



WC Connecting for Kids Newsletter

Director's Note: Inspiration from a Tampa conference

I recently attended the Infant Mental Health/Early Childhood Council Conference in Tampa and was impressed by the quality of presenters and attendees. One speaker who stood out for me was Ellen Galinsky, president of the Families and Work Institute, who reminded me why we are all working with young children and their families. Her landmark book is *MIND IN THE MAKING: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs*. Ellen Galinsky, is the President and Co-Founder of [Families and Work Institute](#), and helped establish the field of work and family life at Bank Street College of Education, where she was on the faculty for twenty-five years. She also directs Mind in the Making, a project on the science of early learning.

The seven skills she considers essential are summarized as:

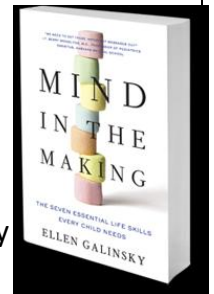
1. **Focus and Self Control** – children need this skill in order to achieve their goals especially in a world that is filled with distractions and information overload.
2. **Perspective Taking** – children who can figure out what others feel and think are less likely to get involved in conflicts.
3. **Communicating** – children need to be able to determine what they want to communicate and how. This is the skill teachers and employers feel is most lacking today.
4. **Making Connections** – children who can make unusual connections are more creative and can go beyond knowing information to using information well.
5. **Critical Thinking** – children need to be able to search for reliable knowledge to guide their beliefs, decisions, and actions.
6. **Taking on Challenges** – children who can take on challenges instead of avoiding or simply coping with them will do better in school and in life.
7. **Self-Directed Engaged Learning** – lifelong learners can change as the world changes in order to reach their full potential.

MIND IN THE MAKING explains how children learn these skills and how we can help them through every day activities.

Galinsky recommends hundreds of tips, including playing games like “Simon Says,” but in new ways – by doing the opposite of what the leader is doing (to practice self control), asking why, what, where and who questions (to practice communicating), and encouraging children to pursue their passions. She empowers parents to make a difference starting right now and at any age -- it's never too late to encourage these skills in your children. Hopefully you will make time to share activities with your children and grandchildren this summer and nurture their social, emotional and intellectual growth.

Enjoy,

Patricia E. Johnson



Family Tax Benefits and Credits Continue to Make Impact



**Prosperity Program
of Manatee**

Hard to believe, but this was the Whole Child Prosperity Program's sixth year preparing taxes for low and moderate income families. Initially funded by the Knight Foundation in 2005, the Prosperity Program moved from outreach education about family tax benefits and credits to volunteer recruitment, training and site coordination for the hands-on, actual event of electronic tax filing.

In our first year of tax filing we had four staff, one volunteer and a very supportive IRS community liaison tax specialist. We assisted over fifty tax filers and brought back over \$99,000 in refunds,

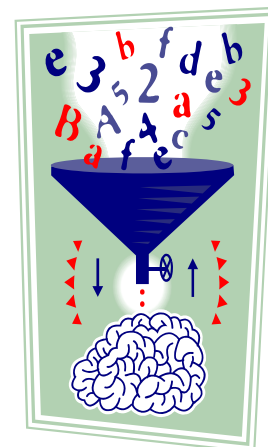
one quarter of which was from the Earned Income Tax Credit. Since then, our numbers have steadily risen, except of course, our staff and volunteer numbers. And just like many of you reading this, our funding sources have changed several times. Lucky for us, MCG's Neighborhood Services has been a key partner in helping us to keep this program going. We also appreciate the continued partnership of Suncoast Workforce and their great team on the Mobile Career Center.

The 2011 tax filing season was a challenge. Volunteers, who looked promising, simply could not join us and one week, we had a reduced staff due to a death in the family. But we did it and to be perfectly honest, we had a great time too.

One third of the tax forms we prepared were from returning families and individuals who continue to seek us out no matter where we end up. An Italian father of two sons whose taxes we've done since the beginning brought us a batch of homemade biscotti and a rum cake (which we only ate after hours). What's not to like? One third of the returns we filed were for those over sixty years of age. The total number of returns we prepared was 162, which brought back over \$310,000 into the community. One third of that total was from the Earned Income Tax Credit; one fifth of that total was from the Child Tax Credit. The Average Adjusted Gross income of those families and individuals we assisted was \$23,000 annually.

Top Needs in over 50% or More of Whole Child Profiles Submitted from June 2010 to June 2011

| | |
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| Does not have a dentist for their child/children under age 6 | 72% |
| Wants information about activities in community for family | 68% |
| Needs childcare/preschool for their child/children under age 6 | 55% |
| Usually runs out of money before food, shelter and clothing needs are met | 54% |
| Needs information on housing | 54% |
| Does not have a doctor for self and the rest of the family | 53% |
| Needs information about job placement, training, GED, ESOL or Higher Education classes | 51% |
| Needs information related to Women's Health | 51% |
| Needs health insurance / Medicaid for rest of family | 50% |
| If expecting a child, does not have pre-natal care | 50% |



National Family Summer Events

June 25th: Family Campout

The National Wildlife Federation is "hosting" a Great American Backyard Campout to encourage families to sleep under the stars. It's a fundraiser, and a way for families to re-connect with the outdoors this summer.

http://online.nwf.org/site/PageNavigator/qabc_2010_home

July 30th: Support Our Schools March

All Americans will depend on making sure upcoming generations get a world-class education. Here's a call to march on Washington and the Education Department, calling for continued action to reclaim schools as places of learning, joy, and democracy.

