



Happy Thanksgiving



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Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

Legislative
Wednesday,
November 21
8 a.m.

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ELC News Alert

Issue 11
November 2012



President's Message

Dear Friends,

I hope you, your families and staff have a wonderful holiday. We are so grateful to be able to count you as our partners. Happy Thanksgiving from the entire Early Learning Coalition team.

Sincerely,

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

ELC Board Room

Program & Strategy
Tuesday, November 27
1 p.m.
ELC Board Room

Finance
Wednesday,
November 28
8:30 a.m.
ELC Board Room

Board
Monday, December 3
8 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
Key West,
FL 33040
305.296.5557
305.296.5588 (fax)

www.elcmdm.org

Join Our Mailing List!

Important Announcements

Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! 2013

Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! 2013 is scheduled for the week of January 14-18, 2013. Join the Just Read, Florida! Office, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), Florida's Office of Early Learning, school districts and Early Learning Coalitions in promoting the enjoyment of reading for children and adults.

For more information, visit the [Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!](#) page on the Just Read, Florida! website.



KidsWell Florida: Building a Legacy of Healthy Children



The Children's Movement of Florida, The Children's Trust of Miami-Dade, Florida CHAIN, the Florida Center for Fiscal and Economic Policy, Florida Children's Healthcare Coalition and several other health advocates have collaborated to bring KidsWell Florida, an initiative to make sure children have affordable quality health care coverage.

This three-year project aims to develop and promote policy changes that will reduce the number of uninsured children in our state by drawing from federal health care reforms, the private insurance industry, and KidCare, Florida's subsidized or low-cost insurance program for children.

Visit the [KidsWell website](#) to view "Florida's KidCare Toolbox," which will give you our state's history on the topic.

Help the ELC Raise Funds through TICKETS fore CHARITY



The Early Learning Coalition is participating in the TICKETS fore CHARITY program, a unique fundraising initiative designed to improve the quality of life for children and families in the communities where PGA TOUR and Champions Tour tournaments are held. By purchasing tickets to this event, you will be directly affecting the funding of programs through the Early Learning Coalition. One hundred percent (100%) of the proceeds of tickets bought on behalf of the ELC will come straight back to our organization.

To buy tickets, visit the [TICKETS fore CHARITY website](#). The promotional code for the ELC is **BOGEY**. Please note that the code is case sensitive.

Department of Children and Family Services' Public Hearing

The Department of Children and Family Services, Child Care Program Office, will hold a **public hearing at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 27, 2012**, at the offices

of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, 2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Coral Gables.

The public hearing is being held to address proposed rule changes to Chapter 65C-22, Florida Administrative Code. This is the section that contains child care licensing rules.

The proposed rule language reflects revisions to the following areas:

- Food service
- Indoor square footage
- Background screening
- Fire safety/emergency preparedness
- Planned activities
- Crib safety
- In-service training
- After school programs that do not require licensure by DCF

To review the full proposed rule, please click [here](#).

Frequently Asked Questions about the VPK Assessment Online Reporting System

What is the VPK Assessment Online Reporting System and what is its purpose?

The VPK Assessment Online Reporting System was developed to provide teachers with a user-friendly tool to track children's progress in attaining the skills in the Standards for Four-Year-Olds, so that teachers may use this information to guide instructional decisions in the VPK classroom.

The Online Reporting System allows teachers to create reports and parent letters that show each child's performance on the assessment measures. Teachers may also access instructional strategies and resources that are aligned with the Standards for Four-Year-Olds.

If a child starts a 540-hour school year (e.g., August- April or May) VPK program after AP1 (e.g., late October or early November), is the teacher required to administer the VPK Assessment and enter the assessment scores on the VPK Assessment Online Reporting System?

Providers are required to administer the VPK Assessment and enter the scores for each VPK child for AP1 and AP3. If a child enrolls after AP1, then the VPK provider may choose to administer the assessment and use the scores to guide instructional decisions. However, the provider is not required to enter the scores for children who enter the VPK program after an Assessment Period has passed.

