



# 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 7

January 2023

## Top 10 New Year's Resolutions to Make with Your Family

When you think "kid-friendly holiday," New Year's Eve probably isn't the first thing that springs to mind. But just because the kids might not last long enough to see the ball drop, doesn't mean they can't participate. In fact, New Year's Eve is a great time to come together and set some family goals for the upcoming year.

In case you need a little help, check out this website, that put together a handy list of Top 10 New Year's Resolutions for Families. You'll notice that a lot of the items on the list are things that you're probably resolving to do for yourself this year – they just added a family twist!

- \*Go Outside More
- \*Practice Gratitude As A Family
- \*Read Together

**For more information check out the link below:**

<https://modernparentsmessykids.com/top-10-new-years-resolutions-to-make-with-your-family/>

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### 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



# ELC of North Florida Early Educators Conference

**EARLY EDUCATORS CONFERENCE 2024**  
We can't wait to see you!

**Saturday, February 3, 2024**  
9AM-3:15PM  
Thrasher Home Conference Center  
283 College Drive, Orange Park, FL 32065  
\$30 Lunch Included  
4.5 CEU's Provided

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

8:30-9:00 - Registration (coffee and snacks available)	Session 3: <b>Learning Through Play: Fine and Gross Motor Skills in Toddlers</b> - Sherry Tindall, Katrina Willis and Brianna DeOsca
9:00 - Welcome	Session 4: <b>But Play Is My JOB! Facilitating Exploration &amp; Language in Infant Settings</b> - Alexis Williams, Jazmine Jackson, Krystal Berry, Tatum Good
9:05-10:15 - Keynote Session #1 - Patty Shukla Music, Movement and Media - For Active Learners	Session 5: <b>The Hunt for Concept Development in Pre-K Classrooms</b> - Susan Murphy, Kelly Warner and Santanna Walker
10:15-10:30 - Break	Session 6: <b>It Starts with the Ringleader: Managing Behaviors in Your Circus</b> - Rebecca Huth, Jhordan Speed-Johnson, Ileana Mattei
10:30-11:45 - Keynote Session #2 - Dr. Teri DeLuca Can't we all just get along? Resilience is your superpower!	2:00-2:15 - Break
11:45-12:00 - Door Prizes & Teacher of the Year Presentation	2:15-3:15 - Break Out Session #2 - same sessions as above, except Session 1 will be as follows:
12:00-1:00 - Lunch	Session 1: <b>Arts, Crafts and CLASS: Facilitating Art Through the CLASS Lens</b> - Ariel Jones and Alisha Rotella
1:00-2:00 - Break Out Session #1 (6 sessions being offered)	
Session 1: <b>Jump, Wiggle and Hop in the Classroom</b> - Patty Shukla	
Session 2: <b>From Awkward to Awesome: Masterful Communication Strategies</b> - Dr. Teri DeLuca	

Remember to register for Breakout Sessions 1 and 2 when you register for the Conference as they will fill up fast! \$30 registration fee payment is made through our website at [www.elcnorthflorida.org](http://www.elcnorthflorida.org). Click the Events Tab! Registration will begin on January 2nd and closes January 26th 2024. Please call 904-342-2267 at ext. 202 or 203 for more information. We can't wait to see you there!

**OUR SPEAKERS!**

**Dr. Teri DeLuca**

Dr. Teri DeLuca is the Founder and CEO of Impact Early Education, a professional development institute for the preschool industry. She completed a dual PhD in developmental psychology and educational psychology during which her research focused on the cognitive, social, and academic development of preschool children. Dr. DeLuca is a member of the John Maxwell Leadership Team. She is a John Maxwell certified speaker and is certified through the Speaking Your Brand Thought Leader Academy. She previously worked as a research scientist for a children's early literacy intervention program and then accepted an applied position operating a system of privately owned preschools, extended day, and summer camp programs. Dr. LaDuca lives locally in St. Augustine, FL and is the mother of two amazing sons.

**Patty Shukla**

Patty Shukla is an award-winning children's musician and internationally recognized expert in educational interactive music for children. She is watched by hundreds of millions of educators and families worldwide through her popular YouTube channel and teaching website [www.PattysPrimarySongs.com](http://www.PattysPrimarySongs.com). When she is not performing live music shows, she is often a keynote speaker for early childhood educators around the country and enjoys teaching classes in her hometown of Palm Beach County, Florida. She has three children of her own who inspire her day.

Registration opens January 2nd  
<https://elcnorthflorida.org/>

## Snowman Sensory Painting

Santanna Walker, Program Assessment Specialist

The Sunshine State of Florida may not be known for its snow, but that doesn't mean your little ones can't have fun building a snowman. Here's a fun activity where they can enjoy a winter sensory experience.



