



Helping Hands

Offering a helping hand to School Readiness Providers
A publication from Childcare Resource & Referral



Mark Your Calendars!



The ELC's second annual Early Educators Conference has been scheduled for Saturday, January 31st from 9am to 4pm. It will be held at the Thrasher Home Center in Orange Park. Our keynote speaker will be Mr. Al, The Music Man. Many other breakout sessions will be scheduled. CEUs will be provided this year! The Cost will be \$25, which includes lunch. More details to come!

Volunteer Reading Pals

The ELC is happy to announce that its volunteer reading pal program is expanding to Clay county this fall! Volunteer reading pals go into child care centers and VPK classrooms once a week for an hour to read to small groups of children. Currently, 15 Clay county centers have signed up to receive a reading pal. The ELC is now actively recruiting readers. If you know of someone who might be interested in being a weekly reader, please contact Joan Whitson, Early Literacy Coordinator, at: 904-342-2267 or jwhitson@elcnorthflorida.org If you are a provider who is interested in having a reading pal but have not signed up yet, also contact Joan Whitson.



ELC Day at Sykes Farms in Elkton

October 6th and 7th 9am to 1pm.

Bring your children for this special day featuring Spookley the Square Pumpkin and this years' new guest, Jack and the Cornstalk! Each child and teacher will receive a FREE copy of the book *Jack and the Cornstalk* by Aaron Burakoff as a gift from the ELC.

What is included in the field trip?

- A trip through a 9-acre corn maze with age-appropriate "passports" to help guide your group through the "cornfusing" twists and turns, OR a trip through the "Spookley the Square Pumpkin" kiddie maze!
- Playground with corn box, tube slide, big tractor tires, Lil' Farmer's play area, etc.
- "Spookley" downloadable activities and curriculum materials
- Online curriculum materials
- Hayride visit to the pumpkin patch and sunflower field
- An up-close and personal look at "Unlce Buck's" farm animals
- A jump on the "Corn Popper" (Huge jumping pillow)
- 2 ½ hours is the time length for the field trip

How much does it cost? \$5 per student. One chaperone for every 4-6 students admitted FREE! Teachers are also FREE!

How do I sign up? Contact Sykes and Cooper Farms and ask for Rachel Callum at 904-692-1084 or rcoper0122@gmail.com It is first come, first served basis!

Read for the Record 2014 Coming Soon!



The date for this year's Read for the Record Campaign is October 21st. This year's book is *Bunny Cakes* by Rosemary Wells. The ELC is inviting every center to participate in helping to break the record of reading the same book on the same day to the most children. This is a nationwide campaign sponsored by the Pearson Foundation and Jump Start. Visit: <http://www.jstart.org/campaigns/read-record> to find out more.

The ELC of North Florida is providing every center in Clay, Nassau, Baker, Bradford, Putnam and St. Johns counties with this book for FREE along with a packet of activities to go with the book. To get your book and packet you must RSVP by phone or e-mail by October 3rd to Joan Whitson at 904-342-2267 or jwhitson@elcnorthflorida.org In your e-mail include your center's name, contact person, address, phone, e-mail and the number of children you will be reading to, so Joan can send in our totals. Thank you!

Episcopal Children's Services

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ATTENTION HH READERS...



If you have a question, comment, or concern you would like addressed in an upcoming issue of *Helping Hands*, please send an e-mail to: hdunn@ecs4kids.org. We will do our best to find the answer, post the comment, and address the concern. Thanks! =)
Heather Dunn,
Editor,
Helping Hands

Putting the "P" in Family Involvement Jena Waters, Education Specialist

Resource: *High Reach Learning*

What's on your "to do" list as you begin the new school year in your family childcare home? Is increasing family involvement at the very top of it?

It may be that you are already providing useful information to parents through daily exchanges of information on their child's day, upcoming celebrations, newsletters and of course ECS's monthly parent activity packet! You know, there comes a time in our early childhood careers that we become complacent, doing what is just required and nothing more. Why not put the "**P**" for **Priority** into making Family involvement more meaningful for everyone!

