



Just for Parents

The recent tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School is heartbreaking, and the families of all those affected will be in our hearts for many years to come. Despite this incomprehensible incident, it is important to remember that schools remain one of the safest places for our children to be. In Florida, measures are in place to ensure that schools are safe. We will continue to review these measures, reinforcing and revising them as needed, so that every effort has been made to provide a safe, and nurturing learning environment for our children.

Pam Stewart, Chancellor of Public Schools

Celebrate "Literacy Week, Florida!" January 14-18, 2013

From the moment a child is born, parents can begin planting the seeds of literacy. By using words to respond to your baby's irresistible cuteness, you are introducing your child to literacy. A child who reads well is a child who can learn independently, and independent learners

is organized from left to right. Sharing books with children builds vocabulary and provides special family bonding time.

Talk to your child.

Talking exposes children to language, and the more language children hear the broader their vocabulary. Good vocabulary knowledge will provide a foundation for when your child begins to read.

Talk to your children about what they are reading.

Discussing with your child what he or she is reading helps build oral language and comprehension skills.

Let your children see you reading.

When children see parents reading, they will learn that reading is important.

Encourage your child to read.

As children get older and begin to read,

encourage them to read daily. Reading should be enjoyable, and children should be encouraged to read both fiction and nonfiction. The more they read, the better readers they will become.

Introduce your children to books that appeal to their interests.

Make books special.

Take your children to the library, get them books as gifts, and begin building a library at home.

Following are helpful websites on how to build literacy skills at home: [Reading List](#) (for children of all ages) [Parent Support](#) (scroll down to the parent section)

[Building Reading Skills 2013 Literacy Week](#) (how parents can get involved)

Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! Is January 14-18, 2013. Ask your school about any special activities during this week. Interested in becoming a

The Bureau of Family & Community Outreach offers the following services and programs to parents and guardians:

Click on a link below to learn more!

[Parent Involvement](#)

[Faith and Community Based Initiatives](#)

[Safe Schools](#)

[Dropout Prevention](#)

[Volunteer and Recognition Programs](#)

[21st Century Community Learning Centers](#)

Bureau of Family & Community Outreach

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Literacy is the ability to read for knowledge, write sensibly, and think critically about the written word.

have been shown to be more successful in both school and work.

Tips for creating a literate child:

Read to your child.

From the time your child is born, familiarize him or her with books. Reading to children shows them that print represents language, that books have a front, back, top, and bottom, and that print

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January is National Mentoring Month

mentor? Perhaps you'd like your child to *have* a mentor. Mentoring is one of the simplest and most rewarding ways to build confidence and success in a child.

What is a Mentor?

A mentor is someone who:

- spends their time with a young person from the community or in the youth's school
- shares their knowledge, experience, insights, humor, and friendship
- has a sincere desire and commitment to help a young person define and achieve their goals
- listens to and respects the thoughts and ideas of a young person
- offers patience, support and enthusiasm to a young person

What does the research say about mentoring?

Research confirms what we intuitively know—that the relationship between a young person and a good mentor can lead to better decisions and a more successful life.

- **Education** – Mentored youth have better attendance in school, a better chance of going on to higher education, and a better attitude toward school.
- **Health** – Mentoring helps prevent substance abuse and reduce some negative behaviors in which youth might engage.
- **Social/emotional** – Mentoring promotes positive attitudes toward society and relationships. Mentored youth tend to trust their parents more and communicate better with them.

How can I be a mentor? How can I find a mentor for my child?

Find a mentoring organization in your community at [National Mentoring Month - Local Partners](#)

For more information, check out [Resources for Parents and Mentors](#)

Celebrate National Mentoring Month in January!

The best part of mentoring is watching my mentee's face light up when she has great news to share with me." - Mentor at Blanche Ely High School, Broward County

"Throughout everything, Debi's guidance and support remained one of the only constants in my life. I credit my open mind, love for life, and desire to never stop learning, to her...."
Mentee, Jennie M.

Common Core State Standards Implementation Timeline

The new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are being introduced to classrooms in stages. Right now, based on the Florida Department of Education's recommendations, all CCSS should be fully implemented in kindergarten and first grade, and the literacy standards should be fully implemented in all grades. By school year 2014-15, classroom curricula, textbooks, standardized tests, and student learning will all use these standards as a foundation.

To view the implementation timetable, click here.

<http://www.fldoe.org/bii/pdf/CCSS-ImplementationTimeline.pdf>