

SPOTLIGHT

2025

ON PROVIDERS

A SPACE TO GROW



EARLY EDUCATION
HOT TOPICS

WWW.ELCPH.ORG

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WRITE FOR US



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A NOTE FROM STEVE



Greetings,

We have had an incredible 2024 at the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties. On behalf of our talented and hard-working staff and Board of Directors, I want to thank you for being such incredible partners. The commitment and dedication you have for our youngest learners and their families has a lasting impact that we are so honored to be a part of every day. The programs across our two-county system have provided us with inspiration and consistency, which is so important to the children and families we serve.

We continue to focus our energy on supporting our teachers, directors, owners, and staff so you have the resources and opportunities to grow and develop as professionals. The first five years, or 2,000 days, is the most critical time for brain development. Nearly 90% of a child's brain develops before they walk into the kindergarten classroom. You provide social and emotional guidance and help nurture a love for discovery and learning for so many young children.

We believe in you and how important you are to the future of our children and community. I admire and appreciate you for having the passion and love to nurture and care for our youngest learners. Together, we are making a difference.



YOUR FAITH BASED PROVIDER REPRESENTATIVE

I'm walking through the hallway when I suddenly stop and peek in a classroom to find both the children and the teacher laughing—contagious laughing! There is no better moment in my day than when I hear joy and laughter escaping the walls of our classrooms.

Laughter is one of the most natural and joyful sounds that children can make. When they begin to giggle as babies, laughter becomes a natural part of their social and cognitive development and continues throughout childhood. Laughter can be a natural stress reliever for all ages. Studies show that when we laugh, our brains release endorphins, the very chemical that can reduce stress for all ages.

Humor allows children to express themselves. It's enjoyable to hear their "made-up" jokes and giggles that follow! Laughter fosters connection with others, peer-to-peer and child-to-adult. As children grow up, they use critical thinking to solve silly riddles or wordplay and comprehension to understand punchlines.

Think of what you feel like when you laugh: relaxed tension, deep breaths, a smile on your face. Let's work on fostering our classroom or staff meeting environment where laughter is as natural and often as our words. Let's engage in silly games and stories, dancing to silly songs, even model laughing at ourselves sometimes. I read a quote recently that said "Laughter is by definition healthy". Next time you hear laughter in your center, know that it's doesn't just make you smile, but it is, in fact building a healthier, happier environment for all.

Jan Jones

JAN JONES

PASCO COUNTY FAITH BASED PROVIDER REPRESENTATIVE

PROVIDER VISIT HIGHLIGHTS

With

Executive Director, Steve Knobl, Ph.D.

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4



1. PRIMROSE SCHOOL AT WIREGRASS RANCH
2. GUIDING LIGHT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
3. CHILDREN'S NEST
4. CARE-A-LOT CHILDCARE AND PRESCHOOL

THANK YOU!

....to all childcare providers!
We appreciate you allowing ELCPH
Board members to visit with me!

STRENGTHENING EARLY LITERACY THROUGH FAMILY, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

By Sherri Sabadishin
Organizational and Public Engagement Supervisor
Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties

Early literacy is the foundation of a child's academic journey, shaping their ability to learn, communicate, and engage with the world. Today, many families, educators, and community organizations are actively championing early literacy development, fostering environments that nurture language and reading skills from infancy. Addressing early literacy gaps requires a multi-faceted approach that involves families, schools, and the community.

Joyce Epstein's theoretical model of family, school, and community partnerships provides a valuable



framework for understanding how collaboration among a child's support system can improve early literacy outcomes. Epstein identifies six key types of involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community (Van Voorhis, Maier, Epstein, & Lloyd, 2013). These elements guide educators in supporting meaningful family engagement to close literacy gaps.



PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING EARLY LITERACY

1. Parenting: Creating a Literacy-Rich Home Environment

Parents play an essential role in developing early literacy skills. Research shows that children who are read to daily are exposed to 1.4 million more words by kindergarten than those who are not (Logan et al., 2019). Simple activities can strengthen literacy development at home:

- **Daily Storytime:** Reading to children for at least 15 minutes daily builds vocabulary and comprehension.
- **Interactive Conversations:** Asking open-ended questions about stories fosters critical thinking and verbal expression.
- **Environmental Print Exploration:** Reinforces literacy concepts by encouraging children to recognize letters and words in everyday settings, such as grocery store signs and food packaging.

Early childhood programs can support parents by offering literacy workshops, family reading challenges, and take-home activity guides. Studies indicate that literacy-related parental involvement can improve children's literacy competencies by 22% (Penderi et al., 2023).

2. Communication: Strengthening the Home-School Connection

Maintaining open communication with families ensures they have access to literacy-building strategies tailored to their child's needs. Effective methods include:

- **Weekly Newsletters:** Sharing book recommendations, phonemic awareness activities, and literacy milestones.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Providing specific literacy progress reports and customized at-home strategies to support children.
- **Communication Apps:** Utilize platforms like Procure, ClassDojo, or Remind to send daily literacy tips, activity ideas, and reading reminders.

