



# Just Jenie's News! January, 2011



Welcome to a new year-Happy 2011. January makes us feel like starting anew. I love a brand new blank calendar-which never stays blank for very long! I love making New Year's resolutions-keeping them is another thing-but I love the sitting down and planning with new hopes, goals and dreams in mind. A new year is a new beginning. What are your goals for yourself and the children you love and care for in the new year? What are your hopes for the new year? What are your dreams for the new year? Take some time to sit quietly and plan thoughtfully for 2011. It is in setting goals that hopes and dreams become reality and sometimes the simple act of putting them down on paper makes them become obtainable. Set some goals and give them some deadlines-this is the first step toward making them real and making them happen. With that in mind, I am setting some goals for my technical assistance for you for the next few months. The goals are all moving you towards the AWI changes that are in process-changes that will directly affect you, your staff and the children you teach. The AWI has quality as it's driving force and my goals are to move you towards quality in your environments, your lesson plans, your curriculum and your staff development. I think change is exciting when it is anticipated with a positive 'can-do' attitude and preparations are made well in advance. I look forward to partnering with you in 2011 to make and meet those goals. Happy New Year!

## 2011 Technical Assistance Goals

- January** Environmental rating scale introductions, Literacy Environment assessment and check list. I will visit each of your classrooms, do the literacy environment checklist assessment and discuss the assessment results with you.
- February** Lesson planning assessment and check list. Using the ECERS, ITERS, and FCCERS as guidelines, I will review your lesson plans and discuss these with you. Centers and family child care homes should always have lesson plans current and posted in every classroom.
- March** Curriculum assessment and check list. A new statewide Coalition contract is in the planning stages and will require a research-based curriculum to be in use at your center or family child care home. I will look at your curriculum and make suggestions if changes need to be made.
- April** We will look at the Coalition contract and I will help you understand how to complete it with quality as the goal in the area of Program Overview. If you have been making copies of the same old descriptions year after year, it is time to readdress this area and complete it more appropriately. Dr. Logan read these last year and made several suggestions for improvements and changes.

These appointments will require me to sit down with the Directors of the centers and family child care homes in order to go over the assessment results and discuss ideas for change towards quality. When I set up my TA appointments, we will make sure they are scheduled for a time convenient for you to be able to sit with me and spend some quality discussion time.

## WINTER TIME OUTDOOR PLAY-A GREAT THING!

In North Florida, we are blessed to have sunshine most of the days of our winter season. The weather outside is chilly, and can be downright cold some mornings, but the great outdoors is still so inviting for children who were born to play! Healthy children need fresh air, sunshine and exercise daily. I look at some of the outdoor environment resource books we have in our fantastic Resource Library (have you checked it out lately???), and see pictures of children in coats, hats, mittens and boots playing in the SNOW! We think we have to keep the children cooped up in a stuffy, heated building because it is 45 degrees outside and these kids are having a ball playing outside in the SNOW! What wasted opportunities we miss when we don't take them outside while living in the land of sunshine. Here are some suggestions for getting on-board with outdoor play in the winter season.

1. Make sure children are dressed appropriately. Warm jackets with zippers, long pants, socks, sneakers, mittens and knit hats will ensure outdoor fun and fresh air daily.
2. Write a note home to parents. Let them know how important fresh air is for children's health. Remind them that many children are Vitamin D deficient and a daily dose of sunshine will help alleviate this! Remind them to dress their children appropriately for the weather of the day and to keep an extra set of clothes at your center at all times.
3. Keep extra jackets, mittens and knit hats on hand when children come to school without these clothing items. Be sensitive to parents who simply do the best they can and cannot always afford the clothing their children need. Visit yard sales and thrift stores and be sure to put your center name in the clothes so they don't 'walk away' and deplete your supply.
4. Remember last summer when I suggested you flip your schedule due to the heat in the afternoons? Do the same this winter. Do your main learning time during the colder morning hours, go out briefly for some fresh air and sunshine before lunch, then plan to spend the entire afternoon outside after nap/rest time. The kids will love you for it and it will make your classroom much more manageable.
5. Reminder: Anything you do inside, you can do outside but you cannot bring everything inside that you do outside! Take quilts, blankets and books on the playground. Find a sunny spot and pretend you are cats basking (there's a great vocabulary word!) in the sun while enjoying great books.
6. Children still need to be hydrated in the cold weather. Keep water available to them at all times. When you come inside, enjoy some cups of hot (carefully monitor the temperature so mouths aren't burned!) cocoa and marshmallows.

