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Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

President's Message



Dear Parents:

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Parent Link, a publication we have created especially for you! In this issue and ones planned for the future, we will highlight the work we accomplish at the Early Learning Coalition (ELC) and how it impacts our South Florida community, important topics in early care and education, fun activities and events in which you can share with your kids, and news and tips related to the development, safety, and future success of young children.

I hope this newsletter will serve as a valuable guide but also as a resource that connects you with the early care and education community-our partners, providers, and of course the Early Learning Coalition. Like you, our number one priority is our children, and we are all united in our advocacy and efforts on their behalf.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at info@elcmdm.org or 305-646-7220. I encourage your feedback as our newsletter project takes shape.

As always, I am at your service,

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

Look Before You Lock Your Vehicles

Did you know that on a regular sunny day it can reach up to **110° Fahrenheit** inside your car? This can cause serious damage to the human body, especially infants and toddlers, if left inside the vehicle.



No amount of time is ok.

Here are some ways to prevent such a tragedy:

-Ask your childcare provider to call you if your child does not show up for childcare.



-Make a habit of looking in the vehicle, front and back, before locking the door and walking away.

-Placing your purse, briefcase or something else you need in the back seat so that you will have to check the back seat when you leave the vehicle.

For more information on children and vehicle safety, please visit the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](http://www.nhtsa.gov).

Be on the look-out for more child and vehicle safety information in future *Parent Link* issues.

ELC Programs and You

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)



VPK offers ALL 4-year-old children a jump start on reading, math, language, and social skills. In order for parents to register their child in the VPK program, you must obtain a certificate of eligibility (COE). For more information on where to register, required documents, and registrations dates, please visit <http://vpkhelp.org>, and click on "For Families," or call 305-FREE-521.

School Readiness

School Readiness programs provide early education opportunities to children ages birth to 5 years old, particularly to children whose parents are economically disadvantaged; children who have been determined to be at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation; and children with disabilities. Programs are extended up to 9 years old. Currently our enrollment is closed, but you may apply to the single-point-of-entry list by visiting <http://spe.schoolreadiness.org/pe/>.

Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) Program



The CCEP program offers financial assistance to low-income families through employer-supported child care. Parents pay a portion of their child care costs first (usually on a sliding fee scale based on family income). Then CCEP and the employer each pay 50 percent of the remaining balance. If you would like to participate in the CCEP ask your employer if your company is already a member of the program. If not, contact the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe and we

can contact your employer directly. For more information, please visit http://www.elcmdm.org/our_services/ccep.html.

Enhance Your Child's Motor Skills

Enhance your little one's motor development skills as effectively at home as in school! Listed below are some age-appropriate activities in which you and your young child can actively participate together.

"Mirror, Mirror" (3-12 months) - Enhances visual discrimination and language skills

Stand in front of a mirror and hold your baby facing away from you so she can see her reflection. Sing and dance and point out her features--nose, tummy, feet, etc. Move away from the mirror's reflection and ask out loud, "Where are Mommy and Lucy?" Step back in front of the mirror and exclaim, "Here are Mommy and Lucy!" Encourage your baby to "interact" with her reflection.



"Simple Charades" (Preschool age) - Enhances visual discrimination and imagination

Play charades with your child and have him or her guess what you are pretending to do. For example, act out brushing your hair, putting on your shoes, or driving your car. Encourage your child to play-act for you so you can take turns guessing.

Activity ideas are provided by *Bright and Beyond: Preschool* and *Bright and Beyond: Baby* cards of Pal Toys, LLC.

Local Events for the Whole Family!

December 2010

FREE Train Ride Wednesday

When: Every Wednesday until December 31, 2010
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Where: The Gold Coast Railroad Museum
12450 Southwest 152nd Street
Miami, FL 33177-1402
305-253-4675

<http://www.gcrm.org/>

Cost: First ride is FREE, \$2.50 per person after

*The museum is also currently offering FREE admission on the first Saturday of the month!

Target FREE Third Friday at Miami Children's Museum

When: Every third Friday of the month

3:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Where: Miami Children's Museum
980 Macarthur Causeway
Miami, FL 33132
305-373-KIDS (5437)

<http://www.miamichildrensmuseum.org/>

Cost: FREE admission courtesy of Target

About the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe

The Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring high-quality early care and education for children in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Through a variety of affordable and innovative early education and voluntary pre-kindergarten programs, the Coalition serves more than 50,000 children ages birth to 12-years-old and their families.

Founded in 2000, the Early Learning Coalition is among 31 similar organizations in the State of Florida established following the enactment of the School Readiness Act, which consolidated Florida's early learning services into one integrated program.

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