



OCT- DEC 2025 ISSUE 4

Newsletter

early
learning
coalition
OF PASCO & HERNANDO
A Space To Grow In Service
www.elcph.org



ELCPH Mission Statement
Creating a supportive community
for children to be successful in
school and life.



ELCPH Vision Statement
Supporting quality education
for every child.

Celebrating Holidays Together: Honoring Traditions and Building Understanding

Preschool is the perfect place for children to begin learning about the many ways families celebrate holidays. Seeing their own traditions reflected in the classroom - alongside those of others - helps children feel proud of who they are while learning to respect and appreciate differences. Research shows that learning about a variety of traditions early on helps children grow in empathy and social skills (NAEYC, 2019).

At school, holiday celebrations go beyond decorating for just one season or event. Teachers may introduce traditions such as Diwali, Lunar New Year, Hanukkah, Christmas, Eid al-Fitr, Kwanzaa, or even special family traditions unique to each family. Children might listen to stories, sing songs, try crafts, or taste foods connected to these holidays. When families share their own customs—like bringing in a favorite recipe, sharing photos, or teaching a song—it not only excites the children but also helps build a stronger classroom community.



You can continue the conversation at home by using simple phrases with your child, such as, “Some families light candles for this holiday,” or “This family celebrates with a special meal.” This helps children make connections without feeling that one way of celebrating is more important than another.

By celebrating many traditions throughout the year, we show children that every culture has something meaningful to offer. As parents, your voice and participation make these experiences even richer and help children grow into curious, respectful learners who value the world around them.

Naeyc Valuing Diversity



Owlivia's Reading Corner

Read Together, Learn Together

Books are a wonderful way to introduce children to different traditions. Stories featuring children who are celebrating these traditions allow young readers to visualize and learn in a concrete way. Additionally, families can explore and discover unique traditions together that they might not be aware of. Introducing a holiday you celebrate through literature can also foster understanding and familiarity.

Learn More Together With These Books About Traditions!

Congratulations Parents!



We are thrilled to announce our four lucky winners of the *Old McDonald* Story Sack and Preschool Book Bundles! Thank you all for participating. Stay tuned for more exciting giveaways!

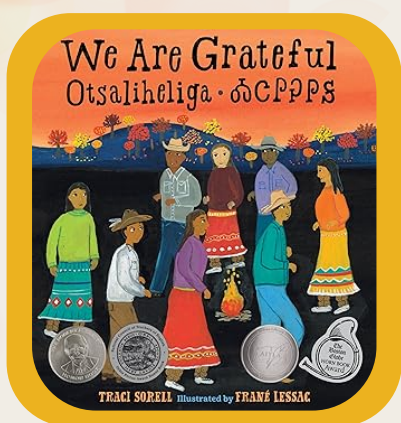
Lymaris Brea
Lisa Britten
Ferwa Mohammed
Harley Davis



We Celebrate the Light
by Jane Yolen, Heidi E. Y. Stemple
A celebration of seven different winter holidays observed in the U.S. and the traditions that unite them all.

Too Many Tamales **by Gary Soto**

This modern classic celebrates the tradition of tamales and family bonding at Christmas.



We Are Grateful: Otsaliheliga
by Traci Sorell
The word otsaliheliga (oh-jah-LEE-hay-lee-gah) is used by members of the Cherokee Nation to express gratitude. Beginning in the fall with the new year and ending in summer, follow a full Cherokee year of celebrations and experiences.



Family Engagement

Making Time for Traditions is Making Time for Engagement

As fall and winter arrive, families are given some of the best opportunities for engagement through traditions. Whether it is a special recipe, decorating, storytelling, or community events, traditions are an excellent way to help children feel connected, supported, and excited to learn.

When families share traditions with their children, they are opening doors to conversations, memories, and learning experiences. A child who listens to Grandma recount the story behind the family holiday cookie recipe or helps decorate the home is developing language, problem-solving, and social-emotional skills in a way that feels meaningful. These shared moments help children understand who they are and how they belong within their family and community.



Family engagement happens when families and children learn and grow together. This season, try inviting your child to take an active role in family traditions. Let them stir the batter, ask them what they are enjoying most about a holiday, or teach them the history of a tradition you value. Want to spark curiosity and connections? Create a new tradition of your own!



Holiday Guardian Bike Sweepstakes!

