




## ELC News Alert

Issue 7  
August 2010

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### President's Message



Dear Friends,

The Children's Movement of Florida is a campaign taking root in our state. Led by David Lawrence, Jr., and other prominent leaders in Florida, this non-partisan, citizen-led movement is dedicated to "educate political, business and civic leaders - and all parents of the state - about the urgent need to significantly improve upon the inadequate manner in which Florida treats its children. The mission is not about raising taxes, but rather about raising children. Florida's children deserve to be our first priority when deciding how the state's resources are spent."

With so many opportunities to do better for children, the Children's Movement of Florida gives us hope that every Florida child will one day have an equal opportunity for success.

For additional information, please visit <http://childrensmovementflorida.org/>. Thank you.

As always, I remain at your service.

Sincerely,

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

## Upcoming Board & Committee Meetings

Program & Strategy  
Tuesday, July 27; 3:30 p.m.  
ELC Board Room

Finance  
Wednesday, July 28; 8:00 a.m.  
ELC Board Room

Board of Directors  
Monday, August 2; 8:00 a.m.  
ELC Board Room

Program & Strategy  
Tuesday, August 31; 3:30 p.m.  
ELC Board Room

For a complete list of upcoming Coalition meetings and events, please visit our website at [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org).

## Quick Links

[Early Learning Coalition](#)

[VPK](#)

[Agency for Workforce Innovation](#)

## Get Connected with ELC!



## Important Announcements

### House Subcommittee Passes Bill Granting Sizable Increases to CCDBG and Head Start

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education has agreed that early care and education should be given priority when it comes to federal budget increases. While the full amounts proposed by the Obama administration were not granted, the Subcommittee still passed a bill on July 15<sup>th</sup> providing a \$700 million increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and an \$866 million increase for Head Start. Next steps include the passing of the bill by the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate working on their own version.

### New Law Effective August 1st Requires Cleared Background Screening for Jobs in Child Care

Effective August 1, 2010, HB 7069 will require background screening of job applicants, employees and volunteers who come in contact with children, the developmentally disabled and vulnerable adults.

Under this new law employers will not be permitted to hire for these positions until the applicants are cleared by Level 2 background screening. This screening uses one's fingerprints to search through criminal records in both Florida and the United States.

Providers are encouraged to begin immediate preparations in their centers for HB 7069's implementation. Additionally, while the new law requires all fingerprints to be electronically processed by 2012, DCF hopes to bring this alternative to workers by August 1<sup>st</sup> as well, thus speeding up turnaround time and lowering error and rejection rates.

For more details on HB 7069 and to read Secretary Sheldon's July 9<sup>th</sup> correspondence regarding the new law, please visit [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org).

### Five- to 12-Year-Olds are Encouraged to Submit Artwork Showing Why People Coming to the U.S. Makes our Country Great!

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is hosting an art project for children ages 5- to 12-years-old. Kids are asked to draw a picture showing why they think people coming to the U.S. from all over the world to become Americans makes our country great. USCIS will display artwork submissions in their offices nationwide. All entries must be postmarked by August 16, 2010. For artwork requirements, project eligibility and rules, and entry instructions, please visit [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org) and click on the link for the USCIS artwork flyer.

### DCF is Offering a New Course, Quality Self-Assessment and Improvement for Afterschool Programs

DCF Child Care Services is offering a new 4-hour course, Quality Self-Assessment and Improvement for Afterschool Programs. Based on standards developed by the Florida Afterschool Network, this course provides afterschool programs with the tools needed to evaluate the quality of their operations and develop effective program improvement plans. To access this course, please visit [www.myflorida.com/childcare](http://www.myflorida.com/childcare) and select "Training Information" or to learn more, please visit [www.elcmdm.org](http://www.elcmdm.org).

### Receive Valuable Feedback from Experts on your Center's Business Plan and Practices

The Early Learning Coalition has begun the strategic planning process. This process will include developing a multi-year strategic plan that includes investment strategies. Investment strategies include slot/child care expenditures, provider reimbursement rates, quality and Gold Seal expenditures and other services funded by the ELC. In an effort to assist the Early Learning Coalition's board of directors in gaining a better understanding of the financial challenges faced by child care providers, the ELC is encouraging providers to volunteer their centers for a review of their business plans and practices by a team of volunteer private sector financial experts. These experts will evaluate your books and business model and provide valuable feedback to the board of directors as they prepare to make some very tough budgetary and programmatic decisions. Providers will not be identified by name on the report to the board. To be considered for this review or to find out more, please submit your center's name and contact information to Tabatha Cullen, Sr. Director of Communications, at [tcullen@elcmdm.org](mailto:tcullen@elcmdm.org).

