



May 2018

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# May 2018

- A day to appreciate child care providers
- Make Mother's Day happy
- Moms build babies' brains
- Soothing a crying baby

[Click to read the May issue.](#)

## 2016-2017 VPK Provider Readiness Rates



### OEL releases readiness rates based on new assessment tool

The Office of Early Learning announced that on May 16, 2018, the State Board of Education approved [Rule 6M-8.601, F.A.C., Voluntary Prekindergarten \(VPK\) Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate](#). As a result, each provider's 2016-17 VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate has been released on the VPK Program Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate Website: <https://vpk.fldoe.org/Default2.aspx>, which is publicly searchable.

The Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener (FLKRS) tool used to create the 2016-17 readiness rate, Star Early Literacy, is new and therefore the score standard is new. To be considered ready for kindergarten, a child's score must be at least 500. [Click here](#) to read the FAQ about FLKRS.

For the 2016-17 and 2017-18 Readiness Rate, no new providers will be placed on probation. However, a readiness rate of less than 60 is low performing and providers should strongly consider rigorous, yet developmentally appropriate improvements to their VPK instructional practices for the 2018-19 program year.

Questions may be sent to [vpkquestions@oel.myflorida.com](mailto:vpkquestions@oel.myflorida.com) or 1-866-447-1159.

**Suzan Gage was announced CEO on May 9**  
The [Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida](#)'s Board of Directors announced Suzan Gage as the new executive director. She assumed responsibilities on May 9, 2018, succeeding former Executive Director Lynne Eldridge.



Gage has been a part of the coalition team for 12 years, during which she worked alongside the former executive director in many functions, most recently as interim executive director.

"I am honored to have been chosen by the coalition's board as executive director," Gage said. "We exist to grow healthy children, parents and the relationship between them. My goal is to continue the legacy initiated by our former executive director and the coalition board by working to ensure all children have the opportunity to receive world-class, quality early childhood education. I look forward to serving in this capacity."

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## *Literacy program teaches children about colors*

### **Program featured popular children's author Eric Carle**

The [ELC of North Florida](#) started a new literacy program featuring the beloved author Eric Carle. The program, called "World of Colors," focuses on teaching preschoolers colors using the books "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and "The Mixed Up Chameleon."

Local children from the Academy of Rising Stars in Palatka, Florida, enjoyed meeting the Hungry Caterpillar in person and creating artwork just like Eric Carle. Each child received a free copy of "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" to take home.



[Click here](#) to read more.

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## *Coalition CEO goes before city officials to raise awareness of child care programs*

### **Charlie Rodgers promotes VPK, School Readiness to Osceola County officials**

Charlie Rodgers, chief executive officer of the [ELC of Osceola County](#), went before Kissimmee city officials earlier this month to discuss two options available to young children and their parents.



The coalition's recently approved annual budget of nearly \$15 million allows the coalition to operate two major early learning programs—a voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) program and a school readiness program.

"It's vitally important that we work with these children and families to make sure they're given the right stimulation, so they're ready and prepared to be successful," Rodgers said.

[Click here](#) to read more.

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## *LENA Grow Shows CLASS® Gains for Escambia County*

## Coalition sees positive results after year of using LENA technology

In October 2016, the [ELC of Escambia County](#) launched a partnership with LENA Grow to explore the use of LENA technology in child care settings. This month, LENA presented the results from the first year at The Association of Early Learning Coalitions conference in Orlando.



The results presented are also summarized in a report on year one from the coalition, "Results & Lessons Learned from the First Year of LENA Grow™" as part of the ELC of Escambia's 'Grow with Me' Initiative." Among other outcomes, data from the first year indicate that classrooms using LENA Grow, a professional development program for early childhood educators, showed gains on Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) scores.

[Click here](#) to read more.

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## Partnership with performing arts hall helps coalition integrate art into learning

### Program promotes literacy, creativity and artistic knowledge

Five years ago, the [ELC of Sarasota](#) partnered with the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. The coalition targeted preschools that serve a high percentage of school readiness kids. The teachers and directors attend a professional training at Van Wezel to learn art integration strategies.



During their most recent training, the focus was on pantomime, soundscapes and character features. After the training, each teacher took home a copy of the book "The Gruffalo" to read and share in their classroom. The teachers used the skills they learned during training to help teach the book to their students. Ms. Laura, from Van Wezel, visited the classrooms twice to expand upon the art integration pieces.

The children's families were invited to attend a family literacy night at the Van Wezel Grand Foyer, where dinner was provided and the families were also introduced to the art integration skills their children learned. At the end of the night, each child was given a copy of the book to read with their family and build their home library. Finally, the children attended a performance of "The Gruffalo" to see the story unfold on the stage.

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## Coalition participates in event to teach children about money

### Event gives children opportunity to learn about money, credit and more

The [ELC of Duval](#) participated in Family Foundations Wise Money Week, which began with a kickoff breakfast on Monday, May 14 at the University of North Florida.

The coalition has participated in this event since its inception in 2012. Family Foundations provides free "kids money kits" to children to teach them about money, credit, the importance of saving and more. Older children are taught how to manage their money, how to track daily spending habits and how to decrease spending. This year, the coalition had 1,500 VPK children participating from 30 child care centers across Jacksonville.



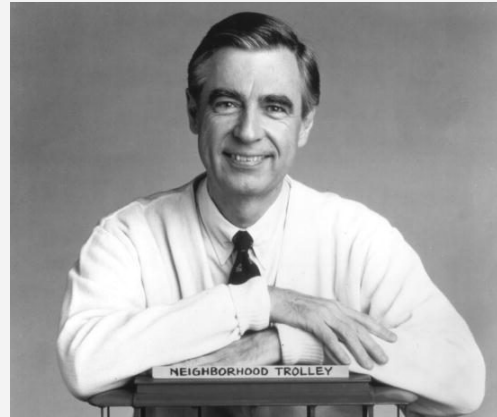
## *Coalition to hold 11th Annual Early Childhood Conference*

### **Conference will feature Dana Winters of the Fred Rogers Center**

The [ELC of the Big Bend Region](#) will hold its 11th Annual Early Childhood Conference on Saturday, June 9, 2018, from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center in Tallahassee.

The conference, titled "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" will celebrate 50 years of Mister Rogers with special guest speaker Dana Winters, director of simple interactions and academic programs at the Fred Rogers Center.

Registration fee for the conference is \$30 per person. [Click here](#) to register now.



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