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ELC News Alert

Issue 11
November/December 2011
President's Message



Dear Friends:

As always, thank you for your partnership in 2011. Despite the loss of \$13 million dollars to our budget, we worked with all our partners to find innovative ways to continue to improve the quality of early care and education in our communities and to retain as many children as possible in the School Readiness Program.

Our drive for quality is important and is the right thing to do. Miami-Dade County has the highest total number of poor inhabitants, with 500,537 residents living in poverty, nearly twice as many as Broward County. A quality education is the best chance that children living in poverty have to succeed in this very competitive world. Considering the state of our economy, we can continue to expect additional challenges in 2012, but we will also be presented with many opportunities to make a big difference for children.

Our Quality Counts Program and our "Look Before You Lock" campaign have been nationally recognized; our role in the Race to the Top application is giving Florida its best chance possible of receiving \$100 million; and our Voluntary Prekindergarten participation rate continues to grow. Our emphasis on serving the most vulnerable children and the most at-risk communities results in a healthier community, children who are better prepared for school and for life and families who become self-sufficient. Our Children's Week event in March brought out a record number of participants, a positive forecast for what we can expect in January 2012 when we host the event yet again in collaboration with the Miami Children's Museum and many other community partners. Our statewide and national partnerships continue to grow. It is safe to say that the business community, including the Florida Chamber, "gets" early

Committee
Conference Call
Tuesday, Dec. 6
3:30 p.m.
Provider Open
Forum Conference
Call
Monday, Dec. 12
10:00 a.m.

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

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learning. The Children's Movement of Florida now counts with over 300,000 supporters. These are just a few of many reasons to celebrate, but there are over 50,000 other reasons - the number of children we serve in Miami-Dade and Monroe every year.

Thank you once again for your partnership. I wish you a wonderful holiday season and a very Happy New Year. We look forward to 2012 and the many possibilities the year will bring.

Sincerely,

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

Important Announcements

Private Sector Member Position Available on Board of Directors

The Early Learning Coalition is seeking a candidate to fill a position on our Board of Directors. The Private-Sector Member Position is open to anyone residing in Florida associated with a private-sector business entity conducting business in Miami-Dade or Monroe County. The individual must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- An owner having at least a 10 percent ownership interest in the business entity
- The CEO or COO of the business entity
- A business executive or employee of the business entity who is at the management level or higher with optimum policy-making or hiring authority
- An individual who previously met one of the criteria mentioned above, but is now retired from the business entity

The candidate must not be a childcare business owner or employee. This rule also extends to the candidate's relatives.

To apply for the position, please visit our [website](#). Applications must be submitted by December 9, 2011. For more information, please contact Leeana Pena at 305-646-7220 ext. 246.

CDC: Flu Vaccine Recommended for Everyone 6 Months and Older

The Center for Disease Control voted for "universal" flu vaccination in February 2010 to expand protection against the flu to more people. The flu season typically lasts from October to May, with a peak in January. It is especially important that people who live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications get vaccinated. This includes pregnant women, children younger than 5 and especially those younger than 2, and household contacts and out of home caregivers of

children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated).

For more recommendations from the CDC and other key facts about the flu season, visit <http://www.cdc.gov>.

New Standards Training to Begin in January

The Florida State Board of Education approved the revised Florida Developmental Early Learning Standards for Four-Year-Olds on October 18, 2011. These standards replace the VPK Education Standards and are to be used to educate all the four-year-olds in your school. The Florida Department of Education Office of Early Learning is preparing training materials to be sent out to master trainers. The materials should arrive after December 12, 2011. Expect provider standards training to launch in January 2012.

News from Secretary Duncan & the U.S. Department of Education



During last month's NAEYC Conference in Orlando, Senior Advisor on Early Learning Jacqueline Jones announced the Department's plan to create the first ever Federal Office of Early Learning. The creation would institutionalize, increase and coordinate federal support for high quality early learning, manage outreach to the early learning community and enhance support for building high performing early education systems in states across the country. The Office for Early Learning was most recently responsible for the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, for which 35 states, D.C. and Puerto Rico submitted applications.

To read Secretary Arne Duncan's entire announcement, please visit www.ed.gov.

