



Universal PreK (UPK) Café

April 7, 2020 – Issue 23

Dear Friends,

The AOE's early education team hopes that you and your families are doing well during this extraordinary time. Please know that our priority is to support Vermont's young children and families, communities, school district staff, and early childhood educators and early childhood special educators.

UPK Café will appear in your email in-box once a week through the end of the school year!

UPK Café will include relevant educational articles, family resources, age appropriate activities that align with VELs, and information that may assist school districts in the development and implementation of Continuity of Learning (COL) plans.

Thank you for the amazing work you are doing each and every day.

Continuity of Learning (COL) The March 27, 2020 Governor's Directive to Prepare for Transition to Continuity of Learning requires school districts to provide education services and related supports through remote and distance learning so that each and every student can access equitable learning opportunities until the end of the school calendar year. Districts are required to make the transition to COL on or before Monday, April 13, 2020.

Parents, families, and caregivers can play a valuable role in establishing routines and maintaining student engagement at home. Since all families are unique, they can support their children in a variety of ways. This support can take on different forms and should reflect what is best for your family. [AOE Maintenance of Learning for Families and Guardians](#) document provides many resources for families during this unique time. It includes ideas to engage children, design a home learning environment and internet access opportunities.

RESOURCES for Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Special Educators

- [Resources Within Reason – Using Telepractice to Support Children and Families](#)
Every other month a concise set of free resources on a key early childhood/early childhood special education topic is posted. This month's issue, Camille Catlett and Kari Holmberg have compiled to help early childhood educators and early childhood special educators support children and families during this new and unknown territory in teaching and learning.
- [Learning at Home During Trying Times](#)
These selected Illinois Early Learning (IEL) resources provide ideas to help families use positive guidance strategies and provide stable routines for young children.

- Teaching Strategies Gold have been continuously updating their resources for teachers and families. One of the items links to a terrific landing page for teachers at [Classroom Connect](#).

RESOURCES for FAMILIES

- Zero to Three: [Staying Connected: Five Tips to Make the Most of Video Chats](#)
Can't visit the grandparent's because of new rules or worries? Here are some tips for making the most of your next video chat.
- World Health Organization: [Parenting in the time of COVID-19](#)
To help parents interact constructively with their children during this time of confinement, these six one-page tips for parents cover planning one-on-one time, staying positive, creating a daily routine, managing stress and behavior, and talking about COVID-19. Use them to your and your kids' advantage, and have fun in doing so.
- [PBS for Parents: Learn and Grow](#)
Young children are always developing and exploring their world. Whether it's learning empathy, honesty and self-confidence, or reading, music and problem solving, there are opportunities and challenges at every age. PBS Kids provides families with tips and activities for ages 2 to 8 by topic (examples: Emotions and Self-Awareness, Social Skills, Literacy, Arts).
- 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 \(VELS\)](#)

Developing Self

Domain: Social and Emotional Learning and Development

Element 3: Relationships with Adults and Peers

Goal 1: Children develop healthy positive relationships with adults and peers.

Developing Self Activities (from VELS Family Calendar):

- At the end of the day (dinner, getting ready for bed), play "Rose, Bud, Thorn". Ask your child to share the best moment of their day (Rose), something that they are looking forward to (Bud), and something that made them feel sad or mad (Thorn).

- Talk through the steps to make your favorite sandwich with your child. Write down the directions as you work together so they have the “recipe” for the next time. Use cookie cutters and make fun shapes or even video the process – your own cooking show and share virtually with family and friends
- Pick a book to read with your child that talks about a place like one in your community such as a school, park, or pond. After reading the book with your child, make a wish list and plan when you are able to visit the place in your town that is similar to the one you read about. Ask your child questions about how they are similar and different. You can find this book and so many more online and with your local library – many have different options to access them!

Books to read with your child:

- *City Shapes* by Diana Murray, Illustrated by Bryan Collier
- *Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Pena and Illustrated by Christian Robinson
- *The Curious Garden* by Peter Brown

Again, thank you for all the work that you do. If you have found any helpful resources that you would like to share or resources you would like to see, please let us know! 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](#)