**What You Will Need:** large freezer bag, sharpie (any color), white paint, duct tape/ masking tape.

**Directions:** grab your large freezer bag and draw a snowman using a sharpie on the front of the bag. Add a few drops of white paint into the bag on each circle of the snowman's body. Close the freezer bag making sure it is sealed tightly and all of the air is out. Firmly tape the bag to the floor or table. Encourage children to press the bag to move the paint around.

**CLASS Connections:**

**Facilitation of Learning and Development:** Children's active engagement -Children are involved physically and verbally during the activity while also being able to manipulate.

**Language Modeling:** Advanced Language – Label snowman, snow, parts of snowman (hat, eyes, nose, mouth).



# National Preschool Health and Fitness Day

Santanna Walker, Program Assessment Specialist

Resource: <https://nationaltoday.com/national-preschool-health-and-fitness-day/>

National Preschool Health and Fitness Day is January 26, 2024.

Every year, the last Friday in January is National Preschool Health and Fitness Day. Ensuring that preschoolers are physically active and healthy is an essential aspect of their overall development. Physical activity promotes strong bones and muscles, improves balance and coordination, and helps children maintain a healthy weight. It also promotes better sleep, reduces stress and anxiety, and boosts self-esteem and confidence.

While this day is dedicated to promoting physical activity and overall health for our preschoolers, the overall goal is to help young learners develop a habit of regular exercise, sound nutrition, and adequate rest. Here are some ways you can get your preschoolers up and moving:

- Do Alphabet Yoga - Learn and practice letters while exercising
- Go for a nature walk - Collect leaves, rocks, and sticks to be used for a craft later on
- Dance - Act out or dance to songs for music and movement
- Play Hopscotch - Practice counting and number recognition while being active



## CLASS Connections:

Concept Development – Integration: Review letters during alphabet yoga and review numbers while playing hopscotch; Link nature walk activity to craft activity by using items collected during nature walk.

Concept Development – Analysis and Reasoning: Ask children “How can we represent this letter in yoga?”, “Why do you think this leaf is brown and this leaf is green?”, “Why do you think these leaves are different colors?”

Language Modeling – Frequent Conversation and Open-Ended questions: Ask children “How does this rock/stick/leaf feel?” “What can we do with this rock/stick/leaf?”

Resource: <https://nationaltoday.com/national-lego-day/> <https://thestemlaboratory.com/famous-landmark-stem-challenge/>

For almost seven decades, LEGO products have entertained both children and adults across the globe and it's not hard to see why. These colorful bricks offer so much more than just building fun. They also inspire creativity, problem-solving skills, and imaginative play. Whether it's constructing a towering castle or designing a space shuttle, the possibilities are endless with LEGO. National LEGO Day is January 28th every year. How about celebrating this special day with a famous landmarks STEM challenge? All you need are LEGO products, pictures of landmarks (laminated for durability), and a planning sheet.

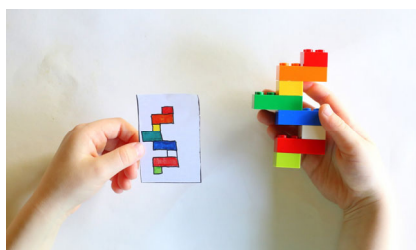


Before jumping right in and building with Legos, allow children to plan and design their LEGO structures using the planning sheet. This will not only improve their critical thinking skills but also enhance their creativity. It will help them visualize their ideas and turn them into reality. They will also learn the importance of planning and organizing their ideas. Plus, it can be a lot of fun to brainstorm and come up with different ideas for what to build. As soon as their plan is ready, they can jump right into the fun of building!

CLASS Connections:

Concept Development – Creating: Building with LEGO materials.

Concept Development – Connections to The Real World: Constructing famous landmarks.



# How to Complete the ASQ-SE Rebecca Huth, Inclusion Specialist

Resource: <https://agesandstages.com/free-resources/articles/top-asgse-2-questions/>

The ASQ-SE is a screening that measures behavior and social-emotional skills. Use these tips to help complete and score the ASQ-SE questionnaire accurately every time.

## **Prepare before the screening with these prescreening guidelines:**

- Choose administration method (paper copy or online).
- Ensure the selected ASQ-SE questionnaire is age appropriate for that child using the [ASQ Age Calculator](#) (β click).
- Look over questions prior to screening child to see if you can answer the questions with fidelity or if parent or teacher input is needed.
- Push back the screening until the child has transitioned and cooperates during the screening.

## **Scoring Help:**

- ASQ-SE have both scored and unscored items. The scored items address competence (things that are beneficial for the child to do) and problem behavior (things that a child should not do).
- Select **often or always** if the child's behavior is performing consistently or frequently.
- Select **sometimes** if the child's behavior is performing occasionally but not consistently.
- Select **rarely or never** if the child is rarely performing the behavior.
- Each response option has a letter assigned to it: Z=0, V=5, X=10. Add an additional 5 points for items marked as **concern**.
- Remember to check for unanswered items. If answers are missing, contact the parent to try to obtain the answers and use the [ASQ Adjusted Score](#) calculator to assist with scoring.
- If one or two items are missing, proceed as usual with scoring.

