



FDLRS SUNCOAST

QUARTER 1 NEWSLETTER - 2021/2022

SERVING CHARLOTTE, MANATEE,
& SARASOTA COUNTIES



ABOUT FDLRS SUNCOAST

The **Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System (FDLRS)** Suncoast Associate Center (AC) Team provides diagnostic, instructional, and technology support services to district exceptional education programs and families of students with disabilities. FDLRS serves four main functions: Child Find, Parent Services, Human Resources Development (HRD) and Technology. FDLRS Child Find, in coordination with the school districts, locates children who are potentially eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and links them with needed services. **Child Find Services** help to promote general public awareness of programs and services available for young children who have or are at risk of developing disabilities. FDLRS **Parent Services** provides information, training, and support to districts and families, in order to promote effective parent participation in the education of children who are exceptional. Parent Services include assistance in the development of family-friendly programs, training and support for services for children with disabilities, and the support of partnerships between schools and parents. FDLRS **Human Resources Development (HRD)** function personnel collaboratively plan and provide information, training, consultation, and resources related to effective instructional strategies and models for the education of children and youth who are exceptional and/or have unique needs based on locally assessed needs and established priorities. FDLRS provides assistance and support in the appropriate use of a variety of technologies for students, teachers, professional staff, and parents. **Technology Support Services** are available in the areas of assistive technology, instructional technology, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), AIM/NIMAS Florida services, and virtual instruction. The FDLRS Suncoast Associate Center also includes a **Florida Inclusion Network (FIN)** Facilitator who provides information about effective inclusive practices, family-school collaboration and communication, opportunities for networking with other families, and ways to access local resources and support.

WHAT'S INSIDE

EARLY CHILDHOOD: Child Outcomes Summary Updates

INSTRUCTION: Ideas for Multi-Sensory Reading Instruction

FAMILIES: Reading IQ & New Worlds Reading Initiative



FDLRS SUNCOAST AC TEAM:

- Tracey Cardenas, Program Manager
- Danielle Ard, FIN Facilitator
- Angelica Rossi, HRD/Tech Specialist and PDA Coordinator
- Lanette Devitt, HRD/Parent Services Consultant
- Dawn Giddens, HRD/Tech Specialist
- Pam Massey, Child Find/Parent Services Specialist Charlotte
- Celeste Preseault, Child Find/Parent Services Specialist Manatee
- Diane Cummings, Child Find/Parent Services Specialist Sarasota
- Ramona Schweickhardt, FDLRS Administrative Assistant
- Dina Romero, FDLRS Child Find Administrative Assistant

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CHILD OUTCOMES SUMMARY PROCESS UPDATES

To determine if children are making progress, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) requires all state ECSE programs to report data on the following three child outcomes:

- 1.Children have positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- 2.Children acquire and use knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication and early literacy);
- 3.Children use appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Progress is measured by growth and the extent to which each child compares to same aged peers-in all three child outcome areas. The COS process is a systematic method for a team of individuals who are familiar with a child, including parents, to summarize multiple sources of information about their functioning in each of the three outcome areas. Information could include parent report, service provider and teacher observations, and results from formal and informal assessments. The COS form is not an assessment instrument - it is a way to summarize information and is needed because there are no assessment instruments that directly measure the three child outcomes.

There are four key features of a quality Child Outcomes Summary process.

- The process produces a description of the child's functioning at a point in time by synthesizing multiple sources of information.
- It is a team process, involving professionals and family members contributing to decision- making.
- The process involves team members using the information gathered about a child to rate their functioning in each of the three outcome areas on a 7-point scale.
- The 7-point rating scale is used to compare the child's skills and behaviors with those expected for their age.
- The Child Outcomes Summary process is completed at two points in time, at a minimum-- when the child enters the program and when the child exits the program.

[Read more about the COS here.](#)

PARENT SERVICES



NEW WORLDS READING INITIATIVE

Governor DeSantis recently signed House Bill 3, investing \$270M in the New Worlds Reading Initiative, a program aimed at delivering free books to homes of elementary-school students who read below grade level. The voluntary program would provide free book delivery to the homes of elementary students who read below grade level. Recipients would get one free book every month for nine months of the year, throughout the school year. This funding will be used to improve literacy and close achievement gaps as a part of Florida's goal to be the #1 state for literacy in the nation.