Whether a child is new to your program or already a "family member" you can start by getting to know each child's family on a personal level, letting them know that you believe that they are the most important people in the children's lives and what your goal/priority is for this year! Communicate clearly that you want to partner with them to help their children learn and grow in a positive environment.



Try using these tips to help your children's families become involved in your Family Child Care home (be sure to leave space for your own ideas):

- * Plan Quarterly conferences with each child's family, providing positive feedback of their child's progress.
- * Keep a portfolio for each child to include special artwork, projects and items that they have learned throughout the year, including photos.
- * Plan several social events throughout the year such as potluck suppers or weekend picnics, holiday gatherings.
- * Invite family members to volunteer for some of these social events or read stories or collect materials to use in the classroom.
- * Design a family of the month bulletin board, with the family's permission; add photos and information about the family to the board.

I Am Special Peggy Daveline, Education Specialist

Resource: teachpreschool.org

It is important for toddlers to feel good about themselves. Below are some songs and activities that will help develop positive self-esteem in toddlers and older children.

Who Is It

Materials Needed: A large box with a hand mirror in it.

Tell the children there is someone special in the box. Pass it around the table and let them shake and guess what is in it without looking. When they have each had a turn, take out the mirror, pass it around and have the children look at the special person-them!



I am Special

Tune "Frere Jacques"

I am special,
I am special,
Look at me,
You will see,
Someone very special,
Someone very special,
It is me,
It is me.

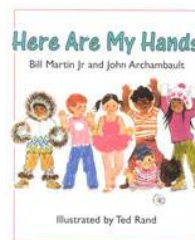
Then change the song up a bit and add different feeling words so the children can make different faces as they looked in the mirror (*I am sad – I am happy – I am mad*).

Runaway

Tune: "Go In and Out the Window"

I have two eyes to see with
I have two feet to run
I have two hands to wave with
And nose I have but one

I have two ears to hear with
And a tongue to say Good-Day
And two red cheeks for you to kiss
And now I'll run away.



Here Are My Hands is a good book to read to toddlers. It will help them learn the parts of their body in a fun way.

They Just Won't Be Still Deanna Williams, Inclusion Specialist

Resource: *The Inclusive Early Childhood Classroom* by Patti Gould and Joyce Sullivan

"They just won't be still." I hear that all the time. There are reasons that the child referred to may not be still. Developmentally they may not have the ability to stay still for very long. Three-year-olds aren't developmentally equipped to sit still and just listen for longer than about 15 minutes. With four-year-olds, you may get an extra 5 or 10 minutes from them. And that is if they are developing at their age level. If there is a delay, these times may be even less.

The child also may be excited about something, or upset, or their diet could be off. They may not understand what you are saying. Perhaps this child is a hands-on learner. Sitting and listening is not going to be one of their better talents. They want to touch, move, experience.

But what can you do to help get your class through circle time with this child? Here are a few tips:

- * Allow the child who is feeling the need to keep moving hold a toy that they can fidget with in their hands. Of course, make sure it is understood that the toy stays in their hands and not on their friends.
- * Use music, props, fingerplays in circle time to hold their attention and give them a little break from strictly sitting.
- * Use changes in your voice to go along with the story or lesson. Be dramatic or whisper or make funny noises with your mouth and tongue.
- * Have the entire group hold hands or hold onto a hula hoop or parachute handles. Make it a game.
- * Consider giving each child a paper cone of a snack. They can chew and listen.


Hopefully some of these ideas will help you to enjoy your class and teach your children.

Transition Time Tricks Peggy Daveline, Education Specialist

Resource: Resource: [Early Childhood News](#)

Stand up! Sit down! Clean up! Calm down! Too many transitions in the day can be frustrating for children as well as teachers, but it doesn't have to be that way. With careful planning and a few tricks you can move the children smoothly and many of the behavior problems can be avoided. Transitions provide a great time to exercise children's brains. Children love music; they love to move and they love surprises. These are the very activities that stimulate children's brains according to recent brain research (Wolfe, 1996). Use the songs and activities below to transition the children throughout the day and to stimulate their brains.



