



The Secret Sauce to Unlocking Your Child's Journey to Kindergarten Success

Have you ever noticed that asking your child to share can sometimes lead to tears, frustration, or power struggles?

Young children are naturally egocentric from birth to age 8, seeing the world through their own eyes. They're not selfish; they're still learning to understand others' feelings and perspectives.

As parents, we want our children to be kind, polite, and willing to share, but how do we help them develop these skills? A great place to start is by teaching your child how to take turns. When adults model turn-taking, children are given opportunities to observe and practice this important social skill. Use short phrases like, "My turn, then your turn," during everyday routines. Practice by rolling a ball back and forth or taking turns adding blocks to a tower. Whenever your child takes their turn, offer specific and immediate praise to reinforce the positive behavior.

Providing regular opportunities for your child to practice taking turns supports the development of patience, communication, self-regulation, and other essential skills that contribute to kindergarten success.

The magic of early learning happens one turn at a time. Try these tips at home, and watch your child's confidence grow!

Put August into Action! Let's get kindergarten ready!

The ELC of Polk Team

SCHOOL TAX HOLIDAY

2026



JULY 20 THROUGH **AUGUST 20**

———— Tax-Free Items Include: ————



CLOTHING

Apparel and footwear
priced at **\$100** or less
per item



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

School supplies priced
at **\$50** or less per item



TECH DEVICES

Certain computers and
related accessories
priced at **\$1,500** or less



EARLY LEARNING COALITION
OF POLK COUNTY

ELCPolk.org

HIGHLIGHTS & IMPACTS

Jubilee Kicks Off The New School Year!

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As we kick off a new school year, we extend our sincere thanks to Frog Street for their valued partnership and shared commitment to strengthening early learning in our community. We are excited to collaborate with the dedicated childcare providers who have chosen to implement the Frog Street curriculum during the 2026 - 2027 school year.

On Saturday, July 18th, the Coalition proudly hosted the Frog Street Kickoff Jubilee, bringing together more than 120 early childhood educators for a day of learning, collaboration, and celebration. The incredible turnout reflected the enthusiasm and dedication of our local providers as they prepare to deliver high-quality learning experiences to young children.

The Frog Street initiative is one of seven priority investments the Coalition is making during the 2026 - 2027 year as we embark on a new chapter in supporting quality early learning.

Together with Frog Street and our community partners, we are working to strengthen classroom instruction, empower educators, and increase kindergarten readiness rates for the children and families we serve. We are grateful for this partnership and look forward to the positive impact it will have on our community throughout the coming year!

FAMILY NEWSROOM 📰

Celebrating 250 Years of American Independence 🇺🇸

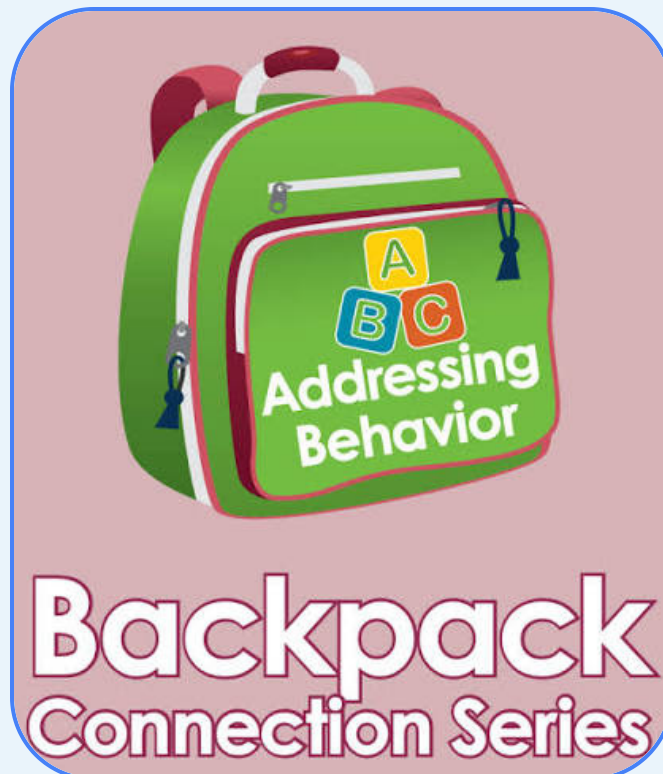


Happy 250th Birthday, America! Celebrate this historic milestone with your family by exploring fun, educational activities inspired by America250. Click the link below to discover ways to learn, play, and celebrate together.

