communicated to those in your community, please visit http://www.ounce.org/CAP_local_event.html. Once your event is submitted, it will be posted under the Prevent Child Abuse Florida - Pinwheels for Prevention section. You may post your event at any time prior to the event date. If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Patterson at 850-921-4494 ext. 141 or email her at cpatterson@ounce.org to access an online form.

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
- *Credit counseling and debt management
- *Employment services such as 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.



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

Mercy Castiglione is a certified public accountant (CPA) and has been serving the Coalition as its controller for the past two and a half years. In her position she oversees all audits, prepares the organization's monthly financial statements, and confirms that invoices are submitted accurately and all bills are paid in a timely manner. Moreover, Mercy ensures that the ELC remains in compliance with applicable rules and regulations.



Mercy takes pride in her work as a leader in the finance department, "We have streamlined processes to become more efficient and effective with our daily

operations and ensure all our files are audit-ready," she says.

Prior to her tenure at the Coalition, Mercy was a controller at HBO Latina America Group and an auditor at Deloitte and Touché. It is her work at the ELC however that is particularly gratifying, "I love that we are able to assist families every day and make a difference in the children's lives. The ELC is truly a great place to work."

In her time outside of the office Mercy enjoys spending time with family and friends as well as traveling.

Miami-Dade County News Briefs

School Readiness (SR)

ELC Board Approves Two New Important Provider Policies

Two new important provider policies have been approved by the Coalition's Board. One policy requires that School Readiness providers in Miami-Dade County receiving federal and state funds must become licensed by July 1, 2010.

The other is the Child Safety and Licensing Policy which states that providers who have one Class I violation or two Class II violations within a twelve-month period will be notified of possible suspension from the School Readiness program. Both policies are implemented to ensure that only the highest quality care, education, and safety are provided for our children. To learn more details about each policy, please visit www.elcmdm.org.

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

Download the Newly Revised VPK Provider Agreement and Forms 10 & 11

The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) has revised VPK-Forms 10, 11, and the Provider Agreement. These forms will be used starting with the summer VPK applications and are currently available on our website at <http://www.vpkhelp.org/policies-and-forms/forms.html>.

VPK Trainings

Florida VPK Assessment Training - 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

March *VPK Assessment* classes are currently full. Please consult the ELC website and/or future news alerts for upcoming training dates in April and May of 2011.

2008 VPK Standards Training - 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

North Dade

St. John the Apostle School, 479 East 4 Street, Hialeah
- Tuesday, March 22, 2011; Reference #1145

South Dade

Miami-Dade College, 500 College Terrace, Bldg. G, Room 206, Homestead
- Thursday, March 24, 2011; Reference #1151

Special Instructions: Training begins promptly at 5:30 p.m. Anyone arriving at 5:45 p.m. or later will not be admitted--NO EXCEPTIONS. The course is \$10.00 and must be paid for at the time of registration. Please go to Step 4 when registering. VISA or MasterCard are accepted. Please note that cash and/or checks will not be accepted at the training, and there are NO REFUNDS. You will receive 0.3 CEUs for your attendance. Thank you for your cooperation.

Monroe County News Briefs

Save the Date

Quarterly Provider Meeting

Saturday, March 12th @ 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
San Pablo Church Hall, 550 122nd Street Ocean, Marathon

The ELC, Wesley House Family Services and the Florida Keys Association of Early Childhood Educators are sponsoring the quarterly provider meeting which will include the following:

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. - Birth to Three Standards Training (for new teachers and/or as a refresher)

11:00 - 11:30 a.m. - Advocacy Training by ELC Monroe Board Member, Alan Eckstein (learn what you can do to stay informed and be proactive during this critical legislative session)

11:30 - 12:00 p.m. - Lunch (provided by the Florida Keys Association of Early Childhood Educators)

12:00 - 2:00 p.m. - Directors Meeting (important and timely School Readiness and VPK program and policy updates will be provided)

To RSVP or for additional information, please contact Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000.

Pyramid Model Trainings for Preschool Teachers Scheduled in March

The ELC's Monroe office and our partners, Wesley House and the Monroe County School District's Head Start and Child Find programs, are sponsoring a three-part series of Pyramid Model trainings to continue the year-long focus on preventing and addressing challenging behaviors in the classroom. The series will be offered Keys-wide with topics to include: the importance of teaching social and emotional skills; developing friendship skills; enhancing emotional literacy; identifying feelings in self and others; controlling anger and impulse; and developing problem solving skills. The series will be free to providers and all materials will be provided.

Training Locations/Dates/Times:

Upper Keys: St. James Children's Center - 87500 Overseas Highway, Islamorada

Dates/Times: Thursday, March 24; Friday, March 25; and Thursday, March 31 @ 6:15 - 7:30 p.m.

Marathon: Community Co-op Preschool - 550 122nd St. (next to San Pablo Church)

Dates/Times: Tuesdays - March 22, March 29 and April 5 @ 6:00 - 7:15 p.m.

Key West: Wesley House - 1304 Truman Ave.

Dates/Times: Wednesdays - March 23, March 30 and April 6 @ 6:00 - 7:15 p.m.

The deadline to register is March 10th. To register or for additional information, please contact the ELC's Monroe office at 305-296-5557.

*Note: A Pyramid Model training for infant/toddler teachers will be held in May (date TBA).

