



Early Learning Coalition
of Miami-Dade/Monroe



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Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

Provider Open Forum Conference Call

Thursday, April 12
10:00 a.m.
786-389-5135 or
866-502-2994.

When prompted for the code, dial 802#.

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ELC News Alert

Issue 4
April 2012

President's Message



Dear Friends:

Reading can take you anywhere.

That's a message we love to share with young children and their parents because early literacy can be the gateway to all kinds of learning adventures. Inspiring young minds to develop a love for reading and books is one the best and least expensive gifts we can make. It can also be the key to success in later life.

I hope you will take part in celebrating School Library Month during April and National Library Week from April 8 to April 14. A visit to a library is a great and free family activity. Libraries are also a great place to gather with friends, research all kinds of topics and enjoy wonderful and free community programs. Pass along the great gift of reading and the tradition of libraries to the young ones in your life. Show them the joy and adventure they can find in the pages of a book.

For a full listing of public libraries, please visit the Miami-Dade Public Library System's [website](#). To find your local library in Monroe, please visit <http://www.keyslibraries.org/>.

Sincerely,

Evelio C. Torres

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

NOTE: Please refer to the Legislative Updates sidebar for important information that may affect your business.

Program & Strategy

Tuesday, April 24
3:30 p.m.

Finance

Thursday, April 26
8:00 a.m.

Board

Monday, May 7
8:00 a.m.

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

Legislative Updates

Capitol Connection

Check this page for weekly updates during the Regular Legislative Session.

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

ELC's Blythe Robinson to be Honored by Legacy Magazine



Blythe Robinson, the Early Learning Coalition's Senior Vice President & Chief Programs Officer, has been selected by Legacy Magazine as one of South Florida's 50 Most Powerful Black Professionals of 2012.

Established in 2004, Legacy is a news/business publication serving South Florida's black professional community with insightful articles and information on business, careers, politics, lifestyle, culture and social commentary.

Blythe will be featured in the April/May 2012 issue of Legacy Magazine. The issue will be inserted in The Business Monday section of the Miami Herald and distributed throughout South Florida. There will be a reception in May to honor all 50 professionals featured.

Congratulations, Blythe! We are so proud to have you on our team.

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](#).

ASQ-3 Online System Up and Fully Implemented

Providers: In the month of February, 497 providers had ASQ-3 screenings due. 245 of the 497 submitted ASQ-3 online. That's 50 percent of the providers! **WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?** By submitting online, you are ensured you will never be late or delinquent in submitting each child's assessment.

If you need assistance with the online system, please call Evelyn Jordan at 305-

514-6098.

As stated on Page 10 of the Provider Agreement, 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. After this deadline has passed, you are considered delinquent in fulfilling your Provider Agreement responsibility.

If you still need an ASQ-3 kit, please come by the Early Learning Coalition between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. daily to pick up your kit. We are located at 2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Coral Gables, FL, 33134.

For ASQ-3 information, please call Bethany Sands at 305-803-1272.

The Warmline number is 305-260-1260.

Grand Opening of Le Jardin Community Center, Inc.



On March 28, Le Jardin staff and students and prominent community figures celebrated the Grand Opening of the organization's latest center. This is their first LEED Certified Green Head Start Facility. The facility has 7,300 sq. feet of teaching space and enough room for 200 students.

Octavio Verdeja, the ELC's Board Chair, spoke alongside Commissioner Lynda Bell, District 8; Stephen Shelley, Homestead Councilman; Julie Edwards, Miami-Dade County, Community Action and Human Services Head Start; and Osberto De Leon, Policy Committee Vice Chair. Le Jardin has served thousands of families and provided high quality early childhood education, disability services, nutrition and parental support since 1986. Guests were treated to a tour of the building and refreshments.

We wish Eddie Berrones, CEO of Le Jardin, the best of luck with this latest endeavor.

Assistance Available to Achieve NAEYC Accreditation

NAEYC accreditation is achievable! The ELC can help your program obtain what many consider the "Gold Standard" in accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).



