



# From Cradle to College



## VPK Family Activities Calendar



**2015 The Early Learning Coalition of Escambia County 2016**

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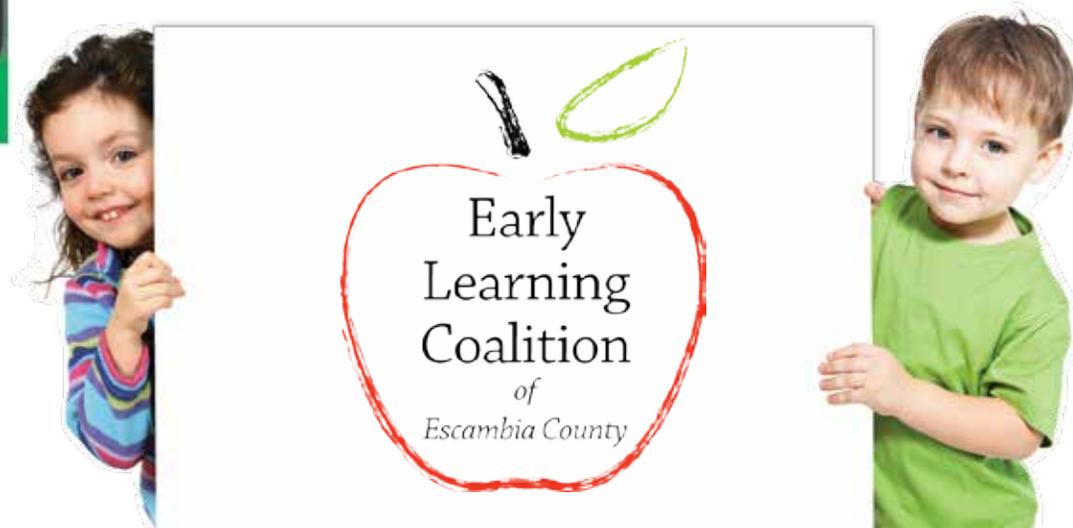
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# Welcome to VPK!

Congratulations, you are on your way! The first day of Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) is here and it is a very exciting day for both you and your child. The VPK skill related activities included in this calendar can help to encourage your child to take an active interest in learning and will help you guide your child to a successful transition to kindergarten.

This calendar is produced as part of an exciting collaboration between the Association of Early Learning Coalitions and the Florida Prepaid College Board. The goal of the partnership is to help you take your child from cradle to college! Throughout the year, we will be emailing additional information regarding exciting opportunities from Florida Prepaid College Board...So don't forget to check your email!!!

Included in this calendar you will find:

- An introduction to important skills your child needs to be successful in kindergarten
- Monthly activities to help strengthen your child's development
- Parent resources
- Recommended books to read to your child

School readiness is more than counting 1,2,3, singing your ABC's or identifying colors and shapes. Children who are ready for kindergarten demonstrate independence, are social and relate well to others their age as well as familiar adults, and are able to communicate with purpose and understanding. They are engaged and show development of a love of learning. It is important to understand that no two children are the same. All children develop these skills in their own time.

Get ready, Get set, GROW...  
All the way from cradle to college!



# Read With Your Child Every Day

In the prekindergarten year your child is exposed to books and how they are used every day. Learning to read and learning to write and communicate are the most important skills your child will need to be successful in kindergarten and throughout life. Prior to kindergarten your child will learn to identify letters, the sounds letters make and he/she will begin to put letters and sounds together to form words and sentences. Your child is beginning to understand that when words are put together they express meaning and they actively listen more carefully to help them comprehend what is being said. In the prekindergarten classroom your child has many experiences with books throughout their day. They are read to and asked questions about the story to help build their understanding. In dramatic play children will use books to pretend to be the teacher and “read” to others, modeling the teacher’s behavior. They are shown that books are enjoyable, have a purpose and should be cared for. These literacy experiences are valuable in helping your child develop a love of books and the motivation to learn to read once they reach kindergarten.

## Tips for Parents:

- Read to your child every day
- Ask questions to check for understanding
- Play games and sing songs about letters and their sounds
- Encourage your child to put sounds together to make words
- Point out letters and words in the environment
- Demonstrate writing and reading skills
- Be patient with your child, these skills are still emerging
- Follow your child’s lead and interest when reading books
- Avoid pushing your child to read or listen to a story
- Talk to your child about books, show them the pictures, ask questions, relate the story to events in your child’s life
- Rhyme with your child, encourage them to make up new rhymes
- Talk about the different parts of a book (i.e., front cover, spine, back cover)
- Model how to hold books, turning pages gently, etc.
- Help your child create a cozy corner or special reading area in your home



## Our Plan is to Make Sure You Have a Plan.

From a two-year degree to a full four years at a university, we have six affordable and flexible plan options to match your child’s dreams and fit your family’s budget. And don’t forget, Open Enrollment is coming up. To learn more and sign up for email updates, visit us at [myfloridaprepaid.com](http://myfloridaprepaid.com).

Let us help you get started today at [myfloridaprepaid.com](http://myfloridaprepaid.com), or call 1.800.552.GRAD (4723).



