



## Steering Committee

Loranne Ausley (Chair)  
Ken Armstrong  
Nina Ashenafi  
Courtney Brogan  
Kristin Dozier  
Laurie Dozier  
Lauren Faison  
Ed Feaver  
Bob Gabordi  
Robin Johnston  
Serena Moyle  
Bev Owens  
Lori Danello Roberts  
Angel Trejo

## Thank you to ELC for Sponsoring our "Catching Smiles" CD

"Catching Smiles - Music for the Spiritual Dimension of the Whole Child" will be reproduced thanks to support from the Early Learning Coalition of the Big Bend.

"Catching Smiles" will be given to new parents as they leave the hospital. "Catching Smiles" artists include: Velma Frye, Rodger "SafariMan" Tripp, Carol Ann Matthews and more.

Songs are currently available for download on the WCL website. For songs, click [here](#).

## Whole Child Leon Community Update January, 2011



Our next Professional Network meeting is at Noon on Monday, January 24th.

Guest Speakers include:

- Tamara-Kay Tibbey, DMD, Executive Dental Director, Gadsden County Health Department will give a presentation on Childhood Oral Health for Children under 5.
- 211 Big Bend will present on their resource and referral service. Presenting are: Janet Bard Hanson, Ph.D., Director of Management, Cathy Schroeder, Community Outreach Coordinator and Jason Zauder, Outreach and Education Coordinator

Email [Heather Telfer](#) if you would like to be added to the Professional Network invitation list.

## Family Connection Corners

Leon County Schools now have 18 Family Connection Corners up and running! KidCare Outreach Specialist, Gladys Medrano has received a tremendous response from school administrators and will continue to set up Family Connection Corners at participating schools. Parents of children at the schools listed below can now use computers in the Family Connection Corners to access WholeChild Leon's Resource Guide and Profile, Florida KidCare, ACCESS Florida and the LCS Free and Reduced Lunch application.

Family Connection Corners are in the following Leon County Schools:

## Welcome Caitlyn Trinkle!



Our newest addition to the Whole Child Leon team. Caitlyn Trinkle is a Florida State senior originally from Jacksonville, FL. She will be graduating this spring with a bachelor's degree in social work. She is currently completing her undergraduate field placement with Whole Child Leon, where she is excited to aid parents in completing profiles through the Whole Child Connection and will also be involved in outreach events. Caitlyn is planning on entering Florida State's MSW program in the fall. She is interested in pursuing a career in grief therapy with children and families.

## Help Keep Us Current

Please go to the Resource Guide on the [Whole Child Leon website](#) and make sure information about your program is current. Please email [Heather](#) with any updates or corrections. Make sure to send us a list of upcoming events and meetings for our calendar!

**Whole Child Advisors**  
Check for service requests on a regular basis; you may not always receive email notification. And please feel free to contact

Astoria Park, Bond, Buck Lake, Canopy Oaks, DeSoto Trail, Ft. Braden, Gilchrist, Hawks Rise, Killlearn Lakes, Oak Ridge, Pineview, Sealey, Springwood, Sullivan, WT Moore, Woodville, Gretchen Everhart, and Pace.

Additionally, the outreach program has contacted approximately 1,000 families through phone calls and letters. These families were identified through Leon County Schools Emergency and Medical Information Cards and through referrals from School Health Assistants, Guidance Counselors and other school personnel. Future Florida KidCare outreach activities include meeting with school parent organizations to educate and increase support of outreach activities, as well as to continue attending community events to identify and assist families in need.

You can help Whole Child Leon and Leon County Schools in our Florida KidCare outreach efforts by referring families with uninsured children to Gladys Medrano, at (850) 414-5110 for additional information or application assistance, or you can refer them to the Florida KidCare website at [www.floridakidcare.org](http://www.floridakidcare.org) or to the toll free number 1-888-540-5437.

