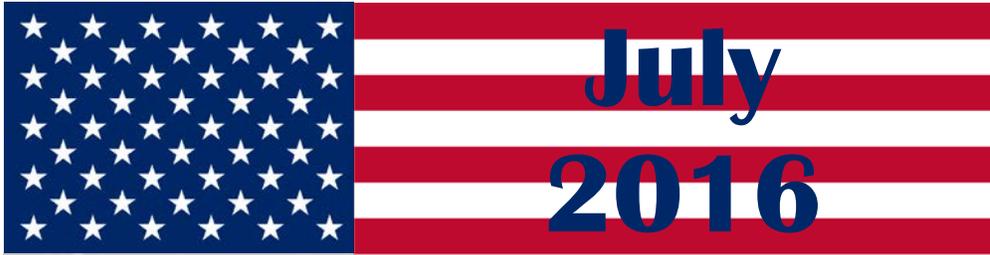


Early Learning Parents' Pages



Celebrate the Fourth of July, stay up-to-date with

immunizations, keep your children learning all summer,

get ready for Florida's sales tax weekend and more.

Happy Fourth of July

On Monday, July 4, 2016 families and friends across the nation will celebrate Independence Day.

On July 4, 1776, thirteen colonies claimed their independence from England. This event led to the formation of the United States and each year Americans celebrate the historic event with parades, picnics, fireworks and events.

Florida is a great state to celebrate the Fourth of July thanks to its beautiful weather and scenic beaches, which provide the perfect spots to view fireworks. No matter where you and your family live, there are [events nearby](#) for celebrating and fun.

In the northwest portion of Florida, Panama City Beach offers a "[Rock the Boat Fireworks Cruise](#)," while [Destin Harbor](#) provides free live entertainment, children's activities, face painting and fireworks.

Venture to the city of Winter Park for the "[21st Annual Olde Fashioned 4th of July Celebration](#)."

Children and families are sure to have a great experience while attending Jacksonville's "[Fourth of July Liberty Fest](#)" or Fort Lauderdale's "[Fourth of July Spectacular](#)."

Wherever your celebration may take you, spending time with family and friends is one of the most important things you can do this Monday.



July is also National Picnic Month and what better way to celebrate the Fourth of July holiday than by hosting a picnic at your home or a local state park.

Take part in an "Old Fashioned Picnic" at [The Barnacle Historic State Park](#) in Miami on Monday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. to celebrate Independence Day and National Picnic Month.

Families and friends can also visit [Oleta River State Park](#) in North Miami Beach on Monday from 7:30 to 11 p.m. for a Fireworks Watch Party, with food drinks, a DJ, games and beachside fireworks.

Have a happy Fourth of July!

In This Issue

Happy Fourth of July

Florida's Sales Tax Holiday

Social Media for Parents

Time for Immunizations

Fourth of July Safety

Summer Literacy and Learning

Upcoming Events in August

OFFICE OF
Early Learning
LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE

Early Learning Parents' Pages

Florida's Sales Tax Holiday

[Florida's back-to-school shopping sales tax holiday](#) is quickly approaching, so make your lists now. During the weekend of Aug. 5, 2016, clothing, shoes, accessories and back-to-school supplies will be tax exempt for three days.

The Florida tax free weekend does not apply to clothing sold for more than \$60 per item or school supplies sold for more than \$15 per item. Other exceptions and exclusions, including some books, may apply.

Parents should plan to purchase clothing and items children may need for the school year during the tax free weekend. Also, check advertisements for special sales and coupons that may be used during the weekend.

Most schools and child care centers have lists of supplies needed for the upcoming school year. If your school does not have a list, you can still buy items such as pencils, crayons and clothing.



Social Media for Parents

Did you know you can stay up-to-date with activities and ideas for children with the Office of Early Learning's (OEL) social media networks?

Pinterest is perfect for DIY projects and house decorating ideas, but did you know you can find read aloud activities and information for military families on [OEL's Pinterest](#) boards?

Twitter helps parents receive quick information, while they are on the go. [OEL's Twitter](#) reminds parents about daily holidays and themes, along with activities.

Facebook is a great place to connect with family, long lost relatives and old friends. Facebook also presents a great way to learn more about your favorite places, like the Office of Early Learning. [OEL's Facebook](#) keeps you in the know about our latest newsletters and gives you the chance to share parent-friendly advice with your friends and family.

OEL's newest social media network, [Instagram](#), launched on July 1 with "Fun Friday." Follow us at @FLEarlyLearning for interactive activities every day.