Like the song says: 'It's the most wonderful time of the year'! Take it outside!





### Attention VPK Providers

Check your mail, all VPK Readiness Rate Website User ID's and Passwords are being reset. You will need to use the information sent to you in late December from the Department of Education to begin the verification process for your 2009-2010 Readiness Rate.

Below is the guideline for this process:

#### 2010 FLKRS Results and Readiness Rate Dates

Readiness Rates	Scheduled Date
Provider verification of matched data process	January 4-17, 2011
DOE releases preliminary readiness rate	February 1, 2011
Readiness Rate Dispute Process	February 1-15, 2011
DOE releases final readiness rate subject to State Board approval	March 3, 2011

**Please note: these dates constitute a working schedule and are subject to change.**

If you have any questions, please call **Melissa Brady, VPK Coordinator at (386)961-0129.**

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#### FROM THE INCLUSION CORNER HAPPY NEW YEAR!

**Did you know? Over 10% of all children have some sort of disability. ADD and ADHD have just been acknowledged as a disability by the Disability Council.**

**Did you know? Sensory play helps children master and understand our world. While some children who are "hyper" responsive might only wish to have a small amount of finger paint or rice in which to play, children who are "hypo" responsive might try to get in the rice or paint themselves and everything in sight!**

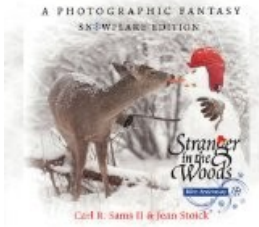
**So, in your classroom, you certainly want to pay attention to ALL senses but be aware of these particular sensory issues as well. You'll be happier and so will the children!**

**And remember, I am here for you, the children and the families. Please call me anytime!**

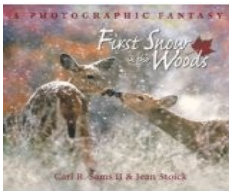
*Dottie Stone*  
*Child Development and Inclusion Coordinator*  
*Early Learning Coalition of Florida's Gateway, Inc.*  
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### January's Focus on Literacy-WINTER!

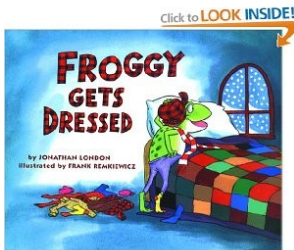
Here are some book suggestions to share in your classroom during the month of January. I love winter books and have a ton in my personal library. Here are some of my absolute favorites. I guess because I've never lived in the snow, I am fascinated with books about snow and real life pictures.



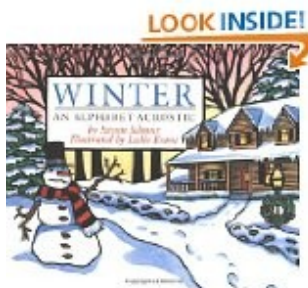
**Stranger in the Woods** by Carl R. Sams II & Jean Stoick. This husband/wife team have written several amazing books with even more amazing photographs of life in the snowy woods of Canada. The children love the story and the photographs. This is a Benjamin Franklin Award book.



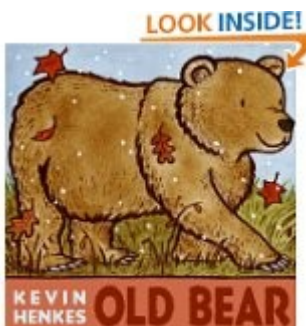
**First Snow in the Woods** by Carl R. Sams II & Jean Stoick. Same wonderful authors with more amazing photographs of snow, animals in the woods and the precious story of a new fawn's first winter in the snowy woods of Canada.



**Froggy Gets Dressed** by Jonathan London, illustrated by Frank Remkiewicz. You all know how I love the froggy books and this one is my absolute favorite. Read the book then create a snowflake from all of froggy's clothes-the children will always remember this one! FROGGGGGGYYYY! What????



**Winter: An Alphabet Acrostic** by Steven Schnur, illustrated by Leslie Evans. Each letter of the alphabet spells a winter word and includes an acrostic poem with outstanding illustrations. The book is mesmerizing and educational. You will enjoy this one as much as the children!



