



Helping Hands

Offering a helping hand to School Readiness Providers
A publication from Childcare Resource & Referral



Family Engagement

Episcopal Children's Services

Volume 18, Issue 4

October 2023

Inside this issue:

Family Engagement	1
ELCNF Updates	2
Color Treasure Boxes	3
Erupting Volcanoes	4
Worry to Wisdom	5
T.E.A.C.H	6
Professional Development	7
VPK Corner	7

<https://cdn.ramseysolutions.net/daveramsey.com/media/blog/budgeting/spending/budget-freindly-fall-activities-checklist.png>

BUDGET-FRIENDLY *Fall Activity* CHECKLIST

- Go on a nature hike.
- Roast pumpkin seeds.
- Have a picnic.
- Watch a favorite fall movie.
- Go pick pumpkins.
- Learn about money together.
- Carve Jack-o' lanterns.
- Roast marshmallows.
- Visit an apple orchard.
- Drink hot chocolate.
- Make your own local fun.
- Go for a Sunday drive.
- Create an outdoor obstacle course.
- Camp out in your backyard.
- Spend time around the fire pit.
- Enjoy some spooky science.
- Tailgate from home.
- Take up bird-watching.
- Make apple cobbler.
- Jump into a pile of leaves.
- Pop popcorn on the stove.



ATTENTION HH READERS...

If you have a question, comment, or concern you would like addressed in an upcoming issue of *Helping Hands*, please send an e-mail to:
Brianna.DeOsca@ecs4kids.org. We will do our best to find the answer, post the comment, and address the concern.
Thanks!
Brianna DeOsca
Editor



ELC of North Florida Updates

You are Invited!

**ELC DAYS AT AMAZING GRACE CROP MAZE IN Green Cove Springs: 4251 State Road 21.
This is their new location.**

Dates: Tuesdays, October 10th and 17th (Schools can arrive starting at 9:00 am)

COST - \$10.00 – CHILDREN, SIBLINGS AND CHAPERONES. TEACHERS ARE FREE

What's included?

A visit with farm animals, Spookley the Square Pumpkin story time, crop maze science adventure, amazing agriculture lesson which includes how food gets from the farm to your fridge, jump on the "The Jump Pad" and play area featuring, mini-hay bale maze, duck races and corn hole games.

Booking Information: Email: info@agcropmaze.com Include school name, contact email and phone number, approximate number of children and chaperones. Please mention the ELC of N. Florida when booking. Their office will contact you to confirm.

What makes coming on Early Learning Coalition Days special is that each child will receive a FREE Farm themed book as a gift and each classroom will receive a bag of assorted FALL books. Also, ELC staff and volunteers will be on hand to provide an extra fun craft activity for the children. Most schools bring their lunches and eat at the Crop Maze. They have a large picnic area.



Resource: www.theimaginationtree.com

IN THIS COLOR THEMED BABY TREASURE BASKET WE INCLUDED:

- A carrot and clementines (oranges or tangerines will also work) for tasting
- Lego Duplo pieces
- A piece of soft felt
- A wooden block with orange lines drawn on it
- A Magnatile piece
- A small discovery bottle filled with orange water, orange beads and orange loom bands

Themed treasure baskets are SO quick and simple to create. Also, since you're in a classroom setting it would be fun to make up a whole set of colors to store on the play shelves for easy access. It's so much fun to create these resources. Infant and Toddlers love engaging with them so much more than most store bought toys.

In relation to the Infant CLASS and Toddler CLASS tool, setting out this color basket for the infants and toddlers to access is "Facilitated Exploration", for infants and "Facilitation of Learning and Development", for toddlers. As you talk about the objects in the basket, describe the infants 'and toddlers' actions and label the objects, you're using "Early Language Support" for infants and "Language Modeling" for toddlers. Sitting near or with the infants and toddlers while they play, will improve your "positive climate" for all ages!



Erupting Pumpkins Alisha Dexter, Education Specialist

Resource: <https://www.freebiefindingmom.com/fun-fall-preschool-project-mini-pumpkin-volcanoes/>

What do I do with those mini pumpkins that I received when we went to the pumpkin patch? These hand held torpedoes can be used to teach our preschoolers science. You can gather the needed materials from the local dollar store and see what happens. By using this activity we can introduce our little ones to the scientific method.

MATERIALS:

- Dish soap
- Baking soda
- White vinegar
- Food coloring: Orange, purple, green
- Mini pumpkins
- Tablespoon
- Large plastic lid or container

DIRECTIONS

1. Carve out the top of each pumpkin. (PLEASE USE CAUTION WHEN USING A SHARP KNIFE)
2. Scoop out most of the insides (this doesn't need to be perfect).
3. Bring pumpkins outside and set them on a lid or in a container.
4. Add a couple tablespoons of baking soda to each pumpkin.
5. Add a couple squirts of dish soap to each pumpkin.
6. Add one squirt of each color of food coloring to each pumpkin.
7. Start pouring vinegar into each pumpkin; you'll likely need about 1/3 cup for each.