► *Starting is Believing*

# September 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Walk with your child to the bus stop. Teach your child to wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before getting off and to never walk behind a stopped bus or in between parked or stopped cars.</p>		1	2	3	4	5 Library Day: Visit your local library and explore! Get your child a library card and check out some books.
6	7 Labor Day	8 Read your library books together. Make predictions and ask questions to check for understanding.	9	10	11 Talk about the different parts of books (cover, spine, etc.) with your child. Show him/her how to handle books.	12
13 Help your child make a book telling the story of his/her adventures with Grandma or Grandpa. Grandparent's Day	14 Rosh Hashanah	15	16 Read <i>Alphabet Adventure</i> together. Go on a letter hunt. Can you find all the letters of the alphabet?	17	18 Read <i>The Alphabet Tree</i> with your child before bed. Talk about the events of the story. Have your child read the story to you.	19 Spread shaving cream onto a flat surface. Help your child practice writing the letters of the alphabet using his/her fingers.
20	21 Have your child help you write a grocery list. Ask your child to read the items on the list and help you find them.	22 Yom Kippur	23 Autumn Begins	24 At bedtime make up your own story together beginning with, "Once upon a time..."	25	26
27 Read <i>Dr. Seuss's ABC</i> together. Talk about letters. What are they, how do we use them, etc. Where can we find them?	28	29 Help your child cut out letters and pictures from magazines and glue on construction paper to make his/her own alphabet book.	30	Books to Share  <i>Alphabet Adventure</i> Audrey Wood  <i>The Alphabet Tree</i> Leo Lionni  <i>Dr. Seuss's ABC: An Amazing Alphabet Book!</i> Dr. Seuss		

# Enjoy the Sight and Sounds Of Language With Your Child

Throughout the prekindergarten year children make tremendous growth in their ability to use language to effectively communicate their thoughts, express their feelings, tell stories and share their ideas. Their exposure to social situations requires them to practice initiating and participating in conversation as they take turns listening and responding to what is said. At this time many children also show a motivation to express themselves through writing. Your child may be able to write several recognizable letters of his/her name, or intentionally scribble letter-like shapes to represent words and convey meaning. Your child may pretend to be a mommy writing a grocery list, a doctor writing a prescription, a teacher taking notes, or an artist painting a picture. These emerging skills are evidence of their developing understanding that all people communicate differently and that all communication is meaningful.

## **Tips for Parents:**

Talk to your child throughout each day

Model clear speech and eye contact

Encourage your child to use language to communicate his/her needs instead of gestures, pointing, or whining

Provide opportunities for your child to socialize with peers outside of school

Encourage conversation during meal time

Model writing for your child

Give your child opportunities to write with pens, pencils, crayons, markers, shaving cream, paint, etc.

All children develop these skills in their own time

Be patient with your child and his/her abilities

Avoid pushing your child to write



# October 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Books to Share</p>  <p><i>Wipe Clean: Letters (Wipe Clean Learning Books)</i> Roger Priddy</p> <p><i>Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?</i> Dr. Seuss</p> <p><i>Z Is for Moose</i> Kelly Bingham</p>	<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Talk to your kids about how to be safe while walking. Always walk on sidewalks or paths and cross at street corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks.</p>	 <p>1</p> <p>Florida Prepaid open enrollment starts soon! Are you ready?</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Library Day: How many ways can you communicate? How do animals communicate? Look for books to help answer these questions.</p>		
<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Strive for 5! Have daily conversations with your child that involves 5 back and forth exchanges of speaking and listening.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	 <p>8</p> <p>Every little bit you save for college today, ensures their brighter future tomorrow. Florida Prepaid.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Ask your child to tell you about his/her day. Write down what is said. Have your child draw pictures to go with the story.</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Columbus Day</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Place objects in a container. Have your child remove an object and tell you what it is and how to use it (i.e., "This is my car, I drive it").</p>	<p>14</p>	 <p>15</p> <p>Visit <a href="http://myfloridaprepaid.com">myfloridaprepaid.com</a> today for open enrollment information!</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Take a walk to the park. Encourage your child to talk to the other kids and ask a new friend to play.</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18</p> <p>While in the car play the "Yes" "No" game. Ask questions, "Are you a boy/girl?", etc. Make up your own silly questions, "Can a crocodile sing?" Take turns asking.</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Show your child a series of pictures from a family get together or magazine. Ask your child to describe what is happening in the pictures.</p>	 <p>22</p> <p>Open enrollment happens fast. Don't miss your opportunity to start saving with a Florida Prepaid Plan!</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Take advantage of daily activities at home. When cooking a meal talk to your child about what you are cooking. How will it taste? Who will clean up?</p>
<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Spread paper out on a table or flat surface. Set out paint in small containers. Paint a picture together using your fingers.</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Provide your child with paper, crayons, markers, etc. Ask him/her to draw you a picture. Can you guess what he/she drew?</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Halloween</p>

# Give Your Child Daily Opportunities To Use Large Muscles

Good health and wellness are the foundation for a child's development and every day learning. When children are physically active, they are happy and social. When they are engaged in social situations, their hearing and vision skills are enhanced, which helps to promote their language skills. In the prekindergarten year children are becoming more aware of their environment and are beginning to be more independent. In the classroom they are encouraged to make healthy choices and to participate in personal care routines on a daily basis (i.e., washing their hands before and after a meal and after they use the bathroom, brushing their teeth, making healthy food choices, and staying physically active). When children are not encouraged to develop these healthy habits they can become lazy and neglectful of their personal hygiene and health, resulting in childhood obesity, diabetes, and other serious health problems that can have a lasting effect. Developing healthy habits and routines in the prekindergarten year are important skills your child needs to stay active and healthy later in life.

