



# Helping Hands

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



## Employee Spotlight: Damaris Ramos

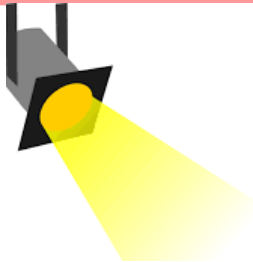
Episcopal Children's Services

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**Employee Name:** Damaris Ramos

**Employed with ECS since:** 2018

**Length of Time in Current Position:** 5 months

**Brief Summary of Job Description/Responsibilities:** The CCR&R-FSS builds and maintains relationships with the Florida Office of Early Learning CCR&R personnel as well as surrounding coalitions. This position is responsible for monitoring and maintaining adherence to the standards for data collection and maintenance in the Coalition's referral database in coordination with Coalition's Database Administrator. The Coordinator CCR&R-FSS delivery of high-quality customer service to families and child care providers seeking assistance.

**Favorite Part about Job:** To be able to help my community.

**Hobbies & Interests:** I like nature walks, traveling, yoga, and spending quality time with my family.

**Anything Else You Would Like Providers to Know About You:** I am Bilingual (Spanish to English).

**Work Email Address:** [dramos@ecs4kids.org](mailto:dramos@ecs4kids.org)

**Work Phone Number:** 386.385.3450 Ext 2883

### 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:

[krosander@ecs4kids.org](mailto:krosander@ecs4kids.org). We will do our best to find the answer, post the comment, and address the concern. Thanks!  
Kristina Rosander, Editor

## THANK YOU!

### Happy Provider Appreciation Day!

May 10th is National Provider Appreciation Day! We would like to take this opportunity to say **THANK YOU** to all of our Child Care Providers.

What an amazing responsibility-caring for and educating precious lives each day! The job is never 'done' and it is certainly not always easy, but you choose to make a positive impact for the children in your care and for that, a big "THANK YOU" is in order!

Thank you for all you do for each child and each family!

**CHILD CARE PROVIDERS**  
*Change the World*  
**ONE CHILD AT A TIME**



## ELC of North Florida Updates

### The ELCNF Mother Goose Sorority is In Full Swing

Volunteers with a love for the theatrics and children, joined together in the spring of 2019 to form a Mother Goose Sorority. The volunteers lead by head honker Sandy Dunnivant (ELC outreach assistant), dress up as Mother Goose and go into pre-schools to put on a nursery rhyme themed literacy program. The program is lively and includes music, rhythm sticks and tons of nursery rhyme stories. Each child receives a FREE best of Mother Goose rhyming book. The teachers receive, on the day of the program, a nursery rhyme teaching manual with a large nursery rhyme book. If the teachers do one of the rhyming activities in the manual with their class and send a photo to the ELC, they can then receive a large resource bag filled with numerous rhyming books, set of rhythm sticks with CD's, a Lakeshore nursery rhyme kit, rhyming cubes, rhyming bingo game and more.

The goal of this program is to further encourage the importance of teaching children rhyming as it is so important to their auditory development. The ELC is looking for more volunteers who would like to join this group. The training and the program is provided for free. The volunteer just has to come up with their own outfit. They commit to putting on at least four programs a year. Contact Sandi Dunnivant at [sdunnivant@elcnorthflorida.org](mailto:sdunnivant@elcnorthflorida.org) or 904-375-1486 to learn more about joining or to schedule a program in your school!



Pictured : Susan and Sheila at Castlebrook Academy in St. Augustine

# ELC of North Florida Updates

## ELCNF Outreach Programs

The ELC outreach team has been very active putting on themed literacy programs. In April alone, 2 space programs, 4 Dinosaur, 3 Eric Carle colors and 3 Mother Goose programs were put on in schools in our six county area. The programs all consist of a very interactive instructive story time. Several of the programs include an activity time as well. The children all receive a free book relating to the theme and the teachers receive a resource bag with teaching materials relating to that theme. The goal is to provide quality programming and to promote early literacy. The ELC does not have to charge to come and put on a program thanks to generous sponsorships by local foundations and civic groups. The ELC would like to thank the Reinhold Foundation, Georgia Pacific, TD Bank and the Kiwanis Club of St. Augustine for their recent donations.