**Old Bear** by Kevin Henkes. A wonderful book with simple yet beautiful illustrations about old bear going to sleep for the winter and all he dreams about only to wake in the Spring and see it all came true! A great book for discussions on hibernation. Let the children bring in teddy bears and snuggle up as you read this book to them.

### Creative Arts and Winter Themed Crafts!

Use the suggested books to plan some wonderful winter themed crafts that will help to make the stories meaningful and unforgettable. We don't have snow in North Florida, but that doesn't mean you can't help the children to experience in some small way the components, the colors or feel of the cold, icy stuff. Try these activities for a 'chillin' good time!



#### Snowflake Window Clings

**Supplies:** White glue, waxed paper, silver glitter, snowflake drawings

Tape the snowflake drawings to the table. Tape a piece of waxed paper on top. Squeeze the glue and trace the drawings on the waxed paper. Sprinkle lightly with silver glitter and let dry 24 hours. Peel the dried snowflake off the waxed paper and stick to a clean glass window.



#### Ice Cube Painting

Mix tempera paints with water and pour into an ice cube tray and place in freezer. When partially frozen, stick a craft stick in the middle of each 'cube'. Freeze over night. Pop out of the tray and let the children paint with the frozen cubes on white paper. Talk about the process and what it feels like. Talk about why the cubes are melting. Place unused cubes into paper cups to melt and use droppers to paint coffee filters. When dry, fold the filters in half twice and let the children cut small triangles out-but don't cut all the way thru. Unfold and you have very colorful snowflakes!

#### Winter Sun Catcher

**Supplies:**

Disposable foil pan (square or rectangular), oranges cut into thin slices, a few small pine branches, fresh or frozen cranberries, sturdy twine cut into 4 lengths (about 2 feet each)



Place the pan on a flat surface. Arrange the orange slices and pine branches in the pan and add enough water to cover them. Sprinkle on the berries. For hanging cords, lay one end of each piece of twine in the pan, submerging it at least several inches. Let the pan freeze outside or place in the freezer overnight.

Remove the ice block from the pan (run warm water over the back if needed) and hang it up outside. Watch and discuss the melting process. Make a couple of them and place one in the shade and one in the sun. Which one melts faster? Which one sparkles the most? Make a chart of the discoveries. Throw the fruit out in the yard for the birds!



## VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

Dear Executive Directors,

You are invited to participate in an exciting pilot project introducing practitioners to Florida's Early Learning Registry. The pilot's purpose is to test certain Registry procedures prior to the formal roll out in summer 2011.

We are looking to Coalitions to help us identify 1,000 practitioners, 32 from each coalition area, to take part in the project. This group will become the inaugural Registry members, each of whom will be matched with a Registry Coach to guide them through the processes and procedures of Registry membership. In return for their willingness to participate in the pilot, each practitioner will be awarded a scholarship to a 16-hour on-line course. The course, a requirement of all Registry members, will be provided by Palm Beach State College beginning in February. Continuing Education Units will be awarded upon successful completion.

To successfully kick this initiative off, we are requesting the following:

- The name of your staff who will serve as a coordinator of this pilot for your coalition area and will do the following:

- Identify 32 practitioners in your area to participate in the pilot.
- Coordinate with the Registry Coach from Palm Beach State College regarding college, Registry, and scholarship paperwork.
- Provide feedback regarding this pilot.
- A meeting space for a two hour presentation that is equipped with internet access that can accommodate 40 people during the month of (fill in).

Feedback from you regarding this pilot, once it is completed.

We will support you and your designated local pilot coordinator as we move forward with the project. Your help is critical in identifying 32 practitioners from your area to participate in the pilot. In order to help get you started in considering who these practitioners might be, we have outlined the following participation requirements. **In order to participate practitioners must:**

- 1) Be a professional in a childcare center, family child care home or school-based site working directly with children from age birth to five.
- 2) Be committed to completing the training which includes web-based follow-up and assignments.
- 3) Meet DCF licensing minimum training requirements (40 hours plus 5 hours in early literacy).
- 4) Have a high school diploma.
- 5) Complete a Registry Practitioner application, a Palm Beach State College application, and a scholarship application .