Are there instructions on how to access/use the VPK Assessment Online Reporting System?

Yes. Instructions are available beginning on page 19 in the VPK Assessment Teacher's Manual - Third Edition and on the Bright Beginnings homepage at <https://www.brightbeginningsfl.org> in the Announcements section at the bottom of the page.

What should providers do if children withdraw from the center/school before the end of the program year?

Providers are required to administer the VPK Assessment *and* enter the scores for each child for AP1 and AP3. If a child withdraws after AP1, the VPK Provider should check the **Did Not Participate** box for that child on the **Assessment Data** tab for the remaining Assessment Periods.

For answers to additional questions, please click [here](#).

Understanding the Florida VPK Assessment Scores

Below please find the cut-off scores for the VPK Assessment. Use this information to plan activities for your children.

Florida VPK Assessment Scores				
AP1	Assessment Measures			
	Print Knowledge	Phonological Awareness	Mathematics	Oral Language/Vocabulary
Exceeding Expectations	10 and above*	11 and above*	15 and above*	19 and above*
Meeting Expectations	8-9*	8-10*	12-14*	16-18*
Below Expectations	0-7*	0-7*	0-11*	0-15*

*These scores are not yet linked to the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS). Therefore, these scores are suggestive of how children will score on the FLKRS but have not yet been linked to that measure. Final scores will depend on the collection of additional data and ongoing benchmarking studies.

LEGEND

Exceeding Expectations: It is likely the child will score "Ready" for kindergarten on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)

Meeting Expectations: It is likely the child will score "Ready" for kindergarten on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)

Below Expectations: It is likely the child will **NOT** score "Ready" for kindergarten on the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS)

ASSESSMENT MEASURES

Print Knowledge Measure: Assesses the child's ability to recognize letters or words, and his/her knowledge of letter names (both upper and lower case) and the sounds they make

Phonological Awareness Measure: Is the awareness and manipulations of the different sounds in a word. The Phonological Awareness measure assesses the child's ability to:

- Blend (put together) a word if it is broken up into smaller sounds or syllables (e.g., /p/ + ig = pig)
- Blend a compound word (e.g., dog + house = doghouse)
- Recognize the remaining word when part of the stimulus word is taken away (e.g., campfire - camp = fire).

Mathematics Measure: Assesses early numeracy skills across three different areas: counting skills, numerical relations skills, and arithmetic reasoning skills

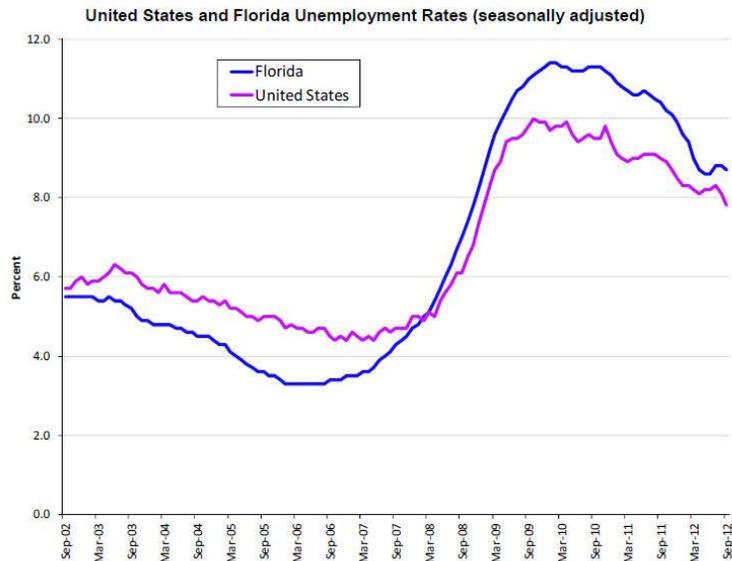
Oral Language/Vocabulary Measure: Assesses a child's expressive language and receptive language and targets the child's knowledge of adjectives, verbs, verb

tenses, prepositions, and nouns

Florida Releases Its Employment Figures for September

Florida's seasonally adjusted unemployment dropped to 8.7 percent in September 2012, down 0.1 percentage points from August. There were 808,000 jobless Floridians out of a labor force of 9,300,000. Nationally, the unemployment rate was 7.8 percent in September.

