



Parents' Pages

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Celebrating Mother's Day: Special Moments for Moms and Children



Mother's Day is a delightful time for families to celebrate the love, care and encouragement that mothers and caregivers give every day. Mother's Day is not just about gifts but also a time for moms to enjoy the strong bonds created with their children. The best gifts often come from spending time together and showing appreciation in simple, meaningful ways. Whether the celebration is big or small, creating joyful moments with your child can make the day special.



Here are a few fun and easy activities that mothers and children can enjoy together:

Make a Handmade Card

Encourage your child to create a card using crayons, markers, stickers or craft supplies. Younger children can draw pictures of their family, while older children can write a short message about why they love their mom. Handmade cards can include family photos which become treasured keepsakes, often saved for years.



Prepare a Simple Meal

Start the day with a homemade breakfast or snack prepared together. Children can help make a delicious parfait by layering yogurt and fruit in a cup or help plan a picnic in the backyard. Preparing healthy treats together helps your child build confidence and good eating habits.



Plant Flowers or Start a Small Garden

Planting flowers in a pot or garden bed is a fun way to talk about how the sun and water helps plants to grow. Give your child the task of scooping soil into the pot or watering the plants with a small pail. Each time the flowers bloom, talk about the special day of planting together.

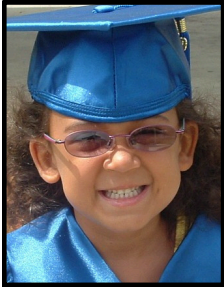


Share a Favorite Story

Spend some quiet time reading for fifteen minutes at home or at the park. Children can pick their favorite book or choose a story about families or kindness from the library. Discuss the main characters and what happens next in the story to encourage listening and language development.

***Happy Mother's Day to all the wonderful moms and caregivers
who nurture, teach and inspire children every day!***

Celebrating VPK's 20th Birthday!



Celeste Phoenix

Celeste started at The Oaks of Durkeeville and is now pursuing a career in drawing and digital art.

Bright Futures Happen Here!



Jalen Devoe

Jalen started at La Petite Academy of Clearwater and received his Bachelor's Degree from Full Sail University.

Congratulations 2026 VPK Graduates

DEL congratulates all of Florida's soon-to-be 2026 VPK graduates and their families! As a VPK parent, you can feel proud knowing your child has built a strong early learning foundation to support success in kindergarten. Keep the learning going by exploring resources available under the [Parents](#) section of DEL's website to support your child's continued growth as they transition to kindergarten.



VPK Registration

Do you have a 4-year-old? Your child may be eligible for Florida's VPK program if they live in Florida and turn 4 years old on or before September 1 of the school year. Children with birthdays between February 2 and September 1 may wait and enroll the following year when they turn 5. Families are **encouraged to apply early** for the 2026-2027 school year through the [Family Portal](#).

Florida VPK and Florida Prepaid Unite

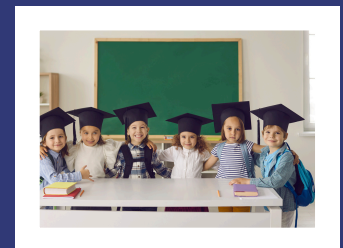
BIG SAVINGS FOR BRIGHT FUTURES!

Start Early. Save More.

Applying to participate in Florida's VPK program is a great beginning to investing in your child's future!

Not only is VPK proven to help your child enter Kindergarten confident and ready to learn, but it also opens the door to valuable financial education opportunities that can support your family's future.

- Apply for VPK and receive a \$100 bonus to start saving for future education costs.
- Apply for VPK and be entered for a chance to win a \$1,000 college scholarship.



Families who opt in to either opportunity are provided additional information about the options available through [Florida Prepaid](#).



Summer Bridge

Families of eligible VPK children have an opportunity to participate in a Summer Bridge program provided by their local school district. The Summer Bridge program is designed for children who need additional support in emergent literacy and early mathematical skills to be fully ready for kindergarten. Ask your VPK provider or your local early learning coalition to see if your child qualifies for this free program.

Provider Appreciation Day – May 8, 2026

Provider Appreciation Day is celebrated each year on the Friday before Mother's Day. It is a day to recognize and thank child care providers, teachers and other educators who work with young children.