Studies show that consistent, high-quality communication between educators and families increases parent engagement in literacy activities by 45% (National Center for Family Literacy, 2022).

3. Volunteering: Engaging Families in Literacy Activities

Encouraging parents to participate in literacy-focused events helps reinforce



early reading habits. Schools can:

- **Host Family Literacy Nights:** Featuring interactive read-aloud and hands-on literacy stations.
- **Classroom Reading Days:** Inviting parents to read with children and model expressive storytelling.
- **Literacy Activity Prep**
Volunteers: Encouraging families to assemble literacy kits or organize book donations to foster community involvement.

When parents engage in literacy-related volunteering, children demonstrate increased motivation to read and higher literacy achievement (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019).

4. Learning at Home: Providing Families with Literacy Resources

Equipping families with at-home literacy tools strengthens learning beyond the classroom. Take-home literacy kits can include:

- **Age-Appropriate Books:** Diverse, engaging picture books with discussion prompts.
- **Activity Cards:** Step-by-step instructions for phonemic awareness games and storytelling exercises.
- **Writing Materials:** Journals and dry-erase boards to encourage early writing skills.

5. Collaborating with the Community: Expanding Literacy Support

Strengthening community partnerships extends literacy learning beyond school walls. Effective collaborations include:

- **Library Partnerships:** Joining free storytime sessions, parent workshops, and book lending programs.
- **Book Distribution Initiatives:** Partnering with organizations like Dolly Parton's Imagination Library or New World's Reading to provide free books to families.

A National Institute for Early Education Research study found that children with access to community literacy programs demonstrate stronger reading skills and greater enthusiasm for learning.





When families and educators work together, they can ensure children enter kindergarten with the foundational skills needed for long-term academic success.

Closing the early literacy gap requires a collaborative approach that actively engages families, educators, and community partners. Joyce Epstein's model emphasizes the importance of shared responsibility in fostering literacy development. By implementing strategies that support parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, and community collaboration, early educators can equip families with the knowledge and tools to foster literacy at home. When families and educators work together, they can ensure children enter kindergarten with the foundational skills needed for long-term academic success.

- Division of Accountability. (2023a). Kindergarten readiness. Florida Department of Education. <https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/assessments/k-12-student-assessment/best/k-ready.html>
- McDevitt, T. M., & Ormrod, J. E. (2023). Child development and education (8th ed.). Pearson.
- NAEYC. (2005). NAEYC Early Learning Program Standards. Position Statement. https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globalyshared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position_statement_ec_standards.pdf
- Penderi, E., Karousou, A., & Papanastasiou, I. (2023). A Multidimensional–Multilevel Approach to Literacy-Related Parental Involvement and Its Effects on Preschool Children's Literacy Competences: A Sociopedagogical Perspective. *Education Sciences*, 13(12), 1192. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13121192>
- Van Voorhis, F. L., Maier, M. F., Epstein, J. L., & Lloyd, C. M. (2013). Executive summary. In *The impact of family involvement on the education of children ages 3 to 8: A focus on literacy and math achievement outcomes and social-emotional skills* (pp. E1-E6).

PROVIDER *Recognitions*

Elfers Christian Preschool Q2 2024

Recognized for recently completing their accreditation process through the Florida Coalition of Christian Private Schools and receiving their Gold Seal status.

Creative World Starkey Ranch Q2 2024

First provider who utilized our MAPs (Making Accreditation Possible) to achieve their National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA).

TreeHouse Village Q4 2024

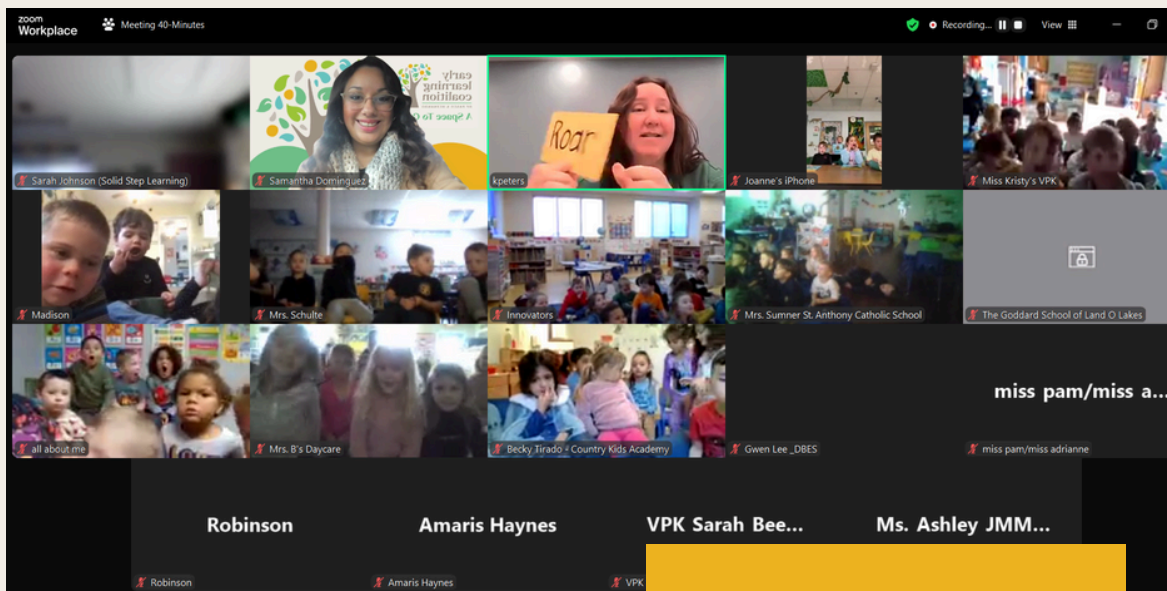
Nominated for submitting their monthly reimbursement on time, free of errors and for having minimal findings in their attendance monitoring.

