



Early Learning Coalition of Lake County

In the spotlight: November 30, 2011



Recipe for Christmas All Year Long

Take a heap of child-like wonder
 That opens up our eyes
 To the unexpected gifts in life—
 Each day a sweet surprise.
 Mix in fond appreciation
 For the people whom we know;
 Like festive Christmas candles,
 Each one has a special glow.
 Add some giggles and some laughter,
 A dash of Christmas food,
 (Amazing how a piece of pie
 Improves our attitude!)
 Stir it all with human kindness;
 Wrap it up in love and peace,
 Decorate with optimism, and
 Our joy will never cease.
 If we use this healthy recipe,
 We know we will remember
 To be in the Christmas spirit,
 Even when it's not December.

Joanna Fuchs

On behalf of the Early Learning Coalition of Lake County Board of Directors and Staff we would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES FROM TALLAHASSEE

Effective October 1, 2011, due to recent legislative changes, Florida's Early Learning System was restructured. The Early Learning Coalition's throughout Florida are now governed by Florida's Office of Early Learning and are no longer affiliated with the Agency for Workforce Innovation. In October the Office of Early Learning welcomed a new director, Mel Jurado, Ph.D. to the early learning team. The Early Learning Coalition looks forward to working closely with Dr. Mel Jurado in a continued effort to provide high quality early education services to Lake County. For more information about Florida's Office of Early Learning please visit their website at www.floridaearlylearning.com.

The Big Blue Bus offers the "Raising A Reader" Program



Last year, the Coalition implemented the "Raising A Reader" program funded through a partnership with Disney, which provides a lending library to children and parents. The Coalition currently has seven providers and/or family homes serving 265 children using the "Raising A Reader" program. Dan, an 8th grade language arts teacher and a parent of a child in the Raising A Reader program said: "I witness first hand the imperative part reading plays in a child's upbringing and future. I've seen how reading isn't simply an art to be appreciated or a skill to lead to success; reading is away of life that molds a child's abilities to think, to predict, to build vocabulary, to solve problems, to imagine and to create." Dan also commented that: "raising children in homes that embrace reading as a natural routine, will

spark curiosity and nurture a young budding reader". The Coalition hopes to expand the program to more providers as the funding becomes available.

Orlando Sentinel highlights ELC's Big Blue Bus program, November 24, 2011

The Orlando Sentinel is raising awareness about their Orlando Sentinel Family Fund Holiday Campaign and wanted to showcase the Bus Program as one of the many programs funded by the Orlando Sentinel Family Fund. Stephen Hudak visited the Coalition last week and interviewed one of our parents, along with her 4 year old son, who routinely visits the Big Blue Bus at the Leesburg Library. This was a great opportunity to highlight our program for all of Central Florida to see. For the 2011-2012 Program Year we received \$25,000.00 from the McCormick Foundation for the Big Blue Bus program. Enjoy!

To read the entire article that was posted on the web by the Orlando Sentinel November 24, 2011, go to http://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/holiday/os-holiday-fund-early-learning-coalition-20111124_0,1232245.story



Measuring the Quality of Our Child Care Facilities

The Coalition continues to ensure that we are offering Lake County parents and children the very best quality programs that we can. The Quality Improvement Campaign that was implemented several years ago continues to guide us in this effort. The Environment Rating Scale (ERS) is currently being used to measure the quality in all School Readiness (SR) contracted sites. The ERS is a series of four scales; Infant/Toddler (ITERS), Pre-School (ECERS), Family Child Care (FCCERS), and School Age Children (SACERS). While these four levels of age categories share the same format and scoring system, they vary considerably in requirements, because each scale assesses a different age group and or type of child care and educational setting. In order to define and measure quality properly, these tools draw from three main sources: research evidence from a number of relevant fields (health, development, and education), professional views of best practice, and the practical constraints of the classroom setting. The tool focuses on the organization of the space, interaction, activities, schedule, and provision for parents and providers. The ERS tool consists of 41 items and is organized into seven subscales: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Listening/Talking, Activities, Interaction, Program Structure, and Parents and Staff. The scoring for these items is based on a range from 1 to 7. A score of *one* is inadequate and a score of *seven* is excellent. The higher the score, the higher the quality of care children will receive in that classroom. At this present time provider scores are ranging from the minimum of 3.0 to a maximum of 5.7. The Early Education Specialists continue to provide training and technical assistance to increase the quality in these facilities.



