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Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

Nominating
Wednesday, July 11
3:00 p.m.

Finance
Tuesday, July 24
8:30 a.m.

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ELC News Alert

Issue 7 - July 2012

President's Message



Dear Friends:

The Board of Directors of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe requests your participation at one of our upcoming community forums.

The purpose of the meetings is to discuss the many upcoming changes to Florida's Early Learning System and how those changes impact providers, parents, other community partners.

The community forums will be held in Miami-Dade and Monroe during the months of August and September.

Topics will include:

- Florida's new web-based Early Learning Information System (ELIS). This new system is significantly different than the current and antiquated data system and will make use of the latest technology to improve services to children, families, providers and the community at-large.
- A status report on our community's Quality Rating Improvement System "Quality Counts." We will address system enhancements, how soon additional providers will be able to join the program, and the progress that has been made to date.
- The impact of the just-released state funding allocation formula on the Miami-Dade and Monroe communities. Under the formula, our community is projected to lose \$22,334,067 in funding over the next six years that will be reallocated to other counties. This number represents approximately 23 percent of our total School Readiness budget and more than 6,000 children. The first year's reduction of \$3,771,397 became effective with the state fiscal year that began July 1, 2012.

We remain committed to working with Florida's Office of Early Learning, members of our business community, early care and education providers, our school system, local government, and other community partners to ensure that as many children as possible receive a high quality early education while their families become economically self-sufficient.

Program & Strategy

Tuesday, July 24
2:00 p.m

Board

Monday, August 6
8:00 a.m.

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!](#)

More information about the dates, times and locations of these forums will be released soon. Please visit www.elcmdm.org for updates.

For more information about the community forums, please call 305-646-7220 or visit our Website.

I look forward to meeting you at one of the community forums.

I remain at your service,

Evelio C. Torres

President & CEO
Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

Important Announcements

Ann Scott Visits United Way of Miami-Dade

On June 27, representatives of Miami-Dade's early learning community welcomed Florida's First Lady Ann Scott to the United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education. Mrs. Scott visited the childcare center to learn more about its mission to elevate the quality of early childhood education. Along with community partners from the United Way, the Early Learning Coalition, The Children's Movement and more, Mrs. Scott toured the facility and participated in a reading of *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!* with one of the classrooms.



Mrs. Scott also shared her Love.Read.Learn! Baby Journal with the center's infants and their families. Love.Read.Learn! is a literacy campaign focused on teaching parents how they can use specific literacy skills as valuable teaching moments for their children. The Baby Journal includes reading and learning tips as well as child wellness information.

To view more photos from the visit, please visit the [United Way of Miami-Dade's Facebook page](#).

Family Summer Kick-Off Event Attracts Thousands of Families

The first Family Summer Kick-Off, hosted by the Early Learning Coalition and the Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade, took place on June 9. Thousands of families attended the free event, which featured classes in early pregnancy, childbirth, home safety, early literacy, choosing quality childcare and more. Early childhood partners gathered to promote childhood health, education and safety for the families of Miami-Dade at the Miami-Dade County Fair and Expo Center.



A special thank you to Dr. Mel Jurado, Director of the Office of Early Learning, and all the local and state legislators who attended the event in support of early childhood education.

Thank you to Manny Fermin, CEO of Healthy Start, for putting together such a great event for all the families we serve.

For photos from the event, please visit the [Early Learning Coalition's Facebook page](#).

Florida Statewide Early Care and Education (ECE) Workforce Study

We are pleased to share an exciting opportunity to contribute to the State of Florida Workforce Study. The Children's Forum is commissioned and funded by Florida's Office of Early Learning to conduct a statewide early care and education (ECE) workforce study this year. This is the first study of its kind conducted in the state since 2001. The study will collect comprehensive information about the ECE workforce to influence policymakers and build a quality early care and education system in the state of Florida.

In the coming weeks, a representative group of childcare providers throughout Florida will be selected to participate. Selected programs will receive information from the Children's Forum on how to participate in the study, which will include surveys and interviews. We look forward to this opportunity to

provide meaningful information on Florida's early learning workforce. If you are contacted to participate, we ask for your cooperation. All participation is voluntary.

For more information about the Early Care and Education Workforce Study, please contact Melissa Clements, director of research and programs, at 850-487-6351 or mclements@flchild.com.

Changes to Approved Holiday Schedule

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe has updated the list of 12 Standard Holidays for the 2012-2013 contract year. The holiday schedule has been modified, at providers' requests, to substitute Christmas Eve for Columbus Day.

