

PROVIDER'S

# FOCUS Magazine

Winter 2019

a quarterly publication for early childhood care and education professionals

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New rates are in effect

Meet your Infant/Toddler Specialist **Pg 07**  
Find out all the resources available to help you with infant and toddler care

Social-Emotional Learning **Pg 14**  
How teaching it in the classroom can reduce bullying



**EARLY LEARNING**  
COALITION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

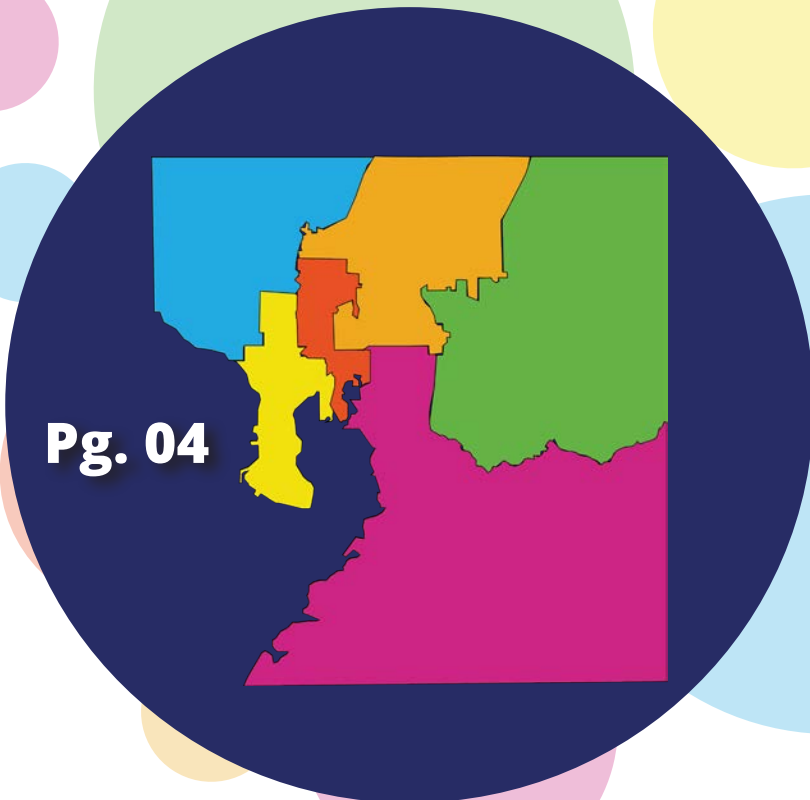


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## INTRODUCTION

The Provider's Focus Magazine is a quarterly publication of the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County (ELCHC). The ELCHC is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization located in Tampa, Florida. The Provider's Focus is printed in limited quantity and distributed across Hillsborough County, Florida. It is also available in digital format at [www.elchc.org](http://www.elchc.org) in the Publications area of the website.

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# SUBMISSION INFO

If you would like to submit an article to be included in the Provider's Focus, listed below are the submission deadlines and requirements for the 2019-2020 publication year.

Articles should include the author's name, affiliation/title, and be typed, double-spaced in 11 or 12 point Arial, Calibri or Times Roman font. Any accompanying photos or artwork should be in high-resolution JPEG format (at least 300 dpi) and sent as a separate attachment along with the article (not inserted in the article). Photo releases should accompany any photo submissions. Submit all to [jjohnson@elchc.org](mailto:jjohnson@elchc.org) by noted deadlines. Please note that submission of articles, information etc., does not guarantee publication.

| Submission Deadline | For Issue   |
|---------------------|-------------|
| February 14, 2019   | Spring 2019 |
| April 12, 2019      | Summer 2019 |
| July 12, 2019       | Fall 2019   |
| November 8, 2019    | Winter 2020 |



# CHANGE IS GOOD



I can't believe that it's been almost a full year since I began as the CEO of the ELCHC! Though we've had our fair share of obstacles and challenges, I'm excited about how we've decided to move forward to better serve our county's children and families, our community partners, and YOU, our early care and education providers.