### Miami-Dade County's Daisy Hensley is Honored for 34 Years of Dedicated Service



On Thursday, June 24, 2010 at the Child Development Services' office in Martin Luther King Plaza, Miami-Dade County's Daisy Hensley was honored for her tireless advocacy and service on behalf of South Florida's children. Daisy Hensley retired after 34 years of outstanding, dedicated service.

Pictured from left to right are Blythe Robinson, ELC Sr. Director of Programs; Daisy Hensley, Miami-Dade County; and Evelio C. Torres, ELC President & CEO.

### Emergency Financial Assistance for Housing Program (EFAHP) is Now Accepting Applications

The Emergency Financial Assistance for Housing Program (EFAHP) provides a one-time payment of up to \$400 to families who are totally without shelter or face the loss of shelter because of nonpayment of rent or mortgage. It also helps those families who have had household disasters such as fire, flood, or other accidents.

The household must have at least one child or caretaker who is a legal U.S. citizen or legal resident to receive up to \$400.00 and they must have proof of the housing emergency i.e. copies of the eviction notice, default letter from the mortgage company etc. Complete eligibility requirements can be found at <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/homelessness/efahp.shtml>.

Applications are available online in English, Spanish and Creole at [www.dcf.state.fl.us/homelessness](http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/homelessness) or by calling 1-877-891-6445.

#### Application Guidelines

The household must contain at least one child under 18 years of age. The application must be filled out completely, including social security numbers for all family members; monthly income from all sources; a written explanation of the housing emergency; and the signature of the applicant.

The one-page Vendor Agreement must be completed and signed by the landlord, mortgage company or property owner. If the case is approved, a State of Florida check will be mailed directly to the landlord, mortgage company or property owner. The program can pay up to \$400.00 one time per year for overdue rent or mortgage payments, or for security deposit for a household that is homeless, being evicted, or whose housing has been damaged by fire, hurricane or other natural disaster. Fax applications to 1-850-921-2559 or mail applications to:

Department of Children and Families  
Office on Homelessness - PDHO  
1317 Winewood Blvd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700

#### Don't Miss out on Your Chance to Participate in the CCEP Program for the 2010-2011 School Year

If you are already participating in the Child Care Executive Partnership (CCEP) program\* and wish to continue doing so for the 2010-2011 school year, **you must re-submit an agreement via mail or drop it off at the Early Learning Coalition's Coral Gables office (2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Suite 500, Coral Gables, FL 33134). Please note however, you do not need to submit a pre-screening form for employees.** Please visit our CCEP webpage at [http://www.elcmdm.org/our\\_services/ccep.html](http://www.elcmdm.org/our_services/ccep.html) further information and to download the necessary paperwork.

We need to receive your 2010-2011 CCEP forms as soon as possible. Thank you.

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

#### **Team Member Spotlight**

This month, the spotlight shines on another valued team member and the important work she accomplishes in bringing quality early childhood education to our community. In this issue, it is our pleasure to highlight Michele Wenleder, Contracts Manager.

Michele Wenleder began her tenure as a contracts manager at the Coalition in late September of 2009. She assists in writing and negotiating the Coalition's program and administrative contracts. Michele also manages contracts throughout their term to ensure that the ELC's contractors comply with all reporting requirements and properly utilize Coalition funds.



"After a long contract negotiation/writing process, it is very rewarding to see the words on a page come to life. Also, managing a contract throughout its term ensures that the state and federal funds that we receive are being well spent," Michele says.

While Michele is often busy with paperwork and contract details, it is the Coalition's mission that ultimately drives her, "My colleagues and I are incredibly passionate about our work. Together we work very hard to craft a contract that will provide high-quality services to the children in our community."

Previously, Michele was an associate at a Miami-based law firm where she practiced real estate and commercial litigation. Prior to that she worked at the New York City Council, the legislative body for the City of New York, where she wrote public safety legislation and prepared elected officials for public hearings.

Away from work, Michele enjoys practicing yoga, traveling, going to the beach, and spending time with her family and friends.