Please click [here](#) for a full list of the 2012-2013 holidays.

Deadline to Submit VPK Contracts

The deadline to submit the 2012-2013 VPK Contract is Friday, July 20, 2012. If the contract is not received by the July 20 deadline, your VPK program cannot begin in August.

The VPK Contract must be submitted electronically using the Provider Portal at <http://providers.elcmdm.org>.

Provider Survey

On March 19, 2012, the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe mailed out the School Readiness/VPK notification letters. Included in these letters was a provider survey. These surveys were sent out in an effort to receive your feedback and improve our services where needed. By submitting a survey, you will be added into our provider survey raffle for the opportunity to win a prize!

If you have not faxed in your provider survey, please do so to 305-447-1608. If you would like a copy of the survey or have any questions, please contact Yesenia Reyes at yreyes@elcmdm.org.

Read to Learn Book Club Offers Free Books to 3-Year-Olds

All 3-year-olds in Miami-Dade County are eligible to receive a free book each month through The Children's Trust



Read to Learn Book Club. By registering for the program, children can receive books in the mail each month for a year of fun and learning.

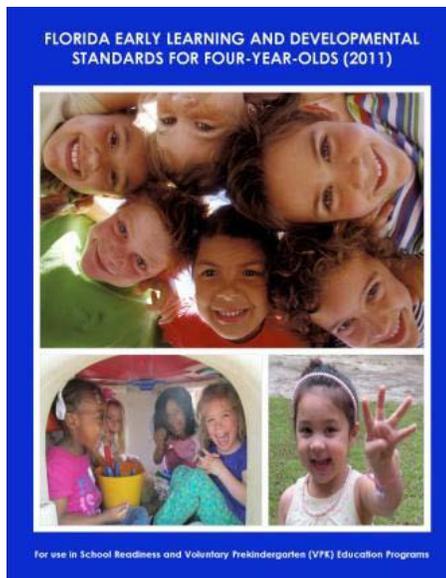
"No child should want for a book in Miami-Dade County, and this book club is just one tool in the comprehensive Read to Learn strategic plan," Modesto E. Abety-Gutierrez, president and CEO of The Children's Trust, said in a statement.

The Read to Learn Book Club is funded and administered by The Children's Trust, the Miami-Dade Family Learning Partnership and the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe.

To sign a child up for the program, complete the [registration form online](#).

To read more about the program, please visit the [Miami Herald's website](#).

Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2011) Manual Available Online



The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2011) Manual is now available to purchase online. These standards create a common framework and language for early childhood programs serving Florida's 4-year-olds; identify the skills and knowledge children should have before they enter kindergarten; and provide supportive instructional strategies for teachers.

To purchase your copy, please visit www.flstandardsfouryearolds.com. Acceptable forms of payment include credit cards, checks, money orders and purchase orders.

For assistance with the website or with placing an order, please contact PBD

Worldwide at 1-855-352-7826 or by email at orders@flstandardsfouryearolds.com.

Please check the [ELC Calendar](#) for upcoming training dates.

ASQ-3 Online System

Effective last October, Miami-Dade County established an online system in which all ASQ-3s must be entered into the its website. Miami-Dade County staff offers trainings to assist providers in accessing the County website; offers assistance inputting the AQS-3 child data online; and has provided training to over 800 providers including individual trainings at actual centers.

As of January 2012, the County has not been mailing packages and all data must be entered online via its website.

If the ASQ-3s are not completed by the due date, providers will be delinquent.

Delinquent providers are in jeopardy of losing funding as per the Provider Agreement (page 10) which clearly states that "each child must receive an annual screening." These ASQ-3 screenings must be completed and submitted by the end of each child's birth month.