[Visit America250](#)

💡 ARTICLES & TIPS

How to Teach Your Child to Take Turns



It's common for young children to become frustrated during play, especially when everyone wants the same toy or wants to go first. These moments can be challenging for both children and their grown-up. The good news is that taking turns is a skill children learn over time. This article shares practical tips and research based strategies to help you teach your child the important skill of taking turns.

[Click Here: How to Teach Your Child to Take Turns](#)

Communicating with Baby: Tips and Milestones from Birth to Age 5



Did you know everyday interactions with your child from birth through age 5 shape brain development and strengthen communication skills. Each conversation helps build the language, thinking, and self regulation skills children need to be ready for kindergarten.

[Click Here: Communication with Baby](#)

👁️ LOOKING AHEAD: AUGUST

Polk HealthCare Plan

BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

SATURDAY Aug. 1

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
RidgePoint Church
100 Hatfield Road
Winter Haven, FL 33880

JOIN US FOR:

- Family Fun**
Hotdogs
Popcorn
Refreshments
- Free Health Screenings**
Chronic disease
Blood pressure
Blood glucose
Adult vaccines
Hearing screenings
- No-cost Services**
Helmet fittings
Teen Driving Simulator (PCSO)
School-age physical exams
Children's vaccines

Free admission

200 backpacks will be given away on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Vendors welcome.
Contact:
Ivette Colon
IvetteColon@polkfl.gov
(863) 289-1170

POLK COUNTY

Community Back to School Bash

We're working together to make sure every child has the tools they need for a successful school year!

Join us

Date: Monday, August 3rd
Time: 4pm-6pm
Location: Webster Memorial Baptist Church
1135 N. Chestnut Rd.
Lakeland, FL 33805

Free backpacks with supplies may include:

- spiral notebooks
- pens
- crayons
- colored pencils
- markers
- highlighters
- glue sticks
- composition notebooks
- pencils
- folders with pockets
- pencil pouches
- erasers
- rulers
- loose leaf paper
- scissors

Community Partners

Options for women
Peace River Center
EBF
EARLY LEARNING COALITION
Healthy Start

Questions? Jeyshka Garcia (863) 899-0087
Together, we can help our children have a brighter future!

Florida Blue

Launch into learning!

Your local Florida Blue Center has you covered with the supplies kids need to blast off into a stellar school year.

Back to School: Mission-Ready

Saturday, August 8, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

- **FREE** school supply giveaways*
- Cosmic-themed kids' activities
- Resources to help students reach for the stars

Learn more about Florida Blue member benefits and how we're supporting students and parents throughout the school year and beyond.

All systems go.
Simply scan the code to RSVP now.

Florida Blue Center – Lakeland
340 Kathleen Rd., Lakeland, FL 33815
(863) 291-0140
FloridaBlue.com/Lakeland

*While supplies last. Parent/guardian must be present with children to receive a backpack by visiting a participating Center on 8/8/26. Limit 3 backpacks per household. Florida Blue is a trade name of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida, Inc., an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. 125197-0026

PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

Open the door to your child's success with **High Quality** Early Learning!



♥ **School Readiness**
Get them ready!

School Readiness is an early learning program that helps working families and families attending school with childcare expenses while preparing children for school.

[Learn More](#)

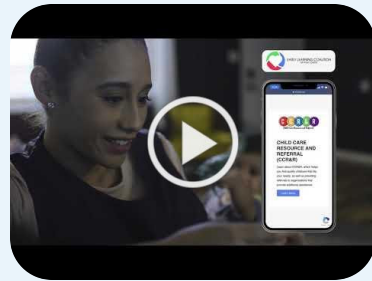


♥ **VPK Ready?**

Let's Get YOU Enrolled!

The application window is now open! Apply for VPK using the link below to obtain your 2026 - 2027 VPK certificate.

[Learn More](#)



♥ **Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)** is a

service focused on helping families find quality childcare that fits their individual needs as well as providing referrals to other organizations.

[Learn More](#)

MISSION

We will lead community efforts in supporting the success of children.

VISION

Children will be prepared for school and life success.

☐ **WANT MORE ELC NEWS?**



VISIT THE ELC NEWSROOM

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Have a photo or story you'd like to share with us?

📌 Post to our **Facebook** page

💬 Direct Message us on **Instagram**

✉ Email pictures to **Layla Cribb**

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Early Learning Coalition of Polk County | 115 South Missouri Avenue Suite 201 | Lakeland, FL 33815 US

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