The unemployment rate for Miami-Dade County was 8.7 percent, 0.8 percentage points lower than the rate a year ago. Monroe County remained at 5.0 percent, still the lowest percentage in the state.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program in cooperation with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Labor Market Statistics Center.

For more information, visit the Department of Economic Opportunity's [website](#).

Child Care Regulation Training Application Update

The Child Care Regulation Program has upgraded the Child Care Training Application (CCTA) Training Portal used statewide by child care personnel to register, complete and track their training. Aimed at achieving an improved user experience, the updated application provides more security and independence for the users through the new enhancements.

This portal now allows users to log in using an email address instead of a Social Security number or student ID; acts as a single access point to all functions within the CCTA Training Portal; increases security and privacy of training records; and more.

To access the new CCTA Training Portal, visit www.myflorida.com/childcare and click on **CCTA TRAINING PORTAL COURSE REGISTRATION/VIEW TRANSCRIPT**.

If you need assistance, please contact the Child Care Training Information Center at 1-888-352-2842.

Provider Update Forms Due Before Dec. 31, 2012

Due to the implementation of the Early Learning Information System (ELIS), Florida's Office of Early Learning strongly encourages all child care providers to

complete and submit the annual Provider Update Form, to Miami-Dade County's Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) by **Dec. 31, 2012**.

The Provider Update Form is an important resource that is used during the referral process to help parents select quality child care.

Keep in mind that market rate increases are granted to providers who submit the provider update form before the deadline.

To view and print the Provider Update Form, click [here](#).

For questions or to send your Provider Update Form via email, contact Alain Zamora at 305-514-6207 or alzmora@miamidade.gov. Forms can also be faxed to 305-514-6226, ATTENTION: Alain Zamora.

News from the South Florida Workforce

In Oct. 2012, job postings compiled by the Help Wanted OnLine data series from The Conference Board increased over the year, totaling 264,636 openings, a gain of 28,140 openings. This represents an 11.9 percent increase. Job postings in Florida decreased over the month compared to September 2012 by 3,939 openings. For more information, please see the [Help Wanted OnLine October 2012 Statewide Summary](#).

Consumer confidence among Floridians remained near a post-recession high in October, falling one point to 79 from September. Perceptions of personal finances now compared to a year ago fell three points to 61 while expectations of personal finances a year from now fell two points to 84. Expectations of U.S. economic conditions over the next year rose three points to 84, the highest since the recession began in December 2007. To view the entire Florida Consumer Confidence Index for October 2012, please click [here](#).

New Process for DCF Background Screenings

On Aug. 1, 2012, the DCF Background Screening Office became centralized and is no longer emailing or mailing clearance letters to child care providers.

Providers must now register to get access to the DCF web portal where they will have 24-hour access to view and print the letters they need. Once registered, the provider will see an applicant's screening results, which will be available for 90 days.

DCF has established a BGS Help Desk, where providers can either reach a representative or a voice mail message. The voice mail message will give providers another link to immediate help if they cannot get through to the Help Desk.

To obtain more information and to register for access, please visit the DCF Background Screening [website](#) or call the DCF BGS Help Desk at 850-717-4454.

There is also a **User Guide** on the website. You can find this by clicking on **Background Screening Web Portal Login** then clicking on **User Guide**.

Please call your local DCF Child Care Regulation office if you need further assistance.

ASQ-3 Online System Available to Child Care Providers

Effective October 2011, Miami-Dade County established an online system in which all ASQ-3s must be entered into 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 their centers.

As of January 2012, the County has not been mailing ASQ-3 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 "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.