In early August, with a nod of approval from our Board of Directors, we decided to transition to serving both School Readiness and VPK providers progressively on a consolidated basis as one collaborative organization. This past November, we saw the need to reorganize our Provider Services team and decided to create and begin implementation of a regional structure in which our team in Provider Relations will be assigned to one of our six major regions in our County.

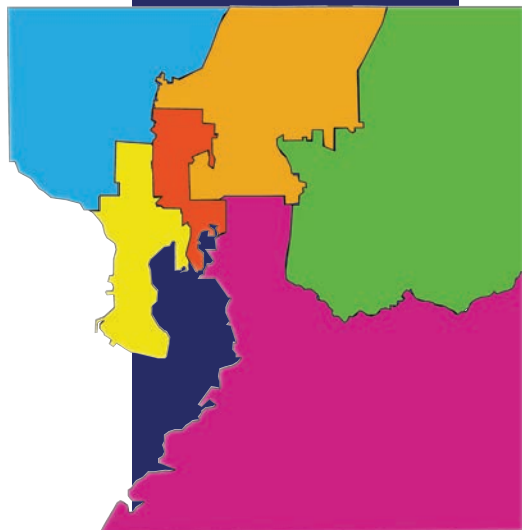
With the state's implementation of HB1091 and the rollout of the OEL Portal, the ELCHC Board of Directors, staff and I saw consolidating services as being necessary to best transition into this new era. While we know that change isn't easy, we firmly believe that consolidation is in the best interest of Hillsborough County's children, families and early education providers.

As to the OEL Portal- together we are facing the challenges and we are urging OEL to correct system issues. As OEL works to fix the statewide Portal, ELCHC staff has been working tirelessly to correct data errors and more accurately distribute reimbursements. We sincerely appreciate your patience as this effort continues.

We look forward to serving you better now and for years to come.

Sincerely,

Gordon L. Gillette





# Providers will see increased pay for infants, toddlers this year

Megan Folts, ELCHC, Policy & Program Compliance

Providing care for infants and toddlers in a child care center or family child care home can present significant challenges. Providers have a higher staffing budget when offering infant and toddler care; the required staff-to-child ratio is one to four. Then, there's the equipment, the formula, the enrichment environment.

To help offset those costs — and to make providing infant and toddler care more accessible to providers — the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County (ELCHC) Board of Directors approved an increase to the pay rate to providers for those age groups within the School Readiness program. Beginning in January 2019, providers in both child care centers and family child care homes will receive an increase of \$3 per day for both infant and toddler care.

There is still more work to be done in the birth to 3-year-old age ranges, but the hope is that this increase will help offset the cost of providing for Hillsborough County's youngest residents. The infant and toddler age categories are an underserved sector of our child care community.

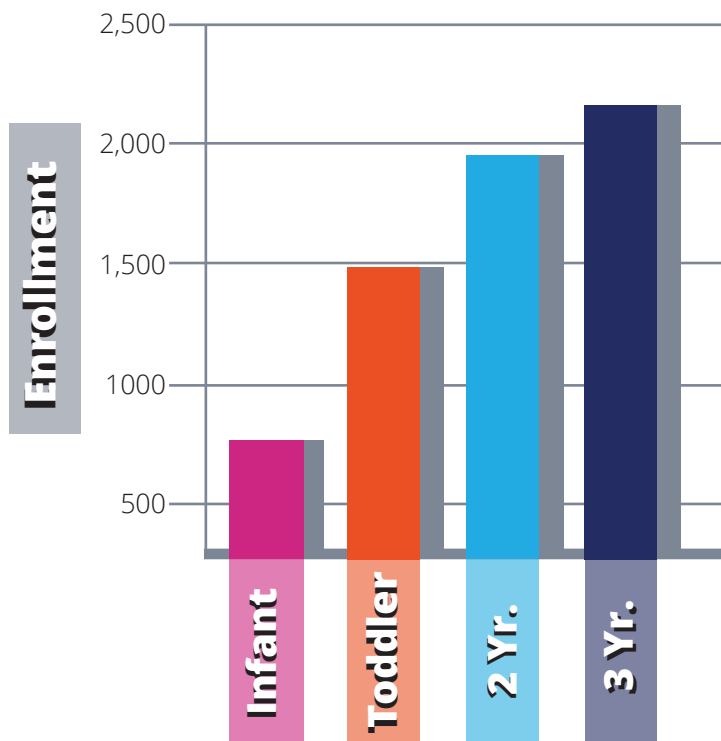
In November 2018, the ELCHC completed a community needs assessment, which gathered data on Hillsborough County's population and analyzed areas in our child care community that needed more attention. Through the assessment, it became obvious that infant and toddler aged children are underserved. The number of School Readiness children in these age groups are significantly lower than