Accreditation is a process through which child care programs voluntarily meet specific standards to receive endorsement, credit, or recognition from a professional agency. Providers seek accreditation for a variety of reasons: recognition of offering high quality services, higher-tiered reimbursement rate, marketing to parents and funders, etc. Deciding to complete a Self-Study and seek accreditation is just one decision. Deciding 'which' accreditation to seek is another. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is the most recognized accrediting body for early childhood education in the nation. In Miami-

Dade and Monroe Counties, there are nearly 90 programs for young children accredited by NAEYC (NAEYC accredits center-based care).

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, listed as Quality Counts Accreditation Facilitation, is a recognized NAEYC Accreditation Facilitation Project. NAEYC defines accreditation facilitation projects as projects that support quality improvement efforts of child care centers, preschools, and other early childhood programs and, in an effort to raise program quality, provide technical assistance and support to programs working on NAEYC Accreditation.

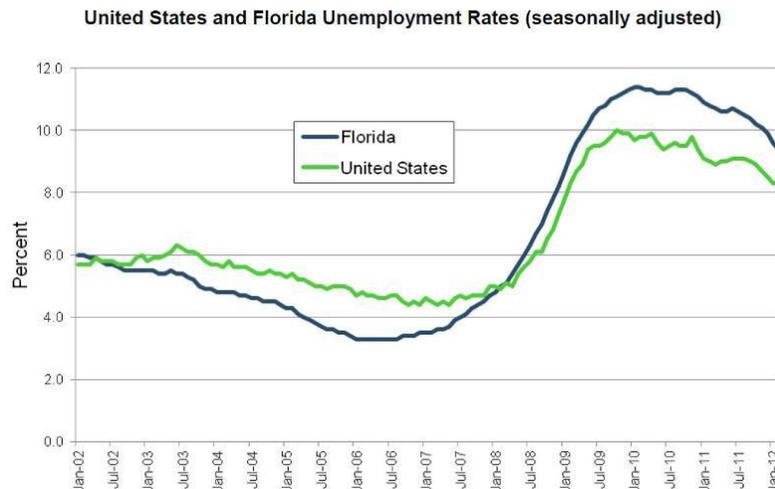
With assistance and support from Accreditation Specialists, programs can and do excel in the process. The ELC provides in-depth face-to-face assistance and materials and/or programmatic support for NAEYC accreditation.

For more information on NAEYC Accreditation and what sets it apart, go to <http://www.naeyc.org/>.

For assistance with NAEYC Self-Study and Accreditation, please contact Carol Brogan, Quality Counts Implementation Manager, at cbrogan@elcmdm.org. Watch future News Alert publications for other accreditations the ELC provides assistance with.

Florida Releases Its Employment Figures for February

Florida's unemployment rate continues to decline, reaching 9.4 percent for the February rate. This is the lowest rate since February 2009. The state's unemployment rate has dropped 1.7 percentage points from 11.7 percent in December 2010.



Florida's success in job creation, which includes 10,100 jobs created in February, is seeing a positive impact on the state's unemployment compensation totals. This means more Floridians are finding jobs and reducing the financial burden on taxpayers and businesses.

"Governor Scott recognizes the importance of changing how Florida can help businesses be more successful while also helping Floridians find the jobs they need," said DEO Interim Executive Director Cynthia Lorenzo.

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

Approved Standard Reimbursable Holiday Listing

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, in concurrence with the Miami-Dade County Department of Human Services Child Development Services Bureau, has released the list of 12 Standard Holidays for the 2012-2013 contract year.

Please visit our website for a [full listing of the approved holidays](#).

Family Counseling Services Offering Parent Trainings

Family Counseling Services of Greater Miami is hosting two different training opportunities for parents.

Child-Parent-Relationship (C-P-R) Training
Weekly for 1.5 hours; 10-week group
Parents of children 12 months to 5 years



Children can't always find the words to talk about their problems, but what they need most is their parents. This training will give you the tools to help your child open up to you, recognize emotional needs, build self-esteem and foster creativity, self-control and self-responsibility.

Infant Massage Class
Weekly for 1.5 hours; 6-week group
Parents and babies 6 weeks to pre-crawling

This training opportunity will help parents encourage secure attachment; understand their baby's unique language and cues; reduce baby's stress and irritability; and more. All you need to bring along is a towel/blanket to lay your baby on and comfortable clothing. There is a sliding income-based fee scale for this training.

Both trainings will be held at 7412 Sunset Drive, Miami, FL 33143. Register early. Space is limited.

For more information on either of these training opportunities, please contact Raquel Concepcion at 305-740-8998 ext. 121 or rconcepcion@familycounseling.org.

Transition to Kindergarten Month



Transitions:

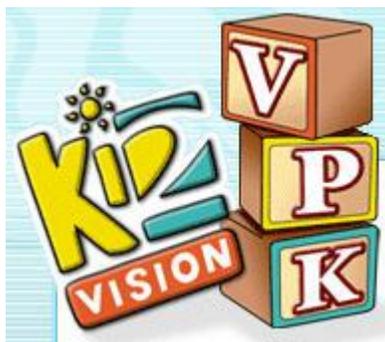
Linking Children, Families, and Schools

May is designated as Transition to Kindergarten month! A quality transition to kindergarten process values the role of families, teachers, administrators and most importantly the child.

Here are some tips to help the families in your program have a successful transition to kindergarten:

- Identify the schools that families will be attending in the fall.
- Reach out to these schools and find out if there are scheduled orientations, registration dates, open houses, etc. Share this information with families and encourage them to register early! Registration begins April 2.
- Provide families with a list of registration requirements.
- If families are unsure of the school their child is eligible to attend, follow this [link](#).

Free Resources for Providers through KidVision VPK



KidVision VPK makes learning Florida's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Education Standards lively and fun for teachers and their students. This resource provides virtual field trips around the community to establish meaningful learning opportunities that extend into the classroom through hands-on lesson plans and student assessments.

KidVision VPK is available to those who wish to better understand and teach the VPK Education Standards. Each unit completed on the website is worth 1 in-service hour training and/or 0.1 CEU.

To access this FUN and FREE tool, visit <http://www.kidvisionvpk.org/>.

SAVE THE DATE

FREE Family Learning Event

The Parent Academy is hosting a free family learning event on Saturday, April 14. Join them for "Well Child/Well Family" and learn about tech tools you can use to enhance your family's health, wellness and fun. You will be able to explore the

Miami Science Museum's galleries and exhibits and receive FREE books and resources. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity.

Miami Science Museum
3280 South Miami Ave.
Miami, FL 33129

Saturday, April 14
12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Children's Movement of Florida

Voices of Florida

We all have a story. A story that defines us. And it is our collective story - our challenges, 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.

Team Member Spotlight



Yesenia Reyes joined the Early Learning Coalition team in May 2010. She works as the CCEP Coordinator and Administrative Assistant to Communications. In these positions, her duties include managing and monitoring enrollment, funds and phone calls for the Child Care Executive Partnership program; writing the monthly Parent Link, the ELC's parent newsletter; and scheduling community events and special projects, including the annual Children's Week event.

A graduate of the University of Florida, Yesenia earned her Bachelor's Degree in Public Relations with minors in Education and Family, Youth and Community Sciences. Before joining the team in Miami, she interned at the Early Learning Coalition of Alachua County. She also worked as a teacher's aide for a first grade ESOL classroom for a year. Yesenia believes education is what makes the world go round.

"The most rewarding part of my job is to know that in some way, whether during a community event, through the CCEP program or any other ELC project, I have made a positive difference in a family's life and a child's future," she said. "It's for them that we work. It's why I wanted to work at the ELC in the first place: to make a difference and impact our community in a positive way."

During her free time, Yesenia enjoys spending time with family and friends; going to local events; playing with her new dog, JJ; and working on her newest hobby, traveling.

