



Universal PreK (UPK) Café

May 1, 2020 – Issue 26

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued work supporting Vermont's young children and families during this extraordinary time.

The AOE's early education team hopes that the educational articles, family resources, activities, VELs and have been helpful and support your daily practice. If you have found any helpful resources that you would like to share or resources you would like to see, please let us know!

This week we are excited to share our first **EDUCATOR in the SPOTLIGHT!**

Jennifer Knowles from Milton Town Preschool Programs has shared a social story about staying home and staying safe during the Covid-19 school closure in her program. Thanks Jennifer!

The UPK Café continues this week with more resources that are focused on social and emotional learning.

Resources for Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Special Educators

- **NEW! EDUCATOR in the SPOTLIGHT**
Milton Early Educator, Jennifer Knowles shares a [social story](#) about staying home and staying safe during the Covid-19 school closure at the Milton Town Preschool Programs. This is a wonderful example of language that can be used and how it can be shared with children and their families.
- **National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) webinar:**
[Providing Distance Family Support: What do I say? How can I help? A Conversation with NCPMI Faculty](#)
Providing Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education using distance technology raises questions about how you can support families as they help their children with learning activities. The NCPMI shares ideas on checking in with families, how to respond to difficult questions, and other resources that can be used during this uncharted teaching and learning time.
- Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) provides [Practice Guides for Families](#) that are for educators to share with families. This guide is based on the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices with tools and resources for educators and families in supporting young children who have, or are at-risk for, developmental delays or disabilities across a variety of early childhood settings. They

include performance checklists, practice guides, and professional development guidance materials.

- [10 Strategies for Engaging Parents \(not Children?\) during Tele-Intervention](#)
Prepared by Dana Childress for the **Early Intervention Strategies for Success Blog**, this post provides strategies to engage parents during tele-intervention, including how to prepare, taking time to check in, how to engage using your voice, and more.
- **Vermont PBS Scheduling Information Week of 5/4**
Vermont Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and the Agency of Education (AOE) are partnering to support continuity of learning for our students and school communities. This partnership provides access to free educational programming through [Vermont PBS At-Home Learning](#). Teachers can create unique accounts with their school email or Google account through [PBS LearningMedia](#). Accounts are free and provide access to a range of additional features. Each Wednesday, the [Vermont PBS Week-Ahead Program Schedule](#) will be made available to educators so they can plan for the following week. Resources that can be printed and sent home have been identified within the schedule. **Check out the new resources for Arthur and Daniel Tiger!**

Resources for Families

- **National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI): [Tips for Supporting Yourself During the Pandemic](#)** As concern increases over the spread of the coronavirus, adults might be feeling vulnerable, concerned, or anxious about the spread of the virus and how it affects their family. Children might also be feeling this way in response to information they are hearing and changes in their daily routine or environment. The infographic from NCPMI provides supports and resources are to help adults take care of themselves so they can support their child.
- Leading researchers in the field of media and early childhood from **Georgetown University, the LEGO Foundation, and ZERO TO THREE** provide practical guidelines that reflect the current research on screen media use and young children’s learning and development in this article: [Screen time can be quality time. Here’s how.](#)
- **Center for Developing Child – Harvard University: [How to Support Children \(and Yourself\) During the COVID-19 Outbreak](#)**
The coronavirus outbreak has changed many things about our daily lives. But even during this uncertain time, it’s a sure thing that our children are still learning, growing, and developing. Everyone can help support a child’s healthy development (and it may even help relieve your stress!). Just a few minutes and some simple, free activities can make a difference.
- **Vermont Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and the Agency of Education (AOE)** are partnering to support continuity of learning for our students and school communities.

This partnership provides access to free educational programming through [Vermont PBS At-Home Learning](#).

VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS (VELS)

Communication and Expression

Domain: Language Development

Element 2: Expressive Language (Speaking)

Goal 1: Young children use increasingly complex vocabulary and grammar to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas.

Communication and Expression Activities (from VELS Family Calendar):

- Explain what you are doing when you are with your child to help your child understand why you are doing something. For example, “I am chopping carrots because we are going to have a salad for lunch.”
- Build on the single words or simple phrases that your preschooler says. For example, when your child says “more” or “more please,” say “Do you want more bananas?”
- Take a walk around your neighborhood with your child. Talk about what you see along the way. What makes your neighborhood special? Who lives in the blue house? What kind of flowers do you think will grow? As you take walks over the next few weeks, ask about what changes they notice!

Books to read with your child:

- *The Boy with Big, Big Feelings* by Britney Winn Lee
- *A Good Night Walk* by Elisha Cooper
- *The Color Monster* by Anna Llenas

Again, thank you for all the work that you do and for your continued work supporting Vermont’s young children and families during this extraordinary time.

If you have received this issue from a coworker and would like to be placed on the UPK Café listserv, please email Leslie at leslie.freedman@vermont.gov.

Be well and stay healthy!

Leslie

Helpful Links:

- [COVID-19 Guidance for Vermont Schools](#)
- [COVID-19 Information from the Vermont Department of Health](#)
- [COVID-19 Information from the Agency of Human Services/ Department of Children and Families](#)