Carol City Middle School Red Ribbon Certification Ceremony



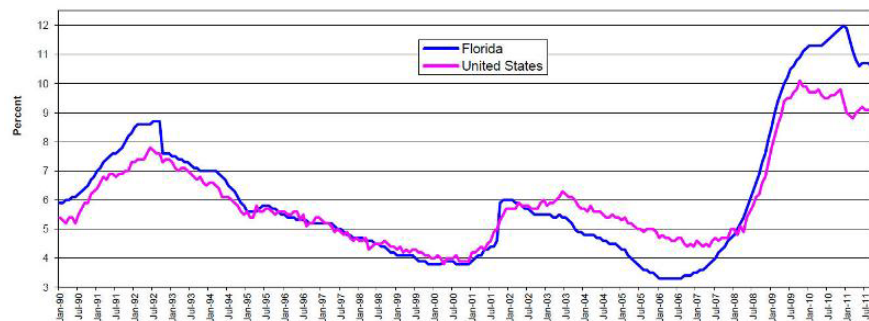
Councilman David Williams, Jr., an Early Learning Coalition Board Member, invited the ELC to participate in Carol City Middle School's Red Ribbon Certification Ceremony. On Nov. 10, the school was recognized as one of only 53 schools in the nation to be a Red Ribbon Certified School. The title is given to schools that model prevention excellence by having a commitment to leadership, prevention efforts guided by best practices and opportunities for all students to be part of the solution, among other things.

The ELC is proud to support the efforts of Carol City Middle School.

Florida Releases Its Employment Figures for October

Florida's unemployment rate in October 2011 is 10.3 percent, the lowest percentage rate seen in 28 months. Florida added a net total of 9,500 new jobs since September 2011 and a net total of 106,900 jobs since January 2011. October's rate is 0.3 percentage points lower than the September rate and 1.5 percentage points lower than the October 2010 rate. The U.S. unemployment rate is 9.0 percent, down 0.1 percentage points from September.

United States and Florida Unemployment Rates (seasonally adjusted)



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

"As we head into the holiday season, it's great to see we continue to move in the right direction when it comes to job creation and getting people back to work," said Governor Rick Scott.

Governor Scott's "2012 Job Creation and Economic Growth Agenda" includes efforts to streamline regulations and provide tax relief to spur economic development, prioritize transportation projects to bring new jobs to Florida, and update the state's unemployment and workforce systems to ensure job seekers have the skills needed to secure employment in current and future job markets.

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

*Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) press release, "Florida's Unemployment Rate Dips to Lowest in 28 Months - November 18, 2011; 10:00 A.M."

Help the ELC Raise Funds through TICKETS fore CHARITY



The Early Learning Coalition is participating in the TICKETS for 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 order tickets, download the order form or visit Ticketmaster.com. The promotional code for the ELC is CCENV9V. Please note that the code is case sensitive.

Amazing Deal from Domino's Pizza and the ELC

The Early Learning Coalition and Domino's Pizza have collaborated to bring you a pizza deal like no other. The ELC is selling Slice the Price cards for \$10.00 each. This reusable discount card will give you one FREE large pizza for every large pizza you buy at regular price from now until June 30, 2012. That means you buy three large pizzas and get three more free, with no limits on the toppings. There is no limit on the number of times you can use the card until then, but using it just once pays for itself.



The ELC will receive 50 percent of the proceeds of each Slice the Price card bought. Help us fund early childhood education programs to ensure that children are school-ready and set for success in life.

Don't miss out on this opportunity. Applications for Slice the Price cards will be available in our office until the end of the year. For more information, contact Yesenia Reyes at yreyes@elcmdm.org.

Open Forum Conference Call

We have an exciting opportunity for you to interact with Provider Representatives sitting on the Early Learning Coalition's Board of Directors. We have scheduled monthly conference calls beginning in November for providers to voice their concerns, ask questions or just get to know the Board Members. This is a chance to build a comfortable working relationship with the incredible people collaborating with the ELC to bring quality educational opportunities to all children in Miami-Dade and Monroe.

Please join us on the following day:

Monday, December 12th
10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

To join the calls, please dial our conference line at 786-389-5135 or 866-502-2994. When prompted for the code, dial 802#.

For more information, please contact Leana Pena at 305-646-7220 ext. 246.

A Great Time to Build Language, by Bethany Sands, Director of Inclusion & Assessment

The holidays are a perfect time to help young children build communication skills and vocabulary and have a great time doing it! The opportunity to extend language is all around in the lights, at school functions, eating a meal or at the zoo.

You can engage children in conversation by asking questions about what they are experiencing. Ask questions that call for a detailed answer by starting them with Who, What, When, Where, Why or How. Let children think about their answer and give them time to formulate words and speak. Make sure you take turns in conversations. You talk first and let them respond before speaking again.

Meals are an especially ideal time to expand vocabulary. Describe the contents of plates instead of just calling it food. Use this time to tell stories from past holidays so children and all family members have the opportunity to share their favorite moments.

Be intentional about talking to or with your children. Make sure language is rich, extend ideas and provide new words to describe. And don't forget to READ with your children every day.

Meet the Board



Lisa M. Martinez, a Miami native, has been actively engaged in the work of education and community building over the past 20 years. Most recently, she joined Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez's senior staff as his Senior Advisor. In this position, she oversees the Departments of Cultural Affairs and Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces and the Miami-Dade Public Libraries. She is also the County's liaison on children issues including school readiness and education related programs.