Kids R Kids Meadowpointe Q1 2025

Recognized for their attention and efforts in maintaining compliance within the Provider Portal along with consistent and excellent monitoring of their programs.



We could not name all of our amazing providers as so many were recognized for their achievements this past year!



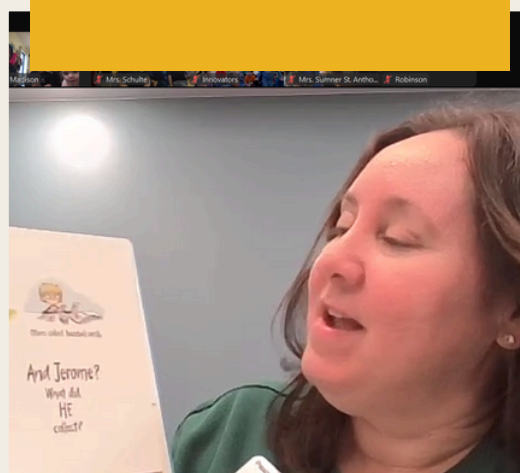
The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando (ELC) is partnering with local libraries to bring a fun and educational opportunity to children in the community through virtual storytimes.

By offering these virtual storytime sessions twice a month, ELC aims to engage young children in reading and learning, even if they aren't able to attend in person at a library.

During each virtual storytime, children will not only listen to stories being read aloud but also receive a book to keep, helping to promote a love of reading and literacy.

If your classroom would like to join a storytime, please contact Samantha Dominguez at s.dominguez@elcph.org.

JOIN
**VIRTUAL
STORYTIMES**



THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DIRECTORS SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Samantha Dominguez
Education Engagement Coordinator
Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc.



Professional development (PD) for early childhood educators is critical to the quality of early childhood education. It directly influences teachers' competencies, instructional strategies, and the overall learning experiences of young children. As early childhood directors play a key role in setting the tone and vision of an educational environment, their support of teachers' professional development is essential. This support fosters a culture of continuous improvement, helps retain qualified staff, and ultimately enhances the developmental outcomes for children.

Enhancing Teacher Competence and Confidence

Supporting professional development allows early childhood teachers to stay updated on current research and best practices. Early childhood education (ECE) is a field

that is constantly evolving with new insights from child development research, psychology, and pedagogy. Teachers who engage in ongoing learning opportunities are better equipped to implement effective teaching strategies that cater to diverse learners. Directors who invest in these opportunities demonstrate their commitment to maintaining a high-quality educational environment.

Research underscores that teachers who regularly engage in PD feel more competent and confident in their teaching abilities (Sheridan et al., 2009). This confidence translates to better classroom management, more creative teaching strategies, and a deeper understanding of how to meet the developmental needs of children. Directors can support this by providing access to workshops, conferences, mentoring, and educational resources that align with the latest trends in early childhood education.



Improving Retention and Job Satisfaction

Teacher retention is a significant challenge in early childhood education. Many educators face low pay, high stress, and limited professional growth opportunities, leading to high turnover rates. Directors who prioritize their teachers' PD can counteract some of these issues by creating a supportive and enriching work environment. When teachers feel valued and see opportunities for professional growth, they are more likely to remain committed to their roles (Cumming, 2017).

A study by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) found that access to PD was a key factor in teacher retention (NAEYC, 2015). Directors who encourage and facilitate PD help foster a sense of belonging and professional purpose among staff.

This can lead to greater job satisfaction, which directly impacts the quality of interactions between teachers and children, as well as among staff members.

Promoting a Culture of Lifelong Learning

By advocating for and supporting PD, directors model the importance of lifelong learning. This sends a powerful message not only to teachers but also to families and children within the educational setting. A director's active participation in PD initiatives, whether through organizing in-house training, collaborating with other institutions, or even engaging in PD themselves creates a culture where continuous growth is the norm.