**Pictured right:** Miss Wanda, VPK teacher at Academy of Rising Stars in Palatka with her class holding up their free Space books.



**Pictured to the left:** Two kids wearing Dinosaur Masks from Tender Hearts Pre-school in Middleburg

## The Domino Effect Jena Waters, Education Specialist

Resource: google images

When was the last time you spent less than \$10 on entertainment for your school age children? Maybe 20 years ago when you could see a movie and have enough left over for popcorn and a drink! If you add in the fact that there's an added bonus of boosting their science, math and social skills.. well one could say this activity pays for itself!

### To play this group game, all the supplies you will need is:

- 2 boxes of dominoes (Or more) – per teams of 2-3
- 1 Large floor
- Timer (You can use your smart phone)
- Ice cream with chocolate sprinkles

**To begin:** Just in case some children have never constructed a domino pattern before, you can give a small example of how to construct one, including tapping the first one, for that visual effect!

### To play:

- Instruct your school age children to pair up (you can choose the amount per group if needed)
- Assign the groups a location on the floor to build a pattern of their choosing (this is where creativity and social skill come into play)
- Inform them that they have a certain amount of time in which to be finished and a timer will buzz, then every group must raise both hands up and step away from their domino pattern
- After, each group chooses a person to tap the first domino as everyone watches on in awe and excitement (Hopefully there will be some high fiving going on)!

With any mind blowing, intense competition, you need to have a cooling off time right?

That's where the ice cream and chocolate morsels come in handy – Have a Domino Ice Cream Party!

**Warning:** This game may become an Afterschool favorite and may require the purchase of more dominoes and .....!ICE CREAM!



## Kindergarten Transition Story Time Kelley Warner, Education Specialist

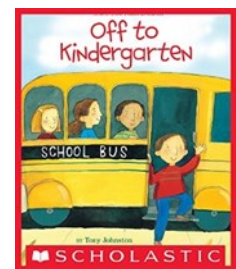
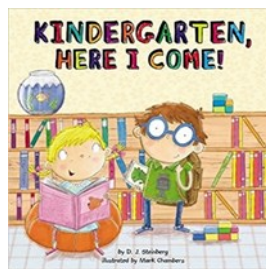
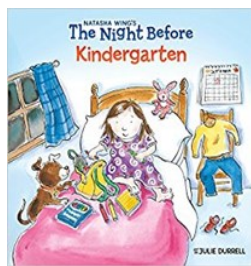
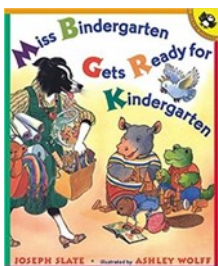
Resource: <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/feb2014/transitions-kindergarten>

It's hard to believe that the end of another school year is upon us! You've been working hard all year to ensure your VPK students are academically ready for kindergarten, but school readiness is more than just ABC's and 123's. Going to kindergarten is an important life event, one of the first that young children experience. Teachers and parents can help prepare them for the social and emotional change ahead by opening a line of communication. Encourage your students to express their emotions about transitioning to kindergarten, whether they are excited, nervous, or anything in between. A simple way to get these conversations flowing is by reading books about starting kindergarten! Allow your students to ask questions, state concerns, and share ideas while reading these insightful stories.