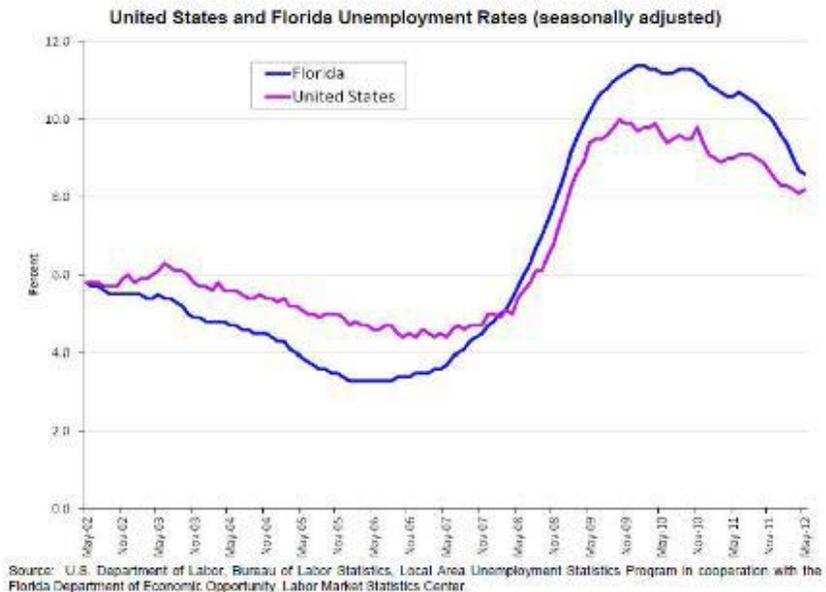
If you need assistance with the online system, call Evelyn Jordan at 305-514-6098.

If you still need an ASQ-3 kit, visit the Early Learning Coalition on weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. to pick up your kit. We are located at 2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Fifth Floor, in Coral Gables.

For more information, call Bethany Sands at 305-803-1272.

Florida Releases its Employment Figures for May

Florida's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 8.6 percent in May 2012, the lowest since December 2008 when it was 8.2 percent. There were 794,000 jobless Floridians out of a labor force of 9,262,000. Nationally, the unemployment rate was 8.2 percent in May.



The South Florida region saw nearly 5,000 jobs added in May. However, the unemployment rate increased slightly. With 22 months of consecutive job growth, the long-term economic trend in the region is demonstrating signs of recovery.

The unemployment rate for Miami-Dade County was 9.8 percent, 2.5 percentage points lower than the rate a year ago. Monroe County was 4.9 percent, the lowest percentage in the state, and 1.3 percentage points lower than the year-ago rate of 6.2 percent.

For more information, read the entire press release from [South Florida Workforce](#) or the press release from the [Department of Economic Opportunity](#).

VPK Assessments

The Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Assessment will be used as the pre- and post-assessment to be administered by each private and public provider of the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program for the 2012-2013 program year. The assessment was developed in collaboration with the Florida Center for Reading Research and will be presented for approval by the State Board of Education in Summer 2012.

All private and public VPK providers will receive a free VPK assessment kit for each of their VPK classrooms by the end of August 2012. Providers should participate in professional development on *How to Administer the Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Assessment* to ensure the proper administration of the VPK assessment measures. This instructor-led professional development includes information on the development of the VPK Assessment and how to administer, record, and score each of the VPK assessment measures.

Participants will also receive an overview of the VPK Assessment Online Reporting System. The VPK Assessment Online Reporting System was created to provide VPK teachers with a user friendly tool to track children's progress in attaining the skills in the Standards for Four-Year-Olds. Teachers may use this information to plan lessons that meet the individual needs of all children. All private and public VPK providers will be required to enter each child's assessment scores into the Online Reporting System after the VPK Assessment is administered for Assessment Period 1 and Assessment Period 3.

Training is available through the DOE VPK Regional Facilitators and other DOE-Approved trainers from early learning coalitions and school districts across the state.

To register for instructor-led training opportunities in your area, private and public VPK providers on probation should visit the Florida Department of Children and Families' [website](#). Providers on Probation who chose the DOE-Approved Staff Development Plan must participate in instructor-led professional development to receive credit on their DCF transcript.

If you have questions regarding the implementation of the VPK Assessment as the pre- and post-assessment, please feel free to contact Michelle Sizemore, Director, Program Standards and Professional Development, at Michelle.Sizemore@fldoe.org or 850-245-9658, or Gary Sabitsch, Director of Accountability and Quality Assurance, at Gary.Sabitsch@fldoe.org or 850-245-9412.

Child Care Executive Partnership Program Available to Providers

The Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) program for early care and education providers in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties allows centers to provide care for an employee's child at the center and be partially reimbursed for that care by the Coalition.

Similar to the School Readiness grant, this program serves center employees with low to moderate wage-earnings who qualify for the program. The eligibility requirements are the same, with the exception that they can earn up to 200% of the federal poverty level.

Increased employee morale and productivity, among other benefits, make this an exciting work-life benefit for your employees.

If you are interested in participating for the 2012-2013 CCEP Program, please contact Yesenia Reyes at yreyes@elcmdm.org or 305-646-7220 ext. 292

New Funding Available for South Florida Schools

The Health Foundation of South Florida's Healthy Eating Active Communities program provides funding to build healthy communities in South Florida. The goal is to create environments that are supportive of healthy lifestyle behaviors. **SPARK**, an evidence-based program, is listed as a recommended program for Healthy Eating Active Communities.