Directors can also establish professional learning communities, where teachers collaborate to reflect on their practices and share insights from their development experiences.

“ ...CONFIDENT AND SATISFIED TEACHERS”

These communities promote reflection and encourage educators to take ownership of their professional growth (Schachter, 2015). A supportive PD culture nurtures curiosity and openness to new ideas, qualities that are vital for educators working with young children who are themselves curious learners.

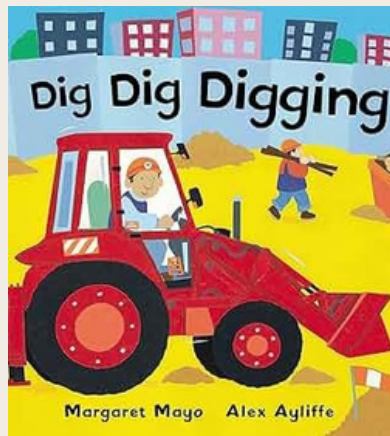
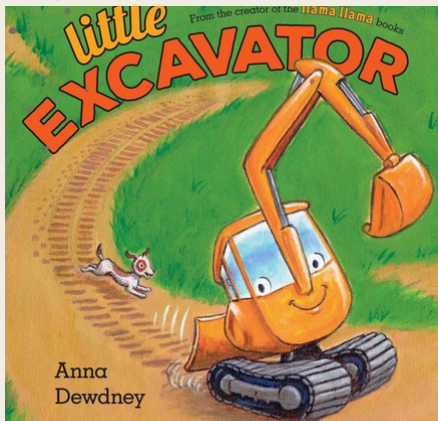
The role of early childhood directors in supporting professional development cannot be overstated. By providing opportunities for learning, fostering a culture of collaboration, and investing in their teachers' growth, directors can significantly improve the quality of early childhood education. Ultimately, these efforts lead to better outcomes for children, as well-prepared, confident, and satisfied teachers create more dynamic and supportive learning environments.



CELEBRATE LITERACY WEEK, FLORIDA!



Pasco County Sheriff Chris Nocco



Pasco County Property Appraiser Mike Wells



PHSC President
Jesse Pisors, Ed.D.



Premier Community Healthcare
Becky Bennett

January 27 - January 31, 2025



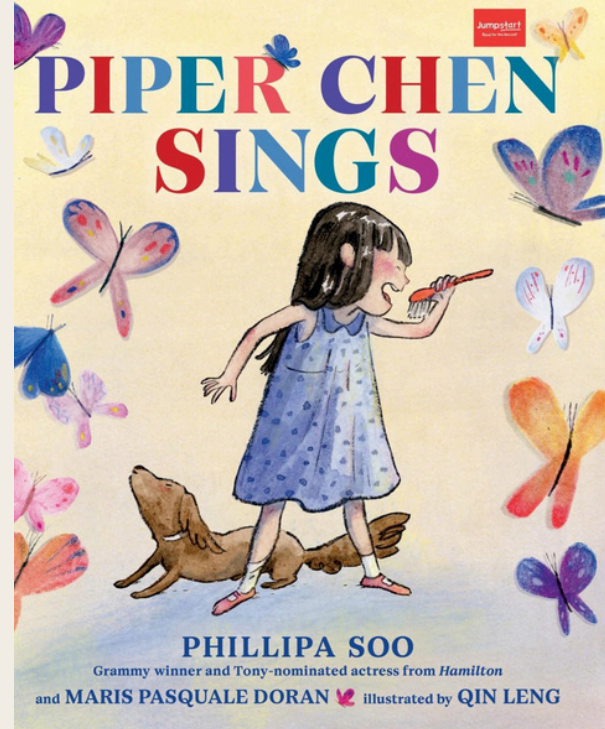
Jumpstart

Read for the Record

October 24, 2024

Over 2 million readers and thousands of classrooms, libraries, and communities came together to celebrate early literacy.

Special thanks to all participating childcare providers!



ELCPH
board member,
David Slovit, MD.
First Friends
Preschool.



ELCPH Kelly Duhon at
Little Bees Learning Center



ELCPH Samantha Dominguez at
New Horizons Preschool & Learning Center



PRESCHOOL NAPTIME ... **WHY?**

Diane Devletian
Living Faith Community Church



As a preschool director, I frequently heard concerns about naptime: “Why does my child need to nap? Isn’t it a waste of learning time?” “My child doesn’t want to come to school because he doesn’t want to nap.” “My child doesn’t nap at home; why should he nap here?” “My child doesn’t sleep at night because he naps during the day.” Every

director and teacher has encountered these comments at some point. While accommodating parents is essential, we must consider whether bending too much to their requests is in the children’s best interest.

Research shows that naps are crucial for young children's brain development and memory. For instance, according to the article "Naps Crucial For Brain Development and Memory in Kids" in Neuroscience News (2024), naps help children process morning learning by allowing the hippocampus to consolidate information and form relationships and memories. Additionally, naps help children rest and reset their emotions for a productive afternoon.

