



Early Learning Coalition
of Sarasota County

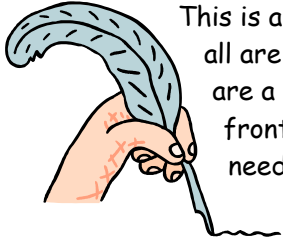
Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County May 2006 Newsletter

Information for all Early Childhood Educators

DIRECTORS: PLEASE COPY BLACK & WHITE VERSION OF NEWSLETTER TO SHARE WITH TEACHERS!

A Month of Surveys...

This is a month for surveys. We know that you all are very busy, but we also know that you are a primary source for information on the front lines in child care. That is why we need information directly from you!



In the April newsletter we mentioned the SAMHSA grant, which is funding an exciting new project in our community to help meet the mental health needs of young children. **The SAMHSA staff is counting on your support and assistance to collect much needed data.** This is a multi-year project to build an Early Childhood Mental Health system of care, and part of the research component is to first establish a picture of the current situation. The information collected in the **survey** will help ensure that the services provided through this project will meet the most pressing needs.

Please take the time to complete the enclosed survey and return it by the end of May. **If you prefer you may call, Maria Garcia-Casellas, one of the researchers, at 684-0090, ext. 1251 and complete it over the telephone.** Please feel free to call her with any questions.

Other surveys:

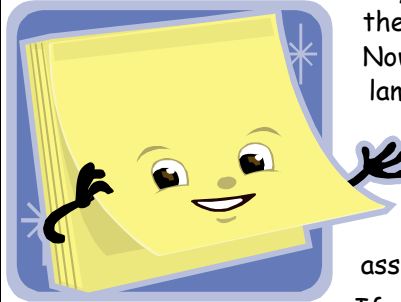
An e-mail was sent recently asking you to complete an online survey related to hurricane and disaster preparedness. The purpose of this study is to learn more about how childcare centers and preschools address children's needs following disasters. The link is: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=34602043975> Your responses will be compiled to help local agencies bolster the disaster response and supports available to early childcare workers with regards to disaster recovery.

And finally,

The Coalition needs your feedback on the services that we have contracted with other agencies to provide. Like last year, some of you will receive a telephone call from Julia Smirnov of the Coalition office to ask some brief questions about the services you have received this past program year. **Thank you for your cooperation!!**



Laminator Now in the Resource Room!



Many of you have already visited the Coalition's **Resource Room**. Now everything is there! The laminator arrived and is set up, there is a computer with internet access available, a copy machine, and multiple resources to assist you in your work.

If you cannot make it during the regular hours, please contact Dianne Rose and she will try to accommodate requests for alternative times, especially for groups of teachers.

Resource Room Hours

Tuesdays Noon - 4:00 pm

Thursdays 3:00 - 7:00 pm

First Saturday of every month

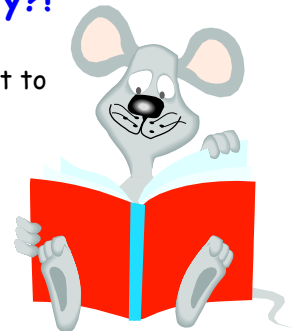
1:00 - 3:00 pm

See you there!

Is Your Family Child Care Literacy-Friendly?!

Last month we enclosed a checklist to help teachers evaluate their classrooms' literacy environments.

This month we are enclosing a literacy checklist to help family child care providers do the same thing.



Take a moment to complete the checklist and think about ways you can enhance your literacy environment and build literacy skill for all the children in your care, no matter what their ages. As we said last month, literacy and a focus on creating literacy rich environments will be an ongoing theme with the Coalition now, as a very important component of your curriculum. Remember that the Coalition is here as a resource if you would like additional assistance on developing your program.





VPK NEWS

❖ Thanks to all of you who attended the VPK Standards Trainings Parts II and III and to the sites that hosted these trainings - Grace United Methodist Preschool, Michael's Learning Center, and Preschool in the Pines.

We hope that VPK teachers will find the Creative Curriculum literacy book a helpful resource in creating appropriate literacy programs in their classrooms.

- ❖ Children's Certificates of Eligibility will not be issued to parents until the end of May or beginning of June. However, parents can complete the process before then at the Child Care Connection and their Certificates will be mailed to them as soon as they are issued. Tell parents to call or drop by the Child Care Connection for information.
- ❖ **A heads up!** To help all classrooms meet VPK program requirements the Coalition plans to be more specific this coming year as to what we expect to see in VPK classrooms. Information will follow! Technical assistant is available - please call Dianne Rose, Program Manager, at 954-4830 ext 3.

- ❖ Our **VPK Celebration** will be held at Twin Lakes Park, Building A, on Thursday, May 25 at 6:30. This is an occasion to share VPK stories, give the Coalition your feedback, and celebrate the hard work that made VPK a success this first year, thanks to all of you - our VPK pioneers! We hope every VPK director and teacher will be able to join us on the 25th!



VPK Celebration on Thursday, May 25

Twin Lakes Park
6700 Clark Road, Sarasota (east of I-75)
Building A, Room A
6:30 to 8:30 pm
Please RSVP to 954-4830 ext. 4 by May 22.

Visit our website! Minutes of meetings and scholarship applications are posted. A calendar of meetings is also available, as well as the community training calendar. Look us up and give us your feedback! If any director or teacher would like to receive a copy of this newsletter via email, please contact the Coalition at the general email address below.

Early Learning Coalition of Sarasota County
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Kindergarten Transition Checklist

Thanks to all of you who completed and returned the **Pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten Transition Checklist** for your children who will be entering kindergarten in the fall. If you have not turned them in yet there is still time.

Going to kindergarten is a big step. The checklist is designed to give the kindergarten teacher information to help ensure a positive transition for each child. Some things that preschool teachers can do to prepare children include:

- Talk about going to kindergarten and what to expect at a new school
- Read books about going to kindergarten
- Encourage parents to visit the kindergarten classroom with their child
- Have children make something to take to their new kindergarten teacher, such as a drawing of their family
- Keep a positive attitude about the move to kindergarten and ask parents to do the same



Child Care Provider Agreement and Self-Assessment

Our goal is to get the 2006-2007 Provider Agreements and Self-Assessments out to you next month, since our fiscal year starts July 1. We are in the process of evaluating these documents and welcome your comments or suggestions. Please call Mary Wolf at 954-4830 ext. 2 or email mwolf@earlylearningcoalitionsarasota.org with your feedback. As you know, the Coalition has the responsibility of ensuring that **all providers** meet state standards and have appropriate program activities in place. **We thank you for your cooperation!**

Child Care Connection of Sarasota
 (Resource & Referral, Scholarship Child Care Program, VPK, Provider Payments)
 2886-C Ringling Boulevard Sarasota, FL 34237
 phone 941.556.1600 fax 941.556.1606