



# ets Connections

CONNECTING FAMILIES TO SERVICES, AND COMMUNITIES TO EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

## Recognition

Congratulations to the following [ets Connections](#) family of Communities and ets client organizations in January:

### Operating Counties

- Brevard, FL: 2012 Whole Child & Family Profiles were completed and 3241 information and service connections were made. Special thanks to **ets Connections** partner Brevard Public Schools for donating 8 computers to fellow partner Child Care Association of Brevard. This will continue to help expand the “no wrong door” concept to 8 more locations throughout Brevard County.
- Martin, FL: Whole Child Connection, Inc. of the Treasure Coast is continuing to diversify its outreach approach by formally engaging the school district and the Martin County Sheriff's Department. Nicole King of Whole Child Connection, Inc. and Bob Seemer (of ets) have a follow-up meeting with School District Leadership on February 26.

### New Communities

- Brevard, FL: The [Whole Senior Connection](#)<sup>™</sup> system is undergoing beta testing, and user input, with official launch scheduled for March 6.
- DeSoto, FL: The implementation team continues to grow as additional agency representatives are added. The team should finalize the survey instruments by February 28.
- Ottawa, MI: The implementation team has finalized its survey instruments and is preparing to move to the next phase of finalizing service types and provider data base development.

## Transitions

Martin County's Whole Child Connection, Inc. (WCC, Inc.) and ets continue to work toward Martin's conversion to the [EZSHS](#). The conversion process schedule was approved by WCC, Inc. on February 22, a week ahead of schedule.

## Staff

After 40 years, Child Care Association of Brevard's CEO, Barbara Moore, has retired. Replacing her is Natalie Jackson.

Brevard's Early Learning Coalition (ELC) Executive Director, Melissa Murphy has accepted another position in North Carolina, and Richelle Holmes, ELC WCC Administrator, is on disability leave. Melissa's replacement has not been announced.

ets will retain administrative and fiscal control of Whole Child Connection Brevard for an indefinite period. Leadership changes in the Child Care Association of Brevard and the Early Learning Coalition, strategic challenges in the school district, and the departure of Frank Barger, United Way Brevard's Director of Community Impact, necessitated this decision.

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## The Data Speaks

The prolonged economic recession continued to reveal itself in the reporting data from Whole Child Communities during January, 2010. In Brevard, two interesting trends have emerged since just six months ago. First, the top six trouble responses were in the areas of *financial counseling and emergency services such as cash, shelter, food and clothing*. This is a shift from earlier trends of demands for health care and child care services. The second group of trouble responses was in the area of *community activities including volunteering*. Previous trends indicated needs for various types of counseling services. This may suggest that people were looking for more economical forms of entertainment and for ways to help others in the community. Overall, the data suggests that the needs are becoming more severe – from counseling to emergency services, cash, food and shelter.

In Martin County, *financial counseling and emergency services for food and clothing* lead the way for trouble responses, followed by *women's health needs, safety, pediatricians and parenting education*.

Both counties have proactive and balanced outreach and [Whole Child Connection](#) promotional approaches in place, thus helping ensure that the data being collected and reported more closely represent both communities' demographic profiles as compared to U.S. Census profile data.

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## News Updates

### Two More Partners

ets is pleased to announce partnerships with two publications which will promote the Whole Child Connection and the [Whole Senior Connection](#) programs throughout Brevard, and will provide valuable information to **ets Connections** users in all EZSHS communities. The [Mark of Excellence](#) is now ets' official Education Publication, providing school district news, reports, and other education-related information to every parent in the school district. ets will provide a monthly column to highlight leadership, management, and operational approaches which have been proven to be effective in educational institutions. The [National Health Review](#) provides health and wellness-related information to families and elders, enabling them to make more informed choices and improve the

quality of their lives. Both publications will be available via the web in all EZSHS communities. ets is working with both partners to help them create e-publications available to the residents in the 35 Florida Counties using various ets Connections products.