Naptime, however, can be more stressful than helpful if not done effectively. Below are some tips to make the transition to naps smooth and stress-free:

- Before going outside, place mats with sheets, blankets, and special items with the children’s help.
- As they finish their lunch, direct the child to get a book or puzzle to take to their mat while they wait for the others to finish.
- Ensure that children use the restroom before settling on their mats for naptime.
- Read one or two short “bedtime” stories in a calm voice, following it with soft music.
- We can use comforting gestures like rubbing backs, stroking heads, or placing a hand on their backs to reassure them of our presence.
- Have children close their eyes, take a deep breath, and guide them through relaxation from their toes to their eyes. Children find this to be fun as they get to wiggle different parts of their bodies as they get their wiggles out and relax.

Working as a teacher can be very stressful. Even the most patient and professional teachers can feel overwhelmed. Once the children are asleep during naptime, teachers can take a break while the aide or director supervises. This allows them to relax, eat lunch, and prepare for the afternoon.

Children will not always nap, and you will have children that have “outgrown” the need for napping, however, it is still important that they have quiet time. They still need time to relax even if they do not sleep. To accommodate those children, try the following:

- Once the other children have gone to sleep, permit the child to rise and sit with the aide at the table. There, they may engage in coloring, quietly solve puzzles, read books, or assist the aide in preparing for the afternoon activity.
- Older preschoolers love to help with toddlers and infants. Let them become helpers in those rooms so long as it does not interfere with the teacher/student ratio and it is permitted by the classroom teacher.

Hopefully this article will help you be able to explain to your parents why napping is important, but gives you ideas on how to make naptime useful instead of stressful.

“
**CHILDREN
WILL NOT
ALWAYS NAP**



LENA GROW[®]

LENA Grow is an innovative, evidence-based professional development program designed to help infant, toddler, and preschool educators create equitable, robust language environments.



Congratulations to the following educators from Discovery Point Seven Hills in Spring Hill who have successfully earned their LENA Grow certifications! This achievement recognizes their commitment to enhancing early language development through innovative practices. Their dedication will have a positive impact on the children and families they serve

“

We need to allow a response time from babies, even if it is just a coo, laugh or their attempt to make words. By the end of the 6-week LENA program, we have not only improved our communication with our infants but also our way of communicating with them.

Breana Martin
LENA Graduate



EARLY CHILDHOOD CREDENTIALS

Early Childhood Apprenticeship

- Must be employed in an Early Learning Center
- Participate in apprenticeship at Marchman Technical College
- \$200 Textbooks and Materials included

Early Childhood 600 Hour - ECPC

- Join the ECE workforce as a Student Teacher
- Located at Marchman Technical College
- \$2,000 Tuition, Materials, and Exams included

Childcare Director Credential

- Up-Skill credential opportunity
- Must have CDA or equivalent to qualify
- \$365 Tuition and Textbook included

Family Child Care Home - NCDA

- Family Child Care Homes eligible for an online, National CDA program.
- \$850 Tuition, Textbook, and Materials included

*All credential applicants must be Pasco or Hernando County Early Educators to qualify. Must be at least 17 years of age and have a high school diploma or GED. Other prerequisites may be required. All programs are based on funding availability.

Contact ELCPH Education Engagement Coordinator:
Samantha Dominguez at s.dominguez@elcph.org or 727-233-8291 ext. 125

VOICES OF GROWTH: EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS SHARE THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

HEAR IT FROM OTHERS:

"The directors course was nothing short of an amazing experience! My teacher Mrs. Eunice Lopez was a great teacher! She took her time to make sure we understood each module in the course. The class participated in breakout sessions in zoom. During the breakout sessions we would share our ideas on the topic to come up with a group answer.



Killian Geraghty, Early Educator

Not everyone has the same thoughts and ideas. We would end up in conversation for 45 minutes or longer talking about our views on the topic we were discussing. The directors class taught me to use more empathy and to hold to my integrity as a leader. When I started the class I would say my leadership skills were a 5 now I feel they are 10. During the directors course we watched TED talks. My favorite TED talk was with Luvvie Jones, she teaches you to keep pushing forward and never give up no matter what. In the TED talk she made a statement "in a world full of whispers I choose to yell"!

I am choosing to yell and continuing my education with early learning. The director's course gave me the power to keep pushing forward and advanced my leadership skills."

HEAR IT FROM OTHERS:

"I cannot express how transformative the Early Childhood Apprenticeship Program and the Directors Program have been for me. As a full-time parent, also pregnant with twins, I was initially overwhelmed by the idea of continuing my education while managing family life. But these programs truly understood the challenges of my situation and offered solutions that made all the difference.



Kyla Smith, Early Educator

The flexible class times allowed me to learn at my own pace and on my own schedule, which was crucial for me as I balanced my responsibilities at home. The free tuition removed a huge financial barrier, making education more accessible and less stressful during a time when every penny counted.