other age groups. Through the assessment, some areas within the county were found to have full infant programs, with few available spaces. The providers who are not offering infant and toddler care cited that the offering was cost-prohibitive.

With those findings, the ELCHC will be developing new options for providers in areas where infant care programs cannot meet the demand. An initiative will be launched this year to implement a number of contracted slots for infant care in these areas to encourage providers to offer infant and toddler care.

For providers considering infant and toddler care, or for those already offering these programs, the ELCHC also has an Infant/Toddler Specialist to provide support and help implement programming. For more on your ELCHC specialist, see page 6.

School Readiness Enrollment by Care Level  
2017-2018



One in five children live at or below the poverty level.

## BY THE NUMBERS

Here's a snapshot of some of the statistics we learned from our Community Needs Assessment about infant and toddler care.

**88,200** — residents in Hillsborough under 5 years old.

**28,262** — children under 5 years old in families under the poverty level.

**\$129** — lowest average cost per week for infant toddler care at a family child care home.

**\$150** — lowest average cost per week for infant toddler care at a non-Gold Seal private center.



# Bring it on, BABY!



*Finding out what you need for infant and toddler care is just a phone call away.*

It's time for baby talk. Well, talking about babies, that is. For early childhood education providers considering opening or expanding an infant and toddler program at their facility, or looking for help with what they are already operating, they have a wealth of resources at ELCHC. Theon Salley, the ELCHC Infant/Toddler Specialist, can help centers or family homes with advice about what they need to produce a quality program for those ages.

It's an underserved sector in the community. There are fewer centers or homes that provide infant and toddler care compared to other age groups. Theon is hoping to be an educational resource, making it easier for providers to open their doors to the youngest population.

The ELCHC's Institute for Early Childhood Professionals (IECP) already has a variety of learning courses and trainings to help providers with the professional skills they need to work with the infant/toddler age groups.

In her current role, Theon is a coach. She observes classrooms and providers to give them insight on areas of success and needed improvement.

"I start with health and safety," Theon said. "I make sure they're meeting standards. You have to get that basic stuff down before you talk about the class."

But, being the Infant/Toddler Specialist isn't about coming in and telling everyone what to do. Theon wants providers to have relationships with her and other specialists. She wants to help centers or family homes build upon their service to the youngest to provide quality care. It can be tangible things, like making sure infant toddler rooms have the right kind of cribs installed for nap time. Or, it can be other ways of providing quality experiences for these youngest of learners, like posting photos along the wall at eye-level so babies can see.



*Top: A teacher praises an infant while he works on the pull up bar at the Learning Center at St. John infant and toddler program.*

*Middle: The Infant/Toddler Specialist can help centers or family child care homes with the rules regarding equipment needed in those age groups' rooms, such as crib regulations.*

*Right: The Toddler room at St. John's features natural wood tones — and labels on everything to help toddlers with word recognition.*





With the help of other community partners, the ELCHC completed a Community Needs Assessment in November. By scrutinizing community data, ELCHC staff recognized the need for additional infant and toddler care.

Infant and toddler care can be harder for many centers or care homes to tackle; for one, it's more expensive. Providers must have one staff person for every four children in those age groups. So, the more infant and toddler slots a provider offers means more staff. Some providers also pay for formula and other supplies, which can also add up. However, with Theon on staff, providers can get advice, recommendations and resources.



"If there are programs that need help, they call me," Theon said.