Ms. Martinez began her career as an elementary education teacher at Coconut Grove Elementary School. Her 10 years of experience in the

classroom combined with her Bachelors and Masters of Science degrees in Elementary Education, a Specialist Degree in Education Leadership and National Board Certification within her field, make her a perfect candidate to take lessons learned into the community. In 2002, she developed a non-profit organization, the Positive Partnerships Program, to target at-risk students within the Coconut Grove area. The success of this program led her to become Mayor Manny Diaz's Director of Policy and Legislation, developing and leading his policy initiatives from his office including the establishment of the first Education Compact with M-DCPS, Faith-Based and Community Based Initiatives, Elevate Miami and various other policies. After a four-year tenure with the City of Miami, Ms. Martinez joined MDCPS' Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Grants. In 2010, she was promoted to manage the Race to the Top Program, a \$73 million grant award, addressing comprehensive education reform efforts for county schools.

Thank you, Ms. Martinez, for taking the time to partner with the Early Learning Coalition!

News from the NAFCC

There are new regulations and improved safety standards for cribs provided by child care facilities and family child care homes. These new standards must be met by Dec. 28, 2012. The new standards took effect for manufacturers, retailers, importers and distributors on June 28, 2011. Most of the new standards address traditional drop-sided rails proven to have deadly hazards and require more durable hardware and parts and mandate more rigorous testing.

NAFCC Launches their Newly Designed Website

The newly designed website allows you to easily navigate through all of the resources offered through NAFCC and stay connected with other providers and colleagues.

In order to access your online, "member-only" benefits you must first log in. Though the website has been redesigned, all of your log in information has stayed the same. It is important that you update your profile immediately after logging into the website. If at any time your information changes please contact NAFCC membership by email at membership@nafcc.org or by calling 801-886-2322 x 225. Keeping your profile and information up to date will allow for smooth transitions.

Special Discount Ticket Offer for Shrek The Musical



Shrek the Musical is coming to Miami. For a limited time, all Miami-Dade County Schools' employees, families, alumni and friends are invited to take advantage of a great offer. Save up to 50 percent off tickets to the show, with discounted tickets starting at only \$21! A portion of the ticket sales will go to The Foundation for New Education Initiatives, Inc.

To get your special discount tickets, visit the Adrienne Arsht Center's [website](#). Enter the promo code MDCPSHOLIDAY prior to selecting your seats.

This special offer is only valid for the following shows:

Friday, December 9 at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 10 at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 11 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are limited, so don't miss out on getting yours!

Save the Dates

FLAEYC Conference 2012

October 11-14, 2012

Marriot World Center Hotel, Orlando, Fla.

The Florida Association for the Education of Young Children (FLAEYC) is hosting the conference of the year. Scheduled workshops include "So Sexy So Soon" and "Remote Control Childhood" by Diane Levin, Ph.D. There will be something for everyone at this conference, including ECE Trainers, preschool teachers and family childcare providers. More details will follow. For more information, please email info@flaeyc.org.

Children's Movement of Florida

The Children's Movement Introduces 2012 Legislative Agenda

Representing more than 300,000 supporters, Children's Movement chair David Lawrence, Jr., along with State Senator Bill Montford, the Office of Early Learning's Dr. Mel Jurado, and Florida Tax Watch's Dominic Calabro, took turns reading to VPK students from Bright Stars Child Development Center and Creative Preschool. After reading to the students, the four discussed details of the



five-point 2012 legislative agenda. This was one of 11 scheduled similar events on the Books and Cookies tour.

"This is about children as a priority," Lawrence said. "That's what we're after."

The agenda items align with the five original goals of the Movement: health insurance, availability of screening and treatment for children who may have special needs, improved VPK quality, and increased availability of high-quality mentoring and parent skill-building programs. Some of the Movement's goals for 2012 include health care for Florida's uninsured children, support for high quality mentoring initiatives and high quality parent skill-building programs. The total cost for this year's items is calculated at \$28.5 million, not including funds allocated through grassroots campaigns and private sector partners.

Team Member Spotlight



Sandra Ampudia joined the Early Learning Coalition in March 2004 as part of a literacy project called Project Upgrade. Since then, she has worked with Director of Inclusion & Assessment Bethany Sands on different projects. She is currently working as a coach with the national research project called "Recognition and Response for Dual Language Learners." After completing that project, she will continue her work with the STEPs program, the Inclusion branch of Quality Counts, providing observation, screening and assessments, designing and implementing classroom and family strategies, processing referrals when needed and facilitating workshops and trainings.

