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Helping Hands

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



Family Engagement

Episcopal Children's Services

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Spring Activities For Children

Inside this issue:

Spring is a fun time for kids to learn and play outside. In this article, you will find simple and exciting **spring activities for kids** to enjoy during spring. From gardening to making art and learning about nature, these activities are perfect for little ones to discover new things about the world around them.

- *Spring Themed Baking
- *Rock Painting
- *Make a Wind Chime
- *DIY Rain Guage

To read the full article & see additional activities, please visit the website:

<https://www.splashlearn.com/blog/spring-activities-for-kids/>

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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: Briana.deosca@ecs4kids.org We will do our best to find the answer, post the comment, and address the concern. Thanks!

Brianna DeOsca, Editor





Chillin' with the Cats!

When: Friday, May 3, 2024,
9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Where: Ravine Gardens State Park
1600 Twigg St., Palatka, FL 32177

Who: Event for VPK age children
(4-5 year olds).

Event Details

The event will feature a fun music-filled storytime with special guests "The Cat in the Hat" and "Pete the Cat" with time for group photo ops. There will be activities for the kids to do all over the room related to different Dr. Seuss & Pete the Cat books. Examples are: Cat in the Hat Cup Stacking, Green Eggs and Ham Sensory play, One Fish Two Fish Fishing game, Pete the Cat playdough fun and Pete the Cat puppets.



RSVP Required: Monday, April 15, 2024
to Joan Whitson:
joan.whitson@ecs4kids.org or
904-342-2267 ext. 202. Space is limited!



www.elcnorthflorida.org

Each child will receive a FREE Dr. Seuss and Pete the Cat book and each classroom will receive a bag of assorted books.

The FREE event is being sponsored by the ELC of North Florida, Episcopal Children's Services and the Division of Early Learning. Schools must RSVP because space is limited.

Doors open at 9:20 am. Story time program starts promptly at 9:30 am.

Container Baby Syndrome, Sherry Tindall Education Specialist

References <https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2018/10/container-baby-syndrome>,
<https://www.ptpdenver.com/blog/container-baby-syndrome-and-how-to-avoid-it>
<https://youtu.be/2sy-CpdyhKQ>

Everyone needs a break now and then, all infant teachers have had to give attention to a crying baby, prepare bottles, and needed a safe place for infants to be. Sometimes it appears the baby enjoys the device we put them into. However, there is a cost to overusing containment equipment. It is the delay in developing gross motor skills. This sort of engagement has a name, and it is called "Container Baby Syndrome."

"Container Baby Syndrome is a collection of movement, behavior and other problems caused by a baby or infant spending too much time in a container-any commonly used equipment that resembles a container.... swings bouncers, exersaucers, baby chairs/Bumbos, strollers, and car seats." All too often we use these devices to entertain or restrain babies. Most of us have never heard of this syndrome or thought we were delaying a child's development.

What does Florida Department of Children's and Family Services have to say? In their reference guide for childcare on page 18 at 6.2F it states that such devices should only be used for a maximum of 30 minutes per day. They may be used 30 minutes a day totaling all types of devices. They can be use in the morning for 15 minutes and in the afternoon for 15 minutes. You may divide the time up in the morning and the afternoon, but they must total 30 minutes. Say, you use a swing in the morning for 20 minutes, then that only leaves 10 minutes for the rest of the day.

"So, you tell me I am restricted; now?" What are the alternatives? The alternative is more floor time along with more tummy time. These types of activities can be broken up for the day. What are some of the things you can do during floor time? You can read a book, engage in tracking activities for young infants, play peek-a-boo with those sitting up and offer a variety of toys to the baby. A simple, reminder is to ask yourself why am I putting the infant in a restraining/container device?

An interesting resource to view is the YouTube video <https://youtu.be/2sy-CpdyhKQ> that is referenced are above. What CLASS dimension are affected by the use of restraining devices? Facilitated Exploration and Teacher Sensitivity.



References: <https://tats.ucf.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2017/11/10-Tactics-for-Dealing-with-Tantrums-in-the-Classroom.pdf>; <https://www.pampers.com/en-us/toddler/development/article/eliminate-tantrums-tips>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vaGT_FtWEQU

Tantrums, what can you say except “Help,” if you are caught in the moment. However, we need to understand them and the ways we can act before, during, and after. They are a part of growing up for toddlers. In time you will be able to tell when one is brewing. When considering tantrums, we need to remember the frustration these kiddos have expressing their feelings and exerting their newfound independence, all of this with a limited vocabulary is a tall order.

