



APRIL - JUNE 2026 ISSUE 6

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.

Spending time outdoors with your child is one of the simplest—and most powerful—ways to support their healthy development.

Fresh air, open spaces, and unstructured play help build strong bodies, curious minds, and family connections. Right here in Pasco and Hernando counties, there are many opportunities to explore together.

Start by visiting a local park in **Pasco** or **Hernando County**. Many community parks offer shaded playgrounds, walking paths, picnic areas, and open space perfect for running, climbing, and imaginative play. Bring a ball, plan a nature scavenger hunt, or simply take a slow walk and let your child set the pace. Point out different leaves, birds, clouds, and insects. These everyday observations build vocabulary and spark curiosity.

Be sure to explore the **Born Learning Trails®** located throughout our community. These interactive trails turn an ordinary walk into a playful learning adventure. Each station includes simple activities that encourage talking, counting, moving, and problem-solving — all while having fun together. It's learning disguised as play!



**Veterans Memorial Park,
Spring Hill**



For a bigger adventure, visit a nearby state park like Weeki Wachee Springs or Werner-Boyce Salt Springs to explore trails, wildlife, and Florida's natural beauty. Pack water, sunscreen, and comfortable shoes, and ask open-ended questions to spark your child's curiosity. Even a short visit can strengthen your bond and support your child's physical, social, and emotional growth.

Let's Explore!



Owlvivia's Reading Corner



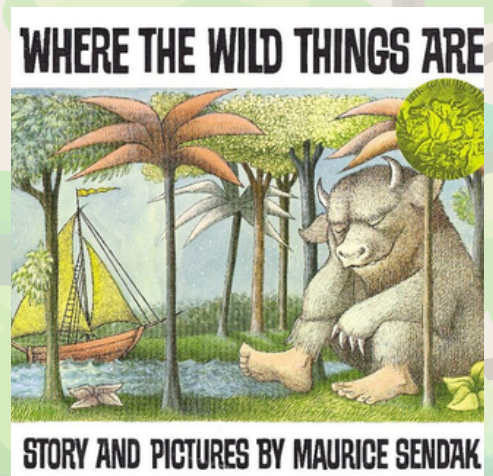
Looking to embark on a literacy adventure with your family? **Be sure to visit your local Pasco and Hernando County libraries** for these recommended book titles!

"We're Going on A Nature Hunt" by Steve Metzger



"Let's Go Outside" by Ben Lerwill

"Where the Wild Things Are" by Maurice Sendak



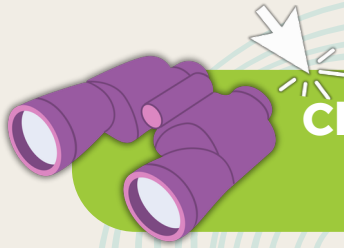
"A Stick is an Excellent Thing" by Marilyn Singer

"At the Park"/"En el parque" by Judy Nayer
(Available in English and Spanish)



Family Engagement

Take it Outside!



Click here to unlock 3 months of playful family engagement activities!



These April, May, and June family engagement activities are designed to get children moving, exploring, and learning outdoors. Each day includes one simple activity that encourages gross motor development, active play, and hands-on discovery using materials families already have at home.

Children will build important skills like balance, coordination, strength, and body awareness while enjoying nature walks, playground time, dancing, obstacle courses, and backyard games. The calendar also highlights seasonal changes and special holidays such as Earth Day, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Father's Day, and the First Day of Summer. Outdoor play supports physical health, confidence, creativity, and family bonding.

These activities are quick, flexible, and easy to incorporate into your daily routine. Just a few minutes of movement and fresh air each day helps children grow strong bodies, develop new skills, and create meaningful family memories throughout the spring and summer months.

Congratulations!



Congratulations to Cheryl B., our latest Parent Circle prize winner! Enjoy your Sensory Strong gift bundle!

The next giveaway...

Win Passes to The Florida Aquarium!



Two lucky families will be randomly selected to receive passes to The Florida Aquarium! **Click here to enter!**



Know Your VPK Options School Year Program

540 instructional hours
Class sizes not to exceed 20 students

Instructors must have a minimum of a Child Development Associate for the school year program (Now referred to as the Birth to Five Florida Child Care Professional Credential.)

Typical class begins in late August for 3-4 hours per weekday.

Summer Program

300 instructional hours
Class sizes not to exceed 12 students
Instructors must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree

Typical class begins the following June for 6-7 hours per weekday.

SIS Program (Specialized Instructional Services Education Program)

The SIS Program takes place outside a traditional classroom setting and is for 4-year-olds with special needs who have current individualized educational plans from their local school districts.



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!

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

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.



Child Development: Connecting Quality Interactions to Growth

Research shows that responsive conversations strengthen brain development and help children connect new experiences to what they already know.

Children learn best through meaningful conversations and hands-on experiences. When adults ask open-ended questions and encourage children to explain their thinking, they support cognitive, language, and social-emotional development.



These rich interactions help children build problem-solving skills, creativity, and confidence.

At home, simple moments like talking during playtime or asking about their day can have a powerful impact.

Quality education starts with positive relationships and thoughtful conversations that promote growth across all developmental areas.





Pasco County Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources connects residents and visitors to vibrant parks, scenic preserves!

[Click Here](#)



The Hernando County Parks and Recreation Department's mission is to provide safe, clean, and functional facilities while offering diverse recreational opportunities!

[Click Here](#)

If you have questions or would like to suggest content, please contact Family Services Supervisor, Brenda Mayo at b.mayo@elcph.org.