<http://www.saveourschoolsmarch.org/>



Child Health + Literacy = Success On July 16th

from 11am-2pm: Parents are invited to come to the Manatee County Central Library with their young children for a day of fun, and learning!

The event will have healthy snacks and fun activities; kids can make a book, enjoy a storyteller, puppet show stories, clowns, games, and Musical Motions – a program of the Family Partnership Center. Information about Florida KidCare, affordable child health insurance, will be available and parents can even apply during the event with a certified application assistant. Parents can learn about more community resources through the Whole Child Connection, and information about injury prevention and poison control will also be available. A healthy child is better able to learn, focus, and thrive. Come learn how Florida KidCare and the libraries can help your child do his or her best!

Call 748-4501 x 6205 for more information about this event.

The Manatee County Public Library System is participating in Geek the Library; a community based public awareness campaign. The campaign highlights what people are passionate about and how libraries can support them, in an effort to heighten awareness about the critical funding issues public libraries face.

Geek the Library features local educational material that introduces 'geek' as a verb, and encourages the public to talk about what they 'geek'—whether it's engineering, superheroes or art. The public awareness campaign illustrates the fact that everyone is passionate about something—everyone 'geeks' something—and that the library supports them all.



I geek
worms

The library helps everyone explore the things they geek. With Internet access for all, knowledgeable librarians and local programs, the library is an important resource for your community. Keep your library vital by turning your passions into support. Get your geek on. Show your support.

geekthelibrary.org

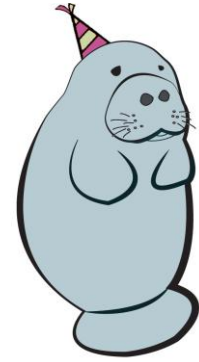
Brought to you by OCLC, a nonprofit library cooperative, with funding by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Geekthelibrary.org does not support or oppose any candidate for public office and does not take positions on legislation.

To find out more about your local library go to:
www.mymanatee.org/library

Snooty the Manatee Celebrates 63rd Birthday

Saturday, July 16th, 2011 10am to 2pm

Join Snooty on Saturday, July 16 2011 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the South Florida Museum, Bishop Planetarium and Parker Manatee Aquarium. This annual event will celebrate Snooty's 63rd birthday and promote wildlife awareness. This event will be held in the Spanish Plaza and is free from 10 a. m. to 2 p.m. for all Snooty's friends and fans. The celebration will feature children's games and art activities; free cookies and juice for the children, a display of Snooty's birthday cards submitted for the card contest; plus much, much more!!!



To enter Snooty's Birthday card contest go to

<http://www.southfloridamuseum.org/ThingsToDo/SnootysBirthdayBash.aspx>

Admission to the birthday party in the Spanish Plaza is free. All day reduced admission prices to the Museum, Aquarium and Planetarium are \$8 for adults, \$7 for seniors (65 and over), \$6 for children ages 4-12, under 4 are free with a paying adult. Food and drinks available for purchase.

Summer Safety Connections

Poison Help:

www.PoisonCenterTampa.org

Hotline number: 1-800-222-1222

Bonnie McDougal 813-844-7981

Water Safety:

www.floridasafepools.com

Swim lessons available at GT Bray

Call 941-742-5923 or go to

www.mymanatee.org/parks

Back to school info:

If you're interested in Safe Routes-- Biking and Walking to Daughtrey, call Amy Anderson, school district 708-8800 ext. 1223

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal program designed to make it safe, easy and convenient for children in grades K-5 to walk and bicycle to schools. The program raises kids' levels of physical activity and safety and reduces pollution and traffic congestion.

For more program information contact: Melissa Edlin, Community Educator, 800-756-7233, ext. 3 melisaedlin@allkids.org

National Night Out Pride Park

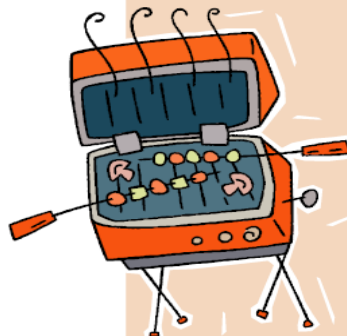
Join us for a unique National Night Out event on several blocks located in the Pride Park Community in South Manatee County. Numerous organizations throughout the county will come together to provide supportive services, activities, and education to residents of Pride Park, including the following:

- Manatee County Health Department - Bike Helmet Fittings and Immunizations for Children
- Southern Manatee Fire Rescue
- Whole Child Manatee
- Manatee Community Action Agency - Container Gardening
- Suncoast Community Capital -Small Business Development
- Healthy Teens Coalition
- HIV Testing Bus

.....and more!

Come celebrate with your community!

Tuesday, August 2nd 6pm - 8pm



For more information:

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Elizabeth@manateehousing.com
p (941) 756-3974 x135