Tantrums don’t need to be defined, you know it when you see it; however, there are things to consider before, during, and after the incident occurs. First, proactive measures are:

- Talk about emotions and tantrums during circle time. Talk about how they feel when having a tantrum and how others feel.

- Praise good behavior.

- Let children have appropriate choices.

- Know your students and their triggers.

- Master the art of distractions.

Next, is the tuff one, acting in the moment:

- Keep everyone safe. Some children fling toys and fall wildly. It is important to keep other children out of the way.

- Keep your cool. Losing your temper is the worst thing you can do; it doubles the trauma.

- Avoid saying, no, don’t, or stop it. Instead, say, “It is not time for that choice and keep reiterating it.” When you stay claim and have a plan of action such as the phrase, “It is not time for that choice,” you become a beacon of calm in the storm of a tantrum.

After the incident do these:

- Talk about what just happened. Help children understand their feelings by naming the feeling they’ve experienced. It is important not to expect a reply from the child.

- Follow up conversations should focus on problem solving.

- Offer a quiet area for the child to calm down—a place with books, soft toys, and toys.

Hopefully if you’re a toddler teacher, you will never experience a child going through a tantrum, but I doubt it. Bear in mind these tips provided here and start to manage each situation. The CLASS area addressing tantrums is Teacher Sensitivity, awareness, notices difficulties or children who are upset. Check out the resources sited in this article, especially the YouTube video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vaGT_FtWEQU for more information.

Kindergarten, Here We Come Sherry Tindall, Education Specialist

Reference: [https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/transitions/article/transition-kindergar-](https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/transitions/article/transition-kindergar-ten)

[ten;https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/feb2014/transitionskindergarten#:~:text=F or%20children%20who%20are%20going,when%20moving%20on%20to%20kindergarten.;](https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/feb2014/transitionskindergarten#:~:text=F or%20children%20who%20are%20going,when%20moving%20on%20to%20kindergarten.;)
<https://www.floridaearlylearning.com/vpk/transition-to-kindergarten>

“Kindergarten transition refers to the totality of experiences and opportunities a child encounters in moving from one program or setting to another.” When this experience is done according to evidence base practices that involves, schools, families, and communities the child’s outcome is more successful.

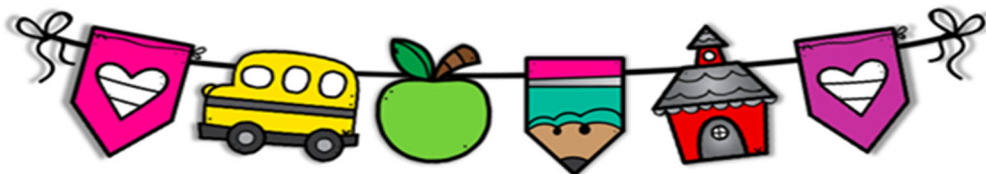
Schools play an important role in successfully preparing a child for transitioning to kindergarten. Teachers can use strategies such as: reading books about kindergarten and creating classroom books about how children feel about going to the “Big School,” kindergarten. Teachers and children can share their feeling about leaving VPK/PreK. It is alright for teachers to let children know they will be missed; however, let them know their new teacher is excited about having them come to their class. Let children share their feelings. Reassure those who are apprehensive and support those who are excited to go.

Teachers reassure children who are anxious provide one-on-one time with the child, talking, and reading books about kindergarten. For children who are excited about the move, give High-five's and words of encouragement. Give the affirmation that you know they will be great at their new school. These same accolades can be given to the reluctant child after reassuring them with individual time and time for their feelings to align with the idea of transitioning.

Families can visit schools where their children will attend. They can include their child in transitioning by having them help when buying supplies for schools. They can talk about things that are different about kindergarten than their VPK/PreK experience. Differences such as eating in a cafeteria, learning new rules, making new friends. Parents and care givers can get children ready by teaching them to tie their shoes, open milk containers, note whipping cream containers are like milk containers used at school and will work well to practice. Working with your child on summer kindergarten packets their PreK teacher sends home will ensure skills learned throughout the year are not forgotten.

Communities where kindergarten teachers and PreK teachers pair up is a component of successful transition. ECS provides this opportunity. At some point during the year, ECS arranges a gathering for PreK teachers along with Kindergarten ones to share transition ideas.

Community involvement may include extra support for those families in need. Various community agencies provide backpack assistance this helps smooth the transition to kindergarten. When everyone helps the child transition to kindergarten the child outcome is much improved.



Reference: www.handmadeintheheartland.com/cricut-chipboard-yarn-wrapped-letters/



Your school agers will not be yawning with this activity; actually, they'll be excited to create letters wrapped in colorful yarn. They can make their initials or form words with many letter stencils. Yes, this activity is a winner. It will be fun and keep the kiddos busy. They will laugh and have fun making their way into something beautiful.