What really set these programs apart was the support I received from the instructors and mentors. They didn't just see me as a student—they saw me as a future leader in early childhood education. They understood the unique needs of working parents and always encouraged me to keep going, even when it felt like too much.

Thanks to this program, I'm now able to confidently pursue my career in early childhood education, and I feel prepared to take on a director role when the time comes. The skills and knowledge I've gained are invaluable, and I am so grateful for the opportunity to have had this support throughout such a pivotal time in my life.

If you're a parent or working professional considering this program, I highly recommend it. It's been life-changing for me, and I'm sure it will be for you too! Thank you ELC and most importantly Katie Chefero!"

HEAR IT FROM OTHERS:

“Wonderful! That's the word I would use to describe the 600-hour program at Marchman Technical College. The program is very informative, professional, and FUN.

They bring in special guest speakers to provide essential information we need as early educators. This helps us with having great connections to programs we may need or want to use in our class or with other children. They made this program fast but very easygoing, making it available for anyone who has a love for teaching and children! This program has helped me so much to start my career in teaching. They gave me so many tools for my classroom as in toys and educational and fun activities to do with my students.

Attending this program without worrying about student loans and paying out of pocket has helped me focus more on becoming the teacher I've always wanted to be. Going forward, I want to further my education and teach one day to be a second-grade teacher. But for now, I love being in my class full of 2-year-olds at Wesley Chapel Christian Preschool!”



Jennifer Vizcaino
600 Hour Graduate

Congratulations!

...ON YOUR GOLD SEAL ACCREDITATION!

Thank you to the following providers for the dedication and excellence you have shown while earning your accreditation!

Sarah Bee Bilingual Academy & Child Care Center

Sarah Bee Bilingual Academy 2

Elfers Christian Preschool

Geaux Baby

Zephyrhills Early Learning Academy

St. Thomas Aquinas Early Childhood Center

Tanglewood Learning Center



“

The process was seamless & easy to follow...becoming accredited highly contributed to the high quality care that we provide and it increased my enrollments!

Terrica Lashley
Geaux Baby

The ELC supports making accreditation possible for providers through the Gold Seal Accreditation process. This opportunity is fully covered, including all membership and application fees. Accredited providers can thrive with benefits such as accreditation status in CCR&R listings and outreach growth.

**TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT
MELISSA HAYES AT M.HAYES@ELCPH.ORG**





The Teach Bridge Scholarship acts as a “wrap scholarship” to the TEACH Children’s Forum Scholarship, supporting early educators in pursuing a higher education. Teach Bridge supplements the educator and sponsoring centers with the required costs, reducing the financial burden from our educators and sponsoring centers.

Teach Bridge Scholarship



Unlock Your Future with the TEACH Wrap Scholarship!

Who Can Apply?

- Early childhood educators currently employed in a licensed child care facility
- Individuals working with children ages 0-5
- Applicants looking to pursue a degree or certification in early childhood education

What Does the Scholarship Cover?

- Tuition assistance for approved degree programs
- Support for textbooks and other required materials
- Scholarships for both part-time and full-time study options

Benefits of the TEACH Wrap Scholarship:

- Financial support to reduce the cost of continuing education
- Flexible funding options tailored to different educational programs
- Opportunity to grow your skills and career in early childhood education
- Contribute to a stronger, more educated workforce of early childhood educators



Visit the Promise Institute
<https://ece-elcph.talentlms.com/>

**APPLY
TODAY**

WELCOME TO THE PROMISE INSTITUTE



The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties continuously strives to meet the needs of Early Childhood providers and partners in the community. To support the mission and vision of ensuring **children are successful in school and life** by providing a quality education from day one, ELCPH has added contracted trainers to their “ELC family” to support the community with more opportunities.

Together, our belief is that “every child, caregiver and teacher deserve the best possible resources on their road to success”! Executive Director, Dr. Steve Knobl along with the ELC staff and the ELC Board members, made “A Space to Grow” a priority, offering more quality professional development opportunities for early educators! The ELC recognizes the variety of needs of adult learners. Therefore, trainings have included: Online options; Hybrid options; and Facilitated professional development for selected providers through grant funding.

The Promise Institute also hosts additional opportunities, such as the Teach Bridge Scholarship, which complements the TEACH Children's Forum Scholarship by providing financial support for educators pursuing higher education while easing the financial burden on sponsoring centers. Additionally, grant opportunities, covering needs like staff retention bonuses, owner commitment bonuses, curriculum expansion, software & technology, and equipment & supplies are available that further support early childhood education initiatives in programs and home providers across Pasco and Hernando Counties.

OVERVIEW OF CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM AND STRATEGIES

Online course including presentation, videos to support the interactive learning experiences, and resources. Zoom sessions with a presentation facilitated by a contracted trainer. This course provides an overview of the State required Classroom Assessment Scoring System with a deeper understanding of the Domains, Dimensions, and Indicators of high-quality interactions with young children.