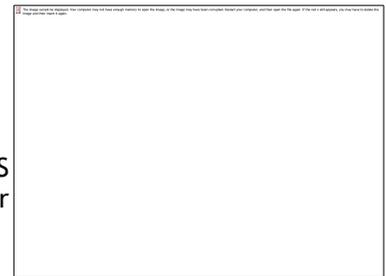
If you need assistance with the online system, please call 786-469-4517 to schedule an appointment for individualized training at your facility. If you still need an ASQ-3 kit, please call 786-469-4517.

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

ELIS: Early Learning Information System

ELIS FAQs

As we get closer to the official launch of the ELIS system, here is some useful information for providers.



Q. Is the ELIS solution fully web-based?

A. Yes. ELIS is a fully web-based Microsoft® product that will use browser plug-ins (like the Adobe® Reader® for PDF files).

Q. What technical requirements must early learning coalitions and providers have in place to use ELIS?

A. Almost any Internet-capable computer can use ELIS. For a complete list of technical requirements, visit <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/hh699710>.

Q. Must providers access ELIS through the portal?

A. Florida's Office of Early Learning will not require providers to use the portal. ELIS should not create barriers to program participants. We expect that training and understanding the benefits of using the portal will encourage many providers to use ELIS over the next year.

Q. Will ELIS have a help desk?

A. Yes. Hewlet Packard (HP) will support a Tier 2 (mid-level) and Tier 3 (advanced) technology help desk for coalitions and Florida's Office of Early Learning. This help desk provides support when the system does not appear to be functioning correctly. Florida's Office of Early Learning will initially establish a business process help desk in partnership with HP when coalitions using ELIS run into exceptional cases like, "How do I get a joint custody child case to update correctly when the child is in care two weeks out of the month in one coalition and the other two weeks in the month at another coalition?"

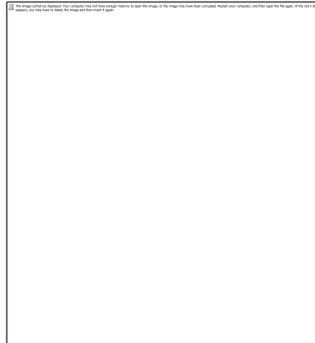
Q. What benefits will ELIS have for providers?

A. ELIS will reduce paperwork and increase communication between Coalitions

and their providers. ELIS has new case management capabilities that include electronic notifications and forms. Additionally, customers, custodians and providers will be able to get information and submit information electronically through websites called portals 24/7. They can access information and services without ever picking up the phone or leaving their house. ELIS will also reduce operating costs of managing child care services by preventing payment errors and reducing operating costs.

For more answers to the most frequently asked questions about ELIS from the Office of Early Learning, please visit their [website](#).

ELC Team Member Spotlight



Christine Hughes joined the Early Learning Coalition team in December 2010. In her current role as Research & Evaluation Analyst, she works mainly with the Quality Counts team analyzing data to evaluate how the program is working to improve the quality of care and education in Miami-Dade County. Christine brings a critical research background to the Coalition's program services, helping inform policy related to early learning services and the children served in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.

Christine earned her Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology at the University of Miami, where she was an Institute for Education Sciences Predoctoral Fellow. Her research focused on the development of children at risk for poor developmental outcomes. Her role at the Coalition has allowed her to use her research expertise to inform policy and practice in the community, which she states has been both professionally and personally fulfilling.

"Quality early education sets us on a path to success, and if enough children have access to it, we can change our community for the better," Christine said.

Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her husband and beautiful 8-month-old baby girl.

Monroe County News Briefs

Lights On Afterschool 2012



Trina Rodriguez, ELC Monroe, and the children creating a tissue paper mural.

The Boys and Girls Club and Wesley House Family Services hosted the Lights On Afterschool event at Bayview Park in Key West on Oct. 18. This event promotes

the importance of quality after school programs for children. The ELC's Monroe staff provided an engaging activity for the children to create a tissue paper mural.

Monroe County Celebrates Children's Day



Children and parents enjoyed the ELC's sensory tables.