Materials:

Initial stencils (Homemade out of cardboard or store bought from Hobby Lobby or Lakeshore)

Colorful yarn skeins to choose from

Instructions: Children will wrap yarn around and around their letter stencil.

Here is a list of six YouTube video books to help your child understand what it is like to go to kindergarten. When waiting for at restaurants, doctor offices, or any other place where you will be detained, use this time to allow your preschooler to prepare for kindergarten transition by watching and listening to the books on your phone or tablet. Be sure to watch the video first before having your child view it. Also, engage with your child by talking about the book and how they feel about going to kindergarten. Remember best practice is to limit screen time to 15 minutes at a time.

Pet the Cat: Rocking in My School Shoes

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrwvZuqKWEY

Whoohoo! I'm Ready for Kindergarten

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwhWrSZWr00>

Kindergarten Bus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iJuBeVxLCZo>

Kindergarten Rocks

www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmQqC6l9jdw

I Am Going to Kindergarten

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uq988Raoc5s>

Kindergarten: Where Kindness Matters Everyday

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQXDxknVSec>



Resource: <https://weelicious.com/strawberry-yogurt-ice-pops-recipe/>

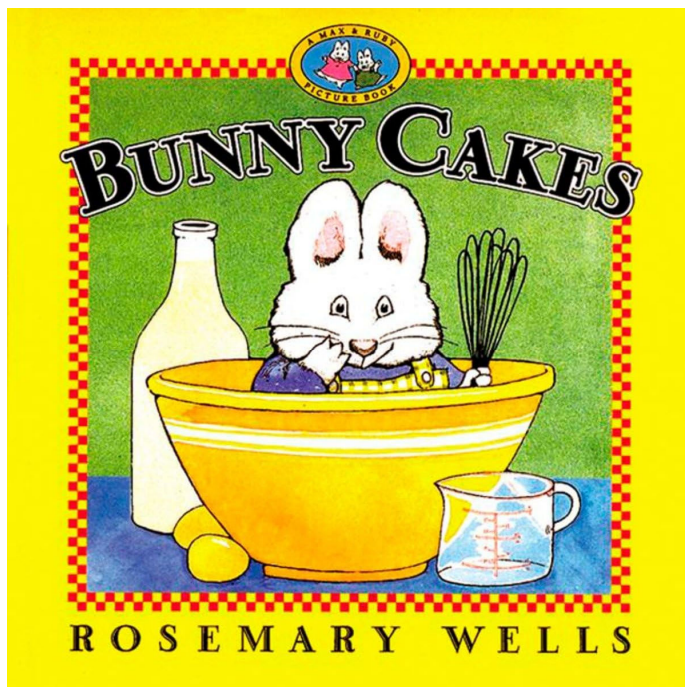
Hey folks, share the exciting fun of cooking that sparks magic in children. As parents and caregivers, you are your child's first teacher. With that in mind, consider teaching math through cooking without ever turning on the stove. Make frozen yogurt pops. Begin by showing your child a measuring cup and a set of measuring spoons. State your recipe will call for a 1-1 cup, measuring dish and 1- tablespoon. Next, have your child help read the amounts of ingredients and pour them into the blender and mixing bowl.

Frozen Yogurt Pops

- 1 Cup frozen unsweetened strawberries
- 1 Cup plain yogurt
- 5 Tbsp. honey
- 7- 3 ½ paper cups
- 7 wooden ice cream sticks

Put strawberries in blender, blend until smooth. Pour into bowl and stir in honey and yogurt. Fill cups 2/3 full of mixture. Put stick in center. Freeze 1-2 hours. Remove from cup and serve.

When finished making yogurt pops, sit down and read a book about cooking such as Bunny Cakes, by Rosemary Wells (A Ruby and Max book).



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 24-25 Provider Applications

24-25 VPK provider applications are available. Providers need to have an Active 2024-2025 profile in order for the VPK provider application (VPK-10, 11A, 11B) to be initiated. If you have not done so, please update your 2024-2025 profile. Existing providers simply need to click 'Create 2024' and most info will populate from your previous profile for you to look over and revise, as needed, before submitting.

Contract Department
8649 Baypine Road, Ste. 300, Bldg. 7, Jacksonville, FL 32256
Toll Free: 1-800-238-3463 * Fax: 904-726-1516
contracts@ecs4kids.org * www.ecs4kids.org

Warm Line 1-800-238-3463

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.

Ext. 2281 (CNBB)
Ext. 2227 (PSJ)