



Helping Hands

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



Family Engagement

**Episcopal
Children's Services**

Volume 14, Issue 1

July 2019

Inside this issue:

ELC of NFL Up-	2-3
PEARLS	4
Sun Safety	5
Alphabet Ice Cubes	6
4th of July	7
Conversation Notebooks	8
Professional Development	9
VPK Corner	9



School is out for summer. What plans do you have to keep your children engaged throughout the summer? How do you plan to entertain your family without going broke?

The cost of child care, camp, summer classes and vacations can financially strap a family. Fortunately, there are ways to keep children entertained and learning throughout the summer. Here is the short list.

- Go Camping-even if it is just in the backyard.
- Browse books at the library.
- Visit the park.
- Bake cookies and other desserts, learn the art of cooking.
- Hike on a trail.
- Build a lemonade stand.
- Make your own board game.
- Paint old boots, belts and other leather with acrylic colors.
- Make snow cones out of crushed ice. Add different flavors and serve friends.
- Search for "free admission" days to the local museum, art gallery or zoo.
- This summer the Cummer Museum of Arts & Gardens will be having Free Fridays at the museum. Each will have a theme that will highlight a specific country or region. Visit <https://www.cummermuseum.org/> for more information.
- Busch Gardens Pre-School Card: Limited-time offer: Kids 5 and younger can enjoy FREE admission to Busch Gardens Tampa Bay and Adventure Island throughout all of 2019 with the Preschool Card. There's never been a cooler time to be a kid! Must register online. Not available at the park. Visit <https://buschgardens.com/tampa/tickets/preschool-free-admission/> to register online
- AMC \$5 Tuesdays with AMC Stubs Membership [Click here](#) to sign up for AMC stubs membership or to learn more about this deal. [Click here](#) to find an AMC movie theater near you.
- For more free or inexpensive activities in your local area visit www.jax4kids.com or contact your local library.

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

The ELCNF and Ferst Foundation News

The ELCNF has participated in the Ferst Foundation book program for 3 years. Each school readiness child ages 0-5 in Nassau, Baker and Bradford counties can receive one free book a month in the mail while receiving ELC services. Parents sign up their child when registering or renewing services at their local Episcopal Children's Services office. This is paid for by ELC quality dollars.

What is the Ferst Foundation and Ferst Readers? They are a foundation that provides high quality age-appropriate books and parent literacy resources mailed to the homes of children ages 0-5 or sent directly to their childcare or school at no cost to the family. The books are paid for by a local community partner. Who can be a community partner? Community partners include civic groups, non-profit agencies, businesses, schools and individual people. It only cost \$36 a year to support one child with 12 books.

On June 13th the Kiwanis club and Sertoma Club of St. Augustine joined funds together to pay for all the children 0-5 at Brandts Child Care in St. Augustine to receive the Ferst Foundation books. The books will be mailed directly to the child care center each month for the children to take home. The teacher will also receive a book for their classroom. Any school can pay for their kids to receive the books. Many faith based schools get their local congregation to pay for the books. Another unique feature to this program is that any parent or grandparent can sign up and pay for their child to receive the books even if they are not in an area or school where someone is paying for this. This is called the Read Ferst Subscription. This subscription costs \$40 a year. What a terrific gift to give a child at a baby shower or for their birthday? To find out more about Ferst Readers visit: www.ferstfoundation.org or contact Michelle Maddox, Regional program Coordinator at michelle@ferstreaders.org or by calling 706-342-0177.



PEARLS

We are starting a program called PEARLS that is sponsored by From Cradle to College Foundation (FCCF). The program is free to you and provides 2 important services. First, we will be able to implement a warning system working with law enforcement so that ECS will notify you should there be an event close to your program that would warrant taking extra precautions such as locking down your program. You would also be notified when it is safe to resume normal activities. FCCF is working now to get agreements with local law enforcement in each area. This would take effect after your area has an agreement signed and we have been trained in the system.

Another equally important part is the PEARLS training. PEARLS was designed specifically for the early childhood community to provide awareness of potential emergency situations such as active shooter, bomb threat and lockdown. Learn how to respond effectively to mitigate risk and protect lives in your classroom. You can sign up to attend the training that works best for you using GoSignMeUp. Instructions for GoSignMeUp are attached as is a synopsis of the training. We are starting off by offering this training at the times and locations listed below. Please feel free to choose whatever works best for you.

