

## Helping Children Deal with Tragic Events in the News

By Heather Sargent, Southeast VPK Regional Facilitator

In times of community or worldwide crisis, it is easy to assume that young children do not know what is going on. One thing is for sure: children are very sensitive to how the adults in their world feel. They are very aware of the expressions on adult faces and the tone of their voices. Children sense when their caregivers are worried, whether they are watching the news or talking about it with others. No matter what children know about a crisis, it is especially scary for them to realize that the adults are scared too.



Here are some helpful tips to consider:

- Do your best to keep the television off, or at least limit how much children see of any news event.
- Try to keep yourself calm. Your presence can help children feel more secure.
- Give children extra comfort and physical affection, like hugs or snuggling up together with a favorite book. Physical comfort goes a long way towards providing security. That closeness can nourish you too.
- Try to keep regular routines as normal as possible. Children and adults count on the familiar patterns of everyday life.
- Plan something that you and the children can enjoy together, like taking a walk or going on a picnic, having some quiet time together or doing something silly. It can help to know there are simple things in life that can help us feel better, both in good times and in bad.
- Even if children don't mention what they've seen or heard in the news, it can help to ask what they think has happened. If adults don't bring up the subject, children can be left with their misinterpretations. You may be surprised at how much children have heard from others.
- Focus attention on the helpers like the police, firemen, doctors, nurses, paramedics and volunteers. It's reassuring to know there are many caring people who are doing all they can to help in this world.
- Let children know if you're making a donation or going to a meeting, writing a letter or email of support, or taking some other action. It can help children know that adults take many different active roles and that we don't give in to helplessness in time of crisis.

*“My mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’” - Fred Rogers*



# 23RD ANNUAL CHILDREN'S WEEK

Jan. 21-23, 2018



Children's Week develops and implements more than 200 community events and activities statewide, bringing thousands of parents, children, policy makers, professionals, community leaders and concerned citizens together to share valuable knowledge and information about children's issues in each community across the state and in Florida's capitol city.

## Scheduled Events Include

Jan. 21– Hanging of the Hands

Jan. 22– Advocate Success Luncheon

Jan. 23– Children's Week Breakfast and Luncheon

Jan. 23– Storybook Village

To view the full schedule of events, times and get additional information on how you can participate please visit

[www.childrensweek.org](http://www.childrensweek.org).



## Training Available Now!

Social and emotional competence is critical to a child's successful kindergarten transition, early school success and even later well-being. Studies indicate that young children who are able to understand and express their own feelings, recognize the viewpoint and feelings of others, cooperate with peers and adults, and resolve conflicts are more likely to be successful in school. For these reasons, the Office of Early Learning has developed two online courses that address these essential skills.



- ◆ **Working to Create Positive Learning Environments: Preventive Strategies** (4 hours, 0.4 CEUs)
- ◆ **Developing the Socially and Emotionally Competent Child** (4 hours, 0.4 CEUs)

The cost for each course is \$10.00 and registration is available online through the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Care Training System at <https://training01-dcf.myflorida.com/student/site/admin/login.jsf>.

# Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida! 2018

Just Read, Florida! and the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), in partnership with other FDOE offices, the Office of Early Learning, school districts, early learning coalitions and numerous other state agencies, are pleased to announce the tenth annual statewide *Celebrate Literacy Week, Florida!* The event will take place the week of **Jan. 22-26, 2018**.



Please join us in celebrating literacy by participating in our simultaneous reading activity on **Wednesday, Jan. 24, at 9:00 a.m. (EST)**.

This year's book selection for preschool age children (3- to 5-year-olds) is *Big Al* by Andrew Clements.



A child's early experiences with books and language lay the foundation for success in learning to read. When you read, talk or play with children, their brains are stimulated and build the connections that become the building blocks for reading.

Please visit [www.floridaearlylearning.com](http://www.floridaearlylearning.com) for additional Celebrate Literacy Week activities including *Big Al* expansion ideas to incorporate in your classroom.

*“All kids need is a little help, a little hope, and somebody who believes in them.”*  
 ~ Magic Johnson

## Be in the Loop!

VPK Learning Circles are ongoing opportunities for early childhood professionals to share strategies, research and best practices in VPK classrooms. Learning Circle activities include

- Practicing new ideas and skills.
- Professional networking.
- Sharing resources and experiences.
- Discussion and brainstorming solutions for challenges faced in the field.

## Who should attend?

VPK providers, directors, teachers and administrators who would like an opportunity to network with other professionals in early childhood education.

## Who do you contact for more information about Learning Circles?

Your local VPK regional facilitator organizes and facilitates the Learning Circles. You can find contact information for your regional facilitator on the OEL website at <http://bit.ly/2o6PGpW>.



	November Circles	November Participants	Total Learning Circles in 2017-18	Total Participants in 2017-18
Face-to-Face	12	112	184	811
Web-Based	2	8	4	17

# Professional Development

Florida's Office of Early Learning in collaboration with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) offers a variety of online and instructor-led training opportunities. To register for any of these training opportunities, please visit DCF's training website at <http://bit.ly/1oHgYPm>.

Online Courses	November Completers	2017-18 Total Completers
Standards for Four-Year-Olds	200	1686
Integrating the Standards: Phonological Awareness <b>NEW!</b>	43	178
Emergent Literacy for VPK Instructors	370	2261
Language and Vocabulary in the VPK Classroom	68	444
Mathematical Thinking for Early Learners	98	505
Working to Create Positive Learning Environments: Preventive Strategies <b>NEW!</b>	83	303
Developing the Socially and Emotionally Competent Child <b>NEW!</b>	51	201
English Language Learners in the VPK Classroom	44	267
How to Administer the Florida VPK Assessment <b>NEW!</b>	49	431
VPK Assessment Instructional Implications <b>NEW!</b>	51	201
VPK Director Credential Course	68	436

Instructor-led Courses	November Classes	November Participants	2017-18 Total Participants
Standards for Four-Year-Olds	2	20	81
Integrating the Standards: Phonological Awareness	4	25	207
How to Administer the Florida VPK Assessment	4	27	330
VPK Assessment Instructional Implications	3	33	226
*EMEL: Making Sense of Sets and Numbers	7	58	467
*EMEL: Counting and Operating with Numbers	13	85	343
*EMEL: Patterns, Measurement and Data	8	64	348
*EMEL: Shapes and Spatial Relationships	13	90	201

\*EMEL– Early Mathematics for Early Learners