CLASS EMOTIONAL SUPPORT TRAINING

Online course including presentation, videos to support interactive learning experiences, and resources. This training focuses specifically on one CLASS Domain: Positive Climate, Negative Climate and Teacher Sensitivity. This online training allows the learner to take the course at their own pace as an introduction, or to refresh, enhance and deepen their learning.

CLASS CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION TRAINING

Online course including presentation, videos to support interactive learning experiences, and resources. This training focuses specifically on one CLASS Domain: Behavior Management, Productivity, and Instructional Learning Formats. This online training allows the learner to take the course at their own pace as an introduction, or to refresh, enhance and deepen their learning.

CLASS INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TRAINING

Online course including presentation, videos to support interactive learning experiences, and resources. Training focuses specifically on: Concept Development, Quality of Feedback and Language Modeling. This online training allows the learner to take the course at their own pace as an introduction, or to refresh, enhance and deepen their learning.

AND FACILITATED OPPORTUNITIES!

Facilitated professional development for selected providers through grant funding. This included online modules from Conscious Discipline. The program provided participant workbooks and resources regarding Adult Social Emotional Learning. Zoom sessions were organized with presentations. During these sessions, participants took the lead to present components of the concepts. Live practice of concepts and classroom implementation of resources were demonstrated by participants. Videos were utilized to share examples of the application of concepts. Additionally, participants had the ability to share ideas with one another to clarify questions.

LIVING CLASSROOMS: GARDENING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Diane Smallze
Web of Wisdom

Gardening with young children helps develop crucial skills that can last a lifetime and sows the seeds of curiosity about the natural environment. A garden is a living playground where educators can help toddlers and preschoolers strengthen their motor skills, engage their senses, explore science concepts, and build lifelong habits that support health and nutrition.

Gardening at a young age should be developmentally appropriate. Children are naturally curious a



and active learners, so rather than simply sharing information, gardening should be a hands-on experience. Gross motor skills are enhanced through activities like carrying watering cans, squatting, digging, and pushing wheelbarrows. Gardening can help

develop fine motor skills by pulling weeds, handling seeds, transplanting seedlings, and using gardening tools.

A garden will encourage children to explore through their senses. Conversations can be had about the colors



and shapes that are seen. Their sense of smell will be stirred by fragrant flowers and herbs as they listen to the sounds of nature. Encourage them to close their eyes and listen to the sounds around them...birds singing, the breeze blowing through the flowers, the rustling of leaves. As we all know, children love to touch! They can experience the many textures of a garden.

“

If you are thinking of starting a garden at your center, you can start small.

The flowers, leaves, and soil all offer opportunities to explore with their hands. Last, but hardly least, is the sense of taste! What better way is there to enjoy the fruits of your efforts than to sample what you have grown?

Nutrition is important and there isn't a better place to start that discussion than over a bed of green beans. I have seen kids eating green beans straight off the plants and had parents tell me that they never eat them at home. They are excited to try things that they have

grown, and perhaps there's even a little positive peer pressure to try something that your friends are enjoying!

When you consider the rise of childhood obesity and the illnesses associated with it, the physical effort of working in a garden coupled with the eagerness to try new fruits and vegetables can only promote a healthier lifestyle.

Growing plants also provides an opportunity to introduce science to preschoolers. They can learn about the life cycle of plants

and the needs of living things. By conducting experiments with different types of soil and seeds, even the youngest gardener can form a hypothesis and make observations.

If you are thinking of starting a garden at your center, you can start small. It only takes a little patch of soil to get started, and your children can reap the benefits for years to come. It is important for children to spend time outdoors, learn about the nature, and take care of the world around them all while engaging in activities that promote a healthier lifestyle. A garden is the perfect place to do this.



FULL STEAM AHEAD CONFERENCE OVER 200 ATTENDEES! 2025

PROFESSOR SKO

Science show
was a hit!
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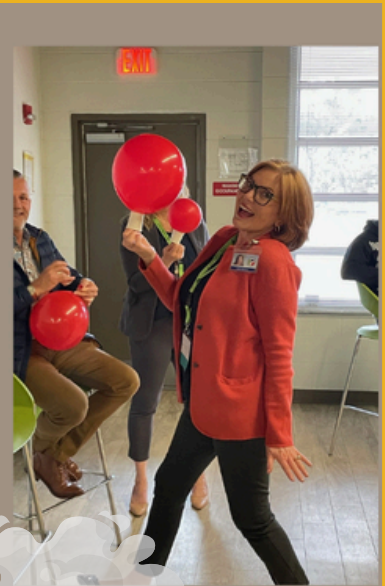


30 SESSIONS!

- PRESCHOOL TRACK
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- SPANISH BILINGUAL TRACK

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Thank You for
Joining Us!