Watch your pumpkins erupt!



CLASS Preschool: Instruction Learning Format, Concept Development, Quality of Feedback, Language Modeling

Navigating ASQ Misconceptions and Parent Concerns

As parents, educators, and childcare providers, we all want the best for children, and tracking their development is important. Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQs) help us do that. But there may be things parents misunderstand or worry about. Let's address some common worries and clear up any misconceptions about ASQs.



MISCONCEPTION #1: "ASQs diagnose my child."

FACT: ASQs are not diagnostic tests. They screen for potential areas of concern or delays. They give a snapshot of the child's progress and help decide if further evaluation or support is needed.

MISCONCEPTION #2: "ASQ results determine my child's future."

FACT: ASQs don't limit the child's potential. They highlight areas where the child may need extra support. Early identification leads to timely help, which can make a positive difference.

PARENT WORRY #1: "I might not assess my child accurately."

FACT: Parents should trust themselves. ASQs are based on everyday observations. Parents should answer the questions to the best of their ability. If unsure, seek guidance from professionals.

PARENT WORRY #2: "ASQs label and cause anxiety."

FACT: ASQs are not about labels or anxiety. They help identify concerns early and connect parents to resources and services provided by specialists, interventionists, and other qualified professionals by a referral through their doctor or referral agencies such as Early Steps and Child Find. Support is offered to address any challenges the child may have.

PARENT CONCERN #3: "What if my child lags behind?"

FACT: It's natural for parents to worry if their child shows delays. ASQs catch concerns early, allowing for timely help. There are many resources and professionals available to support their child's specific needs.

All in all, ASQs help parents track their child's development and spot any concerns. Remember, ASQs don't diagnose, limit, or cause anxiety. They offer a proactive way to support the child. Parents should trust their instincts, seek guidance when needed, and know that help is available. ASQs are tools to ensure the best outcomes for the child's growth and well-being.

T.E.A.C.H.

The T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program funded by the Florida Office of Early Learning provides scholarships for early childhood teachers and facility/family home directors to work toward earning a degree in early childhood education (Associate, Bachelor's, or Master's), an Infant-Toddler Certificate, Florida Staff Credential, Director Credential, National CDA Assessment, or credential renewals.

Your T.E.A.C.H. scholarship will cover the majority of the cost of tuition and books, a per semester student access stipend, a tiered bonus structure for degree-seeking scholars, and much more!

Contact our office today at 877-FL TEACH (877-358-3224) to see how T.E.A.C.H. can work for you.

<https://teach-fl.org/>

T.E.A.C.H. Scholarships



DIVISION OF
Early Learning

LEARN EARLY. LEARN FOR LIFE.

Local Professional Development Opportunities (Training Calendar)

To register for one of our great training opportunities, please visit our website:

<https://www.ecs4kids.org/programs/regional-training-institute/>

Click on the registration link to see a list of available courses.

Click on a course and follow the directions for registration and payment.

The website provides a list of trainings and descriptions offered each quarter.

For CDA information and questions, please contact Danesha Davis, Professional Development Coordinator
904-726-1500 ext.2299
904-536-2119 (cell)

VPK Corner Sarah March, Contract Coordinator

VPK FAST Training Requirements

VPK programs are required to have a qualified test administrator administer the assessment to students. To be qualified as a test administrator, staff must complete and document completion of professional learning training annually. To complete the VPK FAST training requirements, participants will need to register in Renaissance-U. Required test administrator training is available through Renaissance-U: [FAST Star Early Literacy Renaissance-U Enrollment Guidance](#)

VPK School Year Programs FAST Star Early Literacy Test Administration Schedule for Progress Monitoring (PM):

PM1: Is the first thirty (30) instructional days of the VPK class schedule beginning with the first VPK instructional day.

PM2: Is the period of time in a VPK class schedule where at least 40% of the instructional hours have been completed and no more than 60% of the instructional hours have been completed.

PM3: Is the last thirty (30) instructional days of the VPK class schedule ending on the last VPK instructional day

***Providers are required to provide student performance results to the family within 7 calendar days of each PM administration using the Star Parent Report**

Contract Department

8649 Baypine Rd Suite 300 Bldg. 7 Jacksonville, FL 32256

Toll Free: 1-800-238-3463 * Fax: 904-726-1522

contracts@ecs4kids.org * www.ecs4kids.org



Warm Line 1-800-238-3463

Ext. 2281 (CNBB)

Ext. 2227 (PSJ)



Do you have a concern about the health, development, disability, or special needs of a child? If so, call the Warm Line. The purpose of the warm line is to provide advice to child care personnel concerning strategies, curriculum, and environmental adaptations that allow a child to derive maximum benefit from the child care experience.