



Helping Hands

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



Engaging Fathers



When family members enter a program, they should feel welcomed, valued, and respected by program staff and by their surroundings. Staff can pay special attention to engaging fathers to ensure all family members feel the program environment is supportive of relationships. Fathers can feel welcome in your program by including them as an equal caregiver.

Here are a couple of examples that you can apply to create a culture of inclusiveness for fathers.

- ◆ Schedule meetings when fathers and other family members are available to participate. Example: "You mentioned your schedule makes morning meetings a challenge; is there a better time for us to talk?"
- ◆ Embrace attitudes that show fathers their contributions are important and valuable. Example: "Can you tell me how you think your child learns best?" or "What do you do to comfort your child when she is upset?"
- ◆ Provide a welcoming environment to your center. Example: Post positive imagery of fathers interacting with their children. The US Department of Health and Human Services/Head Start: Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center has some examples located here: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-engagement/article/celebrating-what-fathers-do-every-day-wall-posters>

Information from Creating Welcoming, Father-Friendly Program Environments, November 28, 2018, Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center

Episcopal Children's Services

Volume 13, Issue 12

June 2018

Inside this issue:

ELC of North FL Updates	2-3
Flag Day Craft	4
Day At the Beach	5
Rockets Away!	6
Sensory Play	7
Achieve Awards Announcement	8
Professional Development	8
VPK Corner	9

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:

krosander@ecs4kids.org.

We will do our best to find the answer, post the comment, and address the concern.

Thanks!

Kristina Rosander,
Editor

ELC of North Florida Updates

Toddler/Preschool Festival in Palatka

The ELC of N. Florida is partnering with the Kiwanis Club of Palatka, HOPE FM radio and the Palatka library to put on a Toddler/Preschool Festival in Palatka on June 1st. Please help us by sharing this event with your families and staff.

Toddler Preschool Fest!

**Saturday, June 1
11am-2pm**
@ the Palatka Library
**Summer Reading Program
Kick-Off (601 College Road)**
FREE EVENT OPEN TO ALL!
with Fabulous Faces Face Painting...

Family Resource Fair for parents with information from local organizations;
Meet and Greets with your favorite story book and cartoon characters;
Fishing for Books and a **Dino Dig**; **clowns and balloon twisters**; an extra special Story Time with **Marshall from Paw Patrol**; and visit the **Princess Parlor** and **Superhero Central** for crafts!

Don't forget to pick up your Reading Logs and information for the Library's Summer Reading Program!

Plus: Take a Virtual Tour of the International Space Station with our Google Expeditions Virtual Reality Experience in the library makerspace (How To Center).

In the Teen Room with Bee-Bots and Ozobots, we have extra special guests:

MASH
Museum of Science & History
JACKSONVILLE • FLORIDA

Pete the Cat
Story Time with Robin!

For more information, contact Paige Chase at 386-336-8536.

For more library events, visit us online: FunInPutnam.com

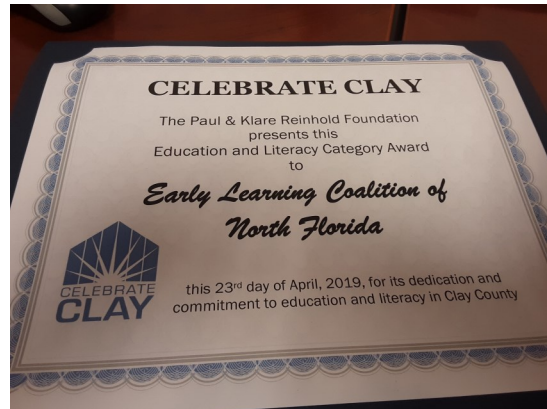
ELC of North Florida Updates

Reinhold Grant

A big thanks to the Reinhold Foundation of Clay County for their recent \$750 donation to the ELC of N. Florida. The money will be used to further support our themed literacy outreach programs.

Book Donation

During the month of April, Riverside Homes lead by sales consultant Marjorie Taylor, held a book drive for the ELCNF. Six real estate offices throughout St. Johns County participated. The books are given to clients visiting the Episcopal Children's Services offices as well at literacy programs. The ELCNF can provide books to providers by special request for special events if they have the books available. Contact Joan Whitson at 904-342-1167 ext. 202.



Themed Literacy Outreach Programs

The ELCNF outreach team and volunteers were busy during the month of May putting on Dinosaur themed programs at Castlebrook Academy and Turning Point Academy in St. Augustine and at First Baptist Preschool in Palatka. The children got a chance to be Paleontologists while digging for dinosaurs and making their own fossils. For information about scheduling a themed program contact ELCNF outreach manager Joan Whitson at jwhitson@elcnorthflorida.org The programs are FREE, geared for VPK age and done as grant money allows.