Those interested in applying for the grant must submit preliminary proposals by August 13. To apply, you must be a nonprofit, local or state governmental agency serving Miami-Dade, Monroe and/or Broward counties. The award amounts range from \$20,000 to \$200,000.

Please visit the Healthy Foundation of South Florida's website to learn more about the Healthy Eating Active Communities program and to review the eligibility criteria and get started on your grant application.

Chapman Partnership Seeks Donations of School Supplies for its Homeless Children



The Chapman Partnership is requesting the community's help in donating school supplies for its youngest residents - homeless children who need to get the school year off to a strong start.

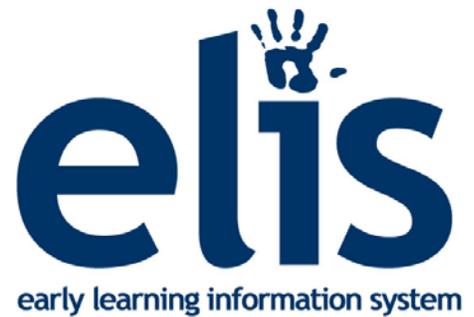
For more information or to donate, visit chapmanpartnership.org or call 305-329-3003.

ELIS: Early Learning Information System

The Early Learning Information System (ELIS) will soon replace the Enhanced Field System (EFS).

ELIS Implementation Highlights

- ELIS will be used to administer a \$1.1 billion early learning budget where currently no interconnected technology system exists.
- A feasibility study was completed Dec. 2008 by a third-party vendor estimating a cost savings of \$28 million a year due to enhanced efficiencies in program operations.
- The \$22 million a year in cost savings could potentially be used to fund 7,000 more children every year in the School Readiness program.



Benefits of ELIS include the following:

- Streamlines administrative processes including attendance tracking, eligibility processing, and provider payments.
- Reduces potential fraud and overpayments.
- Provides data sharing capabilities between educators, parents, providers, and state agencies.
- Provides parents with easy online access to child care resource and referral information along with a wealth of child development and early education information.

For more information, please visit the Office of Early Learning's [website](#).

**Source: Florida's Office of Early Learning: http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/SysDev_ELIS.html*

Children's Movement of Florida

Voices of Florida

We all have a story, a story that defines us. It is our collective story, our challenges and our triumphs that inspire a movement. Floridians from all walks of life have joined together with an understanding that the future of our state rests on the well-being of our children.



Visit [The Children's Movement website](#) to read their stories and share your own.

Monroe County News Briefs

Florida Keys AHEC Receives \$99,947 Grant to Address Childhood Obesity



Florida Keys AHEC has received a grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation to provide obesity prevention programming to preschool children through a comprehensive nutrition, physical activity and interactive health education program. FKAHEC is partnering with the Early Learning Coalition, Wesley House Family Services and Head Start in Monroe County to provide a wealth of OrganWise Guys curriculum materials, lesson plans, CDs, videos, and hard cover books. Recently, three training sessions were held Keys-wide, attended by 50 directors and 3- and 4-year-old teachers to receive their classroom materials and prepare to implement the program at their centers.

Child Car Seat Installation/Inspection Events Offered Keys-Wide

The Florida Keys Healthy Start Coalition and the Florida Department of Transportation are offering monthly child car seat installations and inspection events for any parent or guardian in Monroe County. For a small donation, car seats may be available on an as-needed basis. For dates, times and locations, please check our [Website](#).

Monroe County Health Department's Campaign to Safeguard Infants from Whooping Cough

The Health Department is starting a new campaign to "cocoon" infants from the threat of whooping cough by vaccinating all adults who come in contact with them (parents, grandparents, health care providers, child care workers, etc.). According to Information Officer Chris Tittle, infants are particularly vulnerable during their first nine months when their immune systems are not fully protected from this disease. Although whooping cough may present in an adult as a mild cough, it can present in an infant as a cough so violent that the infant cannot breathe. Health Department personnel are available to come out to childcare centers to speak to staff and parents. The walk-in clinic and contact information is listed on the [poster](#).

Registration Continues for August Florida Child Care Professional Credential Training Program

There is still time to register for the 10-month FCCPC training program sponsored by Wesley House Family Services. The Lower Keys class begins on August 21 with

instructor Jeanne Askins. The Upper Keys class begins on August 22 with instructor Nilda Bernaldez. For information on available scholarships or to register, please contact Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000.

