

Early Learning Update

OFFICE OF EARLY LEARNING

NOVEMBER 2013

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Great Opportunities for Early Learning

From local to state and national levels, more people are paying attention to the importance of early learning.

You may have noticed more articles, studies and reports of late about early learning. From the *New York Times* to the *Wall Street Journal*, *Florida Current* and local news outlets, there is news about early childhood education. As Martha Stewart might say, "It's a good thing."

As more people begin to realize the impact of early education on a child's chance of lifelong learning success, those of us who work in that arena have an opportunity to broaden the base

spread the word about Florida's VPK in a panel on Rethinking Pre-K to Put Student Learning on the Fast Track.

A just-released [policy report](#) from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT highlights the importance of a child's first eight years.

Governor Rick Scott continues to support early learning and, as Florida's legislative education committees meet to gear up for the 2014 session, both House and Senate are

"...a quality early learning system is critical to providing Florida children the tools they need to succeed..."

— Gov. Rick Scott

of support for the young children we serve.

At the National Summit for Educational Reform in Boston, Executive Director Shan Goff

paying close attention to early learning. You can watch recent committee meetings on the [Florida Channel](#).

Literacy Research Alliance Early Learning Workshop – Registration Open

The Improving Literacy Research Alliance of the Regional Educational Lab (REL) Southeast at Florida State University will host an Early Learning Workshop Tuesday, November 12, 2013, from 1 to 4 p.m. EST. The free event will include discussion and related hands-on activities on three topics: phonological awareness, vocabulary development and oral language.

You may register for the face-to-face presentation (Lake Mary) or the regional facilitated webinars (Tallahassee, Tampa, Jacksonville, Ft. Lauderdale) via the link below. Space is limited so if you are interested in attending we suggest you register now. <http://rel-se.fcrr.org/events/>

N.E.W.S. NorthEastWestSouth

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The **Early Learning Coalition of North Florida** held its first *ELC Day* at Sykes and Cooper Farms in Elkton, Fla., Oct. 14. More than 300 people attended including children, teachers, chaperones and parents. Sykes and Cooper Farms partnered with the coalition to host 19 local pre-school centers from St. Johns, Putnam and Clay counties. Children enjoyed a corn maze, hayrides and a farm animal petting zoo. The event was such a success, the coalition is planning to repeat it next fall.

Young parents in the Parramore area of downtown Orlando are benefiting from the fourth year of a parent education program thanks to the **ELC of Orange County**. The Baby Institute is a free parenting program that focuses on brain development, literacy and positive discipline. It also helps parents gain economic and educational success and builds civic pride and community advocacy for families raising young children in the neighborhood.

State Representative Debbie Mayfield toured an early learning center in Stuart and read to preschoolers as part of an October visit coordinated by the **Early Learning Coalition of Martin, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties**.

The **ELC of Manatee County** took part in a Halloween child safety event at the Manatee County Fairgrounds—Crime Stoppers' Kids' Safety Night. ELC staff gave out literature to parents and age-appropriate Halloween-theme children's books to promote literacy.

The Governor's Corner by Governor Rick Scott

Thanks to our public servants, Floridians across the state are finding more opportunities to achieve their dreams and provide for their families. To continue strengthening Florida's economy, we recently released the "It's Your Money Tax Cut Agenda," which lays out our priorities for creating the upcoming state budget. Our three main components are cutting \$500 million in taxes and fees, reducing state debt and cutting government waste.

Florida's hard working public servants have already made great strides to save taxpayers' hard-earned money through eliminating government waste and cutting costs in state contracts. By further streamlining spending, we can free up more dollars to be returned to taxpayers and further pay down debt. For the first time in decades, Florida has already paid down a record \$3.5 billion in state debt over the last three years.

The passion I see every day from state workers makes us more effective at providing quality services, and we'll continue to improve how we serve Florida families with the ["It's Your Money Tax Cut Agenda."](#)

The **ELC of Southwest Florida** has signed up 1,406 adult volunteers to be "literacy buddies." Volunteer adults agree to give three children's books a year to a child in a VPK or school readiness program. The child sends a letter to his or her buddy, who in turn sends a letter and a book to the child. A simple idea, a simple commitment that has the potential to shape a child's love of reading for a lifetime. The coalition is still looking for a few more volunteers to round out the number they need for the children.

Early Learning Programs Profile Monthly State Report September 2013 SCHOOL READINESS By Provider Type

	Private Center or School	Public Schools	Family Day Care Home	Informal	Total
Children Served in 2013-14 as of 09/13	137,116	7,004	10,921	68	150,136
Providers Active in 2013-14 as of 09/13	5,609	838	1,954	35	8,437

¹Duplication may exist if a child receives school readiness services from more than one provider within the limits allowed by OEL policies.

²Duplication may exist if a provider's type changed during the service period.

By Care Level

	By Age							Special Needs	Total
	Infant	Toddler	2 Yr	3 Yr	4 Yr	5 Yr	School Age		
Children Served in 2013-14 as of 09/13	7,555	16,424	21,249	23,272	23,809	10,468	46,622	736	150,136
Providers Active in 2013-14 as of 09/13	3,481	4,975	5,419	5,564	5,640	5,146	6,106	476	8,437

¹Duplication may exist if a child receiving school readiness services has a birthday during the service period.

VOLUNTARY PREKINDERGARTEN By Provider Type

	Private Centers	Public Schools	Family Day Care Home	Private School	Total
Children Served in 2013-14 as of 09/13	119,408	24,341	586	1,391	145,352
Providers Active in 2013-14 as of 09/13	4,742	1,002	80	51	5,874

¹Duplication may exist if children receiving VPK services transfer among different providers within limits allowed by OEL policies.

²Duplication may exist if a provider's type changed during the period of time being examined.

Current Program Year Compared to the Previous Program Year

	School Year	Summer	Program Year
Children Served in 2013-14 as of 09/13	145,352	0	145,352
Providers Active in 2013-14 as of 09/13	5,874	0	5,874
Children Served in 2012-13 Final Count	167,330	8,355	175,685
Providers Active in 2012-13 Final Count	6,313	543	6,432

¹Duplication may exist if a provider participates in both VPK programs.