## Tips for Parents:

- Help your child make healthy food choices at meal and snack time
- Follow a regular bed time routine to promote good sleeping habits
- Encourage your child to participate in physical activity on a daily basis
- Limit TV time
- Demonstrate good health (washing hands, brushing teeth, eating healthy)
- Schedule regular medical and dental check-ups
- Make sure your child has had all necessary immunizations
- Talk about making healthy choices with your child
- Play outside with your child, take a walk, ride bikes, stay active!
- Avoid sending your child to school when he/she is sick
- Be sure to inform your child's teacher of any medications he/she is taking



# November 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1  DST Ends Set clocks back 1 hour	2 Establish a regular bed time routine with your child that includes bathing, brushing teeth and reading a story every night. Try to keep the routine consistent throughout the week.	3	4 Prepare a family meal together. Talk about the different food groups you are preparing and how they help your body stay healthy.	5 Read <i>Lunch</i> . Talk about the different foods the mouse ate and if they are good or bad for your body. What happens if we eat too much or too little?	6	7 Set up an obstacle course outside that requires your child to climb, run, jump, crawl, etc.
8	9 Sing Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes with your child. What other body parts can you name? Make up your own version and play again.	10	11  Veteran's Day	12 Read <i>Just Got to Bed</i> with your child before he/she goes to bed. Talk about why it is important to go to sleep at night.	13	14
15	16	17 Take a walk outside. Look for things that begin with the same sound as the first letter in your child's name.	18	19	20	21 Get moving! Take a walk, go play at the park. How many different ways can you move your body?
22 Play leap frog together from one end of the house to the other. How far can you go?	23	24	25	26  The best gift you can give your child is a college education. Start saving now with Florida Prepaid.  Thanksgiving Day	27  Join more than 378,000 Florida Prepaid students who are thankful that they were able to eliminate/reduce student loan debt while attending college.	28
29	30 Play outside with your child today! Draw a hopscotch board on the sidewalk or driveway and play a few games together.	<b>SAFETY TIP:</b> To prevent burns from hot holiday food or spills, use the back burner of your stove and turn pot handles away from the edge.		Books to Share  <i>Just Go to Bed</i> Mercer Mayer  <i>Lunch</i> Denise Fleming  <i>The Goodnight Train</i> June Sobel		

# Help Your Child Learn About Himself and the Community Where You Live

A child's first social experiences begin with their interactions with family members the day they are born. Eventually these experiences grow to include awareness of themselves, their home environment, classroom community and the people and places in the neighborhood in which they live. As children get older and they become more social they begin to notice the similarities and differences between themselves and others around them. At this stage, children will often begin asking more "why" questions, and will verbally express what they already know to be true about themselves, such as "I am a girl, you are a boy." Included in their curiosity about others is their developing awareness of what it means to be part of a family, and the different roles of family members (e.g., mom, dad, sister, brother, etc.). Pretend play is an important activity to your child at this age. Dressing up and using props allows them to safely act out these different roles and better understand how they fit into the world around them.

## Tips for Parents:

Expose your child to books, music, food, and activities of other cultures around the world

Read stories about different families, their homes, clothing and jobs

Interact with your child during pretend play, ask questions to further their understanding

Be sensitive to your child's developing awareness of cultural differences

Answer your child's questions about different places, people, and things honestly

Avoid passing on negative comments

Be open and willing to learn what you do not know about various cultures and customs with your child

## Give the Gift of Opportunity.

An education is a gift that lasts a lifetime. Open a Florida 529 Savings Plan for as little as \$25 per month, or choose any of our flexible Prepaid Plans to start your child on the path to success.

Let us help you get started today at [myfloridaprepaid.com](http://myfloridaprepaid.com), or call 1.800.552.GRAD (4723).



► *Starting is Believing*



# December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Books to Share</p>  <p><i>A Life Like Mine</i> DK Publishing</p> <p><i>I'm Like You, You're Like Me</i> Cindy Gainer</p> <p><i>The Velveteen Rabbit</i> Margery Williams &amp; William Nicholson</p>		<p>1</p> <p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Consider your child's age when purchasing toys. Read all instructions &amp; warning labels. Watch small parts and other potential choking hazards.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Talk about the different roles each member of the family has. What is your child's role in the family?</p>	<p>5</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Hanukkah Begins</p>	 <p>7</p> <p>Give the gift of a college education. Learn how with Florida Prepaid. Choose from six flexible, affordable college savings plans for every budget!</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Talk about the different members of your community (e.g., firefighters, police, teachers, doctors, etc.) and what their roles are. How do they help your community?</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Assign a chore for your child to help you with (i.e., changing the baby, feeding the dog, watering the plants, washing dishes, etc.)</p>
<p>13</p> <p>Spend time going through old toys, clothing, books, etc. and donate them to a local shelter for a family in need.</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Pick a place on a map with your child that you have not been to. Visit the library and check out books about the people, places and culture of that area.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Read your library books together. Make a book about what you have learned. Have your child draw the pictures and write about them in the book.</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Family Fun: Build a town out of legos, or blocks.</p>
<p>20</p>	 <p>21</p> <p>The favorite gift under the tree? A college education. Florida Prepaid.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Winter Begins</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Let your child help you prepare the holiday meal and set the table.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Christmas Eve</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Talk to your child about how different cultures celebrate the holidays. Choose a new recipe to make together. Kwanzaa</p>
<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Read <i>The Velveteen Rabbit</i>. Talk about your child's favorite toy and why it is so special to him/her.</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Year's Eve</p>		

# Help Your Child Become Aware of Letters and Words At Home and In the Community

The words a child understands and uses to describe his/her feelings, and the people, places, objects, and events in the world around them is referred to as vocabulary. As your child's knowledge of the world continues to grow during the prekindergarten year, his/her vocabulary will also expand to include words to describe people's actions and emotions. The first step to learning a new word begins with your child's ability to recognize print in the surrounding environment. Words are everywhere you go: on street signs, department stores, clothing, product labels and advertisements, and even on television. This environmental print is often a child's first introduction to reading. When children become familiar with the print they see in their environment, they become excited and are more likely to learn faster. Once a child has an understanding of words, he/she then practices putting words together to express a feeling, communicate a thought, share an idea and respond to a question. Their communication now has meaning.

## Tips for Parents:

Read concept related books to your child (e.g., farm animals, cities, parts of the body, etc.)