<p>Who is Here Today? Tune: "The Farmer in the Dell"</p> <p>Who is here today? Who is here today? Everybody clap your hands, Who is here today? Jill is here today! Jill is here today! Everybody clap your hands, Jill is here today!</p> <p>Substitute Jill for the names of the children in your class. Great circle time song where the children can dance or jump while you sing their name.</p>	<p>Surprise Sack Tune: "I'm a Little Teapot"</p> <p>What's in the surprise sack, who can tell? Maybe it's a book, or maybe it's a shell. What's in the surprise sack, who can see? It's something special for you and me! (Have children guess what they think is in the bag, then remove it and share it with them.)</p> <p>Tidy Up Tune: "Jingle Bells"</p> <p>Tidy up, tidy up, put the toys away, Tidy up, tidy up we're finished for today. Tidy up, tidy up, put the toys away. For we'll get them out again the next time that we play.</p>
<p>Washing Hands Song Tune: "Row Your Boat"</p> <p>Wash, wash, wash, your hands, Soap will make them clean, Scrub the germs till they fall off, Germs go down the drain.</p>	<p>Jolly Good Helper Tune: "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow"</p> <p>(Name) is a jolly good helper. (Name) is a jolly good helper. (Name) is a jolly good helper. They're picking up the toys.</p>
<p>A Magic Wand</p> <p>Being a good teacher is a bit like being a magician- you always have to keep a few "tricks" up your sleeve. Now all you need is a magic wand! So get a wooden dowel rod or pencil and cover it with aluminum foil. Dip one end in glue, then roll the glue end in glitter. Taa daa- you have a magic wand! Wave the wand over the children before a story so they will be quiet; tap them gently on the shoulder to dismiss them to go to a learning center; or "Zap!" them with your magic wand to turn them into bunnies, astronauts, butterflies, or bees. Better yet, "Zap!" yourself with the magic wand so all of the "tricks" in this article will work for you!</p>	<p>Repetition and Recall</p> <p>A study of brain-based learning emphasizes the importance of reviewing activities with children. After reading a story, playing a game, or working in learning centers, take a bean bag and toss it to children. As they catch it, ask them to describe what they did or learned. Before children go home, have them recall what they enjoyed most at school, then end on a positive note by singing.</p> 



Local Professional Development Opportunities (Training Calendar)

To register for one of our great training opportunities, please visit our website:

www.ecs4kids.org

Click on "Programs" and then "Regional Training Institute" and follow the directions to register. Direct Link: http://www.ecs4kids.org/training_main



The website provides a complete list of trainings and descriptions offered each quarter.

VPK Corner *Rebecca Barbour, Manager of VPK Services*

We hope everyone is having a great start to their VPK school year!

Please remember to submit the Informed Parental Consent for Delayed Enrollment Form for any children that did not physically attend on the first day of your program. These, and other VPK forms, can be found on our web site (www.ecs4kids.org).

As a reminder, Parental Choice Certificates (PCC) should be **signed and dated** by the **legal parent/guardian only**, using **full signatures**. Dates cannot be completed by center staff. Full signatures are also required on sign in/out sheets (if applicable).

ECS will be coming out to monitor your VPK school year program starting in September/October, so please be sure those PCCs are being completed correctly to avoid any noncompliance issues.

If you have any parents that need to register for VPK, please have them visit <https://vpkcp.floridaearlylearning.com> to register online.

Important Due Date

Did your VPKS program end in August? If so, remember your Provider Verification Report (PVR) is due on or before September 30th. If ECS does not receive your PVR by this date, we will be withholding your final VPKS payment, no exceptions. (These reports are sent out to by the VPK Department once your August attendance rosters have been processed.)

To ensure full compliance with OEL policy, **ALL final VPK payments will be actual checks**, even if you normally receive direct deposit.

VPK Department * 8443 Baymeadows Rd, Suite 1 * Jacksonville, FL 32256

Toll Free: 1-800-238-3463 * Fax: 904-726-1522

vpkinfo@ecs4kids.org * www.ecs4kids.org



Warm Line 1-800-238-3463

Ext. 212 (CNBB)

Ext. 284 (PSJ)



Do you have a concern about the health, development, disability, or special needs of a child? If so, call the Warm Line. The purpose of the warm line is to provide advice to child care personnel concerning strategies, curriculum, and environmental adaptations that allow a child to derive maximum benefit from the child care experience.