Taking time to say thank you helps providers know their hard work matters. A kind note, a child's drawing or a simple thank you message can make a big difference and help providers feel appreciated.

Mark May 8th on the calendar as a reminder to do an act of kindness for your provider for all they do to help children start strong in school.



Teaching Young Children About Water Safety

Teaching your child about water safety helps keep them safe during bath time, pool play and outdoor water activities. You can help them learn simple rules that help prevent accidents and build good habits around water.

Talk about the fun things they can do in water but remind your child that water play can be dangerous without supervision. Explain that they should always ask an adult to go with them before enjoying water play. Simple rules like "Stop, Look and Ask" are easy for your child to remember when approaching water.

Use clear and simple language when teaching your child to walk and not run near pools and to never push others into the water. Share why it's important to always stay close to a trusted adult when they are near water. Consider signing your child up for swimming lessons or a program such as [WaterSmartFL](#) that offers free or reduced cost for lessons.

By teaching water safety early and often, families and caregivers help young children learn how to enjoy water while staying safe.

Memorial Day – May 25, 2026

As you enjoy time together with family and friends this Memorial Day, pause to remember and honor the brave men and women who gave their lives in service to our country. Memorial Day is a time of gratitude and reflection, reminding us of the sacrifices made to protect our freedoms.

Florida residents can visit any state park and trail at no cost on Memorial Day.

Take a moment to talk with your child about kindness, courage and honoring those who serve while enjoying a safe holiday weekend.



Summer BreakSpot

School will be out soon, but wholesome meals are still available during the summer through the [Summer BreakSpot](#), a statewide program offering no cost meals to Florida kids and teens ages 18 and under.

The meals meet U.S. Department of Agriculture nutritional standards, including a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and milk options to keep kids fueled and focused. With locations at schools, parks, libraries and community centers, Summer BreakSpot makes it easy for families to ensure their children receive a nutritious breakfast, lunch and/or snack. An application is not required; just show up and meals will be served!

For more details or to find a location near you, visit www.summerbreakspot.org/find-location/ or call 1-800-504-6609.

Family Fun with a Purpose: Turning Hurricane Preparedness into a Child-Friendly Activity

Preparing for hurricane season doesn't have to feel stressful, overwhelming or scary. With a little creativity, families can turn preparedness into fun activities that help everyone feel ready for hurricane season. By involving your child in age-appropriate ways, you can build safety skills while spending quality time together.

Start with a family emergency kit scavenger hunt. Take a look at the disaster supply kit checklist at floridadisaster.org to see what you will need. Set a timer and have family members help gather items from the list such as flashlights, batteries, water bottles, non-perishable snacks, first aid kit and comfort items like books or games from around the house. Younger children can help decorate the emergency kit container with stickers and labels. This activity will help your child understand why supplies are important, while giving them a sense of responsibility.

Create a simple map of your home and neighborhood and practice evacuation routes or safe places to go during a storm. Role-playing different scenarios like "what to do if the power goes out" will help your child remember important steps without feeling afraid. Keep your tone calm and reassuring, emphasizing that planning helps keep everyone safe.

Families can also enjoy weather themed learning activities by watching a kid-friendly video about hurricanes, reading a picture book about storms or completing a simple science experiment. Try creating a mini hurricane in a bowl by stirring water in a circular motion while dropping food coloring into the center to show the swirling motion. Follow up with a discussion about how people prepare for severe weather and how first responders help them recover if they need assistance.

Finally, you can end the day with a hurricane preparedness celebration! Once your kit is complete and your plan is practiced, enjoy a family game night or special snack to highlight that being prepared is a positive accomplishment. These small activities can help your child associate emergency preparedness with confidence and teamwork rather than fear.

By turning hurricane preparedness into family fun, parents can teach important safety lessons while strengthening family bonds long before the storm clouds appear.

June Upcoming Events

Celebrating Fathers – Family engagement is vital to early childhood development. DEL proudly recognizes the important role that fathers, grandfathers and father figures play in a child's life. Be on the lookout for fun and engaging learning activities to help celebrate Father's Day on June 15.

Summer Reading Programs – Many libraries have reading programs to nurture literacy skills and help children develop a love for reading. Storytimes and reading challenges help prevent the summer slide when school is out.

Children's Day – Plan a special day to recognize the important role families play in supporting their children's learning and development from an early age.

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