New Online ASQ-3 Trainings Scheduled in August

Providers will learn how to enter their children's ASQ-3 screening results, eliminate making copies and scanning or mailing to Wesley House. The training is hands-on on the computer, and you will receive your own login, password and "How To" manual. This new system will save you time and give you better information on your children's development. Directors are asked to attend, along with a secondary representative, and bring their own laptops, if available.

The training dates, times and locations are scheduled at the following locations:

- Friday, August 3, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.: Wesley House Family Services, 1304 Truman Ave., Key West
- **Saturday, August 4**, 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.: Wesley House Family Services, 2796 Overseas Hwy. Suite # 202, Marathon
- **Saturday, August 4**, 2 p.m. - 4 p.m.: Wesley House Family Services, 175 Wren St., Tavernier

For additional information, please contact Gerella Kenniston at 305-809-5000.

Klaus Murphy Foundation Teacher Scholarship Recipients Complete FCCPC Training Program

Sponsored by the ELC through a Klaus Murphy Foundation grant, seven (7) Key West child care teachers recently completed the 10-month Florida Child Care Professional Credential (FCCPC) training program offered by Wesley House Family Services. All seven teachers have been awarded their FCCPC Staff Credential from the Department of Children and Families.



Pictured: Back Row (L to R): Jerlyn Matthews, Sunbeam Christian School; Lori Wilder, Sunbeam Christian School; Kunia Rodrigues, The Learning Center. Front Row (L to R): Yovanna Ramos Castro, Inez Martin CDC; Nicole Rhodes, Sunbeam Christian School; Julia Ann Parker, Sunbeam Christian School; and Andrica Rhodes, Inez Martin CDC.

Quality Counts

"Enhancing Our Minds...in 2012": 20th Annual Florida Family Child Care Home Association State Conference

The Quality Counts Family Child Care Home Technical Assistance Team attended the 20th Annual Florida Family Child Care Home Association (FFCCHA) State

Conference Friday, June 21, to Saturday, June 23, in Clearwater Beach, Fla. The team presented on Miami-Dade's Quality Rating Improvement System first thing Friday morning and then attended workshop sessions on ELIS, Office of Early Learning updates, Reducing Risk in FCCHs, Literacy, VPK Resources, Brain Development (presented by ELC's own Bethany Sands), Marketing for FCCH, Exploring Nature, and Conscious Discipline.



Pictured are Lucretia Jones, Ody Veliz, Georgia Thompson, Renata Lossano and Paloma Lopez-Barcena from the ELC's Quality Counts team.

The Conference Luncheon on Friday afternoon featured Dr. Mel Jurado, director of the Office of Early Learning, as well as Brenda Ives, the first president of FCCCHA, as keynote speakers. George Cretokos, mayor of Clearwater, presented a proclamation, proclaiming June 23, 2012, Family Child Care Provider Day. The ELCMDM and other coalitions were presented with a certificate for sponsoring providers to attend the conference. One of Miami-Dade's local FCCH Association chapters, South Florida Home Child Care Association, was recognized as Outstanding Chapter of the Year. The award was accepted by the association's president, Arlene Lambert. The conference continued with additional workshops and the general session, provider celebration, and annual general meeting through Sunday, June 24.

**From the Desk of Suzette Frazier, Regional Safety Program Manager
Department of Children and Families Child Care Licensing**

This section of the News Alert is designed to inform and remind providers of the licensing requirements of the Department of Children & Families. This licensing corner is a new and innovative way for providers to stay connected to childcare licensing and will serve as a guide to new regulations, information about recalls, licensing updates and much more!



Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) held its end of the grant Provider Appreciation Ceremony at the Double Tree Hotel on Tuesday, June 26, 2012. More than 400 licensed child care providers and community partners attended the event.

CPPW staff and community partners were honored for their commitment to the Make Healthy Happen in Miami program and their dedication to the community and the children we serve.

The program received 5 proclamations from elected officials for cities across Miami-Dade. CPPW also received recognition from Senator Fredericka Wilson commending the Florida Department of Children and Families by declaring June 26, 2012 as "DCF-Make Healthy Happen Miami Day." The CPPW efforts have been recorded in the Congressional Record under the 112th Congress, Second Session, Vol. 157, No. 28.

Early education. Lifelong success.



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Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe | 2555 Ponce de Leon Boulevard | Suite 500 | Coral Gables | FL | 33134