Terri Fernandez, Executive Director of the Learning Center at St. John, did just that. Her center decided to open up space for infants and toddlers in 2017, because of the demand in the community. Every week, they'd have to turn away families who were looking for a quality care center for their young children.

"The demand is so high for quality infant care in Hillsborough County," Terri said. "Our mission has always been to help families in need ... we wanted to make it happen for them."

Their program launched in 2017 with toddlers, and in 2018 with an infant room. Between the two ages, there are 12 children enrolled. But it would have been a lot harder to get off the ground without Theon as a resource. Theon helped with room set-up, enrichment and even staff training. Terri's staff took courses from the ELCHC Institute for Early Childhood Professionals, and came back energized and excited to implement what they learned, she said.

"Having Theon as our in-county expert is a blessing," Terri said.

*Top: An infant enjoys tummy time.*

*Right: A toddler is the captain of his ship during outside time.*

## Meet your Infant/Toddler Specialist



**Name:** Theon Salley  
**Years with the ELCHC:** 6  
**Home state:** South Carolina

Theon started her career in education working with adults with disabilities in South Carolina. She transitioned into a different job working as a lead early interventionist for young children— and the switch changed her life.

From then on, it was all about the kids for her.

"Seeing them progress... that job transformed me," Theon said.

Now, as the Infant/Toddler Specialist and Professional Development Specialist for the ELCHC, she helps teachers help their children.

"What I love the most about my job is making sure children in our county have the best start in becoming life-long learners," she said.

Having worked as an interventionist in the past, Theon has had a first-hand look at the importance of teachers in the field.

"I tell all my teachers, you don't know how children come to you," she said. "You have to make sure they get what they need when they're with you."





**EARLY LEARNING**  
COALITION OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

**MARCH 3**

**AL LOPEZ  
PARK**

**11 A.M. to  
3 P.M.**

# DAY of PLAY

HILLSBOROUGH'S BIGGEST PLAY DATE

Presented by:  **PNC BANK**

**PLAY IS LEARNING! LEARNING IS PLAY!**

Bring your family out for a glorious day of play and learn how the simple act of playing can help your child grow and learn. Families with children ages birth to 12 will enjoy a day of live entertainment, prize drawings and plenty of outdoor games. Come and learn about the value of play!

**DRAWINGS**

**OUTDOOR GAMES**

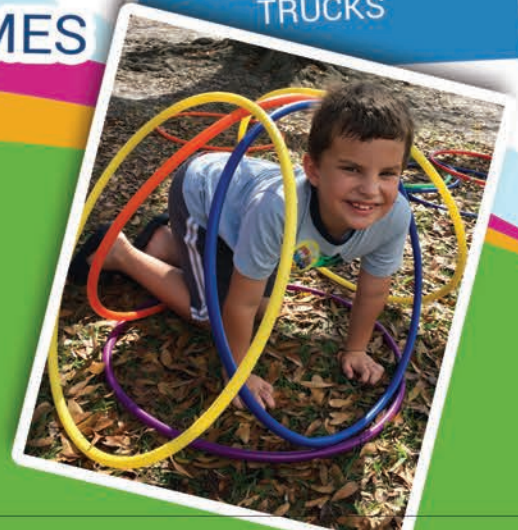
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# Implementing Florida's Early Learning and Developmental Standards in your classroom

Mary Ann Goodrich, MA, VPK Facilitator, Office of Early Learning

By now you should have received at least one copy of the Educator's Guide to Understanding the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards at your site. If your program currently contracts with the Early Learning Coalition of Hillsborough County (ELCHC) for School Readiness services, you would have received one copy of the Birth to Kindergarten guide. Those programs contracting with the ELCHC for VPK services would have received the 4 Years Old to Kindergarten guide.