Once again, thank you for your help in moving the state professional development system forward. Please let us know the appropriate contact at your coalition so that we can begin to plan this effort. Your support is critical to its success.

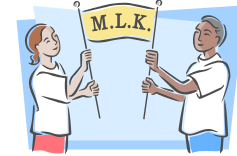
**This is part of the new Professional Development registry explained in my November and December newsletters. The ELC-FG will be participating in this pilot project. If you are interested in participating as one of the 32 selected practitioners, you need to let me know ASAP in order to get the process moving. Participation in this project qualifies you for "Section 8 Professional Contribution Requirement" for your Director's Credential renewal as you will be participating in an educational research project, as well as the scholarship for the on-line course. Call me at 386-961-0128 to participate.**

# January 2011

## OFFICE CLOSURES!

The ELC-FG offices will be closed on **Monday, January 17** in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

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## WORKSHOP INFORMATION

**1/20/11 “Play the Domain Way: Totally Terrific Tray Play!”** 6:30-8:30 p.m. Allied Health Building auditorium, Florida’s Gateway College. Presented by Janie Richardson. Come and get cost-effective ideas and learn how to address all early learning standard domains through tray play with children ages two thru four. Space is limited. Register on-line at [www.elc-fg.org/events](http://www.elc-fg.org/events).

**1/22/11 CPR & First Aid.** The CPR class is FULL! There is still room in the First Aid class. Call Mary Gamble, 386-961-0127 to register.

## STANDARD DOMAIN FOCUS OF THE MONTH!

**Motor Development: Fine Motor Development.** Explores the use of various drawing and art tools.

In your writing center this month, put out white chalk, white crayons and white colored pencils with lots of black, brown or dark blue construction paper. Talk about snow storms and let the children draw what they think a snow storm would look like. Talk about snow flakes, look at pictures of snow flakes and let the children draw lots of snowflakes. Remind them no two snowflakes ever look alike! Show the children how to trace their hands using the chalk, crayons or pencils. Place salt or sugar in cookie sheets or box lids, add large and small craft sticks and let the children make swirly designs or try to write letters in the salt or sugar. Suggest they use their fingers to draw pictures in the salt or sugar.

What other domains have been incorporated into these activities? How about cognitive development and general knowledge? What about approaches to learning? Do you see language and communication in the activities? WOW! Domain play...it’s a good thing.



### FEATURED CENTER OF THE MONTH!

Aunt Marcia's Love N Care in Ft. White featured Christmas Around the World during the month of December. The children made ornaments that represented holiday customs of different countries. When I visited them, they were discussing American customs. Ms. Judy told the class, 'We are talking about customs in America this week' and one little boy raised his hand and very politely exclaimed, 'I don't think I've ever been there before!'. Kids...they say the cutest things! Below are pictures of their Christmas tree full of child-created ornaments and the adorable coffee filter angel on top!



**FEATURED CENTER ACTIVITY OF THE MONTH!**

Wee Kare Academy in Live Oak planned a gingerbread house activity in December with their two VPK classrooms. Look at all the standards used in this activity plus there was parent involvement! Fine motor development, social/emotional, math, science, language/communication, approaches to learning, physical health-they were all there! The children had a fun, messy, taste-testing good time creating their own little candy houses. As Martha Stewart would say, 'It was a good thing!'.



### Cooking Activity of the Month

No snow? No problemo! Whether you live in Florida or upstate New York, you and your children can easily build delicious versions of Frosty! Serve with milk or hot chocolate for a great winter's day snack! Sing 'Frosty the Snowman' while building your snack!

### DONUT SNOWMEN

#### Ingredients:

Small powdered sugar donuts

Powdered sugar donut holes

Decorator's gel

Pretzel or potato sticks

Haviland Thin Mints (or York Peppermint Patties)

Reese's miniature peanut butter cups

Set a powdered donut hole atop a small powdered sugar donut. For a taller version, use a pretzel stick or potato stick to secure a second donut hole atop the first. Use decorator's gel to add a face, buttons and a carrot nose. If the gel won't stick, try smoothing the powdered sugar with a dab of water first. To add a top hat to the shorter snowman, stick a small piece of a pretzel or potato stick through the thin mint and into the peanut butter cup then secure the hat in place on the snowman's head.



### CONTACT INFORMATION

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