Flag Day Paper Craft

Kelley Warner, Education Specialist

Resource: http://www.softschools.com/facts/holidays/flag_day_facts/1299/
<http://mrskarensclass.blogspot.com/2011/02/p-week-and-our-country.html>

Flag Day, celebrated every year on June 14th, marks the adoption of the American Flag in 1776. Though the holiday was not officially declared until 1916 by President Woodrow Wilson, it is believed that the celebration originated with a Wisconsin school teacher in 1885. Infants and toddlers can join in the celebration by creating their own flags with construction paper.

Materials:

- * Red and white construction paper cut into thin strips
- * Blue construction paper cut into squares
- * White star stickers, or white paint and cotton swabs
- * Black construction paper
- * Glue sticks

Begin by showing the children an American flag (an actual flag or a picture) and talking with them about it. Let them know that they are going to be making their own flag using paper. Set the materials out on a table for the children to choose. Allow older toddlers to use the glue stick and place their paper pieces themselves. Younger children can still be responsible for the placement of their paper stripes after the teacher has helped with the glue. After the blue squares have been glued down, encourage the children to place stars on their flag, either with stickers or paint on a cotton swab.



Things to remember...

Allow the children the freedom of creating their own flag! Support their independence by allowing them to glue their paper pieces where they choose, there is no "right place". Teachers can assist the children as needed, but let the children take the lead in this fun, hands on activity. Teachers can support language use by asking open-ended questions while the children are working, using self and parallel talk to attach language to actions, and using a variety of words to label objects and actions.

This activity touches on the **toddler CLASS** dimensions of Regard for Child Perspectives, Facilitated Learning Development, and Language Modeling.

Happy Flag Day!

A Day at the Beach Using Five Senses Ariel Jones, Education Specialist

Resource: The Giant Encyclopedia of Theme Activities for Children 2 to 5

Summer is quickly approaching and what better way to get into the season than diving into a beach theme. A beach theme can promote learning in many ways through real world connections and hands on learning experiences. With this activity, children can use their five senses, artistic skills, and dramatic play. Before beginning the activity, decorate your classroom to create a beach atmosphere. Use props such as a beach umbrella, swimming tubes, beach balls, sea shells, beach blankets and towels.

Directions:

- Setup the classroom into different beach related learning stations that represent each of the five senses.
 - For hearing, children can listen to seashells
 - For taste, children can explore salt water
 - For touch, children can take turns digging for seashells or touching seaweed with a blind fold
 - For smell, children can smell salt water and or seaweed
- You can also provide or enhance a sand table by filling it with pails, shovels, sea shells and sea weed.
- A water table could also be used and enhanced by creating salt water.
- As a gross motor activity, have children play beach ball bounce or swimming tube toss.

Materials:

- 2 bins (plastic)
- Seashells
- Salt
- Seaweed
- Blindfold
- Beach balls
- Swimming tubes
- Beach umbrella
- Beach blankets
- Beach towels



CLASS Connections

Concept Development-Analysis and Reasoning, Integration, Connections to the Real World

Quality of Feedback-Scaffolding, Feedback loops, Prompting Thought Processes, Providing Information

Language Modeling- Frequent Conversations, Open Ended Questions, Repetition and Extension, Self and Parallel Talk, Advanced Language

A Celebration to Remember: Flag Day, Rockets Away Sherry Tindall, Education Specialist

Resource: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_Day_\(United_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_Day_(United_States))
<https://sciencebob.com/build-a-film-canister-rocket/>

This month marks Flag Day, a celebration of the adoption of the American Flag by the Second Continental Congress on June 14, 1775. In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson established June 14th as the official day to celebrate this historical event. In some communities Flag Day is marked by parades. Your school age children may not have a parade, but they can still celebrate the day through setting off rockets. Yes, rockets! The children will be excited to honor our flag in this manner. Below are instructions to how to build a film canister rocket.

Materials:

- ✦ 1 empty film canister for each child (these can be purchased through Amazon)
- ✦ A box of Alka-Seltzer
- ✦ Water
- ✦ Safety goggles

Instructions:

- ✦ Put on those safety goggles, and head outside – no really, when this works, that film canister really flies! If you want to try the indoor version, do not turn the canister upside down in step 5.
- ✦ Break the antacid tablet in half.
- ✦ Remove the lid from the film canister and put a teaspoon (5 ml) of water into the canister. Do the next 2 steps quickly
- ✦ Drop the tablet half into the canister and snap the cap onto the canister (make sure that it snaps on tightly.)
- ✦ Quickly put the canister on the ground CAP SIDE DOWN and STEP BACK at least 2 meters. About 10 seconds later, you will hear a POP! and the film canister will launch into the air!

Caution: If it does not launch, wait at least 30 second before examining the canister. Usually the cap is not on tight enough and the build up of gas leaked out.