The educator's guides are full of information, strategies and resources for your use in implementing the standards in your program. You will be able to order additional copies of these guide soon for a small fee. Just go to the website and click on the "Resources tab" for information about cost and ordering when it becomes available. You can also review and download copies of the new standards and educator's guides at the same website: [flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com](http://flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com). The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards: Birth to Kindergarten (2017) is a comprehensive document containing age-appropriate information and reflections about how young children explore, create and think. The standards reflect the knowledge and skills that a child should be able to know and do at the end of the year for each age group. There are eight domains or areas of development, which include physical development, approaches to learning, social-emotional development, language and literacy, scientific inquiry, social studies, mathematical thinking and creative expression through the arts. Each domain has a developmental progression so you can easily see the expectations for each age group.

Need more? Both online and instructor-led training is available. This course is based on the newly revised Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards and provides an overview of the standards used in preschool classrooms serving children ages 3 years old to kindergarten. Examples of developmentally-appropriate instructional strategies for preschool age children are provided throughout the training along with information about purposeful planning, reflective practice and qualities of an effective educator. Either the online or instructor-led course will meet the VPK Instructor and VPK Director Credential training requirements. Training on the standards for educators serving younger children will be available soon.

The online course is 5 hours, has a fee of \$10 and awards 0.5 CEUs upon successful completion of the course. Registration for this course is available online through the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Care Training System: [www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/training](http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/child-care/training).

The instructor-led course is 3 hours, is offered free of charge and awards 0.3 CEUs upon successful completion of the course. Instructor-led courses will be offered at the ELCHC monthly. Check out The Training Bulletin provided by the ELCHC for dates, times and registration information.

When you get a minute, check out the Standards website at [flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com](http://flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com). It is filled with all sorts of resources for you to use in your program.

Under the "Resources" tab you will find the new standards, educator's guides and so much more. There is even a frequently asked questions document for your review. The "Family" tab has all sorts of educational materials that you can share with your families. Just click on the age you want and the type of resource. You'll find books, websites and Vroom activities to share with families as you partner with them to support their children. When you click on the "Standards" tab, you will find the icons for the eight domains. Just click on the domain you

want to know more about and the age of the child. The standards and benchmarks for this domain will come up. There you will find videos, Vroom activity tips and teaching strategies for each standard. This website is a work in progress and more information will be added as it becomes available. Consider bookmarking this site and check back often for new and exciting ideas, strategies and resources.

So now you know some basic information about the new Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards (2017). If you have any questions, concerns or would like more information, feel free to contact me at [maryann.goodrich@oel.myflorida.com](mailto:maryann.goodrich@oel.myflorida.com). I look forward to supporting you as you implement these new standards and support the growth and development of young children and their families. Maybe I will see you at an upcoming training. Thanks for all that you do for the children and families of Florida.

Visit  
[flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com](http://flbt5.floridaearlylearning.com)





# Q&A

## DAISY CINTRON

The ELCHC Board of Directors is a volunteer board made up of 24 directors. Two of those seats are dedicated to representatives for the provider community; a Private Provider Representative and a Faith-Based Provider Representative. These representatives are elected to their seats by YOU, our contracted providers!

The previously elected Faith-based Provider Representative, Jill Hammond, concluded her term in March of 2018 and, after two run-off elections, Daisy Cintron was declared the winner and appointed to her seat in June 2018 to begin her four-year term.

Daisy has been in early childhood education for 35 years and spent 19 years at St. Timothy as the Director. Find out a little more about her below...

### Why do you do the work that you do in early childhood education?

I love children. I love that I have the opportunity to impact their learning experience and make it enjoyable. I want them to feel and know they are loved when they are here learning. I wake up everyday happy to go to work.

### What do you think you contribute to the ELCHC Board of Directors?

I have a great deal of experience being a VPK provider and early childhood educator. I can provide the insight into center operations and a perspective from a faith-based perspective that may not have been considered before.

### What motivated you to run for the Faith-based Provider Representative chair?

I found out about the opportunity and was encouraged by a group of my peers. I wanted to serve and help make positive change.

### What do you hope to accomplish while serving as the Faith-based Provider Representative?

I hope to make a difference. I hope whatever I do will be helpful. I believe the overall intention of the board is good and the work we are doing is positive for children and families. I truly believe that the ELCHC is going in the right direction.

