



# Helping Hands

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



## Family Engagement Opportunities

Episcopal Children's Services

Volume 18, Issue 3

September 2023

Inside this issue:

ELC of NFL Updates	2
Playdough Sticky Wall	3
Teddy Bear Day	4
Grandparent's Day	5
Introducing ASQ Screenings to Parents	6
Life Skills for Kindergartners	7
Explore Northeast Florida's Parks	8
T.E.A.C.H.	9
Professional Development	10
VPK Corner	10

### How Can I Help My Child Be successful in school?

1. Read EVERYDAY! You can read to your child or have your child read to you...either way...READ!
2. Create a consistent after-school routine. Help your child study and complete their homework.
3. Be POSITIVE! Always speak positively about school, learning, and your child's teacher.
4. Encourage! Give your child the opportunity to excel in all areas of their academics.
5. Be sure that your child is getting plenty of rest each night and is ready for school each day.
6. Teach your child to be responsible for their actions and to take pride in all they do!
7. Stay INVOLVED! Make it a point to ask your child about their day.
8. Communicate...Please know you can contact me with any questions or concerns.

### 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



# 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 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> (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](mailto: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: <https://happytoddlerplaytime.com/playdough-sticky-wall-mural/>



Playdough is a toddler classroom staple! Whether it comes from a can or a DIY recipe, toddlers love to experience all the sensory output playdough offers. You can pinch it, squeeze it, roll it, flatten in, tear it, use tools or molds, create sculptures, the possibilities are limitless! In honor of National Play-Doh Day on September 16<sup>th</sup>, here's a fun new activity to try with your toddlers. Playdough Sticky Wall Mural

**Materials:** Playdough, tools, contact paper, painter's tapes, scissors.

To implement the activity, cut a sheet of contact paper and tape it to the wall with the sticky side facing out. Encourage the toddlers to experiment with placing pieces of playdough on the sticky surface. This open-ended activity can go in any direction that interests the children! Join in while toddlers manipulate the materials to guide their explorations, offer hints or assistance as needed, offer individualized feedback of their efforts, ask open-ended questions about what they are doing in the moment.

### **CLASS Connections:**

**Regard for Child Perspectives:** Child focus, flexibility, support of independence.

**Facilitation of Learning and Development:** Active facilitation, children's active engagement.

**Quality of Feedback:** Scaffolding, encouragement and affirmation.

**Language Modeling:** Supporting language use, repetition and extension, self and parallel-talk.

## Teddy Bear Day Kelley Warner, Education Specialist

Resource: <http://mrstsfirstgradeclass-jill.blogspot.com/2012/03/teddy-bear-picnic-and-much-more.html?m=1>



Who doesn't love a Teddy Bear? The cuddly stuffed animals have provided hugs, company, security, and fun since the early 1900's. And what a better way to honor our furry friends than by inviting them to our classrooms to celebrate Teddy Bear Day, which is held annually on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Here some ideas to help you celebrate Teddy Bear Day in your classroom:

Add Teddy themed stories to your classroom library and read them as a class or encourage the children to read to their bear!

*Corduroy* by Don Freeman;  
*Where's my Teddy* by Jez Alborough  
*Ira Sleeps Over* by Bernard Waber

Bear Compare:

Challenge children to sort their bears by specific characteristics (size, color, etc.), place hula hoops on the floor to create a Venn Diagram of teddy bears, graph similarities or differences among the bears.

**CLASS Connections:**

**Instructional Learning Formats:** Variety of modalities and materials, student interest.

**Concept Development:** Analysis and reasoning, connections to the real world.

**Language Modeling:** Open-ended questions, repetition and extension, self and parallel-talk.

## Grandparent's Day Kelley Warner, Education Specialist

Resource: <https://www.storypoint.com/resources/health-wellness/grandparents-day-ideas/>



Families come in so many varieties and there is so much love to celebrate! This month, we celebrate the older generation in our lives on Grandparent's Day which falls on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Grandparents play many roles in families, they can be caregivers, playmates, and teachers. Depending on distance and circumstance they can be hands-on or virtual.

As a class, brainstorm ways to celebrate Grandparent's Day that could include many types of families. Do your grandparents live locally? Plan to spend a day together, cook a family favorite meal, learn one of your grandparent's hobbies, look at old family photos. Are you grandparents far away? Plan a video chat, send a card or letter in the mail, visit older family friends who may not have family locally. What questions would you like to ask your grandparents? What was it like when they were growing up? How were things different than they are today, is there anything that is the same?

Every family is unique, including the older generation that fills the grandparent role. Celebrate their wisdom and life experience in ways that fill your family with love!

CLASS Connections:

**Concept Development:** Analysis and reasoning, creating, connections to the real world.

**Quality of Feedback:** Feedback loops, providing information.

**Language Modeling:** Frequent conversation, open-ended questions.

## Introducing ASQ Screenings to Parents Rebecca Huth, Inclusion Specialist

Resource: <https://agesandstages.com/free-resources/articles/how-to-introduce-the-questionnaires>

Parents will be more comfortable and engaged in screening when they understand what it's for and how it works. Below are 5 key areas to cover with parents when you introduce ASQ-3 and SE and ask them to participate. Consider informing parents of ASQ's in enrollment packets or send flyers through your digital communication system. Parents should be notified prior to screenings being completed on their child.