## **Miami-Dade County News Briefs**

School Readiness (SR)

### **Providers: Please Submit Your ASQ Forms ASAP!**

Please return your Ages and Stages Questionnaires to Miami-Dade County (CDS) promptly. They must be completed and returned as soon as possible following the instructions included in your ASQ packet, or if you need immediate assistance, call your centers' ASQ staff personnel. Your cooperation is essential to the success of the Miami-Dade County and the Early Learning Coalition's support in educating your children. For more information on completing the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, or if you need forms, please call 305-270-2905 (South) or 305-953-6007 (North).

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

### **How to Register for VPK Trainings**

Please visit our VPK website at <http://www.vpkhelp.org/resources/trainings.html> to learn the 13 steps to successfully register for VPK trainings. Courses include VPK Educational Standards, Integrating the Standards, and Emergent Literacy for the VPK Classroom. Instructions on how to cancel your registration or obtain your certificate, transcript, and/or CEUs are also available.

### **2008 Summer VPK Standards Training**

The following is the 2008 Summer VPK Standards training schedule. Registration for all listed courses is accessible on the web:

#### **St. John the Apostle**

Thursday, July 29, 2010; 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

St. John the Apostle, Hialeah School Library/Media Room  
DCF #779

Friday, August 13, 2010; 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

St. John the Apostle, Hialeah School Library/Media Room  
DCF #780

Thursday, August 19, 2010; 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

St. John the Apostle, Hialeah School Library/Media Room  
DCF #781

### Miami-Dade College - Homestead

Friday, August 6, 2010; 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Miami-Dade College Homestead Campus, Building G, Room 105  
Reference # 789

## Monroe County News Briefs

### Monroe County Pre-K Team Attends the Pyramid Model Implementation Academy

The Monroe County Pre-K Team recently attended the Pyramid Model Implementation Academy in Tampa. Sponsored by USF's Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI), this model provides the framework for evidence-based practices for promoting young children's social-emotional competence and preventing and addressing challenging behavior. The Monroe Pre-K Team represents a partnership between the ELC, Wesley House, Monroe County School District, Head Start and Child Find-FDLRS. The Monroe Pre-K Team will work collaboratively to provide Pyramid Model training to all pre-k teachers in public school and private provider settings in Monroe County during the 2010-2011 program year.

Pictured from left to right: Linda Welsh, MCSD Child Find Specialist; Gerella Kenniston, WH Inclusion; Mary Williams, ELC Managing Director- Monroe Co.; Angela Whidden, MCSD Head Start Director; Jeanne Askins, MCSD Head Start Education Manager; and Amber Keller, ELC Upper Keys Classroom Mentor.



### The ELC Sponsors Free Creative Curriculum Trainings in the Keys

ELC sponsored a series of free Creative Curriculum Trainings in the Keys during the month of June. Two infant/toddler sessions (in English and Spanish) and one preschool session (in English) were provided. Participants received a Creative Curriculum textbook for use in their classrooms as well as additional training materials. The trainings provided by Teaching Strategies focused on best practices in Creative Curriculum implementation. Providers were reminded that the use of an ELC- approved developmentally appropriate curriculum will be monitored during the 2010-2011 program year. Below is a photo from one of the training sessions.



## Quality Counts

The team of technical assistance specialists at the University of Miami Mailman Center for Child Development provides comprehensive mentoring, coaching and career counseling to family child care (FCC) home providers in all geographic areas of Miami-Dade County in the Quality Counts program. With funding from the Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe, The United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education and the Children's Forum, the UM team has provided additional support for family child care providers obtaining voluntary national accreditation from the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) by engaging in training and personalized on-site technical assistance. Out team members consistently go "above and beyond" their job descriptions in their service to providers.

The Mailman Center's goal is to assist family child care providers achieve the goals that they envision for themselves. By creating caring relationships, we are able to motivate each provider to reach objectives they did not think possible. Leadership skills are nurtured by participation in the Council of Presidents monthly meetings. Guest speakers are invited to address the presidents of the four local FCC associations and information is then delivered to all members.

Evidence of the growth of the FCC providers engaged in the Quality Rating Improvement System is seen every day. The improvement in environments, child and parent engagement, administration of their business, and their own education and self-confidence is reflected in more than improved scores on a rating sheet. It is visible in their faces and their demeanor.

Pictured from left to right (back row) are: Maria Luaces, Marlene Colon, Lea Stone, Blynda Murray, Rosalyn Laney, and (front row) Joanne Palenzuela, Dr. Susan Gold.



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2555 Ponce de Leon Blvd. Suite 500; Coral Gables, FL 33134