### What do you like most about being on the Board of Directors?

It's exciting that so many positive things are happening that make a positive impact on children in our community.





## Program-Wide Positive Behavior Support

# WE ARE RECRUITING EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOMS!

Are you interested in:

Improving behavior in your classroom?

Increasing the social and emotional skills of  
children in your class?

Receiving coaching and training at your school?

Program-wide Positive Behavior Supports (PWPBS) provides FREE training, on-site coaching, make-and-take workshops, and supplies to support young children's social-emotional growth.

For more information on PWPBS, visit our website at  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/pbsclass>

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a PWPBS site or classroom, please email Anna Winneker at [awinneker@usf.edu](mailto:awinneker@usf.edu)





# Using Program-Wide Positive Behavior Supports: Helping young children with social-emotional literacy

Anna Winneker, Ph.D., Project Director  
Program-Wide Positive Behavior Support  
Florida Center for Inclusive Communities  
College of Behavioral and Community Sciences

Both nationally and locally, there has been growing attention to the importance of building children's social emotional competencies and addressing persistent challenging behavior among children birth through 5-years-old. Research has shown links between early emotional development and later social and academic behavior. When children exhibit problems socially and behaviorally early on, these problems tend to persist in school and often lead to later academic challenges. Additionally, preschool programs have increasing rates of suspending or expelling our youngest learners from their child care sites. Often the reason for these dismissals have been behavioral in nature. When children are removed from early learning environments, there are negative effects, not in only in the short-term but in later years academically and socially. Child care centers and the teachers of our youngest children need evidence-based ways to teach children social-emotional skills and help to prevent and address behavioral challenges to ensure children successful outcomes and have the skills needed for to be ready for school.

Program-wide Positive Behavior Support (PW-PBS) is an evidence-based framework which uses a multi-tiered approach to help programs and teachers meet the social and behavioral needs of all children in their school. PW-PBS at University of South Florida (USF) trains and coaches teachers to use the Pyramid Model in their classrooms. The Pyramid model consists of universal practices for all children, preventative practices for who are children at-risk and need more targeted social-emotional supports, and individualized interventions for children with significant needs. These practices are based on research and focus on effective instruction for young children, as well as strategies to promote child engagement and appropriate behavior. When the Pyramid Model is implemented across all program staff, it is referred to as Program-Wide PBS.

Teachers using the Pyramid Model support children in learning skills such as identifying emotions, expressing feelings, self-regulation and problem-solving. Programs and

teachers who implement these with fidelity report seeing a decrease in challenging behaviors and an increase in social-emotional competencies. PW-PBS provides on-site coaching to programs and classrooms to ensure that teachers and teams are understanding what they learned in training and able to successfully use strategies with their children. The on-site coaching is a critical part to seeing the desired outcomes in classrooms. Our sites have indicated that the ongoing coaching support, especially for children needing individualized interventions, have been key to the program's success.

PW-PBS at USF currently works with 26 sites, both community early childhood centers and family child care homes, to develop a system to support and sustain evidence-based practices within their programs. The sites are all at varying levels of implementation. We support sites from the beginning stages of understanding PWPBS all the way to achieving and maintaining fidelity for more than five years. Data from our programs demonstrate that over 90% of the teachers who participate in training and coaching show growth in their use of evidence-based practices in the classroom. Additionally, PW-PBS works with sites to reduce the likeliness of children being expelled due to behavioral or social-emotional concerns.

PW-PBS at USF also provides free community trainings for providers in Hillsborough County who are interested in using these practices in their classroom but currently do not partner with the project. These trainings are held twice monthly within Hillsborough county and participants are encouraged to attend to learn new ideas and make resources to take back to their classrooms. Participants have responded that they have found the trainings very useful with practical strategies and resources for their classrooms.

For more information Program-wide Positive Behavior Support at USF and a list of trainings, visit our website [pwpbs.cbcs.usf.edu](http://pwpbs.cbcs.usf.edu). For more information about the Pyramid Model, visit [challengingbehavior.org](http://challengingbehavior.org).

# June 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> Save the Date!

## Early Childhood Conference

# 2019

*Oh, the Places You'll See*

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Save the Date!