### Share the purpose of the screening with parents.

Parents may worry about participating in a screening program. Some may be new to the idea; others might fear that their child will be labeled. Here are some things to say:

- "The ASQ-3 and SE provides a quick check of your child's development."
- "The answers will show your child's strengths and any areas in which your child may need more help or practice."

### Give parents guidance and make them feel prepared to successfully complete a screening.

Completing the ASQ questionnaires is simple but parents doing it for the first time will appreciate some tips to say:

- "Try each activity with your child before you mark a response and have necessary materials."
- "Make this a game that's fun for your child."
- "Make sure your child is fed and rested."

### Explain how the ASQ screenings work.

Describe the developmental areas of both the ASQ-3 and SE, the items within these areas, and the Overall Response section. You might say:

- "Your child may be able to do some, but not all of the items."
- "It is not a pass/fail or diagnostic screening."
- "Here are the 5 developmental areas we'll look at on the ASQ-3. Here are the social-emotional areas we'll look at on the ASQ-SE."
- "The Overall Response section asks questions about your child's development and about any concerns you may have."

### Review the response options and what they mean.

The ASQ-3 and the ASQ-SE asks to choose one of three possible answers:

- Yes/Often or always means the child can consistently do it.
- Sometimes means that your just is just beginning to do it or does it inconsistently.
- Not yet/Rarely or never means the child is not yet performing or rarely performs it.

### Tell parents you will share the results with them.

- Let parents know that you'll be in touch to share the results. Give them a timeframe.

## Life Skills for Kindergartners Kelley Warner, Education Specialist

Resources: <https://www.weareteachers.com/incoming-kindergartners-life-skills/#:~:text=Knowing%20their%20important%20family%20info,Caretaker's%20phone%20number.>

What comes to mind when you think about kindergarten readiness? Site words? Counting to 30? Recognizing and writing names? What about life skills? Here are some suggestions of ways to help our kiddos feel ready to tackle kindergarten that are outside of the academic standards.

**Practice knowing their family information:** Their own first and last name, the first and last names of their caregivers, caregivers phone number, and their address.

**Lunch procedures:** Did they bring lunch from home or are they eating a school meal? Practice opening lunch items for themselves, like sting cheese, yogurt cups or tubes, peeling fruit, opening milk carton or juice boxes. Learn which items go in the trash when they are finished, and which items need to go home to be washed and used again.

**Self-care skills:** Bathroom routines; flush the toilet, wash hands, secure/fasten clothing. Personal care; blowing their nose, tying their shoes, taking off/putting on jackets.



## Explore Northeast Florida's Parks Kelley Warner, Education Specialist

Resource(s)/Website(s): <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails>; <https://www.floridastateparks.org/experiences-amenities>

Did you know that Jacksonville has the largest urban park system in the nation? It's true, and now that summer has passed and the heat and humidity are more manageable, it's a great time of year to get outside! September 23 is National Public Lands Day in which most entrance fees are waived for state parks. Hiking, biking, boating, fishing, picnicking, bird watching, camping, stargazing, and much more are available throughout Northeast Florida.

**Black Creek Park and Trail** in Flemming Island offers great trails for hiking and mountain biking.

**Clarke House Park** in Orange Park is very family friendly, with ziplines, climbing play structures, swings, nature trails, and seating.

**Edwards Road Sports Complex and Splash Park** in Starke features tennis and racquet ball courts, fields, playgrounds, skating, and a splash park.

**Flagler Estates Community Center and Park** in Hastings includes basketball courts, playgrounds, and picnic pavilions.

**St. Mary Shoals Park** in Macclenny offers pavilions, trails, river access, and geocaching!

Pick a family activity to try, find a park near you, and have a blast!





## 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

### Important Reminders about Florida's Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) using Star Early Literacy

#### 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](#) This is now an annual requirement.

#### Provider Portal Updates

Providers also need to designate an Admin User for Renaissance in the Business Tab/External Users/ Renaissance section of the provider portal. For detailed instruction please refer to the Manage External Users\_Provider Portal User Guide that was emailed as an attachment to providers in early. Please note that any changes made in the Provider Portal will take at least 24- 48 hours to update in Renaissance.

#### Child Assessments

To complete assessments please ensure you are using the new Renaissance site: <https://global-zone05.renaissance-go.com/welcomeportal/7957988>.

Also, you will need to designate an Admin User for Renaissance in the Business Tab/External Users/ Renaissance section of the provider portal. Please see the Manage External Users\_Provider Portal User Guide that was emailed as an attachment to providers in early August for instructions on how to add the Admin user in the provider portal. Any changes made in the Provider portal will take at least 24- 48 hours to update in Renaissance.

#### 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.



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.