Model a variety of vocabulary words

When you are reading together, define new words for your child and talk about what they mean

Play games using positional words (over, under) and descriptive words (same, different)

Teach your child category labels (clothing, furniture, vegetables, fruits, vehicles, etc.)

Call attention to environmental print at home, in the car or while you are waiting in line

Use puppets and props to model expressions and emotions with your child

When discussing new words with your child be sure to use them correctly



# January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Books to Share</p> 	<p><i>I Spy Letters</i> Jean Marzollo</p> <p><i>Inside Outside Upside Down</i> Stan and Jan Berenstain</p> <p><i>Parts</i> Tedd Arnold</p>		<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Store all household products and cleaning solutions out of children's sight and reach. Use safety locks on cabinets under the kitchen and bathroom sink.</p>		 <p>1</p> <p>Resolve now that this is the year you put a college savings plan into action. Florida Prepaid.</p> <p>New Year's Day</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Vocabulary Goal: Help your child learn 10-20 NEW words this month!</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Have your child help you write a grocery list. While shopping have your child help find the items on the list. Talk about the letters and words they see.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Play with positional words. Move a blanket over, under, on top of, next to, and around you and your child.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Talk about the positional word game you played yesterday. Review the sequence of words that you used.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Have your child take a turn. Can he/she move the blanket under, over, around, next to, and on top of his/herself?</p>
<p>10</p> <p>Talk about Opposites with your child. What is the opposite of big, angry, etc. How many can you name?</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Take an alpha-walk outside. Can you find all the letters of the alphabet? Can you find the letters in your child's first and last name?</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Toss a bean bag back and forth and name as many rhyming words as you can. Play again while reciting the alphabet. Spell your child's name and other words.</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Martin Luther King Day</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Play the thinking game. Say to your child "This cup is round. What else can you find that's round?" &amp; play again.</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Sort your child's toys into categories (i.e., vehicles, animals, food, action figures/dolls, etc.).</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Make a list of words with your child. When you are out and about try to see how many you can find in street signs, product labels, other advertising, etc.</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Make a list of all the new vocabulary words your child learned this month and write a story using all of the words.</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>

# Invite Your Child To Think and To Solve Problems

A child's success in kindergarten is dependent on how socially and emotionally prepared he/she is to make the transition. Children who are successful in kindergarten are appropriately able to identify, express, and understand their feelings. They are able to develop special friendships and often show concern for other's thoughts and feelings. Children who are socially and emotionally ready are able to self-regulate under stress. They manage their feelings appropriately and are able to cooperate with peers and adults to solve problems in social situations through turn-taking, waiting, sharing, and negotiating. A child's social emotional readiness is firmly rooted in his/her ability to develop positive relationships with adults and peers. It is through these relationships that children learn how to become contributing members of a social group.

## Tips for Parents:

Talk to your child throughout each day

Use transition signals in routines at home to help your child manage changes

Be supportive of your child's abilities and celebrate their accomplishments

Play games with your child that require him/her to negotiate, wait, and take turns

Encourage your child to interact with peers outside of school

Support the special friendships he/she develops

Acknowledge your child's emotions and talk about how you feel

Read books about feelings

Play silly games to help your child recognize facial expressions (mad, sad, excited, etc.)

Model empathy, "I can see that you are upset. Can I give you a hug?"

Teach your child how to initiate interactions with peers, "Do you want to play?"

Talk to your child about helpful/hurtful situations

Take time to connect with your child one-on-one each day



# February 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Talk to your child about strangers. Explain why it is not safe to ever walk off alone when playing outside. Discuss what to do in the event he/she is approached by an unknown adult.</p>	1	2 Groundhog Day	3 Use a transition signal with your child to help move from one activity to another (e.g., sing a special song when it's time to clean up toys and get ready for bed.)	4 Help your child make a peaceful place in your home where he/she can go to calm down or have some quiet time.	5	6 Library Day: Choose new books about making friends and how to solve a problem.
7	8 Sing "If You're Happy and You Know It". Make up your own version using different emotions (i.e., sad, angry, surprised, etc.).	9	10 Ash Wednesday	11	12 Play a board game together that requires your child to wait, listen and take turns.	13
14 Make a special meal together and eat as a family. Talk about why each family member is special. Valentine's Day	15 President's Day	16 Talk to your child about the events of her/his day. What made her/him happy? What made her/him sad?	17	18 Read <i>Feelings To Share</i> . Play a game of Face It together. Sit facing each other. Make an emotional expression and have your child do the same.	19	20
21	22	23	24 Play different types of music and move how it makes you feel. Experiment with fast, slow, loud, soft, classical, rock, etc.	25	26	27 Read <i>Talk and Work It Out</i> . Talk about how to solve problems with friends and peers at school.
 <p>28 Did you miss open enrollment? No worries, you can start a Florida 529 Savings Plan year round!</p>	29	<p>Books to Share</p>  <p><i>The Way I Feel</i> Janan Cain</p> <p><i>Feelings To Share</i> Todd and Peggy Snow</p> <p><i>Talk and Work It Out</i> Cheri J. Meiners M.Ed.</p>				

# Encourage Your Child To Listen and Use Language To Express Ideas

In the prekindergarten year, children are busy building relationships with peers, and the familiar adults in the classroom and at home. They communicate with purpose to help them gain understanding about the people, places and objects in the world around them. They are actively listening, asking questions and seeking out new information to help them further understand the how, what, where, when, and why of their daily life. In kindergarten, your child will be required to use these skills on a daily basis as he/she listens to a story read aloud and shows understanding of the events of the story by asking and answering relevant questions, adding comments and reacting appropriately to what is said. Life in kindergarten, and in later school years, will require your child to be able to listen to, understand and demonstrate their understanding by following directions. Over the course of the prekindergarten year these skills will improve. As they do, your child will gain more independence and will need less guidance when completing everyday tasks.

