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February 2018



Early Learning Parents' Pages

Children and Pets

Valentine's Day

Children's Dental Health Month

Social-Emotional Learning at Home

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Elizabeth Smart-Gilmour presents to Florida Children and Youth Cabinet

Speaks about child safety during Children's Week

The Florida Children and Youth Cabinet heard a special presentation from Elizabeth Smart-Gilmour, a child safety activist and contributor for ABC News, on Jan. 22, as part of Florida's Children's Week. Smart-Gilmour, a child abduction survivor herself, works to prevent future crimes against children and to address the needs of survivors and families. In her presentation, Smart-Gilmour shared details of her harrowing experience and those of her family, as well as tools and resources now available to help with recovering children who have been abducted or reported missing.

The Florida Children and Youth Cabinet initially served as the state organization working to increase awareness and prevention of human trafficking of children and youth in Florida by recognizing Human Trafficking Awareness Day, establishing a statewide anti-human trafficking workgroup, and planning and executing a conference to educate professionals and practitioners. Their work was made part of Florida law and oversight was passed to the Florida Attorney General's Office.



Board members tour coalition's community facilities

ELC of Palm Beach board members met staff and toured the facility firsthand

On Jan. 30-31, 2018, [Early Learning Coalition of Palm Beach](#) board members visited one of their community-based locations in Riviera Beach's Port Center building. This building houses one of the coalition's family services offices as well as their customer resource call center and upcoming resource library. Coalition board members were thrilled to get a first-hand look at the operations and facilities, meeting many of the staff members. [Click here](#) for more information.



"During my visit, I was able to see firsthand how extensive the coalition staff works to ensure our families are connected to the right services for their children," said Keith Oswald, Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) representative and chief academic officer of the Palm Beach County School District. "The staff was also extremely receptive to feedback on how to improve on an already well run system of support for the community."

Connie Chiara, private sector board member and president/CEO of Corporate Benefit Partners was also pleased with the facility. "I was so impressed with the professionalism of the coalition staff, their passion for what they do, and their culture of service."

Coalition volunteers read to children for Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!

The coalition's Literacy Buddy Program volunteers to read at three local preschools

The [ELC of Southwest Florida](#) participated with three area preschools in the 10th Annual Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! Volunteers from the coalition's Literacy Buddy Program read *Big Al* by Andrew Clements to voluntary prekindergarten classes. Children were delighted and offered many insights into how Big Al-a big, ugly fish-could find a friend.



Volunteer Theresa Daniels read to students at Family of Faith Preschool in Cape Coral, volunteer Donna Schehr read at Joseph H. Messina Children's Center in Fort Myers, and volunteer Brittany Pendarvis read at the P.A. Geraci Child Development Center in Fort Myers.

Coalition wins "Best Group Piece" for Children's Week's "Hanging of the Hands" exhibition

ELC of Northwest Florida receives special recognition from Children's Week organizers

The [ELC of Northwest Florida](#) took home the "Best Group Piece" award for their hand art submission to the 2018 Children's Week "Hanging of the Hands" exhibit in the Florida State Capitol. There were three awards presented for "Best Individual Hand Art," "Most Creative" and "Best Group Piece." The coalition won applause from Children's Week for their collaboration with the libraries throughout Northwest Florida, including participation from Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, and Washington County public libraries.





The coalition is grateful for the partnership among Northwest Florida libraries, child care programs and newly-included friends at the Girl Scout Council of the Florida Panhandle.

To view the original post on the Children's Week Facebook page, [click here](#).

Coalition hosts Black History Month ELC Café

Monthly ELC Café will focus on the history of Black Americans in the military

The [ELC of Miami-Dade/Monroe](#) invites local providers and organizations to join them for their February ELC Café on Feb. 22 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. The monthly theme for this café will be about

honoring Black History Month, and will provide networking and intersectional conversation with courageous black men and women who have served in the United States military.



ELC Café
It's More than Just Lunch



Honoring Black History Month "African Americans in Times of War"

African Americans played an important role in the Revolutionary War with more than 5,000 freemen and slaves serving on both sides and the legacy of African Americans serving in the U.S. Civil War is marked by 186,097 officers and enlisted men. Since then, African American men and women have consistently demonstrated valor, courage and love of country while serving in the armed forces.

Join us as we uncover the unknown and little known facts, both historic and present day, surrounding African Americans in times of war.

"When I talk to students, they say, 'How did it feel to know you were making history?' But you don't know you're making history when it's happening. I just wanted to do my job."
—Charity Adams Earley, (1918-2002) Women's Auxiliary Army Corps

Did you know?
The U.S. Military was desegregated under President Harry Truman by Executive Order 9981 in 1948.
Eldridge F. Williams, one of the Tuskegee Airmen, the first all-black flying military unit, worked in our Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Join the Early Learning Coalition as we raise awareness and connect members of the community. Business card exchange and raffle.

Thursday, February 22, 2018
11:30 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.



PANELISTS
Anthony D. Atwood, Ph. D.
Executive Director, Miami Military Museum and Memorial

The event is free and open to the public, and will feature interactive dialogue between panelists and attendees, readings by veterans and a sponsored lunch courtesy of House of Hope Martin County. The event's special panelist will be Dr. Anthony D. Atwood, executive director of the Miami Military Museum and Memorial.

To attend this event, please R.S.V.P to Yusneli Martinez at ymartinez@elcmdm.org.

Coalition receives grant to fund Infant Toddler Training Institute

Orlando Magic Youth Foundation awards grant to ELC of Orange County

The [ELC of Orange County](#) was one of 27 organizations in the Orlando area to receive a grant from the Orlando Magic Youth Foundation. The \$50,000 grant will go toward the coalition's Infant Toddler Training Institute.

"This community gives so much to us in terms of support, and it's important for us to give that back to them," said foundation CEO Alex Martins.



Local elementary school holds book drive to support books for youngsters

Maclay School will be supporting the ELC of the Big Bend's book program

The Maclay School in Tallahassee kicked off their school-wide book drive Feb. 6 and will continue for two weeks until Feb. 20 to raise books for the [ELC of the Big Bend Region's](#) My First Books program. The coalition started the book drive with a presentation to the lower school on how to engage others about books and reading. [Click here](#) to read more.



Grant will help coalition fund enrollment for at-risk children

Children in Volusia and Flagler counties will now receive additional funding for enrollment

The [ELC of Flagler & Volusia](#) received a \$5,000 grant from BB&T Bank. The coalition will use the funds to enroll at-risk children in early learning programs in Volusia and Flagler counties.



Coalition announces county-wide Preschool Teacher of the Year

Margie Tedder of Village Academy in St. Augustine was honored with the award

The [ELC of North Florida](#) proudly presented the third annual Preschool Teacher of the Year Award on Jan. 5, 2018. The six-county wide preschool teacher recognition acknowledges the creativity and hard work of those who teach children at the most fundamental time in their lives.

"These are the kind of teachers that children will remember for the rest of their lives," said Dawn Bell, coalition CEO.

This year's Preschool Teacher of the Year is Margie Tedder, a VPK teacher at Village Academy in St. Augustine. Tedder was honored by a surprise prize patrol on Dec. 20, 2017, with balloons and flowers. She was also recognized at the ELC of North Florida's Early Educators Conference held on Jan. 27, 2018, at the Thrasher-Home Center in Orange Park. Tedder also received a \$500 cash prize from Kaplan Early Learning, Inc., the 2017 Teacher of the Year Sponsor.



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