Link to register: <https://ecs4kids.gosignmeup.com/Public/Course/Browse>

PEARLS-Preschool Emergency Alert Response Learning System. PEARLS is a program designed to provide an awareness of potential emergency situations and present options on how to mitigate risk and protect lives.

OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will have a greater awareness on lockdown procedures, bomb threats and active shooter scenarios.
2. Using information provided by PEARLS participants should be able to formulate an emergency plan specific to their needs.
3. At the end of the session participants will feel confident in their ability to educate, prepare and protect the children in their care.

SYNOPSIS

PEARLS was designed specifically for the early childhood community to provide awareness of potential emergency situations such as active shooter, bomb threat and lockdown. Learn how to respond effectively to mitigate risk and protect lives in your classroom.

BASIC OUTLINE

Lockdown, Active Shooter and Bomb Threat power point followed by scenarios and discussion. Q&A always indicates a shift in thinking.

Sun Safety Stephanie LaRoche, Screening Specialist

Resource: <https://kidshealth.org>

Sun Safety



Why Is Sun Protection Important?

We all need some sun exposure. When skin is exposed to the sun, our bodies make vitamin D, which helps the body absorb calcium for stronger, healthier bones.

Too much unprotected exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can cause skin damage, eye damage, immune system suppression, and skin cancer.

Who Needs Sun Protection?

Every child and adult need sun protection. The lighter someone's natural skin color, the less melanin it has to absorb UV rays and protect itself. Both dark- and light-skinned children need protection from UV rays because any tanning or burning causes skin damage.

Here are the key ways to protect children's skin

- ☺ Use Sunscreen- The American Academy of Dermatology recommends that all children wear sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Make sure it's broad-spectrum. Re-apply often.
- ☺ Avoid the Strongest Rays of the Day- Try to stay in the shade when the sun is at its strongest (usually from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the northern hemisphere). Remember that even on cloudy, cool, or overcast days, UV rays reach the earth. This "invisible sun" can cause unexpected sunburn and skin damage.
- ☺ Cover Up- One of the best ways to protect skin is to cover up. To make sure clothes offer enough protection, put your hand inside garments to make sure you can't see it through them.
- ☺ Wear Sunglasses- Sun exposure damages the eyes as well as the skin. Even 1 day in the sun can lead to a burned cornea. Sun exposure over time can cause cataracts (clouding of the eye lens, which leads to blurred vision) later in life.
- ☺ Double-Check Medicines- Some medicines make skin more sensitive to UV rays. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if any prescription (especially antibiotics and acne medicines) and over-the-counter medicines your child takes can increase sun sensitivity.

Alphabet Ice Cubes Blythe Mauldin, Education Specialist

Resource: <https://www.stirthewonder.com/alphabet-ice-cube-sensory-play/>

Summer is in full swing and the temperatures are rising every day! It may not be the "school year" but it's still important to implement instructional time during a less structured preschool summer camp. The alphabet ice cube literacy activity is a fun way to sneak in some literacy while keeping kids cool in the summer heat! This activity combines a few different skills as it incorporates literacy, science, and sensory play.

Alphabet Ice Cube Sensory Play ALPHABET ICE CUBES

What you will need:

- * Ice cube trays
- * Muffin pan
- * Alphabet beads
- * Water
- * Freezer
- * Large bin/sensory container
- * Plastic hammer, wooden blocks, tongs etc.



To prepare this activity:

- * Place one alphabet bead in each compartment of the ice tray or muffin pan.
- * Fill each compartment with water and place in your freezer until completely frozen.
- * Once they're completely frozen you can empty them in your large bin/sensory container.
- * Have children use various items: plastic hammer, blocks, tongs to extract the alphabets from the ice.
- * As children remove the beads from the ice have them identify the letters, and sort capital from lowercase letters.

Implementing CLASS: Instructional Support Strategies

Remember to try and implement CLASS strategies as much as possible as it is the teacher-child interactions that maximize a child's learning! Below you will find some tips to help.

Analysis and reasoning: How do you think you could get the letters out quicker? How does it feel? Can you think of another way to get the letters out?

Real-world connections: What letters do you think you need to make your name?

Creating: Encouraging children to create their names with their letters or any other words they can think of. (This may require you as the teacher to scaffold for the children and provide hints/assistance.)

Encouragement & affirmation: I can tell you're working hard on getting the letters out! I see that the ice is melting, you almost got it!