## Tips for Parents:

Engage in daily conversations with your child

Take multiple turns listening and responding

Read to your child every day

Ask your child "who", "what", "why", "where", and "when" questions about their experiences

Have your child help set the table, prepare a meal or snack, or help clean up by giving them two-step directions

Play games and sing songs with your child that require them to follow simple directions (i.e., Hokey Pokey, Simon Says, etc.)

Encourage your child to read to you and retell the events of a favorite story in his/her own words



# March 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Books to Share</p>  <p><i>The Mixed Up Chameleon</i> Eric Carle</p> <p><i>Why Should I Listen?</i> Claire Llewellyn</p> <p><i>My Mouth Is A Volcano!</i> Julia Cook</p>		 <p>1</p> <p>Did you miss open enrollment? No worries, you can start a Florida 529 Savings Plan year round!</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Play a couple rounds of Simon Says together as a family. Take turns giving and receiving directions.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Invite your child to help set the table for dinner. Ask him/her to set out the plates, napkins, silverware, and cups for each person.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Talk into an empty paper towel tube to your child. Ask him/her questions about his/her day. Have your child speak into the tube to answer. Take turns listening and speaking.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Read <i>The Mixed Up Chameleon</i> with your child. Tell your child to listen carefully. Can he/she name all of the animals from the story? What happened to the chameleon?</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Lent Begins</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Take a walk to the park with your child. On the way there and on the way home, play Red Light Green Light together. Can your child follow your directions?</p>
<p>13</p> <p>DST Begins Set clocks ahead 1 hour</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Make up a simple story to tell your child. Ask him to listen carefully to what happens. Have your child retell the story to you. Take turns listening and speaking.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>St. Patrick's Day</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Gather all the members of the family together and play the Hokey Pokey. Be silly and make up your own family version to play.</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Spring Begins</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Sit outside with your child and close your eyes. What sounds can you hear? Draw a picture together of all the sounds you heard.</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Read <i>My Mouth Is A Volcano</i> with your child. Talk about why Louis has such a hard time expressing himself in a respectful way.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Good Friday</p>	<p>26</p>
<p>27</p> <p>Easter</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>While waiting for dinner play a quick game of Tap the Beat. Using your fingers, tap a beat on the table. Encourage your child to listen and repeat the beat.</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Make sure your home has carbon monoxide alarms installed on every level, especially near bedrooms. Keep them at least 15 feet away from fuel-burning appliances and check batteries regularly.</p>	

# Make Math A “Hands On” Learning Experience For Your Child

Children are naturally curious about numbers, counting and mathematical concepts. Their ability to understand numbers, operations and patterns grows tremendously throughout the prekindergarten year as they engage in hands-on number recognition and counting activities. A child’s knowledge of numbers begins with learning that numbers represent something. They practice this skill as they help set the table for lunch, giving 1 plate to each friend, or 4 forks at each table, etc. Over time their knowledge of mathematics grows to include relationships between sets of numbers and through meaningful conversations with other peers and adults, they begin to explore concepts such as measurement and compare quantities “more” and “less”. The final mathematical skill that begins to emerge at the end of the prekindergarten year is the ability to assign number words to numbers and sets. (i.e., a child writes the word “six” and demonstrates his/her understanding of “six” by drawing a picture of six fish).

## Tips for Parents:

Read books that explore numbers, patterns and operations with your child

Talk to your child about numbers

Encourage your child to count numbers of objects in their environment

Expose your child to measurement through hands-on cooking activities

Practice counting and one-to-one correspondence with your child while setting the table for snack or meal time

Model counting for your child and use appropriate number names during everyday activities

Sort objects at home into groups, talk about “less” and “more”

Encourage your child to make predictions, “How many cookies are in the jar?”

Sing counting songs and play finger games that focus on adding and removing sets of numbers (i.e., “Five Green Speckled Frogs”)

Play number games with your child that teach order (1st, 2nd, 3rd)

## How Saving Can Save the Day.

If I need about \$50,000 when my 8-year-old is ready to go to college, I could...

SAVE



OR



BORROW

529 College Savings Fund  
**SAVE \$236/mo\***  
starting now through the first 4 years of college

Borrowed  
**PAY \$539/mo\*\***  
paid back over 10 years

OUT-OF-POCKET



\$39,650

\$64,700

\*Assuming a 9% average rate of return. \*\*At the Stafford Loan rate of 4.44% on April 28, 2018. All values reflected are expressed in nominal dollars.

Let us help you get started today at  
[myfloridaprepaid.com](http://myfloridaprepaid.com), or call 1.800.552.GRAD (4723).

FLORIDA  
PREPAID  
COLLEGE BOARD

▶ Starting is Believing

# April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Books to Share</p>  <p><i>Counting Crocodiles</i> Judy Sierra</p> <p><i>Mouse Shapes</i> Ellen Stoll Walsh</p> <p><i>The Doorbell Rang</i> Pat Hutchins</p>			<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Make sure your child always wears a helmet when riding a bike or skating. Check your child's helmet to be sure it fits him/her properly.</p>		1	2 Read <i>Counting Crocodiles</i> . Talk about numbers and what they represent. How high can your child count?
3	4 Make a counting book. Write the number at the bottom of each page and glue sets of pictures to match the number (i.e., 6 cats, 2 cars, 10 people, etc.).	5	6 Help your child create a math-on-the-go box for traveling. Include items for counting, sorting or building (i.e., cars, blocks, small animals)	7	8 At dinner place cards around each side dish (e.g., take 8 carrots, 1 slice of bread, etc.) Take turns counting out your food.	9
10 Build with legos/blocks. How many blocks does to take to reach the ceiling? Experiment with color and number patterns as you build.	11	12 Read <i>The Doorbell Rang</i> . Make predictions about how the story will end. Will there be enough cookies? Count how many cookies each child will have.	13	14 Make chocolate chip cookies together. Eat the cookies and compare how many chocolate chips are in each cookie. Who has less? Who has more?	15	16 Play hopscotch outside together. Use chalk or masking tape to draw the number board. Take turns hopping the numbers.
17	18 Read <i>Mouse Shapes</i> . Go on a shape hunt around the house or in your neighborhood. How many different shapes can you find?	19	20 Make your own bingo cards with numbers and play a few games of bingo with your child.	21	22 Earth Day	23
24	25	26 Trace your foot and your child's foot onto paper and cut them out. Measure around the house. How many mommy feet to the kitchen? Use your child's foot and compare the results.	27	28	29 After dinner play a couple of rounds of Go Fish with your child as a family. Take turns listening and asking.	30