Coalition's Inclusion Program

The past two months have been very exciting for the Coalition's Inclusion Program. During the month of October the Coalition extended an invitation to the Healthy Start Coalition to serve as guest speakers for our *Parenting 101* training session. Ms. Diane Cassan, Nursing Program Specialist and Ms. Dee Rutherford, Family Support Specialist were insightful and generous with their experiences and information about the Healthy Start program with an emphasis on how parenting styles impact our overall development as individuals. Judging from the surveys, participants were very pleased with the information provided as well as the exchange of ideas during this training.

In November, the Coalition's Executive Director, Ms. Lesha Buchbinder along with Quality Operations Director, Mr. Hugh Brockington and Inclusion Program Supervisor, Ms. Noelle R. Nicolas were given a tour by Lillian Flores, site Director of the Holloway United Cerebral Palsy (UCP), in Orlando. We had an awesome opportunity to see what's going on in the world of inclusion. It was remarkable to see how ERS standards have become so common place in all preschools, as they were initially created in *special needs* classroom throughout the country.

Several members of the Inclusion team attended the NAEYC Conference in Orlando. During the conference, the staff was exposed to the most recent information impacting the world of early childhood education, including Reggio Emilia's Approach to American Sign Language, and Social Emotional Development, to the most effective behavioral interventions. Finally, the Inclusion team attended the Office of Early Learning's Conference in Orlando. We had the opportunity of participating in presentations by Ms. Mimi Graham herself, as well as CSEFEL's own Ms. Lise Fox. The information and opportunity to speak with the most influential people in our field as well as our peers and counterparts throughout Florida was *tremendous!*



(Left) Nelly Diop-ELC & Dr. Becky Bailey at the NAEYC Conference



The Coalition hosts the 8th Annual Day in the Park Event!

The Coalition, in collaboration with the *VSA Art of Florida*, held its 8th annual Start with the Arts-Day in the Park event on October 27, 2011. The Coalition was able to offer school readiness activities through a variety of art, music and dance for 807 pre-kindergarten children and 202 adults who attended from Lake County Public Schools and private child care facilities. The Coalition wishes to express our sincere thanks to the *100 volunteers* representing ELCLC's Board of Directors; The Chiropractic Center; Nemours Bright Start; Publix of Leesburg; Just Funtastic Party Rental; Kiddie Land Academy; Kiwanis Clubs from Clermont, Leesburg, Lady Lake, Mt. Dora, and Tavares; Optimist Clubs of the Villages and Leesburg; Silver Trefoil Girl Scout Alumnae; Adventure Christian Learning Center; Central Florida Women's Club; Lake County Library; Ms. Pockets from the Villages' Clowns and the Clowns from St. Paul's Church who did face painting for the children and Mr. Hard Times from the Villages Clowns who did balloon art for the children. A special thank you to the Leesburg High School band and drill team who performed for the children, teachers and volunteers during lunch time .



Leshia Buchbinder (in blue) welcomes our Day in the Park-Start with the Arts sponsors from VSA of Florida

The Coalition also wishes to thank our many sponsors for their financial support and to those who donated art materials, food or other supplies for this special event. Without our volunteers and sponsors, this event would not be the success that it is every year!

Patrons of the Arts

Don Monopoli Productions/The Learning Station
Brown & Brown Insurance of Florida, Inc.
Business Techs, Inc. of Leesburg
Kiddie Land Academy of Groveland
Nemours Bright Start!
Lake County Schools
Lake Community Action Agency

Supporters of the Arts

Hays Ginn, Michele Rawls, Jackie Atkinson, Eddy Workinger,
The Chiropractic Center of Leesburg, Hallmark Nameplate,
Quality Printing of Leesburg, LakeShore Learning Materials,
Lake County Water Authority- Hickory Pointe,
Publix of Leesburg & Mt. Dora & Publix Corporate,
Chick Fil A of Mt. Dora and Lady Lake,
Cutrale Citrus Juices USA, Florida Natural Juices, Perrine's Produce,
McDonalds in Tavares, Subway SR 19 Tavares, Walmart of Leesburg,
Leesburg High School Marching Band, Job Site Services, Inc.,
Grand Rental Supply, Reddy Ice Company, and



Children shown are learning a new craft project and they get to take their creations home.