## Whole Child Leon Advisor at TMH

Beginning later this month, Whole Child Leon will have an advisor, Caitlyn Trinkle, at Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare on Wednesdays helping parents of children in the NICU and the Pediatric Department complete profiles and get connected to resources and services through the Whole Child Connection.

## KidSmart Computers - IBM Grant Recipient

IBM donated 16 KidSmart computers equipped with early-learning educational software from Riverdeep, The Learning Company, and housed in colorful children's desk furniture. 14 units will be used in the VP-K program housed in Wesson, one will be located at the Children's Medical Services and one will go to Family Connection Corner at the Early Learning Coalition.

IBM has donated KidSmart units throughout the world and has been excited about the increase in computer literacy among children with access to these units. With the teacher education component, it also helps teachers improve their computing skills.

## Get Connected to Whole Child Leon - from the Leon County Courthouse

Whole Child Leon will soon have a kiosk in the Leon County

us if you need additional assistance or information.

Contact Heather at 850-414-8344 or [htelfer@uwbb.org](mailto:htelfer@uwbb.org) for assistance.



## Children's Movement of Florida Needs You!

The Children's Movement of Florida will present its 2011 Legislative Agenda Tuesday, January 11th, 5:45 - 6:30pm in the Leon County Commission Chambers located on the 5th Floor of the Leon County Courthouse, 301 S. Monroe Street.

RSVP to David Abrams 305-798-9699 or click [here](#) to email him.

## PRAMS - Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System

Florida PRAMS is an ongoing public health project to improve health services for moms and babies. Every month a small number of moms are chosen to do a survey that asks questions about the lives and health of moms and babies around the time of pregnancy. Even though many babies are born healthy, too many babies in Florida are not.

Courthouse to provide easier access to our Connection and Resource Guide for parents and families in our area.

From this kiosk parents will also be able to access the Whole Child Leon website, KidCare for low cost health insurance, ACCESS for temporary cash assistance and medicaid, as well as the free and reduced lunch application.

## Community Baby Shower

Whole Child Leon participated in the second annual Healthy Baby Community Baby Shower, hosted by the Chi Theta Zeta Graduate Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, on December 11th. Over 100 parents and expectant parents participated in educational sessions, health screenings, and baby games at the Lincoln Center gym. There were zumba and yoga demonstrations, a healthy recipe demonstration from the Florida Department of Agriculture as well as presentations on the importance of dental care during pregnancy and self-care during pregnancy.

## VITA - Volunteer Opportunities

Are you looking for a way to give back to our community? The United Way of the Big Bend's

BEST Project is looking for volunteers for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Volunteers help prepare simple tax returns for low and moderate income households. No previous accounting or tax preparation experience is necessary; all needed training is provided for free. Training is going on now, and VITA sites are open from January 22 until April 18. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Megan Earnhardt at [megan@uwbb.org](mailto:megan@uwbb.org) or (850) 488-8342, or visit <http://www.thebestproject.org/volunteer-registration>.



## Money Talks! Have You Heard?

You could owe less in taxes and get cash back from the IRS. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a federal tax benefit for working people with low or moderate incomes. It can offset some or all of the taxes workers must pay and can help cover any federal income tax workers may still owe at tax time. You may also get cash back through an EITC refund. The EITC can be worth up to \$5,666 for families who worked in 2010. In addition, some families can get the Child Tax Credit (CTC), which can be worth up to \$1,000 per child. Even if you don't owe any income tax, you may still be eligible for these credits if you worked during 2010.



If you receive a PRAMS survey in the mail, complete the survey and return it in the postage-paid envelope that came with it. Or you can do the survey over the phone by calling 1-800-922-7475.

Please call if you have more questions about Florida PRAMS 1-800-922-7475 or click [here](#) to visit the website.

## Children's Week - Save the Date



Children's Week is a grassroots event that brings together over 90 organizations in an effort to highlight children's issues during the legislative session.