CO-PARENTING: HEALTHCARE DECISION- MAKING WITH SHARED PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY (JOINT CUSTODY)

Jake Hornstein – Co-Founder & Executive Director

Greg Hill – Co-Founder & CEO

Our Children Have Rights



Shared parental responsibility means a court-ordered relationship in which **both parents** retain full parental rights and responsibilities with respect to their child. Parents are expected to communicate and confer with each other so that major decisions affecting the welfare of the child will be determined jointly.

When it comes to shared medical decision-making, **co-parents need to keep each other informed about their child's medical and healthcare situations.**

Here are examples of what should be shared between co-parents:

- The child's medical history, including any relevant, recent or anticipated changes
- Contact information of doctors & medical care providers
- Contact information & details for scheduled appointments and office visits
- Changes in the child's health status
- Medications the child is currently taking
- Changes in the prescriptions, dosages or directions
- All suggestions made by the child's healthcare provider or therapist regarding interventions, immunizations or procedures
- All emergency contacts and instructions

Medical decisions can have a significant impact on a child's health and well-being.

By communicating effectively, co-parents can more easily navigate the intricacies of medical decision-making. Clear and concise communication will avoid misunderstandings and future disputes and keep co-parents in sync. Above all, it will ensure that the child receives the best possible health care and medical treatments.



For help with **communication strategies between co-parents**, feel free to contact us! Our one-on-one consultations (via phone, Zoom, email, text, FaceTime) are confidential and always No Cost. **Why? Because Our Children Have Rights.**

Thank you, Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando, for including us in Spotlight on Providers!

Contact Jake & Greg at info@ourchildrenhaverights.com or www.ochr.org



The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. is excited to share that we have partnered with Tampa General Hospital Spring Hill. We will be supporting the NICU care unit with its first children's book library. This library will be a valuable resource for parents, giving them access to infant-friendly books that encourage bonding with their babies.





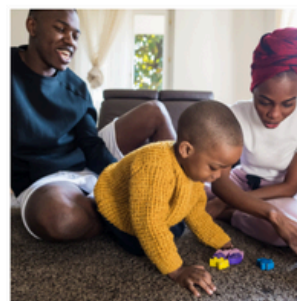
R.N. Mohra, ID.
Psychologist



EMOTIONAL VACCINES FOR PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Emotional Vaccines® consists of a library of videos featuring proactive, evidence-based content, each designed with non-clinical messaging and simple, easy-to-follow steps to empower anyone with the knowledge and education they need to transform their lives.



PARENTING POD

Turning surviving into thriving

INNOVATIVE LEARNING

BRING YOUR CLASSROOM TO LIFE



Curiosity triggers areas in the brain that help us become better at learning skills and retaining information. Curiosity even enhances overall learning success!

Did you know that the Early Learning Coalition partnered with MarcoPolo Learning to provide all School Readiness and VPK providers in Pasco and Hernando, **FREE** access to MarcoPolo for Educators and Families! This digital resource aligns with and enhances your

early learning curriculum, and provides support to every domain of CLASS Framework for classroom quality.

MarcoPolo Learning is an award-winning developer of early childhood content and technology for schools and homes that fosters curiosity.



Our educators find it to be user friendly and filled with educational content.

MarcoPolo for Educators, provides the largest library of curriculum-aligned, developmentally appropriate videos that bring curriculum to life, teach diverse learners, and drive learning from school to home through an

innovative connection of its teacher-facing and child-facing platforms.

If you would like more information, please contact Katie Dean at k.dean@elcph.org.

HEAR IT FROM OTHERS:

"MarcoPolo for Educators has been a wonderful addition to our curriculum. Our educators find it to be user-friendly and filled with educational content. It ignites the curiosity of students while providing our educators with resources like the Educator Guide which includes thought-provoking questions for classroom discussions. We love the integration of video messages and family engagement activities to foster a strong connection between school and home. I highly recommend MarcoPolo to fellow educators seeking to enhance instruction and inspire a love for learning in their students."

Katie Guth
Pitter Patter Kids Preschool





WRITE FOR US! A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO COLLABORATE.

SPOTLIGHT on Providers is published annually by the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. for the provider community. It is distributed electronically to all providers and is also available on the website at www.elcph.org.

Authors are encouraged to submit readable, practical manuscripts that reflect and advance the knowledge base of the profession. Manuscripts should be prepared in current APA style (7th Edition). This style includes: typed, double-spaced, wide margins, and cover page with a working title, authors' full names, degrees, affiliations, and e-mail address for the lead author.

Manuscripts published by ELCPH address both the continuing interests of early childhood professionals and emerging ideas and issues in the field. Among topics considered are emergent curriculum for children from birth through age 8, effective assessment strategies, effective classroom practices that reflect sound theory and research, program administration, relationships with families, and public policy effecting early care and education.

The length of journal manuscripts ranges from 1 to 3 pages, including complete references. Please submit manuscripts as e-mail attachments to expedite the review process. Send to s.sabadishin@elcph.org with the subject heading SPOTLIGHT Manuscript. Manuscripts are reviewed and processed electronically. Manuscripts that are submitted in hard copy will not be reviewed.

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