



Universal PreK (UPK) Café

May 7, 2020 – Issue 27

Dear Friends,

Our AOE's Early Learning Team hopes that you, your families and your students are doing well during this ever-changing time in our world.

We are excited to share that the UPK Café now has a landing pad on the [Early Education Team's webpage!](#) Please visit as we add the newest issues as well as share our past issues.

We will also continue to send the most current UPK Café through our listserv!

The AOE's early education team continue to share educational articles, family resources, activities, and Vermont Early Learning Standard supports that can be helpful in your daily practice.

And as always, if you have found any helpful resources that you would like to share or resources you would like to see, please let us know!

RESOURCES for Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Special Educators

- **EDUCATOR in the SPOTLIGHT**

This week's *Educator in the Spotlight* is Meg Edmunds! Meg is an Early Childhood Educator with Maple Run Unified School District at St. Albans Town Educational Center and shares her version of [Flat Stanley!](#) Meg created her own "Flat Miss Meg" using [Bitmoji](#) and then printed and laminated and mailed to each of her students and their families. She suggested, in an accompanying letter, that "Flat Miss Meg" would love to be included in family adventures at home such as baking cookies or cooking dinner, building forts, playing outside, and reading stories. Meg asked families to help by taking pictures of "Flat Miss Meg" in their home adventures and (with permission) shares "Flat Miss Meg's" adventures on the classroom's private Facebook page as well as Google Classroom. Meg developed a *BINGO* game to encourage and expand more creative adventures! A huge thanks to Meg Edmunds and "Flat Miss Meg" for sharing!

- **Child Trends:** [Resources for Supporting Children's Emotional Well-being during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) Children are more vulnerable to the emotional impact of traumatic events that disrupt their daily lives. This resource offers information on supporting and protecting children's emotional well-being provided by child trauma experts at Child Trends and the Child Trauma Training Center at the University of Massachusetts.

- **WBUR (Boston's National Public Radio Station): Circle Round Podcast**

[Circle Round](#) is a podcast that adapts folktales from around the world into 10-20-minute episodes for kids ages 4 to 10. Episodes, such as "The Sultan's Figs", which ties together "sweet figs, bad breath and the bitter truth", are both story and music-rich, while also providing a message that promotes social-emotional growth. Open an [archived](#)

[recording](#), and find links to hear the story and access to a printable coloring page, a “Things to Think About After Listening” section, information regarding an instrument that was highlighted during the recording, as well as a transcript of the recorded story.

- **Vermont PBS Scheduling Information Week of 5/11**

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. **For more information on how to access PBS program schedules and materials, watch our [At-Home Learning Site Guide](#) video.**

RESOURCES for FAMILIES

- **National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)**

The [Feeling Face Chart and Template](#) can assist children with understanding their feelings and the feelings of others. It is important to teach children words to use to express feelings in replace of the use of challenging behavior. The feeling posters can be used in a variety of ways to help children learn social emotional skills around use of emotional literacy and vocabulary.

- **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

[Guiding Children by Using Questions](#)

For families, it can be hard to remain patient and calm as a toddler grabs a toy from a playmate or a 5-year-old throws a snack she doesn’t like on the floor. It can be tempting to punish children to quickly put a stop to their behavior—but punishment often teaches children little about better alternative behaviors and it runs the risk of emotional harm.

- **PBS Kids for Parents**

[Self-Control: How to Help Your Five-Year-Old Make Responsible Choices](#)

PBS Kids for Parents provides suggestions and strategies that parents can use when supporting their child as they learn how to manage their emotions and exercise self-control — particularly when they feel overwhelmed by emotions.

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VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS (VELS)

Developing Self

Domain: Social and Emotional Learning

Element 1: Emotion and Self-Regulation

Goal 1: Children express a range of emotions, and regulate their emotional and social responses.

Developing Self Activities:

- Explore body language with Feeling Charades:
Helping kids tune into body language can help them build empathy skills and feel more in control of their own emotions. It's one step to developing better self-management down the road. This focuses on how we feel about certain things. For instance, how does your child feel when they hear, "Let's go get ice cream?" On a strip of paper, write down a situation that would make someone feel happy, scared, angry, etc. Fold strips and put them into a bag or container. Then have family members chose a strip and act it out. Then unleash your inner thespian and act them out. Have fun with it!
- Start a new tradition! One night a week, take turns planning a fun night with your child. You could stick to a theme, like choosing which food to eat, movie to watch, or game to play. Or leave things wide open, and let the person in charge pick.
- Set up a comfy, cozy place with your child using empty cardboard boxes or make a small tent in a corner and add a few comfy pillow and stuffed animals. It can be a great place for children and parents to quietly look at books, listen to music, put together puzzles or to just take a break (together or separately!).

Books to read with your child:

- *Elephant and Piggie: Waiting is Not Easy!* by Mo Willems
- *Even Superheros Have Bad Days* by Shelly Becker, Illustrated by Eda Kaban
- *My Mouth is a Volcano!* by Julia Cook, Illustrated by Carrie Hartman

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 place 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](#)