# Encourage Your Child To Be Independent

Young children strive to be independent. Their developing independence begins with their ability to perform self-care routines (e.g., washing hands, brushing teeth, getting dressed/undressed, etc.) with little or no assistance from an adult. In order for a child to be successful in these routines, he or she must have opportunities to work the small muscles in his/her hands. With practice skills such as manipulating zippers and buttons on clothing, using utensils to eat, and holding crayons or pencils to write or draw can become mastered. Children will also watch what mommy and daddy do at home, paying attention to the roles each parent plays. They see mommy making dinner and daddy taking out the garbage. Over time they become anxious to help and take on "jobs" of their own. During the course of the prekindergarten year their zest for independence grows even more as they become part of a classroom community and take on new roles everyday (e.g., line leader, lunch helper, door holder, etc.). When a child follows through with his/her given tasks, he/she is contributing to the health and safety of the classroom. At this age, a child's degree of independence and willingness to participate in and carry out classroom routines are important indicators of kindergarten readiness.

## Tips for Parents:

Create opportunities for your child to participate in routines at home (i.e., setting the table, folding laundry, drying the dishes, caring for the family pet, etc.)

Post visual and written checklists for self-care routines to help remind your child of the steps he/she needs to take when brushing his/her teeth, washing his/her hands, etc.

Demonstrate proper health and safety routines at home with your child

Provide puzzles and other toys for your child to work that help strengthen fine motor skills

Vary the clothing you dress your child in so he/she can have opportunities to practice using zippers, buttons, laces, clasps, etc.

Be patient with your child's abilities and progress

Encourage your child to complete tasks independently before you offer help

Celebrate your child's accomplishments!



## The Family That Saves Together...

The 1-Year Florida University Plan is the first and only plan to allow multiple purchasers for a single beneficiary, so now the whole family can team up to help save for college. And did we mention it's also our most affordable plan!

Let us help you get started today at [myfloridaprepaid.com](http://myfloridaprepaid.com), or call 1.800.552.GRAD (4723).



▶ Starting is Believing

# May 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Make a visual/written checklist for steps to take when washing hands, brushing teeth, etc. and put it up so your child can review.	2	3	4 Dress your child in shorts that have snaps or zippers today. Encourage him/her to zip up or snap the shorts on his/her own.	5 Cinco de Mayo	6	7 Help your child choose a chore to do all month (e.g., cleaning his/her room). Make a chore chart and track your child's progress.
8 Mother's Day	9	10 String beads, noodles, or Cheerios on ribbon or pipe cleaners to make necklaces and bracelets.	11	12	13 Using a hole punch and paper, make your own lacing cards. Tie a piece of yarn to the card and practice lacing the yarn through each hole.	14
15 What can you make with playdoh? Practice rolling it with your fingers and flattening it with your hands.	16	17	18 Use tweezers to count and sort small objects (i.e., buttons, marbles, beads, etc.) by size, shape, or color.	19	20	21 Armed Forces Day
22	23 Dress your child in a shirt with buttons today. Encourage him/her to button the shirt on his/her own.	24	25	26 Provide your child with child-safe scissors, old magazines or paper. Let them practice their cutting skills and cut the paper into pieces.	27	28 Draw a simple picture using black marker on paper. Give your child a toothpick. Show him/her how to punch small holes around the edge of the picture to trace it.
 Parents, it's National 529 Savings Day! Start saving for college for just \$25/month! Floria Prepaid.	29 Memorial Day	30	31 Cut up strips of yarn into small pieces. Give your child a clothes pin. Show him/her how to squeeze open the clothes pin to pick up the yarn.	Books to Share  <i>I Can Do It Myself!</i> Diane Adams  <i>The Berenstain Bears &amp; the Trouble With Chores</i> Stan & Jan Berenstain  <i>I'm Big</i> Milton Schafer	<b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Talk to your kids about how to be safe when walking and playing outside, being aware of moving vehicles and playing away from busy streets.	

# Be Curious and Investigate the Natural World With Your Child

Children are naturally curious about objects and the world around them. During the prekindergarten year children are encouraged to expand their curiosity by asking questions, making predictions and participating in scientific activities to further their understanding of physical events and the natural world. They explore living things to identify growth and change, examine new objects using a magnifying glass, and experiment with cause and effect as they mix colors or ingredients to see what happens. When children are actively engaged in their learning, they become excited. This excitement propels them to want to learn more and share their knowledge and experiences with others.

## Tips for Parents:

Provide opportunities for your child to examine how things work

Use everyday events to help your child learn about nature

Take daily walks and discuss what you see with your child

Cook together, provide opportunities for your child to experiment with taste, texture and smells

Read books to your child describing how things work, how they grow and change

Talk about the weather with your child, encourage him/her to make predictions about what the weather will be like, and how it will change

Talk about recycling with your child

Encourage your child to help care for plants and animals at home, talk about what they need

Sing songs that require your child to act out how things grow and change

Encourage your child to help sort items in the recycling bin into groups (i.e., plastic, glass, metal, cardboard, paper)

Build something with your child that requires using different tools

## Get to Know the Flexible and Affordable Florida 529 Savings Plan.

A Florida 529 Savings Plan is a tax-advantaged way to cover housing, books and lots of the other costs of attending school, and you can save as much or as little as you choose. There are no in-state residency restrictions or time limitations on usage, and they make a great "family" plan because they can be used by a parent or child.