- ⇒ Miss Bindergarten Gets Ready for Kindergarten, by Joseph Slate.
- ⇒ Welcome to Kindergarten, by Anne Rockwell
- ⇒ The Night Before Kindergarten, by Natasha Wing
- ⇒ Off to Kindergarten, by Tony Johnston
- ⇒ Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come, by Nancy Carlson
- ⇒ Kindergarten, Here I Come, by D.J. Steinberg

Before starting the story, focus the children's attention to the learning objective by explaining what they are about to hear, and remind them that they are welcome to ask questions. While reading these stories teachers should be aware of children's emotions and acknowledge them. By providing comfort, reassurance, and acceptance, teachers can help their student's feel more secure about their upcoming transition. Encourage the children to look for connections to their own lives in the stories, making it real for them. Here are some tips to further these conversations in your classroom:

- ⇒ Host this type of story time several times in the weeks leading up to the end of VPK to allow children time to process their feelings and think of questions
- ⇒ Post their questions and ideas in your story time area to refer to in the future and share with parents
- ⇒ Invite a local kindergarten teacher to your class to read, answer questions, and discuss what kindergarten will be like with the children



**\*This activity touches on the CLASS dimensions of Teacher Sensitivity (all indicators), Regard for Student Perspectives (indicators; flexibility and focus, student expression), Instructional Learning Facilities (indicators; effective facilitation, clarity of learning objectives), Concept Development (indicator; connections to the real world), Quality of Feedback (indicator; feedback loops), and Language Modeling (indicators; frequent conversations, open-ended questions).**

Resource: <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/support-language-development-infants-and-toddlers>



Have you ever wondered what infants and young toddlers are thinking as they are exploring our world? It amazes me how expressive they are with their body language, coo's, and babbles. When adults recognize and respond to these expressions of language, infants and young toddlers begin gaining the introductory skills in which language is built. The CLASS tool measures a teacher's intentionality to expose young children to language and expand upon that. Below are various ideas from NAEYC that can help strengthen your interactions with children in these areas.

### **Read them as if they are being spoken from a child...**

1. When I point to something, tell me what it is. While you are telling me, look at it and point to it too.
2. Use a gesture along with the word you say, so that I can say it too. If you tell me it is time to eat, tap your lips. I can imitate the gesture and tell you when I'm hungry.
3. Talk to me about what you are doing. Tell me what will happen next, so I will know what to expect.
4. Talk to me about what I am doing. Using words to describe my actions and feelings helps me learn those words too.
5. Take turns chatting back and forth with me. Listen to what I am saying –then imitate my coos or babbles. If I'm older, you can reply to my questions and ask your own. I like open-ended questions that don't have right or wrong answers.
6. Model bigger and better sentences. If I say, "Two cat," you can say, "You have two cats on your shirt!" I learn a lot from you.
8. Show me the words on things. When you point out words in books and on containers, I begin to understand how printed and spoken words are connected.
9. Give me time to learn and explore. There's no rush to learn the names of colors, letters, and things. I will learn them in my own

## Preschoolers and Feelings Shauna Mayo, Inclusion Specialist

Resource: [http://www.pbs.org/parents/arthur/activities/acts/family\\_matters.html?cat=development](http://www.pbs.org/parents/arthur/activities/acts/family_matters.html?cat=development)

Just like adults, children have feelings too. Young children may have feelings that overwhelm them and they do not know how to handle it. They may not have the vocabulary to express these feelings, so they communicate them in different ways, such as, challenging behavior. It is very important to teach preschoolers about feelings. One of the long-term goals we have in Early Education is to teach children how to self-regulate. With this, goes a lot of co-regulating on the adult's part to help children learn this skill.

The first step in the process of self-regulation, is for a child to know and understand what feelings are. Help your child name their feelings by giving them a label. Naming feelings is the first step in helping kids learn to identify them. It allows your child to develop an emotional vocabulary, so they can talk about their feelings. Kids who are able to identify, understand, express, and manage a wide range of feelings, experience long term benefits to their mental health and well-being.

