



January 2016

## Celebrate VPK's 10th Birthday

Find interactive contests and information throughout the month



The Office of Early Learning is celebrating VPK's 10th Birthday from now until Feb. 26 with prize-winning contests and fun events statewide. In 2002, Florida voters became one of the first in the nation to approve a state-funded voluntary prekindergarten. September 2015 marked 10 years since the first class of VPK students entered classrooms in August 2005. Since then, early education has been provided to more than 1.7 million of Florida's 4-year-olds, helping them be ready for kindergarten and for life. As we celebrate this birthday, we look forward to the future and enrolling more children in VPK, so they too can have a bright future. Look for more information and contest guidelines on [VPK's Birthday page](#).

## Celebrate Literacy Week,

## Florida 2016

Celebrate the love of reading at an early age

In coordination with Just Read, Florida! and the Florida Department of Education, OEL is celebrating literacy with the theme "Literacy Changes Our World." From Jan. 25-29, 2016, school districts, ELCs and many agencies statewide will promote literacy throughout Florida with the beloved children's story *Where the Wild Things Are*. Visit OEL's [January Upcoming Events board](#) on Pinterest to find fun activities created to help you celebrate the eighth annual event.

### WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE



STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK

## N-E-W-S

Early learning highlights from North, East, West and South Florida

## Early Learning Coalition Releases Magazine

### Focusing on Big Issues

Discover ways to assist children with learning and understanding

Published by the ELC of Hillsborough County, the 2015 winter issue of Provider's Focus Magazine discusses early learning subjects, including helping children cope with traumas and involving fathers in child care



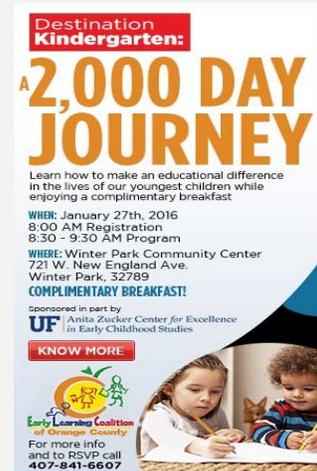
programs. The magazine strives to place the spotlight on issues that matter in children's lives. See the [full issue](#) to read more.

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## *Join a 2,000 Day Journey with Destination Kindergarten*

### **Make a difference with the ELC of Orange County**

While the phrase "they grow up so fast" may seem overused by parents, the remark does hold some truth. Did you know there are only 2,000 days from birth to kindergarten? In order to make the most out of those days, it's important to become involved early. Make sure to check out *Destination Kindergarten*, an event hosted by the ELC of Orange County on Jan. 27, which will emphasize the importance of early education. The event will take place at the Winter Park Community Center beginning at 8 a.m. Call 407-847-6607 for more information or to RSVP.



## *Join "The Future is Here for Early Learning" Summit*

### **Learn how today's early childhood teachers are creating learning opportunities through research**

The ELC of Palm Beach County looks to the future as they host a one-day summit on Jan. 26 in West Palm Beach. The [summit](#) will look at how teachers are using research in their efforts to enhance student education. The summit will discuss how everything from technology to neuroscience can assist teachers and will include a special talk led by the President of the Barbara Bush Foundation, Liza McFadden.



## *ELC Hosting Early Educators Conference*

### **Interest children in learning with intentional play**

The ELC of North Florida looks to start off the New Year on the right foot by hosting an Early Educators Conference. Keynote speaker Jennifer Daniels will share information on ways to facilitate intentional play to interest children in learning. The conference will explore a diverse range of topics aimed at creating the best experience possible for students. [Register now](#) for the conference taking place on Jan. 23 in Orange Park.



## *Second Annual Event Provides Early Head Start Information for Families*

### **Interaction among the community brought forth attention to the program**

The ELC of Miami-Dade/Monroe recently hosted their Second Annual Homestead and Florida City



Health and Resource Fair. The Early Head Start program participated in the event by recruiting families with children from newborns to 3-year-olds for the program. The event provided information on school readiness programs, while coalition staff distributed several hundreds of children's books to families.

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## *ELC Hosts 35th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Parade*

**Parade highlighted music and education from the Civil Rights movement**

The ELC of Miami-Dade/Monroe hosted its 35th annual West Perrine Battle of the Bands, featuring the world famous Florida A&M and Bethune-Cookman marching bands. The ELC was present at the event providing information on programs and services, while celebrating the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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