



EARLY LEARNING
COALITION
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

News from The Early Learning Coalition SWFL

Summer, 2022
Here's what's happening at the ELC

Visit our Website

FFCCHA

Stronger Together

Never stop learning! In June, Early Learning Coalition of SWFL staff members Cheryl Carpenter and Bronwyn Gogia conducted a training at the 30th Annual Conference of **Florida Family Child Care Home Associations**, in Clearwater, FL. Topic: "Effective Interactions in Toddler & Pre-K Classrooms"

Florida family child care providers came together to create a statewide peer networking group. After many committee meetings around the state, the Florida Family Child Care Home Association, Inc. (FFCCHA) was established in June 1993. It has since grown to 500 members.



(l-r) The ELC's Bronwyn Gogia, Cheryl Carpenter

Lessons Learned

Teatime!

A 4-year old must learn a lot of lessons before they enjoy a tea party at **Joseph H. Messina Children's Center** in Fort Myers. How to sit still, hold a real teacup, and make polite conversation all go into it! The reward: a special time for parents, visitors and children alike. Thank you, Messina teachers and staff for the invitation!



Florida VPK

New School Year/ New Assessment Standards

Florida was one of the first states in the nation to offer free voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) to all 4-year-olds. Another enrollment year is upon us. This year, VPK students' progress will be assessed using a new tool - **Florida's**



Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST). The monitoring program is used to gauge student achievement in literacy and math.

To enroll your VPK-eligible child, visit [Florida's Family Portal](#).

PreK to K *Easing the Transition*

PreK → K Florida Transition to Kindergarten

For children who are even in the **best** childcare and VPK programs, the transition to a more structured Kindergarten setting can be difficult. To help smooth the way, the state of Florida has implemented a new program this year called [Transition to Kindergarten](#).

The program aims to put preschool and kindergarten programs in communities across the state into a more cooperative approach to kindergarten expectations. Parents can also help by accessing the various [Toolkits](#) available on the Florida Division of early Learning website.

Preschool Pay *New Law Can Raise VPK Teacher Wages*

House Bill 5001, which affects preschool Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK) teacher pay, became effective on July 1, 2022. Providers who participate in the program can offer their VPK teachers a base rate of \$15.00 and hour for the 2022-2023 school year.



Literacy Buddy Program *Consider Registering or Volunteering*

The 2022-2023 Literacy Buddy Program year is gearing up and we're looking for Preschool participants or adult volunteers. This program teaches children about communication, reading and writing. It can be a wonderful addition to your classroom activity list. [Learn more here.](#)



We are also looking for adult volunteer "Buddies" to write to 3, 4 or 5-year old children, and supply them with a quality hardback book three times a year. You'll be surprised how you look forward to your little Book Buddy's "letters", and the pride you'll take in watching how their writing skills improve. [Learn more about the Literacy Buddy Program here.](#)

Business Breakfast 2022 *Hope to See Ya!*

Join us October 28, 2022 for the return of the ELC's "Business Breakfast". The event is hosted by ELC Interim Board President, Marshall Bower for this year's theme: ***The Building Blocks of Preschool: How Early Learning Builds the Foundation for a Stronger Economy.***



Featured Speakers: [Armando Llechu](#), Chief of Hospital Operations at Lee Health; and [Dr. Mike Martin](#), President, Florida Gulf Coast University.
Honoree: **Joe Paterno**, outgoing Executive Director of CareerSource Florida and recipient of the *ELC Learning Champion Award*.

For tickets, please [REGISTER HERE](#).

Thank you to [Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre](#) for hosting this event.

Looking Forward

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Susan Block, CEO
Early Learning Coalition SWFL

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