A large, stylized blue '529' logo is centered within a white rounded square, which is set against a dark blue background.

Let us help you get started today at [myfloridaprepaid.com](http://myfloridaprepaid.com), or call 1.800.552.GRAD (4723).



▶ *Starting is Believing*

# June 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Books to Share</p> 	<p><i>I Love Tools!</i> Philemon Sturges</p> <p><i>How A Seed Grows</i> Helene J. Jordan</p> <p><i>What Is Science?</i> Rebecca Kai Dotlich</p>		<p>1</p> <p>Read <i>What Is Science?</i> Ask your child questions about the story as you read to check for understanding.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Read <i>How A Seed Grows</i>. Talk about what happens to a seed as it grows. What does a seed need to grow?</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Plant a window garden with your child. Make predictions about how it will grow, measure and chart its progress throughout the month.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>In the bathtub, experiment with different toys. Make predictions, will they sink or float?</p> <p>Ramadan Begins</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Take a weather walk. What is the weather today? How does it feel? What does it look like? What do you hear or smell?</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Flag Day</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Check on your window garden. How has it changed? Measure it, write about it, and draw a picture of it in a journal.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Encourage your child to help sort recycling products (paper, plastics, glass, etc.) and place outside for pickup.</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> <p>Read <i>I Love Tools!</i> Explore what tools you have in your house. Can you name them?</p> <p>Father's Day</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Build a birdhouse with your child using the tools you have at home. Let your child paint and decorate it.</p> <p>Summer Begins</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Camp out in the backyard. Talk about what you hear at night. What do you see, smell, etc. Write a story about it together.</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Check on your window garden. How has it changed? Measure it, write about it, and draw a picture of it in a journal.</p>
<p>26</p> <p>Go on a nature walk to the park. Bring a magnifying glass to watch the ants, examine leaves, etc. Make a book together about what you saw.</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Check on your window garden. How has it changed? Measure it, write about it, and draw a picture of it in a journal.</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Sensory Fun: Provide your child with different items to look at, feel, smell, touch, and taste. Categorize the items (i.e., soft, light, big, round, etc.).</p>	<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Watch your children closely around water. Teach your child never to go near water without an adult to supervise them. Enroll your child in swim lessons at your local YMCA.</p>	

# Actively Play With Your Child

## Be Creative, Sing, Dance, and Be Silly

As they develop, children need multiple outlets to express their emotions, share ideas, use language, and solve problems. The experiences children have to creatively express themselves through art, music, dance, and dramatic play are valuable in that they allow children to freely express what they already know, experiment playing different roles and to safely move their bodies or act out complicated real-life scenarios to help them understand the world around them. Creative expression is also an outlet for children to pursue their own interests and further their own abilities. When children are engaged in activities they enjoy, they are happy and are more motivated to learn new skills. At this age, their work during these activities helps them to develop an understanding that people can express themselves in various ways. In turn, they learn to show appreciation for these differences by asking questions and commenting on another's work.

### Tips for Parents:

Provide multiple opportunities for your child to be creative at home. Introduce different art materials and supplies to your child

Pretend play with your child, follow their lead and ask questions to further stimulate their imagination

Be creative with your child: paint, draw pictures, dance, and sing

Read books about the arts to your child

Play appropriate music and dance while you carry out routines at home

Show interest in your child's creative process, ask questions about their artwork

Play various instruments with your child and talk about the sounds they make

Play movement games with your child that require him/her to move in different ways

Make up stories with your child at bedtime and add to them each night

Act out scenes from your child's favorite books



# July 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Books to Share</p> 	<p><i>Giraffes Can't Dance</i> Giles Andreae</p> <p><i>Harold and the Purple Crayon</i> Crockett Johnson</p> <p><i>Beautiful Oops!</i> Barney Saltzberg</p>		<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Always LOOK Before You LOCK your car. Make sure any car keys are kept up and out of reach of children at all times. If you see a child left alone in a car call 911.</p>		<p>1</p> <p>Designate a special spot as an art gallery and hang up pictures or artwork created by your child.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>3</p> <p>Make a plan to picnic in the park and watch a fireworks display on the Fourth of July as a family.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Independence Day</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Talk about the fireworks display you saw last night. What did it look like? What did it feel like? What did you smell, or hear? Draw a picture and write about what you saw.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Library Day: Check out books or videos about kids' yoga. Watch the videos and practice doing some of the poses with your child.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Play music and dance together while cleaning up around the house.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Use food coloring to make red, green, and blue water. Use an eye dropper to experiment mixing colors and drop the water onto a coffee filter.</p>
<p>10</p> <p>Pattern Play: Make patterns using legos or blocks. Have your child copy or continue the pattern. How many different patterns can you make?</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Play musical chairs together as a family. Experiment with fast and slow, and different types of music. How does the music make you feel?</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Spend some special time together with your child doing the activities he/she enjoys. Follow his/her lead in play and have fun!</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Make counting cans: Write numbers on the front of each can. Count out pens, pencils, etc. to match the numbers and place them in the can.</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17</p> <p>Read <i>Harold and the Purple Crayon</i> together. Ask your child to retell you the story in his/her own words.</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Have your child help you sort the laundry to wash into categories (i.e., whites, color, cold water, hot water, etc.).</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Spend a day at the park together as a family. Play games and have a picnic. Take pictures of your day and make a scrapbook.</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Review shapes with your child. Can you find a triangle, square, oval, diamond, circle and rectangle?</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Read <i>Beautiful Oops!</i> with your child. Talk about art. What is art? How is art made? What is your child's favorite art project?</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Paint with your child. Review colors. Mix colors together to create new ones and make a list of all the colors you made.</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Go on a bike ride. Have a conversation about what you see, hear, smell, taste. What does the weather feel like? Is it hot or cold out?</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31</p>						