Hello parents! Enter for your chance to **win a brand-new Guardian bike designed for children ages 3–5 years/height: 37–43 inches.**

ENTRY RULES: One entry per household. To enter, please provide:

- Parent's first and last name
- Email address
- Phone number

ENTRIES CLOSE WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2025.

- The winner will be notified after the drawing.
- The parent/guardian must confirm acceptance of the prize and arrange pick-up at our office (12107 Majestic Blvd, Hudson, Florida) no later than Wednesday, December 10, 2025. Good luck!

Enter Here!

Issue 04 Newsletter



Click Here!

Unlock a special 3-month calendar filled with daily activities designed to support traditions and family engagement this fall!

giveaway
TIME





IMAGINE!

Florida VPK



VPK Provider Ratings & Designations
The Florida Department of Education has released the performance ratings and designations for all Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) providers for the 2024–2025 school year. This is the first year ratings are part of Florida's new VPK accountability system.

[Click here to view the VPK Provider Ratings and Designations](#)



How Providers Are Rated

Each VPK provider receives a score based on three important factors:

- **50% Program Quality** – Measured by classroom interactions (CLASS assessment)
- **20% Student Achievement** – percentage of children scoring “kindergarten-ready” on the PM3 assessment
- **30% Student Learning Gains** – Growth from PM1 to PM3 assessment scores

For more details please download the VPK designation flyer, click below:

[Download VPK Designation flyer](#)



If you have questions about ratings, curriculum, or your child's progress, please contact your provider or reach out to the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties for support.

VPK Families for 2025-2026 School Year

Florida VPK supports the development of early literacy, executive functioning, and social emotional skills. To learn more about Florida VPK, please click Family Portal below!

Florida VPK

To learn more about School Readiness, please click Family Portal below!

Florida School Readiness

You may apply for School Readiness services through the Family Portal below. If you are eligible, you will be placed on the Wait List until enrollment takes place, depending on availability of funding.

Apply Here

Family Portal

Parent Workshops Begin Oct 6!

Click on Flyer to download

To register or learn more, contact Brenda Mayo at b.mayo@elcph.org

SIGN UP

FREE FAMILY EDUCATION



The START Initiative is a family support program designed for families in Pasco and Hernando Counties who want to strengthen their parenting skills and better navigate today's challenges. We understand how families care about their children's success and well-being, and we know that parenting during these uncertain times can be stressful.

Introduction to the Circle of Security Workshop where families Gain access to helpful tools and strategies Build healthy connections with your children Receive support to cope with the unique challenges of today's world – now and in the future. Make community connections with other START parents Can participate by zoom and technology is provided if needed!

Participants receive a free copy of Raising a Secure Child. This book is based on decades of research about how secure parent-child relationships can be supported and strengthened.

To register or for more information, please contact Brenda Mayo at b.mayo@elcph.org.



#parentpromise

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Who can join?

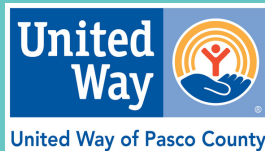
Parents,
Grandparents,
Caregivers,
Legal Guardians

At the heart of the Circle of Security approach is the belief that children thrive when they feel safe, understood, and connected to their caregivers. The workshops help parents recognize their child's emotional needs—whether a child is reaching out for comfort, exploring the world, or showing big feelings. Parents learn to recognize these signals, and respond in ways that nurture the child's sense of security. This secure foundation allows children to grow more confident, develop healthy relationships, and manage their emotions more effectively.



Ultimately, the Circle of Security workshops remind parents that perfection isn't the goal - connection is.

Community Partners



The United Way of Pasco County's mission is to improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities to advance health, education, and financial stability, according to the United Way Pasco County. They achieve this by identifying critical needs, developing resources and partnerships, and producing measurable results.

[Click Here](#)



The mission of United Way of Hernando County is to inspire leaders and partners and mobilize resources to strengthen the lives of people in the community, according to United Way of Hernando County. Their vision is to build a strong, caring community and improve the quality of life in Hernando County.

[Click Here](#)

What are Parents Saying?

When my kids do something that stresses me out, I can pause and ask myself where they are on the circle and how I can help them based on that.

Watch here



If you have questions or would like to suggest content, please contact Child Care Resource and Referral Coordinator, Brenda Mayo at b.mayo@elcph.org.