### Express emotions enthusiastically

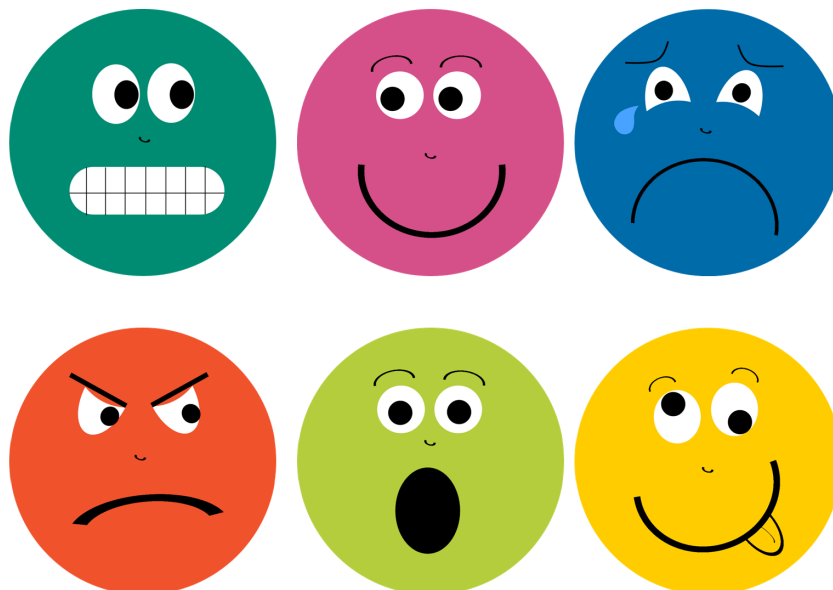
Young children experience a wide range of emotions that they might not be able to name yet. Help your children explore emotions with these activities.

### Identify emotions:

- ☺ Discuss different emotions. Model some facial expressions and body movements. Have your children name each emotion you are portraying.
- ☺ Create a parade- Invite your children to march in a "Parade of Feelings." Encourage them to be dramatic with their bodies and facial expressions. Ask: *How would you march if you were angry? Scared, sad, or happy? How about proud? Or bored?*
- ☺ Get silly- Let your children have a silly parade. Encourage them to make funny faces and get each other (and you) to laugh!

### Take It Further

You might want to end your parade by playing a silly song you can easily add verses to, such as *Down by the Bay* or *Iko, Iko*. Encourage your children to suggest other songs they like, and to talk about how those songs make them feel.







## 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.

## VPK Corner *Shanda Ellis, Manager of VPK Services*

### **VPK Applications Now Available in the Provider Portal**

If you have an active 2019-2020 Provider Profile, we will be initiating your VPK Application very soon. You will log in to your Provider Portal account and from the main page, you will want to click on the links in the Manage VPK Applications and Contracts fields. Once your VPK Application has been processed and certified, we will be able to initiate your 19-20 Statewide VPK Provider Contract.

### **VPK Assessment Materials for Summer 2019 & School Year 2019-20**

Once your VPK Contract has been certified, providers will be responsible for requesting current assessment materials online at: [www.brightbeginningsfl.com](http://www.brightbeginningsfl.com) for the summer and upcoming school year. If your program has been approved and you are having trouble ordering, please contact the VPK department ((800) 238-3463). OEL expects orders to be placed at least 30 calendar days before the first day of the VPK class schedule.

As a reminder, the assessment training for assessors is required in order to participate in the VPK program and the data collected must be entered on the Bright Beginnings website by set deadlines.

### **Provider Verification Reports:**

The VPK Department should soon be receiving processes on the end of year Provider Verification Reports from OEL. Our department will send out correspondence to you soon on how to verify your end of year payments and children served so that you may look over the report for accuracy and return to us so that final VPK payment can be released after your program ends. Please note, you may view all of your monthly VPK reimbursement reports by logging in to your Provider Portal account, clicking on the Attendance tab, Reimbursement Details and clicking on a service period to choose a month to **view**.

**VPK Department** \* 8443 Baymeadows Rd, Suite 1 \* Jacksonville, FL 32256  
Toll Free: 1-800-238-3463 \* Fax: 904-726-1522  
[vpkinfo@ecs4kids.org](mailto:vpkinfo@ecs4kids.org) \* [www.ecs4kids.org](http://www.ecs4kids.org)



**Warm Line 1-800-238-3463**

Ext. 281 (CNBB)

Ext. 227 (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.