

◆ Circle Time Scoop ◆

JULY 2026

ELC BREVARD

RACHEL GIANNINI

Summer Fun



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Risky Business

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Sign Language



Ahh, July. The month of picnics, fireflies, and danger.

Think about it. There are fireworks. There are sunburns. There are playgrounds. From scorching hot slides to the menace known as monkey bars, playgrounds are built for fear and danger...for adults. As teachers, we've all heard about the benefits of risky play. We know children need opportunities to test their limits, solve problems, build confidence, and discover what they're capable of.

THEN WHY IS IT SOOOOO TOUGH?!?

Maybe it's just me. Maybe I'm the only one who cringes when the big blocks come out or patrols the playground with the intensity of a Secret Service agent. But I don't think I am.

Recently, someone offered me a different perspective on risky play.

Think back to your own childhood. A time when you were climbing too high, swinging from monkey bars, or trying something for the first time. Who was around you? How did it feel? Did you try again if it didn't go perfectly?

Now look at your own classroom or playground. First, make the environment safe. Next, create clear expectations and safety plans. Then, do what you do best: support them.

Remind them to slow down. Help them think through their next move. Be the steady presence that helps them navigate challenges safely.

Because risky play isn't about children getting hurt. It's about children discovering what they're capable of doing. And sometimes, the biggest risk isn't theirs. It's ours—loosening our grip just enough to let them try.

Upcoming Events & Programs Calendar

Here is a detailed look at upcoming events, important dates, and cool things happening near you!

**JULY
4TH**

INDEPENDENCE DAY

**JULY
19TH**

National Icecream Day

Link for BOTH workshops



Thank you to everyone who joined us for the sign language webinars this month! We learned all the ways to include sign in literacy lessons, mealtimes, rug time, diaper changes, and everyone's favorite... redirection. If you weren't able to join, no problem! Below are the links to the videos!

[VIDEO 1](#)

[VIDEO 2](#)

For more information on using sign language, please check out:

- <https://babysignlanguage.com/>
- <https://www.signingsavvy.com/>
- signasl.org/sign/pro



Ketchup on ketchup with a side of chicken nuggets. Sound familiar?

Picky eaters and preschoolers seem to go hand in hand. As educators, we've all watched children carefully inspect a green bean as if it personally offended them or refuse a sandwich because it was cut into triangles instead of squares.

And while every family meal and every child is different, one thing has become clear to me over the years: children are far more likely to try food when they have played a role in getting it to their plate.

This year, our classroom garden became an unexpected lesson in adventurous eating.

Children who once avoided tomatoes suddenly couldn't wait to pick one off the vine. Green beans that sat untouched during lunch became treasures when they were harvested by tiny hands. Lettuce became exciting when children watered it, checked on it daily, and celebrated each new leaf that appeared.

If they grew it, they ate it.

It wasn't magic. It was ownership.

Growing food gives children a sense of pride and connection. They aren't simply being asked to try a vegetable; they're tasting the results of weeks of work, patience, and care. The tomato isn't just a tomato anymore. It's *their* tomato.

Of course, not every program has space for a garden, but ownership can happen in other ways too. Children can wash vegetables, tear lettuce for a salad, stir ingredients, set the table, or help serve snacks. The more involved they are in the process, the more invested they become in the outcome.

We know that pressure rarely creates adventurous eaters. Relationships, curiosity, and experiences do.

So the next time a child turns their nose up at the vegetables on their plate, consider inviting them into the process a little earlier. They may not eat the cucumber because you asked them to.

But they just might eat the cucumber they grew.