Sensory Play: Sensory Paths Kristina Rosander, Inclusion Specialist


Resource: <https://www.educationalplaycare.com>
<https://www.hellowonderful.co/>
<https://www.understood.org>
<https://www.playlandprek.com/>
<https://childsuccescenter.com>

Sensory play builds nerve connections in the brain's pathways, which lead to the child's ability to complete more complex learning tasks. Sensory play supports language development, cognitive growth, fine and gross motor skills, problem solving skills, and social interaction.

5 BENEFITS OF SENSORY PLAY


Highly Sensitive Children

IMPROVED BRAIN PATHWAYS




When all of our senses are involved in learning, pathways are created quickly. Allowing children to accomplish complex problems during play.

ENHANCED MEMORY




Playing with our senses allows us to make connections between moments and our senses. Such as how a smell reminds us of a place.

IMPROVEMENT IN ALL AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT




Sensory play aids all areas of development; cognitive, language, social, problem solving, and motor skills.

HANDS ON LEARNING



Children learn about different sensory inputs such as sound (loud and soft), touch (smooth and rough), sight (near and far), smell (sweet and sour), and taste (salty and sweet).

HELPS ANXIOUS AND NERVOUS CHILDREN



Sensory activities allow children to refine their thresholds for different sensory information helping their brain to create stronger connections to process and respond to sensory information.

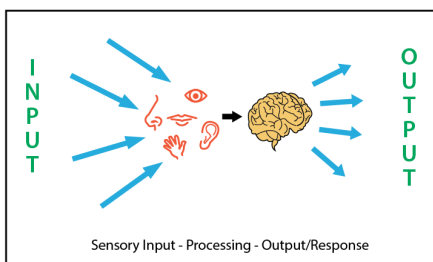
SOURCE:
<http://www.playlandprek.com/2018/03/benefits-of-sensory-play/>

Outdoor Sensory Path

Now that it has officially warmed up for the summer, take your children outside for them to enjoy this outdoor sensory path! You can also save up flat cardboard boxes that would work just as well as these trays.

Sensory paths are an essential part of a sensory diet. Sensory paths give proprioceptive sensory input to help kids stay calm and regulate their bodies. A sensory diet implemented in the classroom includes a designed set of activities and accommodations that will give the kids the sensory input that they need.

A sensory path can be great for kids with sensory processing issues and ADHD, but all kids can benefit from it. Through movement and breathing, kids will be able to release any sensory buildup that they have, allowing all of their built up energy to be utilized by their brain.





Congratulations!

Episcopal Children's Services Achieve Awards Announcement

We are pleased to announce the winners of the First Annual Episcopal Children's Services Achieve Awards!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Community Partner Award

Brighton Day (St. John's County)

Best CLASS Score

Shirley Crooms (Putnam County)



Local Professional Development Opportunities (Training Calendar)

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

<https://www.ecs4kids.org/programs/regional-training-institute/>

Click on the registration link to see a list of available courses.

Click on a course and follow the directions for registration and payment. The website provides a list of trainings and descriptions offered each quarter.

For CDA information and Questions, please contact Danesha Davis, Professional Development Coordinator

904-726-1500 ext.299

904-310-2105 (cell)



VPK Corner Shanda Ellis, Manager of VPK Services

Closing out the 2018-19 VPK School Year

As of May 15, 2019 the Provider Verification Report has not been made available in the Statewide Portal or to Coalitions to send to providers. In the meantime, if your program has ended or will be ending in May/June, please log in to your Provider Portal account and click on the Attendance link and the Reimbursement Details link. Here you can see your monthly reimbursements and check them against your records. This will be helpful once the report is available to you.

In the meantime, while waiting for the report, ECS will send you a Provider Verification letter after we close out your last VPK attendance month. Please read the letter carefully and choose one of the two options available regarding your final VPK payment.

Assessments

The deadline to input AP3 for VPK Assessment into Bright Beginnings is 15 calendar days (includes weekends) from your last day of VPK. This deadline is classroom specific and strictly enforced. Failure to meet the deadline will result in removal from VPK eligibility for five years.

Important reminders for the upcoming 2019-20 VPK School Year

Please remember that you must be **approved** at least **two weeks prior** to your intended start date. This allows the VPK department to make sure everything is in order with your provider file and can enroll children in your program. If you need to make changes to information that has already been approved, please log onto the Provider Portal and go to your VPK application to update your information along with any applicable documentation.

If your VPK Application has been certified, we are not yet able to initiate your VPK Contract. Once the contract is fully functional in the Provider Portal we will initiate it for you to sign and submit through the portal. At that time, a coalition representative will sign the contract to complete the certification. A VPK Specialist will then contact you with instructions on how to enroll your VPK children through the Provider Portal.

You will also need to go online to request updated VPK Assessment materials for the new program year through the Bright Beginnings website. If you are unsure of your provider file status, please call and speak with a VPK Specialist.

The VPK Department would like to wish everyone a safe and fun summer!

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. 281 (CNBB)

Ext. 227 (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.