



## Our Children and Family Come First



When the world as we knew it changed, the Carole Robertson Center for Learning pivoted to adapt.

Responding to COVID-19 has changed everything we do and all of us. **NIMBLENESS** remains one of our daily vocabulary words. It has changed how we support our families. It has changed the methods we use to deliver on our mission and the preparations we painstakingly take to ensure that everyone – families, children and staff - are protected and safe from the threat of transmission. But make no mistake; it has not deterred our unwavering commitment to support children and families, especially in this unprecedented time.

So, I invite you to read further and join me and our hardworking and stellar staff to support our families, remain healthy and engage their children in continued active learning that they have come to expect at the Carole Robertson Center.

I wish you and your families continued good health and safety!

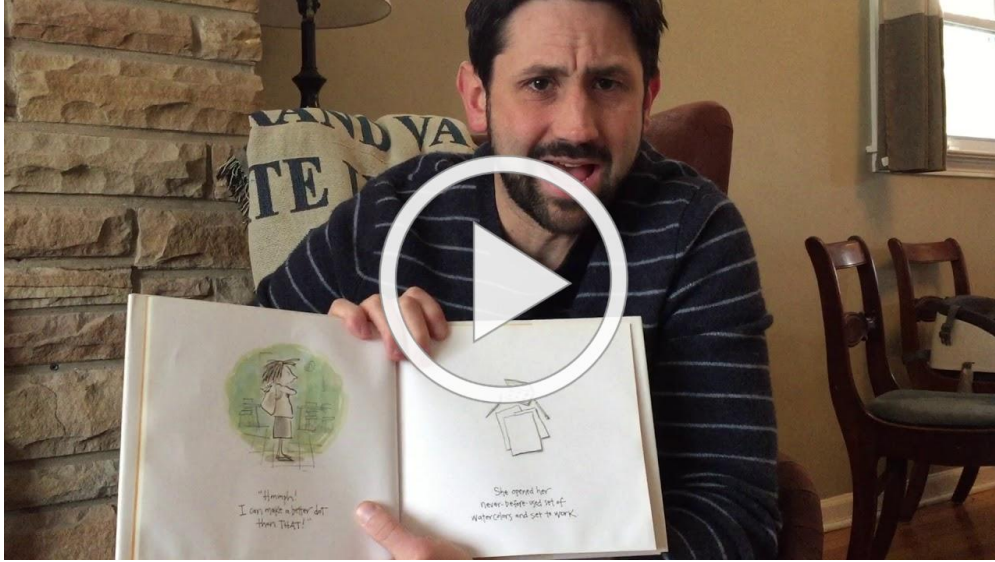
My Best,

Bela

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### New Methods of Mission Delivery

Our family support specialists and Programs and Impact teams are fully utilizing the technology at hand to check-in with families, provide assistance and care for those we serve.



Kenny Riley, Director of Out of School Time Programs is staying connected with our children by recording story time. To view the video click the photo above or click [here](#) to view on YouTube.



Family Support Specialists like Fatima maintain daily contact with families by phone, email and texting.



Our families now maintain connection with the Center through virtual visits.



We created activity packs to help our children continue their learning and developmental progress.

## Monday Distributions to Families

To adhere to the Governor's shelter in place order, we closed our sites for direct services. Within days of closing, our teams converted the gross motor rooms at both sites into distribution center.

On Monday mornings we distribute supplies such as diapers, formula, books and learning activity kits for our children and families. We are doing this while





maintaining social distancing standards.

From Cradles to Crayons donating diapers and hygiene kits to board members like Jessica Gaito volunteering during Monday distributions, the support we have received from partners and key stakeholders has been critical to the continuation of our mission.

Additional financial support will allow us to continue to provide supplies to our families who are facing severe challenges during this time. Please click [here](#) to donate.



Our teams practice social distancing while continuing to provide our families with needed goods.



Our distribution days have careful measures in place to ensure the safety of our staff and families when they arrive to pick up goods.



Our CEO is often at the distribution days serving our families with other frontline staff.

**Thank you** to our tremendous funders and partners like the Chicago Community COVID-19 Response Fund who have stepped up to support our mission with their readiness to extend support to our COVID-19 emergency response initiatives.



## Maintaining Connection - Virtually

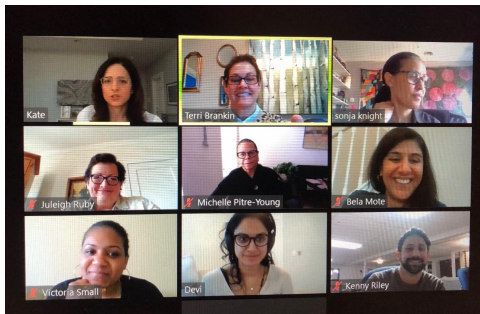
“It is nice to know that there are people caring for our family during this tough time.” Families and youth were very happy to hear from their Out of School Time Mentors and shared a lot about what they were doing and struggles they were having. One young person stayed on the phone for an hour just to talk. Our families are very grateful to hear that we are distributing items on Mondays and posting activities to our social media pages.



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## Virtual Team Work

We have quickly adapted to becoming a remote organization using our current technological infrastructure and are looking for ways to improve and deepen our support. Every one of our teams is staying connected through virtual meetings. Many teams are meeting daily instead of weekly to stay ahead of the work that must be done to support our families.



Executive Team meeting with  
Bridgespan colleagues.



The Out of School Time team dons  
superhero shirts to lift spirits.

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## Mental Health Supports for Staff and Families

While the Carole Robertson Center is attuned to the social-emotional health and supports our children and families need, we are also more aware of the needs that our staff have for good mental health since it effects the work we do and the services we are able to provide.

We warmly welcome our new Senior Manager of Mental Health, David Walker, who shares his guidelines on practicing self-care while working from home during this epidemic. [Click here to read about self care at home, click](#)



[here to read about coping with stress.](#)



Secia Larnce, Health Specialist, shared a guide with our teams on quelling anxiety and managing wellness during quarantine.

[Wellness During Quarantine](#)



## Annual Celebration Cancelled but Fundraising is More Important Than Ever



Managing life during COVID-19 is difficult for all of us, but can be devastating to our Carole Robertson Center families. Each day we're hearing the data on the impact COVID-19 is having across black and brown communities, and this reality is something all of us at the Carole Robertson Center are paying very close attention to so that we can offer further support. Instead of asking you to buy a ticket or a table at our now cancelled Annual Celebration dinner on May 7<sup>th</sup>, we ask that you support our ongoing, ever more critical work to educate, enrich, and empower children and families with a donation.

We are distributing essential items, book, and activity packets to our families each week. We are also in need of more capacity with our own technology, and lastly we are in the early process of building a support fund for any enrolled family who might have been directly affected by COVID-19. These efforts take will, passion, goodwill, partnership, and resources. Please click [here](#) to donate so that the Carole Robertson Center can continue to fulfill our promise of serving children, families, and communities as an anchor institution.

Today, tomorrow, and always, We **THANK YOU**

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Please follow us on social media at:

