



Quick Links

[Early Learning Coalition](#)

[VPK](#)

[Department of Economic Opportunity](#)



Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings

Program & Strategy

Thursday, June 27
3:30 p.m.
ELC Board Room

For a complete list of upcoming Coalition meetings

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ELC News Alert

Issue 6
June 2013

President's Message



Dear Friends:

I am pleased to announce the launch of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) online registration system.

Our new system allows parents and caregivers to fill out the application online, submit proof of Florida residency and the child's birth certificate electronically, and print the Certificate of

Eligibility at home. This enables parents to skip the visit to a service center, where there is usually a wait time.

Our hope is that this new system will help us achieve our goal of enrolling every 4-year-old child in Florida's FREE Voluntary Prekindergarten education program. Visit www.elcmdm.org to learn more about the program and register your child today.

Sincerely,

Evelio C. Torres
President & CEO

Programs Information

Information about the VPK Assessment

The Florida Department of Education has mandated that all VPK providers administer the VPK Assessment to all VPK children. The Coalition has requested School Year VPK Providers administer Assessment Periods 1, 2 and 3 and enter all scores online at the Bright Beginnings website within two weeks of completing each assessment period. Please refer to page 17 of the VPK Assessment Teacher's Manual, 3rd Edition, for instructions on how to input scores online. The Teacher's Manual can be found inside the box in which the assessment was delivered.

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
1111 12 Street
Suite 206
Key West, FL 33040
305-296-5557
305-296-5588 (fax)

info@elcmdm.org

Join Our Mailing List!

Providers must keep all VPK Assessment scoring booklets for three (3) years. Parents can be given a copy of the scoring booklet, but providers must keep the originals for reporting purposes to the Florida Department of Education.

Information about the VPK Assessment for Summer VPK Providers

Summer VPK providers must administer the VPK Assessment for Period 1 by **Friday, June 21**, and Assessment Period 3 by **Wednesday, August 14**. All scores must be entered online at the Bright Beginnings website by the end of the Summer VPK program.

The Summer VPK program is compressed into a 10-week timeframe, which makes it difficult to administer VPK Assessment Period 2. Therefore, Summer VPK Programs are only required to perform a pre/post assessment. If a provider wants to check children's progress, they may administer Assessment Period 2 the week of Monday, July 15. This is up to individual providers.

All scoring booklets must be kept on file for three (3) years.

Training Dates for VPK Providers

The ELC will be releasing training dates for **How to Administer the VPK Assessment**. If you have already attended this training, you do not need to retake the session. If you cannot attend, you will find a training DVD in the assessment box. This DVD can be used to train yourself, teachers and assistants.

The ELC will be offering training dates for **Instructional Implications of the VPK Assessment**. This course is recommended for VPK directors and teachers. This training supports efforts to identify children's needs as related to curriculum development and implementation.

Integrating the Standards: Phonological Awareness will be offered on a limited basis. If you have taken this course in the past, you do not have to retake it.

Please check your transcript at the Department of Children and Families to verify the Florida Department of Education courses you have already taken.

VPK Materials Provided by the Florida Department of Education

The Florida Department of Education will be sending the assessment items to VPK providers free of charge.

For the 2013-14 School Year, providers will receive:

- VPK Revised Scoring Booklets for Assessment Periods 1, 2 and 3
- The VPK Revised Teacher's Manual
- The VPK Revised Training DVD

Please note that the actual VPK Assessment has not changed.

VPK Assessment deliveries will begin the last week of June and run through the month of July. If you do not receive your delivery by the end of July, please contact Kerry M. Allen at 305-646-7220 ext. 239.

We will be releasing the VPK Assessment schedule in the August 2013 News Alert.

Miami-Dade ASQ-3 Screening Update

Beginning July 1, the Early Learning Coalition will provide ASQ-3 online entry on the ELC website. ELC staff will make training and assistance available to all providers online and/or on-site. A Screening Specialist will also be accessible at each of the new service centers in Miami-Dade County. This transition will be relatively easy for

all and will provide valuable information to both providers and families regarding each participating child's development.

You will access your ASQ-3 monthly list by visiting the ELC website and clicking on the **Provider Portal** button. A "How-to Manual" will soon be available in English and Spanish. Beginning this year, the Parent Consent will be a Decline only form that will be attained at time of eligibility and will be reflected on the ASQ-3 child online entry screen.

If you need an ASQ-3 kit, please call 305-646-7220 ext. 281 and leave your name and telephone number or email bsands@elcmdm.org.

For more information on the child screening program, please contact Bethany Sands at 305-803-1272 or bsands@elcmdm.org.

Curriculum Learning Communities Now Accepting Applications

We are currently accepting applications for the 2013-2014 Curriculum Learning Communities. The Curriculum Learning Communities (CLC) project helps early learning programs implement developmentally appropriate curricula through a shared community learning and peer facilitation approach. It currently supports programs that use Creative Curriculum or HighScope Curriculum, with plans to include other approved curricula in the future. CLC is based on best practices and lessons learned from the local Ready Schools Miami project and other local and national early childhood curriculum implementation initiatives.

*Please be advised we are currently looking at ways to improve the implementation model of Curriculum Learning Communities and will be accepting pre-applications from all interested programs through June 30. We anticipate serving a smaller number of programs for the 2013-2014 year as we improve the implementation process.

If interested, read more and apply here:
http://www.elcmdm.org/our_services/clc.html.

Important Announcements

Sites Opening Across Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties

As part of our service transition, the service centers currently operated by Miami-Dade County will be replaced by centers operated by the Early Learning Coalition. **Beginning July 1**, ELC Staff will be available at each of these new service centers to assist with child care resource and referral, child eligibility, and provider services. We hope our new hours and locations offer flexibility for all of you.

Following are the addresses for each of our service centers opening July 1:

Miami-Dade Locations

Main Office

Location: Wells Fargo Building
Address: 2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Suite 500, Coral Gables, FL 33134

North Service Center

Location: Golden Glades Office Park
Address: 1505 N.W. 167 St., Suite 300, Miami Gardens, FL 33169
Note: This is a temporary location. The permanent address will be released once it is available.

Central Service Center

Location: United Way of Miami-Dade, Inc.
Address: 3250 S.W. 3 Ave., Miami, FL 33129

South Service Center

Location: The Centre at Cutler Bay Condominium
Address: 19001 S.W. 106 Ave., Unit C-109, Miami, FL 33157

Note: This is a temporary location. The permanent address will be released once it is available.

Additional satellite offices will also be opened in different locations in Miami-Dade County. Once these locations have been finalized, we will send out the addresses.

Miami-Dade Service Center Hours

- Monday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Tuesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Wednesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Thursday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Friday: Not open to the public
- Saturday: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (*Last Saturday of each month only*)

Monroe Locations

Upper Keys Service Center

Location: Pink Plaza Shopping Plaza
Address: 103400 Overseas Highway, Key Largo, FL 33037

- Monday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Tuesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Wednesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Thursday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Friday: Not open to the public
- Saturday: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (one Saturday per month, TBD)

Note: Closed daily from 12 to 1 p.m. for lunch.

Central Keys Service Center

Location: Co-location with Keys AHEC, Gulfside Village
Address: 5800 Overseas Highway (Units 36 and 38), Marathon, FL 33050

- Monday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Note: Closed daily from 12 to 1 p.m. for lunch.

Lower Keys Service Center

Location: Professional Plaza
Address: 1111 12 St., Suite 206, Key West, FL 33040

- Monday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- Tuesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Wednesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Thursday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Friday: Not open to the public
- Saturday: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (one Saturday per month, TBD)

Note: Closed daily from 12 to 1 p.m. for lunch.

Enhancements to Provider Portal

As part of our transition to in-house services taking effect July 1, we have made some changes and enhancements to the [ELC Provider Portal](#).

By logging in to the portal, providers can:

- Submit VPK and School Readiness agreements
- Submit attendance for children served with ELC dollars
- Submit ASQ-3 assessment information (COMING SOON!)

Your log-in information and password will remain the same. If you are a new user and have difficulty creating an account, please contact Fred Hicks at fhicks@elcndm.org.

Visit providers.elcndm.org to see these changes first-hand.

June Attendance Rosters Available on ELC Portal

Your June School Readiness and VPK attendance will be submitted through the ELC Provider Portal. Visit providers.elcndm.org to access your attendance rosters.

If you are having trouble accessing your rosters or are missing children on the rosters, please call us at 305-646-7220.

Max the Bear Available to Visit Your Center

Introducing..... Max the Bear



Please join us in welcoming Max to the ELC Family! Max is our Community Outreach bear, brought into the world on April 26, 2013. His favorite activities are reading, learning and playing.

Max would love to spend time with each of you at your centers and family child care homes. At each center, Max will interact with the children, read, do activities and learn new things to share with the ELC and all our friends. His adventures will be shared on our Facebook page and added to his very own storybook.

If you want Max to spend a week at your program, please send us a handmade card from you and your kids explaining to Max why he should spend time with you. Cards can be mailed to Max at 2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., 5th Floor, Coral Gables, FL 33134 or emailed to contest@elcmdm.org.

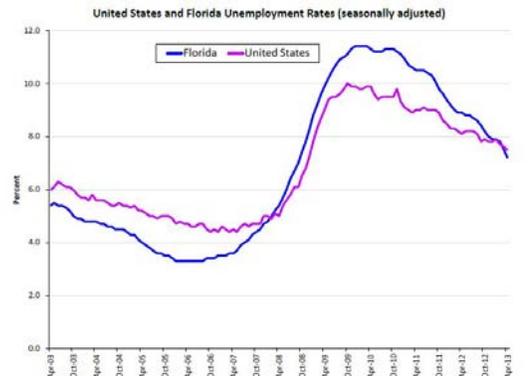
If you have any questions or if you want to learn more about this community outreach program, please contact Christina Vila (cvila@elcmdm.org) or Leana Sanchez (lsanchez@elcmdm.org).



Florida Releases Its Employment Figures for April

Florida's seasonally adjusted unemployment dropped to 7.2 percent in April 2013, the lowest it has been since September 2008 when it was 7.0 percent. The April rate was down 0.3 percentage points from the March rate of 7.5 percent, and 1.7 percentage points lower than the April 2012 rate. There were 680,000 jobless Floridians out of a labor force of 9,411,000.

The U.S. April unemployment rate was 7.5 percent. Florida's unemployment rate was 0.3 percentage point lower than the U.S. rate and was below the national rate for the second consecutive month.



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

In April 2013, Monroe County (3.7 percent) had the state's lowest unemployment rate. The unemployment rate for Miami-Dade County was 8.8 percent. For more information, visit the Department of Economic Opportunity's [website](#).

Operating a Child Care Program Following a Declared Emergency: DCF Guidelines for Child Care Providers

Within 24 hours after a declared emergency (hurricane, forest fire, or other natural disaster), the Florida Administrative Code requires the owner, operator or director of a child care facility or family day care home (licensed, large or registered) to notify your licensing authority about the status of operation in order to ensure that health and safety standards are met.

Once the surrounding area has been cleared for access by the Emergency Management Team, a child care facility or family day care home **will** be able to re-open/remains open if:

- It has NO structural damage, AND
- It has FULL electrical service, AND
- The water and sewage/septic tank are working properly.

A child care facility or family day care home **may** be able to re-open/remains open (based on a case-by-case assessment by the Department) if:

- It has NO structural damage, AND
- The water and sewage/septic tank are working properly, AND
- It is without electricity, BUT lighting needs are being met through the use of either batteries or a generator. Under NO circumstances are candles, open flames, gas or fuel lanterns to be used.

Caution: Generators, if used, must be located outdoors away from windows and doors. Exhaust can easily cause carbon monoxide poisoning if it enters the building or home. The generator must also be inaccessible to children.

If the child care facility/home SUSTAINS STRUCTURAL DAMAGE, regardless of the extent, an on-site inspection is required PRIOR to caring for children.

Licensing staff must ensure that the structure is sound, no live wires or open access to sewage exists, etc. DCF staff may accomplish these inspections in collaboration with other departments or agencies

If children are to be moved to alternate sites, child care providers are responsible for notifying your licensing authority for confirmation that the site is appropriate, as well as informing the parents. Both licensing staff and the provider should work with their local Resource and Referral agency to help get the message out, to confirm location changes, and to ensure all children are provided care in a healthy and safe environment.

Each and every situation must be assessed on an individual basis and determinations made based on protecting the health, safety and well-being of the children in care.

For more information, please visit <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/>.

ELC Team Member Spotlight



Bethany Sands, Director of Inclusion and Assessment, is the longest employed member of the Coalition, with this past February marking her 10th year here. Her job entails overseeing child assessment for all School Readiness children aged 0 to 5, ensuring every child receives an annual developmental screening and every child has access to inclusion programs as needed.

Bethany says, "My intrinsic perk is when I have a parent that contacts me and says their child ended up with the right services. She also loves representing the ELC at local, state and national conferences and presenting on early childhood education and special education.

Bethany holds a Bachelor's degree in Education and dual certification in Elementary Education, Special Education K-12 and has the Pre-kindergarten ESE Endorsement. She earned her Master's from the University of Miami in Early Childhood Special Education.

"Education should be the ultimate goal for everyone," she said. "An education will provide opportunities for success in attaining personal goals and lasting positive outcomes in life."

In her free time, she loves boating and watching football, cheering on the Miami Dolphins and the Florida Gators.

Monroe County News

Additional Monroe Office Information

The Key West ELC office relocation from the Gato Building to the Professional Building took place June 7. All Monroe offices will be fully operational on July 1 to serve parents and providers. The main phone number remains the same. All Monroe staff can be reached at 305-296-5557. This number will also serve as the Keys-wide number, with extensions for the Marathon and Key Largo numbers (to be established).

ELC Monroe offices are located at the following addresses:

Key Largo

Location: Pink Plaza

Address: 103400 Overseas Highway, Suite 232

Hours of Operation:

- Monday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Tuesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Wednesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Thursday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Friday: Not open to the public
- Saturday: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (one Saturday per month, TBD)

Note: Closed daily from 12 to 1 p.m. for lunch.

Marathon

Location: Co-location with Keys AHEC, Gulfside Village

Address: 5800 Overseas Highway, Suite 36

Hours of Operation:

- Monday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Note: Closed daily from 12 to 1 p.m. for lunch.

Key West

Location: Professional Plaza

Address: 1111 12 St., Suite 206

Hours of Operation:

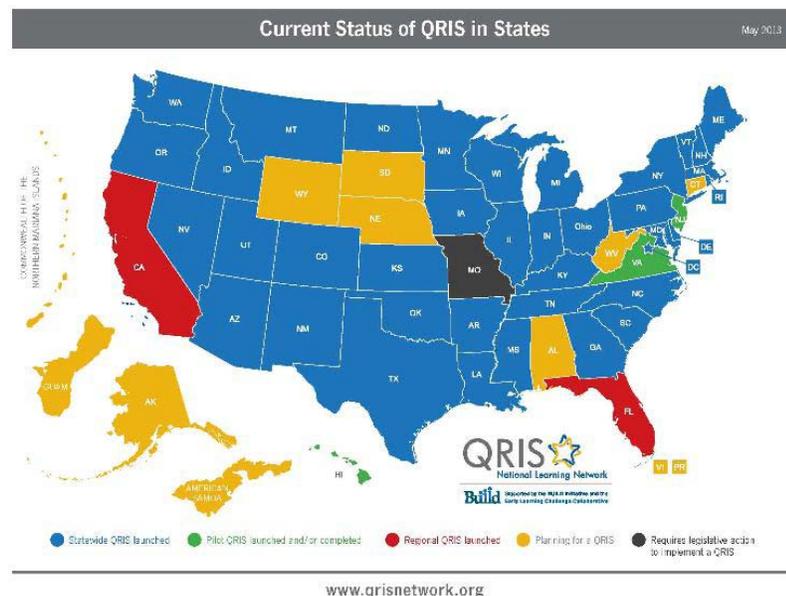
- Monday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Tuesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Wednesday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Thursday: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Friday: Not open to the public
- Saturday: 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. (one Saturday per month, TBD)

Note: Closed daily from 12 to 1 p.m. for lunch.

Quality Counts

Quality Rating Improvement Systems (QRIS) Across the Nation

In May 2013, the national map of states implementing, piloting and planning for a QRIS was revised, and almost every state is in the process of implementing a system.



While accreditation identifies the achievement of a measurable level of quality, QRIS

identifies the current level of quality and helps providers improve by providing support and resources.

To learn more about Quality Counts, Miami-Dade's QRIS system, please visit <http://www.elcmdm.org/QualityCounts/index.htm>.

Free Resources Available to Programs in Miami-Dade Through Shared Resources Florida

Shared Resources is a free, membership-based website that offers an array of resources and tools for program directors, owners, and teachers to enhance the business and educational environment of centers and family child care homes.

Program Benefits:

- Cost savings on child products, books, office supplies and more
- Quick links to DCF Regulations
- Helpful templates
- Free printable posters
- Community message boards

Classroom / Teacher Benefits:

- Free online training for teachers
- Literacy activity ideas
- Physical activity ideas and videos
- Parent handouts
- Teacher resources

To access the site, visit www.sharedresourcesfl.org.

- Click on "Interested in becoming a member?" and enter requested information.
- A login and temporary password will be emailed within two business days.

Shared Resources Florida is brought to you through the collaboration of the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Early Childhood Initiative Foundation, and Quality Counts in partnership with The Children's Trust.

Early education. Lifelong success.