Scan QR Code for Short Video on Completing and Scoring the ASQ-SE



# Transition to Kindergarten

Santanna Walker, Program Assessment Specialist

## **Parents: Getting Ready for Kindergarten**

Resource: <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/kindergarten-here-we-come>

Entering kindergarten is an exciting time for both you and your little one. While it can be nerve-racking to send your child off to school on the first day, there are plenty of simple things you can do to prepare them for this new adventure. Encouraging independence is key.

- Allow your child to practice dressing themselves, using the bathroom, and washing their hands without your help. These skills will not only build confidence but also teach them how to take responsibility for themselves.
- You can also involve them in small tasks at home, like tidying up their room or bringing toys back inside after playtime.
- Make sure to talk to your child about their feelings towards school. Whether they're excited or nervous, it's important to listen and acknowledge how they're feeling.

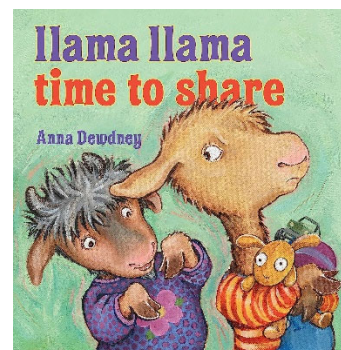
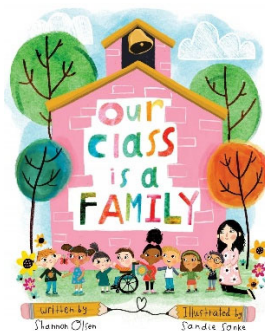
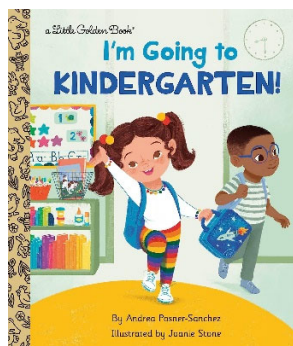
By doing these things, you can help make the transition to kindergarten as smooth as possible and set your child up for success in their education journey.

## **Teachers: Social-Emotional Skills for Kindergarten**

Resource: <https://tats.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2022/03/TopTenTransition-All-Aboard-2.22.pdf>

As a teacher, it is naturally common to focus on academic skills such as letter recognition and counting when preparing preschoolers for kindergarten. It's important to keep in mind that non-academic skills are important, too. Kindergarten teachers often advise Pre-K teachers to prioritize social and emotional development with their students. This includes discussing classroom and school routines and helping children develop a sense of structure and security in a learning environment. Working with children to develop appropriate social skills will help with the transition from pre-k to kindergarten.

Here are some books to help teach these important social-emotional skills.



## Homemade Playdough Santanna Walker, Program Assessment Specialist

Resource: <https://littlebinsforlittlehands.com/cornstarch-playdough/>

It's no secret that children (and adults) love playdough. Did you know that you can easily make playdough at home with only two ingredients? The ratio for this simple recipe is 1 part hair conditioner to two parts cornstarch. Adjust the recipe as needed depending on the amount you want to make.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of hair conditioner
  - 2 cups of cornstarch
  - Mixing bowl and spoon
- Food coloring (optional)

To begin, help your child add the hair conditioner to a bowl. If you want your playdough a certain color, then add a few drops of food coloring. Next, add the cornstarch and begin mixing with a spoon. Finally, it's time to get your hands in there to begin molding your playdough. If the playdough is too dry, add more conditioner. If it is not firm enough, then add a dash of cornstarch until it's the right consistency.





## 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

Danasha Davis, Professional

Development Coordinator

904-726-1500 ext.2299

904-310-2105 (cell)

## VPK Corner Sarah March, Contract Coordinator

### Renaissance Reminders for Progress Monitoring Window 2

Please check our website for your PM2 start date and end date through our new automated system that is updated weekly! All you will need is the email used as the FAST contact in your provider profile and your Provider ID.

<https://www.ecs4kids.org/programs/vpk/providers/progress-monitoring/>

Please remember, any changes to your classroom calendars can impact your progress monitoring dates, please verify these dates anytime you have a calendar change.

Please ensure all children are being tested within the PM2 Window. You may test a child as many times as you want within or after the Progress Monitoring dates, however, only the first completed test during the testing window will count. Please check your STAR Test Activity Report to make sure all children have been tested. Any child that is enrolled at your facility during that progress monitoring window needs to be tested during that window. Also, any child that is not able to be tested or failed the practice test more than 3 times per the Non-participation status reasons, please mark their Non-Participation status in Renaissance.

#### Contract Department

\* 8649 Baypine Rd Ste 300 Bldg 7 \* Jacksonville, FL 32256

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

[contracts@ecs4kids.org](mailto:contracts@ecs4kids.org) \* [www.ecs4kids.org](http://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, and 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.