Monroe County News Briefs

[Florida Keys AHEC Receives \\$99,947 Grant to Address Childhood Obesity](#)

Florida Keys AHEC, our community partner, has received a grant from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation to provide obesity prevention programming to children ages 5 and below through a comprehensive nutrition, physical activity and interactive health education program. FKAHEC will collaborate with the ELC, Wesley House Family Services and Head Start in Monroe County to provide a wealth of educational materials, tools, lesson plans, CDs, videos, and hard cover books, as well as training and technical assistance to our early care and education providers. Stay tuned for additional information and an upcoming presentation and demonstration of the educational resources at the May 19 Provider Quarterly Meeting.

Klaus-Murphy Teacher Scholarships Available

The ELC has received additional funding from the Klaus-Murphy Foundation to continue to support scholarships to childcare teachers in Key West-Stock Island to enroll in the upcoming August 2012 10-month FCCPC training program offered by WHFS. Scholarship applications will be available in April. For additional information on the Klaus-Murphy scholarships, contact Mary Williams at 305-296-5557. For additional information on the FCCPC training program, contact Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000.

Pre-Registration for 2012-2013 VPK School Year Program Underway

Pre-registration dates are scheduled as follows:

Tavernier

Saturday, April 14, 9:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Wesley House Family Services
175 Wrenn St. (beside Coral Shores High School), MM 89

Marathon

Saturday, April 14, 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Holiday Inn Express
13201 Overseas Highway, MM 54 Oceanside

*Note: On-going registration will begin on Monday, April 16 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). Evening hours by appointment.

For additional information, please contact Val Taylor at 305-809-5000.

Save the Date:

Provider Quarterly Meeting
Saturday, May 19, 8:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
San Pablo Church Hall, Marathon

Please join Wesley House and ELC Monroe staff for the quarterly provider meeting to include important programmatic updates and a presentation by FKAHEC on the childhood obesity grant project. Additionally, an inclusion training and a FLKRS (Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener) training will be provided to VPK directors and instructors. Stay tuned for additional details.

Quality Counts

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Program Serving Miami-Dade for 27 years!



HIPPY leaders visit the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe. Left to Right: Pam Hollingsworth, Quality Counts Director; Peggy Gaines, HIPPY Health Coordinator; Wendy Salomon, Vice President Family Central, Miami-Dade; Evelio Torres, President and CEO of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe; Blythe Robinson, Senior Vice President and Chief Programs Officer of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe; Nicole Lopez, Quality Counts Project Manager; Alissa Pardo Stein, Health Literacy Project Manager; Dr. Henry A. Green, HIPPY Advisory Committee Chair.

The Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Program is an international and national literacy and school readiness program with a home-delivery training model. It is designed to provide educational enrichment for parents and their preschool children. HIPPY provides parents with a set of carefully developed curriculum, books and materials designed to strengthen their children's cognitive skills, early literacy skills, social/emotional and physical development.

HIPPY is a great success story with evidence-based data. Emphasizing holistic education, it brings families, organizations and communities together and removes any barriers to participation that may include limited financial resources or lack of education. Through hands-on experiences (role-playing), parents learn to interact with their children, become their first teachers and prepare them for their school experiences.

A Miami HIPPY Advisory Committee, with the support of the National Council of Jewish Women, provides financial scholarships to HIPPY home visitors and parents, to encourage their pursuit of higher education and better jobs in the labor force. Dr. Tracy McCloud, for example, was a home visitor from 1993 to 1995. Both of his children participated in the HIPPY Program. In 1995, he received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from Florida Memorial College and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership from Nova University in 2001. He is presently an assistant principal in Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Funded by Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), M-DCPS Title I HIPPY is the

longest running HIPPIY Program in the USA. The Children's Trust and Florida HIPPIY fund Family Central's HIPPIY program. Both M-DCPS Title I and Family Central's HIPPIY programs have been recognized by HIPPIY USA as Stellar HIPPIY Programs. To contact a HIPPIY provider or to learn more about the HIPPIY Program, please visit our [website](#).

Early education. Lifelong success.



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