Parallel Talk: I see that Jaxson is using his hammer to extract the letter "J". I see that you have now used 6 letters to spell your name!

Experiencing The Fourth of July Sherry Tindall, Education Specialist

Resource: <http://www.hymnsite.com/lyrics/umh697.sht>

Stars and Stripes Forever, Oh say can you see, America the Beautiful, and My Country Tis a Thee are all favorite patriotic songs and lyrics we love to sing. Have your center's school age children celebrate our country's birthday with a musical review. Parents will love it! Children will sing out true and blue as their voices lift high in song. Children love to sing and this is an opportunity to teach children our country's songs of pride. After-schoolers will have fun making props for their show. This construction will build team work, confidence, and a sense of self-worth. Let someone be Uncle Sam and another Betsy Rose, and have a chorus of flag wavers as the teacher directs the music. If you don't know the lyrics to these patriotic songs, don't worry they are only a click of a mouse away on the internet. Here's a favorite to get you started on the best ever Fourth of July celebration.

My Country, 'Tis of Thee

*My country, 'tis of thee,
sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing;
land where my fathers died,
land of the pilgrims' pride,
from every mountainside let freedom ring!*

*My native country, thee,
land of the noble free, thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
thy woods and templed hills;
my heart with rapture thrills, like that above.*

Have fun with your production and let your children know just how lucky we all are to live in the land of the free and the home of the brave!



A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words: Conversation Notebooks

Sherry Tindall, Education Specialist

It is true that a picture is worth a thousand words. Some pictures are breath taking. Pictures of people, places, or things can evoke emotions within us. They can also build language, maybe not a thousand words, but they can be the spring board to language acquisition.

If you are an infant or toddler teacher, consider the use of photographs and images to foster interest in your youngsters. For example, having a picture of a bear or the forest is especially helpful to children when reading a book about forest animals, such as *Bear's New Friend* by Karma Wilson. In this book a bear finds a new friend after his current friends help him find out where his new friend is hiding. The book includes many familiar woodland animals. Using photos of real woodland animals helps to bridge the information in the book to the real world. To bridge this connection, teachers need to talk about the animal picture, reference it back to the book and label the images both in the photo and in the book. Help the children parrot back the words you use, such as: this is a "bear," can you say "bear" and scaffold the children in the language acquisition.

Consider making your own conversation notebook. It can be organized by themes such as family, farm, zoo, forest, and holidays to name a few categories. It can also be organized by books if you have a literacy focus.

How to begin making this notebook is easy

- ◇ First you need a computer and a printer.
- ◇ In your search engine, key in the word for the picture and then the word "image" and a plethora of pictures will pop up. You will want to click on the picture that interests you and it will open up.
- ◇ Copy and paste it into the note-pad feature or word program you use on your computer. *Note:* not all images will be large enough to cover a full page. Don't try to expand the picture to fit your page it will only pixelate the photo. Instead, keep searching for the size that you need.

This collection of pictures will now support the language you want your children to practice. As the title points out, you will want to have conversations around the pictures. Do this and watch your toddlers' language grow, as well as their background knowledge. Remember background knowledge is important too and children's receptive language is greater than their expressive. Conversation books are a win-win as they build background knowledge through conversations that lead to language growth. Give this strategy a try!





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

The payment adjustment function in the Statewide Portal is not yet available. Normally when the VPK program ends, ECS sends out a Provider Verification Report for review of children in your program and hours paid to each child. Until that report is available and payment adjustments can be made, ECS will send you a letter to sign regarding your final VPK payment. Please keep an eye out for this letter that will be located in the document library in the folder named VPK Provider Verification Report.

Assessments

If your program ended in June, the deadline to input AP3 for VPK Assessment into Bright Beginnings is **15 calendar days** following your last VPK day. These deadlines are classroom specific and strictly enforced. Failure to meet the deadlines will result in removal from VPK eligibility for five years.

You are able to order 2019-20 materials if you need them. Simply log into Bright Beginnings and register your classroom(s) and complete the orders tab. Orders will be approved as your provider file is approved.

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. The application process is now completed in the Provider Portal. If you have already been certified in the portal, please notify the VPK Department if you need to update or add anything to your application.

If you are an approved provider, you may use the Certificate of Eligibility information for each child in the enrollment tab and start enrolling the children into your program. As long as you have at least four eligible children, you can start that process. 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



Warm Line 1-800-238-3463

Ext. 281 (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.