FREE TRIAL - READING IQ FOR FAMILIES & TEACHERS

ReadingIQ is the latest development from Age of Learning, Inc, the same people who brought you ABCmouse. ReadingIQ is a huge digital library for children 12 and under, which gives families and teachers access to thousands of high-quality books, chosen by experts to advance literacy. The ReadingIQ collection includes books with simple language, early chapter books with engaging characters, picture books with light-hearted stories, and nonfiction texts that provide informational graphics to support understanding. The collection also includes many Read to Me books to support readers in developing listening comprehension.

Age of Learning is partnering with the Florida House of Representatives to immediately support the New Worlds Reading Initiative, which provides quality literary resources to Florida families.

This partnership offers every Florida family FREE access, through Dec. 31, 2021, to a comprehensive library of digital books for children 12 and under.

Parents can start their trial at <https://www.readingiq.com/teachers/redeem/create-account>.

The cost of full membership is \$7.99 a month.

"FRIDAYS WITH FDLRS" - A PARENT WEBINAR SERIES



The FDLRS Administration Project and Associate Centers Network are proud to offer a series of parent webinars to take place virtually over the 2021-2022 school year.

The 90-minute webinars are conducted during lunch hours, from 11:30AM - 1:00PM EST on a designated Friday for parents, family and professionals. All sessions will be recorded and posted at www.fdlrs.org.

These webinars are free of charge and open to all parents, families, and professionals working with children with disabilities or those with unique learning needs.

Registration for all webinars is located at: <http://www.fdlrs.org/free-parent-webinars-fridays-fdlrs>.



- **October 15th** - Strategies to Support Homework Completion
- **November 19th** - Understanding Quality Individualized Education Plans
- **December 17th** - Family Guide for at Home Learning
- **January 21st** - Smart Artificial Intelligence Devices at Home
- **February 18th** - Supporting Writing at Home
- **March 18th** - Including Children in Storytime
- **April 15th** - Sensory Processing for Parents
- **May 13th** - Summer Activities and Resources for Parents and Families

DEVELOP A STRONG PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP FOR FAMILIES WITH DISABILITIES



BUILDING TRUST: Let's always remember that the children in our class are someone's baby, and we should treat our students as we expect our children to be taken care of when they go off to school. Having parents feel comfortable leaving their baby with someone new is difficult for all, but can be even harder for parents of children with disabilities.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE: Parents have the utmost knowledge about their child. Having the families share what makes their child tick is so essential for any teacher. Start the year by having families [complete a questionnaire about their child](#).

ACCOUNTABILITY: Setting up a communication routine at the beginning of the school year will help hold both you and the families accountable.

DAILY COMMUNICATION LOG: Send home a daily communication log with your students. Our students often struggle with communication, and it can be difficult for the students to explain how their day went to their families.

[Read the full list at Stage of Learning.](#)



CDC AUTISM AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES MONITORING NETWORK

Published every two years by the CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, the study shows the rates of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) jumped 10% between 2014 and 2016. Instead, the rise in rates may be due, in part, to the increased awareness of parents and clinicians. The increase is also driven by the rising diagnoses rates in minority children, with African-Americans and Hispanics narrowing the "diagnostic gap" with their white counterparts. This is evident in the most recent two-year interval between studies. [Read the full article from the University of Miami here.](#)

HOW MULTISENSORY ACTIVITIES ENHANCE READING SKILLS

When we discover that a child doesn't respond to and recall information in the traditional ways, it is important to consider how the brain receives information. The brain is exposed to a stimulus (hearing a phone ring or tasting spaghetti), at which point it analyzes and evaluates the information. Our five senses (sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste) send information to our brain, which is designed to recognize sensations, initiate behaviors, and store memories. Multisensory activities benefit all students and can be implemented daily in our classrooms. However, the key is to use more than one sense at a time in order to cement the concept. A sight-based activity alone isn't enough; pair visual learning activities with another type. When a lesson uses multiple senses at once, it reinforces students' strengths and strengthens their weaknesses. [Read the entire article on Edutopia.](#)