# BULLYING

## *and the case for Social Emotional Learning*

Stephen C. Martaus, Executive Director,  
Early Childhood Council of Hillsborough County, Inc.



Have you ever been bullied? Perhaps because you looked or talked differently from the rest of the kids in your class? Or maybe you have witnessed bullying in some form or fashion by others. For years, bullying was the province of high school or middle school, but the last few decades have seen the act of threatening, harassing or intimidating others begin earlier in elementary and even prekindergarten classrooms. More than one in five children report being bullied at some point, whether it is being made fun of, called names, excluded from activities, being the subject of rumors or physically hurt, according to the i-SAFE foundation.

Technology has brought about the increased incidence of cyberbullying, and subsequent suicides by victims have resulted in the demand for a better understanding of this phenomenon and perspectives on how to prevent bullying in general. Bullying can take many forms including emotional, physical, verbal and the aforementioned cyberbullying, virtual. It can also be symptomatic of a culture in which the abusive behavior is tolerated or even promoted by those perceived to be in charge: a story recently broke about a "flight club" in a preschool in St. Louis, Missouri.

There has been some notable work done on how we might combat this hurtful and damaging behavior, and it relates to social emotional learning and helping young children develop empathy.

***"Empathy is a relatively new concept."***



## Ways you can teach kindness and empathy:

- Label feelings
- Praise empathetic behavior
- Encourage the young child to talk about their feelings
- Point out other children's behavior
- Teach non-verbal cues
- Teach basic rules of politeness (and kindness)



Empathy is a relatively new concept.

The term was coined by British psychologist, Edward Titchener, who practiced during the late 19th and early 20th century. The word empathy was derived first from the German word, *emfühlung*, literally meaning "feeling-in". Titchener also utilized the Greek word "empatheria" which means 'appreciation of another person's feelings.' The thought is that if we can teach our children to be more empathetic, they will be less inclined to hurt or bully others. It is an emotional and cognitive exercise that could, in theory, translate into compassion. But to understand how another person feels, children need to be able to identify feelings and emotional cues which are social and emotional constructs.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) has been a part of prekindergarten classrooms for many years as it is a critical component to early school readiness and healthy child development. It is believed that early social-emotional skills are linked to a number of positive outcomes later in life including good mental health, healthy interpersonal relationships, reduced incidence of substance abuse, higher graduation rates, greater employment opportunities and greater community involvement. Social-emotional learning is also closely associated with learning to be 'kind.' According to Dr. Patty O'Grady, associate professor of education at the University of Tampa, when students learn and practice kindness, serotonin levels increase and allow students to be more open to social and emotional cues from the environment. "The neuroscience and social science research is clear," she says in *Positive Psychology in the Elementary School Classroom* (2013).

"Kindness changes the brain by the experience of kindness. Children and adolescents do not learn kindness by only thinking and talking about it. Kindness is best learned by feeling it so they can reproduce it." So it follows that teaching children about empathy, kindness and compassion is essential to the development of social-emotional competence in young children and adolescents, and this social emotional-learning sets them free to achieve academic success.

The implications for improved social competence are evident as well. Young students who are in tune with the feelings and emotions of others are less apt to commit acts of bullying. Author of *The Whole-Brain Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing Mind*, Dr. Dan Siegel, says "when children are interconnected, in tune with others, and have the capacity to be reflective, it increases empathy and understanding for the self and others. The ability to be reflective and to understand the self and others is what builds resiliency."

Educators, by virtue of focusing on social-emotional learning and helping young children develop empathy and awareness of others' feelings, can help children become more resilient as well.

There is much more work to be done in this area. While we must be concerned about a 4-year-old's ability to count and identify basic colors, we need to be as mindful or more so regarding how well they get along with others, show awareness of the feelings of others and regulate their own emotions with the knowledge that it will pay dividends for years to come. And perhaps one day, the incidence of bullying might be replaced by random acts of kindness.



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# Save the Date

# Provider Appreciation

# Celebration

## Saturday, May 4, 2019

## 10:00am - 12:00pm