



## MEDIA ALERT

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## EARLY LEARNING COALITION OF PASCO AND HERNANDO COUNTIES, INC. HOSTS FREE “STORYBOOK FOREST” EVENT AT CREWS LAKE WILDERNESS PARK

*The event is in honor of Children’s Week 2012, a statewide celebration of Early Childhood Education that brings awareness to legislators and community leaders.*

The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. is hosting its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual “**Storybook Forest**” event on **Saturday, February, 4 from 11 AM to 2 PM**, at Crews Lake Wilderness Park, 18739 Crews Lake Drive, Spring Hill, 34610, to support Children’s Week and Early Childhood Literacy.

Early Childhood Educators in Pasco and Hernando counties will create interactive displays based on children’s novels. Children will learn about the story and create a related make-and-take project at each display. Past stories include: “Jack and the Beanstalk”; “Cat in the Hat”; and “Where the Wild Things Are.”

In-costume Storytellers will ignite guests’ imaginations as they bring children’s stories to life, and Clifford the Big Red Dog will sign autographs and visit with children.

Thanks to our sponsors including Target, Paul & Jerry’s Storage and UPS, **The Storybook Forest** offers a **FREE** afternoon of family fun, including:

- **FREE** Children’s Entertainment
- **FREE** Activities
- **FREE** VPK Registration
- **FREE** Crafts
- **FREE** Music
- **FREE** Food

**The Storybook Forest** is one of hundreds of events held throughout Florida to celebrate Children’s Week (January 29—February 3) by raising awareness for children’s issues.

“Children’s Week activities put a much needed spotlight on issues facing our children,” said Children’s Week organizer Jason Zaborske. “This is a great opportunity to bring thousands of parents, children, professionals, advocates, community leaders and concerned citizens together to share valuable knowledge and information about children’s issues across the state and in our state Capitol.”

To learn more about Children’s Week, visit [www.ChildrensWeek.org](http://www.ChildrensWeek.org).

For more information about this event, contact Sharon Hayes at (727) 233-8291 or [s.hayes@phelc.org](mailto:s.hayes@phelc.org).

For more information about the ELC and its services, visit [www.phelc.org](http://www.phelc.org).

*The Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties, Inc. is one of 31 Early Learning Coalitions in Florida. It works to ensure that programs and services are available to assist families with young children during their formative years. Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program is for all children who are four-years old on or before September 1st. School Readiness provides assistance for low-to-moderate income working families by paying a portion of the childcare costs on a sliding fee schedule. Starting as separate organizations in 2000, Pasco and Hernando counties joined forces to form the Early Learning Coalition of Pasco and Hernando Counties in 2005. The non-profit serves over nine thousand children between infancy and five years old, working with over 300 providers in the counties.*

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