# August 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>SAFETY TIP:</b> Talk to your child about playground safety. Teach him/her that pushing, shoving, on the playground is dangerous and how to ask an adult for help.</p>	 <p>1 The start of another school year. One year closer to college. Florida Prepaid.</p>	<p>2 Begin to follow a regular bedtime routine with your child so he/she will be well adjusted to waking up early for school.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 Read <i>Kindergarten, Here I Come!</i> Have a conversation with your child about what it will be like to go to Kindergarten.</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>8 Begin making back to school plans with your child - What can he/she expect to happen on their first day of Kindergarten?</p>	<p>9</p>	 <p>10 This time 14 years from now, they'll be in college. Do you have a plan? Florida Prepaid.</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 Help your child make a school supply list. Encourage him/her to write the words on his/her own as you say them.</p>	<p>13 Review the school supply list with your child and take it to the store. Can your child find all the items on the list?</p>
<p>14 Read <i>The Kissing Hand</i>. Talk about the story and review your back to school plan with your child. Be reassuring that things will be ok.</p>	<p>15 Begin to check your child's backpack each day for important notes, etc. Make a plan to help complete and/or review any homework assignments each night.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 Read <i>Adventure Annie Goes to Kindergarten</i>. Ask your child how he/she is feeling. Listen and be sure to acknowledge his/her fears and excitement.</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 Keep a notebook in your child's backpack to communicate with your child's teacher regarding any issues or concerns you may have throughout the school year.</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 Have a conversation with your child about school. What is his/her favorite part of the day and why? Encourage your child to make friends with his/her classmates.</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>28</p>	<p>29 Take the time each day to ask your child about his/her day-what they learned, what they liked or disliked. Talk through any concerns together.</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>Books to Share</p>  <p><i>Kindergarten, Here I Come!</i> D.J. Steinberg</p> <p><i>Adventure Annie Goes to Kindergarten</i> Toni Buzzeo</p> <p><i>The Kissing Hand</i> Audrey Penn</p>		

# Parent Resources

## County Agencies

Early Learning Coalition of  
Escambia County  
3300 North Pace Blvd. Suite 210  
Pensacola, FL 32505  
(850) 595-5400  
[www.elcescambia.org](http://www.elcescambia.org)

Escambia County School District  
75 North Pace Blvd.  
Pensacola, FL 32505  
(850) 432-6121  
[www.escambiaschools.org](http://www.escambiaschools.org)

United Way of Escambia County  
1301 West Government Street  
Pensacola, FL 32502  
(850)434-3157  
[www.unitedwayescambia.org](http://www.unitedwayescambia.org)

Gulf Coast Kids House  
3401 North 12th Avenue  
Pensacola, FL 32503  
(850) 595-5800  
[www.gulfcoastkidshouse.org](http://www.gulfcoastkidshouse.org)

Manna Food Pantries  
116 East Gonzalez Street  
Pensacola, FL 32501  
(850) 432-2053  
[www.mannafoodpantries.org](http://www.mannafoodpantries.org)

## Get Linked: Websites

Florida Office of Early Learning  
[www.floridaearlylearning.com](http://www.floridaearlylearning.com)

Safe Kids Worldwide  
[www.safekids.org/parents](http://www.safekids.org/parents)

Department of Children and Families  
[www.myflfamilies.com](http://www.myflfamilies.com)

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Florida Department of Health  
Escambia County  
<http://escambia.floridahealth.gov/>

5210 Let's Go Northwest Florida  
<http://5210nwfl.com/>

## Local Libraries

West Florida Public Library  
Main Branch  
239 North Spring Street  
Pensacola, FL 32502  
(850) 436-5060  
<http://mywfppl.com/locations/>

\*Visit the website above for a full list of  
branch locations\*

## Fun & Educational Recreation for Kids

WSRE Imagination Station  
At Blue Wahoo Stadium  
351 West Cedar Street  
Pensacola, FL 32502  
(850) 484-1200  
<http://www.wsre.org/community>

Naval Aviation Museum  
1750 Radford Blvd.  
Pensacola, FL 32506  
(850) 452-3604  
<http://www.navalaviationmuseum.org>



More options for you means  
▶ more options for them.

Each plan is a step toward their success



**2-Year Florida College Plan**

Covers full tuition and most fees for 60 credit hours at one of 28 Florida Colleges.



**4-Year Florida College Plan**

Covers full tuition and most fees for 120 credit hours at one of 28 Florida Colleges.



**2 + 2 Florida Plan**

Covers full tuition and most fees for 60 credit hours at one of 28 Florida Colleges, plus 60 credit hours at one of 12 State Universities.



**1-Year Florida University Plan**

Covers full tuition and most fees for 30 credit hours at one of 12 State Universities in Florida.



**4-Year Florida University Plan**

Covers full tuition and most fees for 120 credit hours at one of 12 State Universities.



**Florida 529 Savings Plan**

Flexible education savings with a variety of investment options. Valid nationwide for qualified education expenses like books, fees, etc.



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**Knowing is Believing**

Every Prepaid Plan is guaranteed by the state of Florida — you can never lose any amount that you've paid into your plans.

Let us help you get started today  
at [myfloridaprepaid.com](http://myfloridaprepaid.com), or call  
1.800.552.GRAD (4723).