All of ets' partner publications are key to create public awareness, provide valuable information, and encourage usage of the EZSHS. [Space Coast Business](#) is ets' official Business/Economics dimension publication, and [Space Coast Living](#) is the official Social Well-Being dimension publication. Both have statewide reach and a strong affiliated network.

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## Community Events

### Whole Child Connection

One of Whole Child Connection Brevard's partners, the Early Learning Coalition, held a fundraiser at the Melbourne Art Museum on February 12. The event raised more than \$25,000 for young children and their families.

Martin's Whole Child Connection, Inc. held a Community Event on February 13. Despite the cold, inclement weather, more than 300 people attended and more than \$2,500 was raised for the benefit of Martin's children and families.

### Whole Senior Connection

On March 6, Brevard's League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women are sponsoring a community-wide event to promote the Whole Child Connection and Whole Senior Connection systems. Representatives from all age groups will be present since both systems will proactively connect all members of the **total life continuum** to information and services in Brevard County. [Learn More](#)

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## System Enhancements

1. The **Best Practices Florida** subsystem of the EZ Self Help System (EZSHS) is in the beta phase and is scheduled for release to all 3500+ Florida public and 1500+ private schools on March 8. To date, more than 30 school districts representing 74.5% of Florida's enrolled public school children, and the Florida Virtual School have committed more than 150 best practice submittals. Portals to the EZSHS Best Practices Florida system will be accessible through the websites of Florida's Department of Education, the Sterling Council, and all School Districts. ets also will make the system available to Florida's Community Colleges and Universities, and to other Florida State Agencies such as DJJ, DCF, DOH, DVR, DBS, APD, and DEA (Elder Affairs) since many of their core, intake, and delivery processes are similar to those of WCC and WSC not-for-profit providers. The site includes a Search Engine and Discussion Board to facilitate the retrieval of best practices and effective approaches. ets has assembled a statewide team of eight experts to provide quality control for all best practices before they are uploaded to the site. The system will be available to the additional agencies and all **ets Connections** communities' providers on April 1. Beginning in May, ets will start

actively engaging all not-for-profit organizations and government agencies who are included in ets Connections provider databases to participate in the Best Practices Florida system. The sharing of knowledge across organizations through a common point is an effective way to improve the quality and efficiency of services. [Learn More](#)

2. ets is working with the Florida Governor's Sterling Council to make its [Small Business Blueprint](#) available to all ets Connections partners and providers at a special price. Large and small organizations are having to reinvent the way they have historically done business to stay in business, and to thrive. The "Blueprint" is designed to help organizations assess their current situations, refocus, and develop action plans for success. The special pricing should be available by March 22, 2010.
3. The "Provider Feedback" feature of the EZSHS is now available for parents to provide comments regarding specific providers. Comments may include needed updates to provider information or service features which users liked. ets and WCC/WSC Administrators review all comments prior to posting.
4. The "Provider Recommendation" feature of the EZSHS is now available, enabling parents and other users to suggest the addition of new providers or programs to the system.

These two new provider-related features are consistent with ets' philosophy of enabling **ets Connections** systems to adapt to the needs of the respective community, and empowering users to maintain, upgrade, and modify the systems to best meet the needs of the individual community.

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## Did You Know:

1. The EZSHS was designed to be accessible and meet the needs of all families, regardless of socio-economic and geographic factors?
2. The EZSHS is scalable and can be used by a city, county, judicial circuit, region, or state of any size or population?
3. The EZSHS segments the population using age group or other unique profiles so that a community can more effectively target its outreach initiatives?
4. The EZSHS can serve as an initial point of entry or screen for other information and resource referral systems?
5. The EZSHS costs pennies per child to implement and maintain in any Florida county.

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## Feedback & Input

Should you have any questions, comments or suggestions for topics, please contact [info@etsfl.com](mailto:info@etsfl.com).