Don Monopoli performs music and dance with the children under the Big Tent!



Over 800 4 yr old children had the opportunity to visit 21 art stops during the event at Hickory Pointe

ELC's "Match It" campaign extends beyond Lake County!

The Coalition and its Business Development Director through a partnership with the leaders of the United Way of Lake and Sumter Counties (UWLS) participated in the 2011 Campaign Speaker's Training Program. Mr. Bill Hartman successfully completed the training and in August was appointed *Chairperson of the UWLS "Partners Meetings"* for the 2011-2012 Campaign. As a result of this ongoing collaboration, the Coalition recently received confirmation that the ELCLC will be listed as an eligible recipient of the 2011 United Way Campaign.

Mr. Hartman was invited to speak at the Suncoast Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Charity Fair Kick Off that was held in Tampa Bay on September 16, 2011. Mr. Hartman had the opportunity to speak to the 50 presenters and 450 federal employees about the Coalition's mission and vision as well as the services that are available for children and families in Lake County. Mr. Hartman commented that "this opportunity was a great way to interact with other CFC charity recipients and to meet the key people responsible for requesting speakers to attend their in-house events."

The banner in the photo was designed specifically for display at the CFC kickoff in September and will travel with Mr. Hartman to all meetings and events covering the Coalition's Match It Campaign and future United Way funding raising events. For more information on how you can help raise match dollars please contact Mr. Hartman at 352-315-6666 Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The Coalition is required by law to raise 6% of our grant dollars for the working poor families, which this year is approximately \$220K. So far this year, the Coalition has received donations, grants or pledges totaling an estimated \$75K toward our match requirements. These funds will enable the Early Learning Coalition of Lake County to draw down federal dollars at a ratio of \$1.00 to \$16.00

On November 21, 2011 Ms. Sue Cordova, CEO of the UWLS, made an unannounced visit to the Coalition offices. Mr. Hartman gave Ms. Cordova and Ms. Mariah Delgado a tour of our offices in Leesburg. The Coalition was the recipient of a grant from the United Way in July 2011 to support our 6% Match Program. The funds are to be used for the BG8 Working Poor children in Lake County. The next visit is tentatively set for December with Ms. Cordova and board members of the UWLS organization. The Coalition always welcomes visitors from our donors or business partners.



Upcoming Meetings, Trainings and Events

December 3rd	First Aid/CPR & AED	Aquarelle Kids Academy, Clermont	8:30 am - 12:30 pm
December 6th	ITERS - Activities II (Act. Play/Blocks/Dram Play)	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
December 7th	ELCLC Board Meeting	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	9:00 AM
December 8th	School Readiness Meeting - 3 of 6 VPK Meeting	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	SR 11:30 am & 6:30 pm VPK 12:30 pm & 7:30 pm
December 13th	ECERS - Activities II (Blocks/S&W/Dram Play)	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
December 15th	FCCERS - Activities II (Act. Play/Blocks/Dram Play)	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
January 7th	First Aid/CPR & AED	We Are The Future, Groveland	8:30 am - 12:30 pm
January 10th	ITERS - Activities III (Nat&Science/S&W)	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
January 14th	Enrichment Session - 3 of 4	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	8:30 am - 10:30 am
January 19th	FCCERS - Activities III (Math/Nat&Science/S&W)	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
January 24th	ECERS - Activities III (Nat&Science/Math)	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
January 31st	Positive Behavior Support & Inclusion	ELCLC 1300 Citizens Blvd Leesburg	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

If you wish to register for a training you may do so online at elclc.org. If you have questions regarding a training please contact Tameka Mays at 315-352-6672.