Children's Week starts with the "Hanging of the Hands" on Sunday, April 3rd. Tuesday, April 5th is "Children's Capitol for a Day" with a Legislative reading corner, guided tours of the Capitol, entertainment, and a "Kids Only" Town Hall Meeting. Go to [www.childrensweek.org](http://www.childrensweek.org) for more information.

## ELC Open House

The Early Learning Coalition Leon County Office has moved!

New Location:  
Northwood Centre  
1940 North Monroe St.,  
Suite 70

The big problem with the EITC and the CTC is that not enough people claim their credits! The IRS tells us that millions of eligible families did not file for these credits last year. This means that millions of dollars are not finding their way into the pockets of people right here in our community.

You can get these tax credits and not lose other public benefits. The EITC and CTC do not count as income in determining eligibility for benefits like cash assistance, Medicaid, food stamps, SSI, public housing or child care.

To claim the credits, you must file a 2010 tax return. Many people feel confused or overwhelmed when faced with filing a tax return. They often seek the services of a paid tax preparer who may charge \$100 or more. That preparer may also persuade you to get a "quick refund" which can add more fees. That's why it's so important to know there is an alternative: **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**.

VITA, part of the United Way of the Big Bend's BEST Project, offers free tax preparation at sites throughout the Big Bend from January 22 to April 15. This free service helps residents claim the benefits you earned, avoid costly income-tax preparers and refund-anticipation loans. If your household made low to moderate income in 2010, you can visit a VITA site to have your taxes prepared and filed for free.

Before using a paid tax preparer, consider using a VITA site that can help you prepare and file your taxes for free. Taking advantage of free tax preparation through VITA is a simple way to save money while filing your taxes. Your tax refund, including credits like EITC and CTC, can help you become more financially secure - better able to keep up with household bills, save for emergencies, and fend off more dire situations such as mortgage foreclosure.

You don't have to pay for filing, loans or quick refunds. VITA has no fees or hidden expenses. Returns are e-filed so you'll receive your refund in 10 days - faster if you receive your refund using direct deposit. To find a VITA site near you, dial 211 or visit [www.theBESTproject.org](http://www.theBESTproject.org).

## OASIS - Single Parent Moms Support Group

Now on Thursdays at The OASIS Center for Women & Girls, 317 E. Call Street.

Free Childcare for children 12 and younger!  
Thursdays 6:00pm - 7:30pm  
Call First! 850-222-2747



Being a parent is tough enough - raising a family alone is that much tougher! OASIS understands and wants to give you access to

Open House Wednesday  
February 2nd 10am - 2pm.

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

## Thank you

to Capital Medical and Surgical, Inc., Paige Miller, President for their recent donation of a transport chair to a foster child in need and a wheelchair to Children's Medical Services for another client in need.

Thank you for your support!

Find us on Facebook 

Follow us on 

## We're on the web!

The [Whole Child Leon Online Event Calendar](#) gives information on a wide array of local events for kids and for people who work with kids.

If you have news you would like to share, [email it](#) and we'll make sure it gets onto the WCL Website in the Community News section or the Event Calendar.

Find us on Facebook 

Follow us on 



support and help.

## Thank you Jackie!

Thank you, Jackie, for all of your help. We're sorry to see you go. Good luck with your new job!

## Whole Child Leon Staff

**Courtney Atkins**, Executive Director

**Heather Telfer**, Connection and Outreach Coordinator

**Amanda Clements**, Vice-President of Strategic Initiatives, United Way of the Big Bend

**Gladys Medrano**, KidCare Outreach Specialist

**Megan Earnhardt**, Strategic Initiatives Associate, United Way of the Big Bend

**Got Kids? Get connected to community resources that can assist you and your family at the Whole Child Connection available at**

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

Contact a Whole Child Leon Advisor today, at 850-414-8344



Whole Child Leon  
2813 S. Meridian Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
850.414.8344

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



United Way of the Big Bend



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