Time for Immunizations

As a parent, you want to protect your children against preventable diseases and keep them as [safe and healthy](#) as possible. Immunizations are available that will protect your children from infectious diseases.

Your pediatrician or other health professionals will give you a list of immunizations and the ages at which your children will need them. Parents can also use the [Immunization Tracker](#) available from the Centers for Disease Control.

Before your children's visit to a pediatrician, read as much [information](#) as possible about the [vaccines](#) your children will be getting and the possible side effects. Write down questions for your doctor and be sure to pack your children's favorite toy to [keep them happy](#) before, during and after the immunization.



It is important parents speak with their children about what might happen during the shot, such as there may be a small pinch, but that the pain will go away quickly.

While you are at the doctor's office, talk to your children in a calm voice to reassure them before and after the shot. Distracting your children by singing a silly song or making funny faces can help during the shot.

Continued on pg. 4

Early Learning Parents' Pages

Fourth of July Safety

The Fourth of July is meant to be a day of fun and celebrating with family and friends, but sometimes accidents and mistakes can happen when you forget to take the proper precautions.

Each year, more calls are made to 9-1-1 on the Fourth of July than any other day of the year. Keep your family and friends safe by becoming a safe swimmer, taking precautions around fireworks and grills and preparing for the sun.



Being out in the sun can be hazardous to your health, so while you are spending time on the beach or at a picnic, make sure your cover up with a hat, sunglasses, extra clothing and sunscreen.

Safety with children around pools, ponds, lakes and oceans is always important, but with crowded beaches and swimming areas on Fourth of July, parents are encouraged to keep a close watch on their children.

A favorite pastime of Independence Day is hosting the family cook out. Families and friends will gather around this Monday for burgers and hot dogs, but it is important that whoever is grilling makes sure the grill is working properly. Do not ignite charcoal with gasoline or lighter fluid, use heat resistant tools and never lean over an open flame.

Fireworks are often the most memorable part of a family's Independence Day celebration, but sometimes can lead to accidents. Remember to stay a safe distance away from fireworks and only allow able adults to handle lighting the fireworks. Remain aware of children handling sparklers, as the wire can remain hot enough to burn skin, even after the sparks have diminished.

By taking the proper safety steps and precautions, your family and friends are sure to have a fun and safe holiday.

Summer Literacy and Learning

It may be summer and your children may be out of school, but that does not mean learning and literacy should come to a screeching halt.

The Florida Department of Education is encouraging students all across Florida to take on the [Summer Literacy Adventure Challenge](#). Children and students are encouraged to set a personal reading goal and pledge to read every day in an effort to strive for success.



Children can fill out their own personal [Summer Literacy Pledge](#) and help their school win a chance for a surprise visit from First Lady Ann Scott.

Following the summer break, the department will recognize the top 10 schools with the highest percentage or participation. Parents can find [resources and book suggestions](#) to help kick start their children's love of reading and learning.

This summer, encourage your children to continue reading to promote success in the new school year.

While keeping up with a child's love of reading throughout the summer is important, summer is still all about having fun and keeping active.

Continued on pg. 4

Early Learning Parents' Pages

Time for Immunizations

Continued from pg. 2

If your children are infants or toddlers, breast feeding them as soon as possible after the immunization will comfort them, in addition to swaddling before and after the shot. Children can sense their parents' moods, so it is important that you remain calm throughout the process.

If your children have a reaction to a shot, such as a rash, fever, redness, soreness or swelling, place a cool, wet cloth on the area to ease the pain. Get permission from your doctor before giving your children non-aspirin pain relievers.

Immunizations are scary for both children and parents. Simple tips such as the right way to [hold your child](#) and [knowing more](#) about immunizations can make the trip [less stressful](#) for both you and your children.

Remember to give your children lots of hugs and reassurance during the immunization process!

Summer Literacy and Learning

Continued from pg. 3

The Office of Early Learning's [2016 Summer Activities](#) are perfect for families to have fun learning together. Celebrate summer with your children by learning through water play, taking trips to special places, exploring nature and playing at home.

All the activities will help your children continue to develop language, as well as science, math and literacy concepts all summer.

So whether you're having fun at home, on the go, with water or in nature, you and your family are sure to have a great time this summer.



Look Forward to these Articles in August

- Get ready to go back to school with educational tips and activities.
- August is National Family Fun Month. Find ways to have more fun with your family.
- Make the most out of the rest of your summer.
- Teach early learning to children.



Rodney J. MacKinnon
Executive Director

OFFICE OF
Early Learning
LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE

250 Marriott Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Toll-free 866-357-3239
www.FloridaEarlyLearning.com