Quality Counts

Achieve Accreditation for your Child Care Center or Family Child Care Home

Did you know that nearly 400 child care centers and family child care homes in Miami-Dade County are accredited? Have you been thinking about achieving accreditation for your center or home, but you just don't know where to begin? Are you in the self-study process and just need extra assistance and support to finish the process?

If your center is located in Miami-Dade County, the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and its partner agencies can provide accreditation-support for your program. If you have never been accredited or if your accreditation has expired or will expire within the next 12 months, help is available. An accreditation specialist will serve as a guide throughout the process and direct you to valuable resources regardless of the stage at which your program currently participates. In addition, you will have access to any of the approved Florida Gold Seal accreditation associations. For more information and to receive assistance in your journey towards accreditation, please call the Quality Counts team at 305-646-7242 or email oveliz@elcmdm.org.

Quality Counts Adds Classroom Assessment Scoring System Pre-K (CLASS Pre-K)

Quality Counts is in the process of adding CLASS Pre-K to assess learning environments with a focus on measuring the quality of interaction between adults and children. Before implementing a full-scale collection, the ELC is conducting a pilot study in order to compare the two measures of classroom quality. Devereux will conduct a CLASS Pre-K and an Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) simultaneously in one classroom per program. Also, subscale scores will be compared with the goal of understanding at which point the measures may overlap (if at all) and at which point they may differ. The pilot-project sample consists of 41 programs, each one a voluntary participant. Thirty programs were selected randomly, stratified according to star level (baseline or star rating) and region (North or South). The remaining eleven programs were a targeted sample, selected based on high need (located in a highly underprivileged area and possessing a high percentage of children enrolled in School Readiness). Data collection is expected to be completed in early March of 2011. Please stay tuned for more details!

Attend a Healthy Living Training

Healthy Living Trainings address ways to prevent obesity and live a healthier lifestyle. Sessions are presented in both English and Spanish and are a perfect

opportunity to earn in-service credit hours. Breakfast will also be provided. For a schedule of current session dates and to learn the list of training locations, please visit <http://www.elcmdm.org/downloads/ObesityTrainingMarch2011.pdf>.

Quality Counts is on the Move!

Quality Counts, Miami Dade's Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) is pleased to announce the selection of Cohort 7 North!

Cohort 7 North is a diverse array of 16 early care and education programs whose providers attended an orientation workshop at the ELC on Wednesday, February 16th. Early Learning Coalition Senior Director of Programs Blythe Keeler Robinson welcomed the providers and congratulated them on their voluntary commitment to quality improvement.

Several Quality Counts community partners participated in the event including: Family Central, Inc.; The Devereux Foundation, Inc.; United Way Center for Excellence in Early Care and Education; Quality Counts Career Center; STEPS program; Curriculum Learning Communities; and Communities Putting Prevention to Work. These programs comprise just a few of the resources and opportunities available to Quality Counts program participants.

Additional cohort selections are scheduled for the current calendar year. If your application is in the system, now would be a great time to update your information. For providers who have not yet applied, the Coalition gladly accepts online applications at any time. Please call the Quality Counts hotline at 305-646-7242 or email us at qualitycounts@elcmdm.org should you have any questions. To update your application or apply for the first time, visit <http://www.elcmdm.org/QualityCounts/Applications.html>.

Investing in Early Childhood Education Benefits Children through Early Adulthood as well as Society

The Child-Parent Center (CPC) is an early intervention program in Chicago public schools that has provided preschool and school-age services (up to age 9) to low-income children and families for four decades. The children who attended this program early on were followed throughout their lives to determine whether the preschool program improved their outcomes later in life.

Several studies have shown the benefits of attending the CPC preschool and school-age programs. Recently a team of researchers examined whether the cost of the early intervention program was a "return on investment" because of the many resulting positive outcomes and fewer negative outcomes compared to a group of similar children who did not receive CPC services.

With information on 1,400 individuals at age 26, Dr. Arthur Reynolds and colleagues found that those who attended the CPC preschool program were *more likely* to graduate from high school, complete more years of education, and possess health insurance coverage. They were also *less likely* to be retained in school, require special education services, experience child maltreatment or out-of-home placement, experience symptoms of depression, abuse drugs, and smoke cigarettes. Moreover, they were *less likely* to have been arrested, incarcerated, or convicted of a felony crime. Although educational outcomes were not the focus of this study, the children who attended the CPC preschool also showed

increased achievement in reading and math up to high school compared to the group of similar children who did not attend the CPC.

Because of the many positive and few negative outcomes these children experienced over their lifetime (through age 26), the cost-benefit analysis showed that the CPC preschool program was associated with a return of *\$10.83 per dollar invested* in the program-an 18% annual return-representing the financial benefit of effective preschool to society. These savings were mainly due to higher income and tax revenues, and lower costs of the criminal justice system. The savings were significantly larger for boys than for girls, as well as for families with more risk factors or who lived in a high-poverty neighborhood. A return of \$3.97 per dollar invested (10% annual return) was found for the school-age program, and a return of \$8.24 (18% annual return, equal to that of the preschool program) was found for extended program attendance (when a child attended both the preschool and school-age programs, from age 3-9).

Reference

Reynolds, A. J., Temple, J. A., White, B. A. B., Ou, S., & Robertson, D. L. (2011). Age 26 cost-benefit analysis of the Child-Parent Center early education program. *Child Development, 82*, 379-404.

Early education. Lifelong success.

