

January

2024

Volume 10 Issue 1

Early Learning Parents' Pages

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DIVISION OF EARLY LEARNING

New Year, New Skills to Learn! *Make Time to Learn About Time*

As we flip the calendar to a new year, it is a great opportunity to help your child learn about time.

Reading a calendar and learning to tell time involve important skills and concepts for your child to learn, but they take practice. Daily routines and schedules help children know what to expect at home and at school, as your child learns best through daily routines and activities by watching and listening.

Find ways in your child's daily routine to talk to them about their activities and schedules. Regularly ask them what happens first, next and last throughout their day. As the school year continues, maintain the same morning and bedtime routines, and use them as learning opportunities.

For instance, while traveling with your child to school ask, "What day is today?" Another example – if you visited the farmers market last week, ask, "Do you remember last week on Wednesday, when we went to the farmers market?"

Ask questions to help your child get familiar with the concept of the days and weeks.

- What day is today?
- What day is tomorrow?
- What is the day after tomorrow?
- How many days are in a week?

Wait several seconds, giving your child think time, for your child to respond to questions asked.

Throughout the day, point out and talk about numbers anywhere you can. Clocks and calendars are a great way to do that. Show your child the time on the clock when they sit down for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Flip the calendar together and see what numbers they can identify.

To learn more about how your child engages in conversations and what your child should be learning, visit the [Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards](#).



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How the School Readiness Program Supports Early Learning

Great learning happens every day in Florida's School Readiness (SR) program. SR curricula align with the [Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards](#) and involve four key concepts important to children's early development: play, patterns, cause and effect and communication.

For example, an activity with children playing together and building a tower with multi-colored blocks involves play, patterns (building and using colors), cause and effect (blocks fall down when there is not a strong foundation) and communication as children plan and talk about how to design or rebuild their tower. By engaging in activities that are real and meaningful, children in SR develop skills, knowledge and ways of thinking and learning.

The Division of Early Learning partners with 30 early learning coalitions and Redlands Christian Migrant Association to deliver the SR Program directly to families and providers. A directory of Florida's 30 coalitions and the Redlands Christian Migrant Association can be found on the [Division of Early Learning website](#). You can [apply for the SR program online](#) from a computer, laptop, tablet or cellphone. To learn more about this program and how to apply, contact your local early learning coalition or call the Child Care Resource and Referral State Network at 1-866-FL-Ready (1-866-357-3239) (TTY:711).



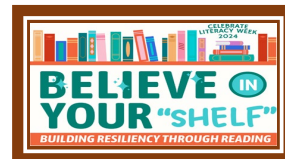
Open Enrollment Time!

Registration for the 2024-2025 Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program is underway! This free educational program prepares 4-year-olds for success in kindergarten and beyond.

Here are just a few of the activities your child will enjoy in VPK:

- ✓ Identifying letters (**letter recognition**).
- ✓ Learning about the parts of a book and developing the understanding that letters make up words (**print awareness**).
- ✓ Listening to stories read aloud so they can start to recognize letter sounds and identify individual words within spoken phrases or sentences (**phonological awareness**).
- ✓ Using vocabulary words through expressive language to describe objects, actions and events (**vocabulary**).

For more information, read [What is Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program \(VPK\)?](#)



2024 Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!

The Division of Early Learning is actively supporting the 16th annual statewide Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! The week occurs January 22-26, 2024, with the theme **Believe In Your "Shelf" – Building Resiliency Through Reading!**

Join Florida's early education community, including child care providers and families, for a simultaneous reading activity on Wednesday, January 24, at 9 a.m. (EST) to spread the love of literacy by reading *The Little Butterfly That Could* by Ross Burach.

While this book is suggested, another book with a focus on new experiences may be used to engage young children.