Sandra received a Bachelor's Degree in Speech Pathology from Manuela Beltran University in Bogota, Colombia, and an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education from Universidad Pedagogica Nacional in Bogota. She worked as a preschool teacher for more than 10 years before joining the team at Family Central and ultimately coming to the ELC. To her, education is "the most important tool we can receive from our family and society" because it shapes the life and future of our children. Her proudest moment at the Coalition came when Mayor Carlos Gimenez proclaimed September 17 as Social Emotional Development Awareness Day due to an event hosted in Miami-Dade by the Social Emotional Workgroup of which Sandra is a part.

Sandra believes strongly that the ideas, activities and strategies that the ELC provides teachers and families can make a positive impact in their lives. As Garrison Keillor once wrote, "Nothing you do for children is ever wasted." When away from the office, Sandra enjoys walking her dog, going to the beach and spending time with her niece and nephew.

Monroe County News Briefs

ELC Board Member Reads to Children for RIF Distribution

Early Learning Coalition Board Member Alan Eckstein was the special "guest reader" at the RIF literacy event at Lighthouse Christian Academy, Stock Island. Alan read "Caps for Sale" in costume as the peddler. The children participated wearing monkey visors as characters in the story. Local press coverage was provided by the "Key West Citizen" to highlight the importance of instilling a love of reading in young children.



Save the Dates

Infant/Child, Adult CPR & First Aid Course
Saturday, December 17, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Wesley House, 1304 Truman Ave., Key West

Advance registration is required; seats are limited.
Registration Fee: \$50

For additional information, contact Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000 ext. 231.

Wesley House Provider Mini-Conference "Take It to Heart"
Saturday, January 14, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Murray E. Nelson Government and Conference Center, Key Largo

Presenters for the mini-conference include Keith Pentz, Education Consultant for Kaplan and Amanda Moore, Statewide Inclusion Network Coordinator. The focus of the three workshops is relationship building and the heart and mind connection for all children, infants through preschool, including special needs. A flyer with additional details is forthcoming.

Registration Fee: \$10
Seats are limited.

For additional information or to register for the event, contact Laurie Dunn at 305-809-5000 ext. 231.

Monroe County Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, January 19, 1:00 p.m.
Monroe County School District Board Room, 241 Trumbo Rd., Key West

Please join ELC Provider Services Committee board members, Monroe Advisory Committee board members, CEO Evelio Torres, ELC staff and our community partners as we discuss important information of interest and concern to our early education and care provider community.

Provider participation is strongly encouraged in person, via conference call or via videoconferencing. Additional information is forthcoming.

Quality Counts

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 and 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!

Updates have been made to the requirements for manual washing. The number of sinks required will depend on what is occurring in the food prep area and what equipment is available to meet the sanitation requirements. Two-compartment sinks will be required in a Limited Food Service operation. This includes kitchens where cutting and slicing of raw fruits and vegetables and portioning of bulk food items occurs. The sink would be used to wash and rinse equipment used. Sanitizing will not be required as long as no food items are potentially hazardous. Raw fruits and vegetables, for example, are not potentially hazardous, with a few examples that including cut melon, cut tomatoes and seed sprouts. A full list of examples of when a two- or three-compartment sink is needed can be found on our [website](#).

In the instances of mechanical washing, providers have two options to meet the sanitizing requirement: heat or chemical solutions. Providers must maintain the testing kits for sanitizing solutions such as chlorine to ensure the solution strength is appropriate. When heat is used as a sanitizer, the temperature of water must reach 170 degrees Fahrenheit or above for manual washing. Residential dishwashers may substitute for a 3-compartment sink as long as there is a way to sanitize the dishes by either heat or chemical injection during the final chemical rinse. Be sure there is the option for heat cycles or look for a container of the sanitizing chemical being routed into the machine.

For more information about this policy change, please contact the Policy Unit at 850-488-4900.

[Get Your National CDA Credential](#)

Nova Southeastern University Fischler School of Education and Human Services is offering classes to earn 9 credits toward your degree in Early Childhood Education. These classes include classroom observation by an advisor and assistance completing the National CDA Assessment Application. Successful completion of the class covers fees for the Council of Professional Recognition Assessment.

English classes and observations will be held at the North Miami Beach Campus. Classes and observations at the Kendall Campus will be held in Spanish. Please contact your Career Advisor to request a scholarship application before December 4, 2011.

This opportunity is only open to Quality Counts participating providers.

Nicole Bardin Nominated to NAFCC Accreditation Council



Nicole Bardin, our Quality Counts Project Manager, has been invited to apply for the National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation Council. As a member of the Council, Nicole would develop and approve the policies that govern the NAFCC Accreditation system, monitor operations on behalf of the NAFCC Foundation Board using performance benchmarks for accountability, and review and possibly revise the Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation annually. This nomination is a distinction that speaks volumes in her field of work. Final committee selections will be conducted in April 2012, with new council member terms commencing August 1, 2012.

Congratulations, Nicole! We're very proud to have you on our team.

Early education. Lifelong success.



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