



FAMILY CONNECTION

THE OFFICIAL FAMILY NEWSLETTER OF
THE EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF BROWARD COUNTY



It's Time For Back to School!

INSIDE LOOK

ENROLL IN VPK

STARTING PRESCHOOL

HEALTHY EATING
TIPS

READING TIME: BOOKS
TO ENJOY WITH YOUR
LITTLE ONE

Now Enrolling VPK

Did you know you can enroll your child into VPK (Voluntary Prekindergarten) year round? It's true. ELC Broward is here to assist you with getting started! To enroll, children must live in Florida and be 4 years old on or before Sept. 1.

How do I apply for VPK?

You can apply online from a computer, mobile phone or other digital device by visiting <https://familyservices.floridaearlylearning.com/> You will need an email address, proof of Florida residency and proof of your child's age to apply.

ELC Broward will review your application and email you with further instructions. Once your application is approved, you will be provided with a Certificate of Eligibility you can take to any VPK provider.



You've Started Preschool! What's next?

Starting school is an exciting time, but it can be stressful for both children and families. Here are some fun and easy tips you and your family can add to your weekly routine!

- **Create a photo book with your child!** Taking pictures of your child and making an album with your them will give provide a hands-on way to get your child excited about reading and recalling memorable moments.
- **Establish Morning and Bedtime Routines.** Routines help us all be organized. Pictures placed in order of our morning and evening routine will help children learn what's expected, and create consistency. Try it!
- **Nurture your child's independence!** Give him/her choices when you can. For example, allow him/her to pick a shirt out and two acceptable shirts of your choice.
- **Let children help...with easy tasks.** For example, they can help throw garbage away, set the table, feed pets, put dirty clothes in the hamper, and help get a diaper for a younger sibling.
- **Prepare for Strong Emotions!** Sometimes young children have separation anxiety when they go to school. This is normal. If your child cries, it's important to label your child's emotions and reassure your child that you'll be back.
- **Offer encouragement!** Acknowledge their helpfulness and remember... perfection isn't necessary!

Example of a morning and evening routine checklist

	eat breakfast
	put dishes in sink
	use the bathroom
	brush teeth
	wash face
	get dressed
	make bed
	gather things for school
	put on shoes

	TIDY UP
	TAKE A SHOWER OR BATH
	PUT ON PAJAMAS
	BRUSH TEETH
	READ A BOOK WITH THE FAMILY
	GO TO THE BATHROOM
	WASH HANDS
	LIGHTS OUT



Check out more tips
on getting ready for
preschool at:

www.zerotothree.org

Tips to Encourage Healthy Eating



The foods and drinks preschool children have throughout the day is vital to their health. Parents can help their children get the nutrients they need from every food group by offering a variety of healthy foods. Fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy together provide what preschoolers need to support and enhance their overall healthy eating plans.

Try this new recipe!

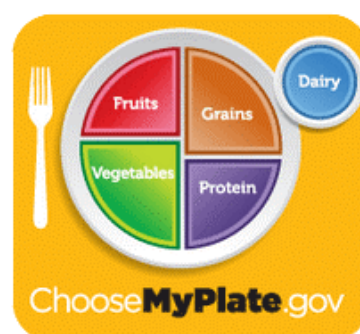
Delicious Dippers

Children love to dip their foods. You can whip up a quick dip for veggies (carrots slices, broccoli, etc.) with yogurt and seasonings such as herbs or garlic. Fruit chunks go great with yogurt and cinnamon or vanilla dip.

Stay tuned for healthy tips for picky eaters and another recipe in the next family newsletter.

- **Go food shopping together.** Grocery shopping can teach your child about nutrition and different foods. Discuss where vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy, and protein foods come from.
- **Offer a variety of healthy foods.** Choose foods from each MyPlate (shown below) food group- fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, and dairy to build long-lasting healthy habits.
- **Be mindful of sweet drinks and other foods.** Offer water instead of sugary drinks like juice or soda. Make certain foods like pizza, burgers, and candy occasional treats.
- **Make meal time family time.** Children learn by watching. Try new foods and describe the taste, texture, and smell. It's a great time for connection and conversation.
- **Reward with attention, not food.** Choose not to offer sweets as rewards because it makes your child think sweets and deserts are better than other foods. Comfort with hugs, kisses, and talks instead.
- **Be patient with your child.** Some new foods take time to get used to. Children enjoy food when eating is their own choice. Let children serve themselves small amounts and offer new foods often.
- **Listen to your child.** If your child says he or she is hungry, offer a small, healthy snack. Offer two healthy choices. For example, ask, "Which would you like for a snack: an apple or carrots?" instead of "Do you want an apple for a snack?"

REMINDER: Children may be allergic to certain foods. It is important to let your child's school know what food allergies he/she may have.



It's Reading Time!



The best gift you can give your child is helping to nurture a love of reading. Snuggling with a book with your child every night as part of his/her bedtime routine will not only help develop literacy skills, but it will also create a special, cozy time with you!

Books to enjoy for reading time:

- **First Day Jitters** by Julie Danneberg
- **David Goes to School** by David Shannon
- **How Do Dinosaurs Go to School?** By Jane Yolen and Mark Teague
- **Chrysanthemum** by Kevin Kenkes
- **The Kissing Hand** by Audrey Woods
- **Monsters Love School** by Mike Austin
- **If You Take a Mouse to School** by Laura Numeroff and Felicia Bond

Family Resources



Need assistance searching for a child care provider in Broward County? ELC Broward can help! We can provide a FREE customized search for child care based on your families' needs such as location, schedule, curriculum, environment, and special need and more! Call ELC Broward to request a customized list at (954) 377-2188.



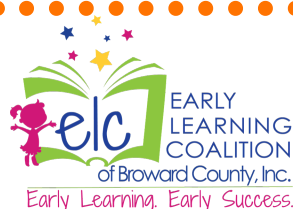
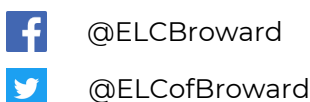
Beginning August 22, 2019 every Thursday, the Health Department in Broward County will be stationed at our ELC Broward headquarters to provide KidCare & Women, Infants and Children (WIC) resources to families.

KidCare is free or low cost health insurance for children from birth through age 18 offered through the state of Florida, even if one or both parents are working.



WIC is a supplemental nutrition program that provides healthy foods to pregnant, breastfeeding and post-partum women, infants, and children up to age 5. WIC also offers breastfeeding support and referrals to healthcare, immunizations and other community services.

Stay Connected



1475 W. Cypress Creek Road, Suite 301

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309

(954) 377-2188

www.elcbroward.org