Labels
Word Walls
Anchor Charts
Flash Cards
Graphic Organizers

Letter Sounds
Rhyming Songs
Read Alouds
Shared Reading
Audiobooks




Finger Spell in Pudding & Cheez Whiz
Spell with ABC Crackers

Form Letters in Scented Shaving Cream
Smelly Markers
Scratch & Sniff Books



Letter Tiles
Play-Dough
Kinetic Sand
Air-writing
Arm Tapping



SCHOOL COUNSELING IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

Growing concerns about threats to students' mental health and decreased numbers of students transitioning to postsecondary education suggest access to school counselors is needed more than ever. Although previous research on school counselors finds they promote positive postsecondary, social emotional, and academic outcomes for students, further studies highlight the organizational constraints, such as an overemphasis on administrative duties and unclear role expectations, that hinder their work.

Here are some of the ways schools and families can prepare for a new school year filled with uncertainty, and support the counselors at school who can help.



Prepare for Phobias: The isolation and disconnect that students experienced was so significant that there will be transitional challenges. Schools will need to be prepared for students dealing with new school-related phobias.

Creating a Safe Space: Setting interventions to create space for kids to self-regulate or calm down and feel safe, so that it's not just entering the building and going to your classroom. Knowing that this space exists would go a long way for parents who are concerned.

Communicate Roles: Counselors can be a great resource for educating parents and caregivers, but schools need to make sure that connection is made as oftentimes the role of counselors can be misunderstood by students and parents.

STRATEGIES TO HELP STUDENTS MANAGE TRANSITIONS

Teachers often have students that struggle when transitioning from one activity to another and one class to another, both on an individual basis and across entire classrooms. Students can struggle with this skill due to challenges with sensory processing, such as emotional regulation, attention, and speech and language processing. Difficulties with transitioning may manifest in a variety of different behaviors, including avoidance, decreased attention, resistance, or fight-or-flight. [The full article, "Strategies That Help Students Manage Transitions," by Lauren Brukner can be found at Edutopia.](#)



Have your students stand with their feet firmly planted and then place their palms on their hips. Have them keep this position when walking. This gives students awareness of a central point of balance and control within their bodies, which can decrease the fight-or-flight response, thus increasing overall regulation.



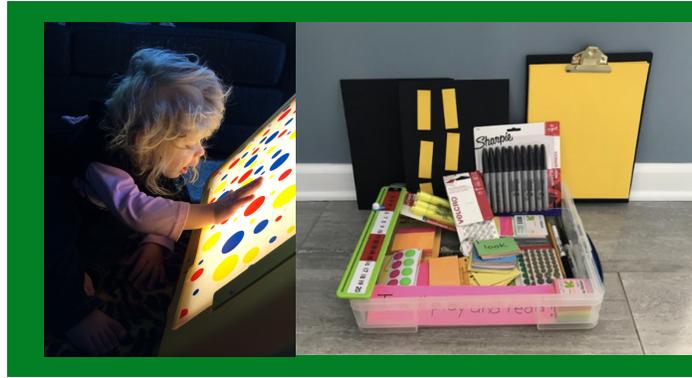
Fidgets and weighted fanny packs: Fidgets are sometimes mentioned with respect to metacognitive "strategy instruction," as tools that help students reflect on their thinking, self-monitor, and take ownership of their learning. Any number of sensory items can double as fidgets, such as wax craft sticks, putty, or weighted beanbags.



Ask your students to visualize a story unfolding and share it with a friend or a helpful adult, or have your students tell a collective story in which each contributes one sentence. Try asking students who struggle significantly with transitions to choose a story to tell their peers when moving from one task to another



If you have a student who struggles significantly with transitions, consider providing them with low-frequency music, which can aid in improving regulation. The number of beats per minute is important in terms of focus: 100 beats per minute is reported to be best in aiding attention to presented tasks, while 60 beats per minute is said to be best before bed.



