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# Early Learning Parents' Pages

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DIVISION OF EARLY LEARNING

## Savoring Sweet Summertime

For many, summer is still in full swing; however, the back-to-school bell will soon be ringing. As you enjoy the final days of summer, take time to focus on spending quality time with the ones you love. This is the opportune time to be creative and silly while you spend time as a family. Make this month of fun really count by including everyone in the planning. Create a list of fun activities for the entire family by using some of the ideas below:

- Go on a picnic.
- Camp outdoors.
- Have a movie night.
- Plan a scavenger hunt.



- Play tag.
- Create a puppet show.
- Visit a local playground.
- Read books at the library.

This is also a great time to prepare for the upcoming school year. Establishing a routine for your family is one way to give your child a sense of security and predictability while learning new skills. Routines will also help your child establish healthy habits such as washing hands before a meal or putting away toys. Routines should be reasonable, and your child should understand their role and what will happen next. Be flexible as you incorporate a new routine and know that establishing a new routine takes time. Consistent routines help children build confidence in their abilities and strengthen their communication skills. Your child learns through routine activities by watching and listening. Greeting your child as they awaken each morning and talking with them as you go about your day helps them understand new words and concepts. Reinforce these concepts by reading with your child daily and making it a part of your child's routine.

Remember, you are your child's first teacher. Your child's development of values, learning skills and social skills begins at birth. The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards help you support your child's learning and development from birth to age 5. The standards show the knowledge and skills a child should be able to demonstrate at the end of an age-related timeframe. How and what your child learns are influenced by their environment, family and other caregivers. Your child's brain develops the most during the first five years of life. Your child learns many skills and concepts through interactions with other children and adults, but your child's first and best teacher is you.



### Reminder:

Vision, hearing and other screenings are important for a young child's growth and development. As your family prepares for a wonderful school year, see what the [Florida Department of Health \(FDOH\) School Health Services Program](#) provides. Services for children, such as preventative dental screenings and more, are available in your area or at your child's school.

**LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE.**



### What does the local CCR&R program do for families?

The Florida Department of Education's Division of Early Learning partners with 30 regional early learning coalitions to help families connect with resources locally. Each coalition has a CCR&R team that provides services to families and child care providers in their communities.

#### Trained CCR&R specialists can provide your family:

- A customized list of local child care options.
- Information about quality child care and early learning programs.
- Financial assistance strategies and opportunities.
- Referrals to community resources and programs.

## Supporting Teachers Through T.E.A.C.H.

Did you ever wonder how your child's early learning teacher became a highly qualified early learning educator?

The Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Scholarship Program is one of the supporting programs for early learning teacher funded by the Florida Department of Education's Division of Early Learning.

The T.E.A.C.H. program:

- Helps educators expand their professional learning to earn certifications and degrees.
- Promotes a well-qualified early learning workforce.

Families and children benefit when they have a highly qualified early learning teacher who continues their professional learning. Such training promotes a nurturing and supportive learning environment and helps teachers meet the needs of each child through developmentally appropriate programs and activities.



### COMMISSIONER'S BOOK OF THE MONTH

If you are looking to add to your home or school library, check out the [Commissioner's Book of the Month](#) from Florida Education Commissioner Manny Diaz, Jr. This monthly reading challenge promotes literacy and reading engagement while helping children succeed academically and in life.

#### Spotlight on Your VPK Teacher

Your VPK teacher completes many tasks preparing for classes to start—they gather materials and set up centers to prepare the best possible environment for new students, and they review materials and supplies to see what needs to be replacement.

Your VPK teacher is:

- Thinking about future students and how they will soon fill the room with laughter and learning.
- Smiling while writing the names of students on labels and items for each child.
- Planning fun lessons and tasks to help students make progress in growth and development in all areas including literacy, math, connecting to others and finding how each child learns best.

Your VPK teacher is so excited to meet you!