On Oct. 28, the ELC's Monroe staff participated in Children's Day at Bayview Park in Key West, the largest children's event of the year. The ELC's booth was very popular with the preschoolers. Sensory tables filled with colored rice, "insta snow" and water kept the children actively engaged in play. Parents were provided with helpful developmental guides and resources on services available through the ELC and our partners.

2012- 2013 Klaus Murphy Foundation Grant Awards Provide Child Care Assistance

The ELC has received two grants to provide subsidized child care services to economically disadvantaged children in the Key West-Stock Island area. The first grant, totaling \$13,736, targets school age children, between the ages of five and nine. The second grant award, totaling \$15,005, targets preschool children ages birth to five.

Klaus Murphy Foundation grant funds are used as a dollar-for-dollar match to draw down state Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) funds. Approximately ten school-age children and seven preschool children on the current wait list may be assisted for a period of up to one year through these grant funds. The ELC greatly appreciates the Klaus Murphy Foundation trustees for their continued generous support for the children and families in this community.

Save the Dates:

Monroe County Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday, Nov. 20, 1 p.m.

Gato Building, 1st Floor Conference Room, 1100 Simonton St., Key West

Please join ELC board members, CEO Evelio Torres, ELC staff and our community partners as we discuss important state and local information of interest and concern to our early education and care provider community. The impact of the state's new School Readiness funding formula and recommendations from the November 5th Annual ELC Board Meeting and Strategic Planning Retreat will be discussed. Provider and community partner participation is strongly encouraged in person or via conference. The agenda with the conference call information will be distributed shortly.

Quarterly Provider Meeting in Key West
Saturday, Dec. 1* (*Please note the date change)
Location: To Be Determined
Additional Details to Follow

Competency Testing
Marathon: Dec. 15, 2012
Key West: Mar. 9, 2013
Marathon: June 8, 2013

For additional information or to register, please contact Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000.

CPR Training
Spanish Session, Marathon: Dec. 8, 2012
English Session, Marathon: Feb. 9, 2013
Spanish Session, Tavernier: April 6, 2013
English Session, Tavernier: May 18, 2013
For additional information or to register, please contact Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000.

Quality Counts

ELC Hosts CLASS™ Training Session

The Early Learning Coalition recently hosted a Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) overview for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) staff entering the Quality Counts program. CLASS™ is an observational tool that provides a common lens and language focused on what matters: the classroom interactions that boost student learning.

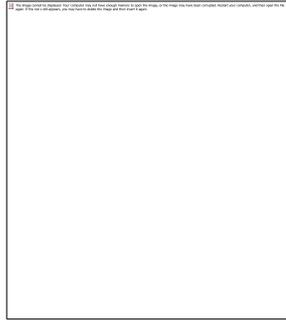
MDCPS will begin actively participating in Miami-Dade's Quality Counts Rating Improvement System this year. This aligns with their mission of providing the highest quality education and fostering a suitable and safe environment for young children.



Trainer Myrna Hennessey educated a group of MDCPS staff on the CLASS™ observation tool. Riverside Elementary School, Orchard Villa Elementary School, Lindsey Hopkins Technical Education Center and Silver Bluff Elementary School were represented during the training, along with family support workers and curriculum specialists.

Licensing News and Updates

**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.

The Child Care Regulation Office is pleased to announce the new and improved Child Care Training Application Training Portal (CCTA Training Portal). The CCTA Training Portal is used statewide by child care personnel to register, complete, and track their training and is a vital part of Florida's child care system.

The updates to the CCTA Training Portal are aimed at improving the user experience by providing more security and independence for the users through new enhancements and features. The new enhancements include, but are not limited to:

- New log-in process utilizing email addresses instead of Social Security numbers or student ID
- Single access point to all functions within the CCTA Training Portal
- Increased security and privacy of training records

The Florida Department of Children and Families Child Care Regulation Program Office is committed to ensuring the well-being of every child served in the state of Florida. Please review details on the new enhancements and instructions for logging in in preparation for the launch, and forward on to anyone applicable. Should a provider need assistance, please contact the Child Care Training Information Center at 1-888-352-2842.

Early education. Lifelong success.



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