BUILDING YOUR CORTICAL VISUAL IMPAIRMENT ADAPTATION TOOLBOX

- **Stack of yellow paper**
- **Black File Folders** (Used to make your own folder games)
- **Black Cardstock** (Great for covering up one row at a time in a book or on a worksheet.)
- **Metal Rings** (Used to hold pages, cards, and other materials together)
- **Solid Color Cardstock** (Used to make flashcards)
- **Sentence Strips** (Great for practicing sentence or vocabulary)
- **Markers for Highlighting or Underlining**
- **Sharpies**
- **Bright Solid Color Sticky Notes**
- **Roll of Colorful Masking Tape** (Used to tape to mark doorways or edges of steps)
- **Puffy Paint** (Serves as tactual reminder)
- **Bumpy Stickers** (bump dots or felt or velcro to mark ON/OFF switches)
- **Glue**
- **Scissors**
- Counters or manipulatives for addition and subtraction
- **Stickers**
- **Crayons**
- **List of Apps** ([Click here](#))

SEE THE TOOLBOX IN ACTION



[Click here to read the entire article "CVI Adaptations Tool Box," by Lisha Yochimowitz at Paths to Literacy.](#)

[Click here to watch the video tour of the CVI Adaptations Box.](#)

VIDEO RESOURCES TO HELP CHILDREN UNDERSTAND AND MANAGE COVID-RELATED ANXIETY



[How to help children cope with stress during the COVID-19 pandemic?](#)



[Explained to Kids: Worry and Anxiety Over COVID-19 Coronavirus](#)

UPCOMING FDLRS TRAININGS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

DISABILITY AWARENESS THROUGH LITERATURE

ALL educators in Charlotte,
Manatee & Sarasota
Counties

- 10/7/21 @ 5:00pm

MAKING INSTRUCTION STICK Sarasota PD Day

- 10/15/21 @ 9:00am & 1:00pm

Contact Angel Rossi
angelica.rossi@sarasotacountychools.net



PUMPING UP SUPPORTS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION BY: BRITTANY VIGIL & JESSICA SHROYER-KING

Brittany Vigil and Jessica Shroyer-King are assistant principals at Coates Elementary School in Herndon, Virginia. They realized there was a need to maximize the amount of time that teachers and paraprofessionals were spending with students with disabilities in order to directly support individualized education program (IEP) goals. A focus on scheduling, professional development, and accountability ensures every student gets the resources they need. [Read about their process by clicking here.](#)

UPCOMING FIN TRAININGS TO SUPPORT LEARNING

COLLABORATIVE TEACHING

Sarasota PD Day

- 10/15/21 @ 8:00am

ALL educators in Charlotte, Manatee & Sarasota Counties

- 10/18/21 @ 4:30pm

PARAPROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Sarasota PD Day

- 10/15/21 @ 12:00pm

SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION

ALL educators in Charlotte, Manatee & Sarasota Counties

- 11/4/21 @ 4:30pm

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

ALL educators in Charlotte, Manatee & Sarasota Counties

- 11/16/21 @ 4:30pm



CPALMS.ORG FOR FLORIDA PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

CPALMS is the State of Florida's official source for standards information and course descriptions. It provides access to thousands of standards with aligned, free, and high-quality instructional/educational resources that have been developed specifically for the standards and vetted through our rigorous review process. CPALMS also provides 16 state-of-the-art curriculum planning and professional development apps/tools to help educators effectively implement the standards. CPALMS was built primarily for Florida's educators but it transformed to a global resource with users from more than 200+ countries and territories around the world. It doesn't matter if you are a student, teacher, home-schooler, administrator, parent, or anyone else. CPALMS's instructional and educational resources are available to you completely FREE of charge. [Watch this short video to learn what Cpalms.org has to offer to parents and caregivers.](#) CPALMS has recently made changes so that all Florida parents have access to all teaching resources without needing an account to help them through this challenging period of time we've all been experiencing. Navigate to the website to begin exploring some of the resources we offer to Florida parents and caregivers. For more information and videos, visit www.cpalms.org and click the tab entitled "I am a Florida Parent."