



# Community Connections

# Welcome



**Objectives:** In this hour, you'll learn how Let's Grow Kids has been responding to COVID-19, gain some tips for working at home with kids, learn what's next for child care as our economy begins to reopen, and hear how we are facing this time of transition and uncertainty.

## You will hear from:

- Anna Gebhardt; Field Director, LGK
- Emily Blistein; Director of Business Strategy, LGK
- Maria Richards; Data Specialist, LGK
- Sarah Kenney; Senior Director of Policy, LGK
- Beal St. George; Engagement & Stewardship Officer, LGK
- Ellen Drolette; Owner/Director, Sunshine Daydream Child Care
- Dominique Viteretto; Teacher, Davis Studio Preschool
- Dawn Irwin; Owner/Director, Growing with Wonder



# Agenda



- Welcome & Overview
- Update from LGK
- Your questions
- Policy update
- Looking at the big picture
- Taking action



# Resources & Participation



 What We Do

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 Resources

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## Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources



STAYING HEALTHY

STAYING INFORMED

RESOURCES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS

WHAT YOU CAN DO

WEBINARS

[www.letsgrowkids.org/coronavirus](http://www.letsgrowkids.org/coronavirus)

[www.letsgrowkids.org/mobilize](http://www.letsgrowkids.org/mobilize)

[www.letsgrowkids.org/events](http://www.letsgrowkids.org/events)

# Who is here?

In the chat tool, please share:

- Your name
- Your town
- How are you connected to LGK?



# Our Mission



Let's Grow Kids has always been focused on ensuring access to high-quality, affordable child care for all Vermont families who need it. For over 10 years, we have been working to strengthen the early care and education system and raise awareness among Vermonters about BOTH the importance of high-quality child care AND the impact of Vermont's child care crisis on our:

- Youngest children
- Working families
- Businesses & workforce
- Demographics
- Economy



*And because of advocates like you, child care has become a top issue in VT!*

# LGK: A Statewide Movement



# 2020 Legislative Agenda



- Sustain and Grow Vermont's Early Care and Education Workforce
- Help More Children Access Affordable Child Care
- Engage Vermont Employers



# Taking Action



*You called, emailed, and met with your legislators. Together we built a movement and put ECE on the map. You were **ready for action.***



# And then...



While our mission has not changed, we have had to dramatically adjust the ways in which we are supporting and advocating for child care during this global public health crisis. LGK has been working closely with Vermont's Administration, early care and education programs, our federal delegation, and state and national advocacy organizations in a variety of ways, including:

- Helping to create and support emergency child care infrastructure for essential workers
- Supporting child care programs that have closed in supporting their families and their staff
- Launching an [emergency fund](#) to support child care programs
- Supporting families and businesses affected by child care closures
- Collaborating with the state and local partners to be a resource for child care programs and early childhood educators
- Collecting feedback from families with young children and the early childhood education field and relaying concerns and ideas to state agencies and policymakers

# I joined this call because...



# You submitted questions, and we have some (but not all!) of the answers



We received so many great questions from all of you when you registered for this call that largely fell into three main categories:

- How can I work from home with young children while also supporting their emotional well-being?
- What can I do to help?
- What will the re-opening of child care look like in Vermont?



# Ellen Drolette



- Owner/Director of Sunshine Daydream Child Care
- Author of “Overcoming Teacher Burnout in Early Childhood: Strategies for Change”
- Owner/Co-Founder of Positive Spin
- Co-Creator of the Empowerment Project
- Burlington Action Team member
- Rally Planning Team member
- Active media spokesperson for LGK

Contact me! [Emdrolette@gmail.com](mailto:Emdrolette@gmail.com)



# Dominique Viteretto



- Preschool teacher at the Davis Studio in Burlington
- Burlington Action Team member
- Traveled to DC for the NAEYC Public Policy Forum to advocate for ECE
- Scheduled to speak at our 2020 Rally for Kids

Contact me! [Dominique.davisprek@gmail.com](mailto:Dominique.davisprek@gmail.com)



# Dawn Irwin



- Owner/Director of Growing with Wonder
- Essex Action Team member
- Active spokesperson for LGK
- Traveled to DC with Save the Children
- Organized a No Small Matter screening
- Statehouse advocate
- Door-to-door canvassing and tabling for LGK

Contact me! [dawn@growingwithwonder.com](mailto:dawn@growingwithwonder.com)



# Recovery & Reopening



***What will the re-opening of child care look like in Vermont?***

As our state and federal leaders begin to discuss terms for reopening economies, our focus is likewise trained on HOW we begin to think about re-opening child care programs. At this time, we still have many more questions, than answers.



# Policy Update

Still asking for early childhood educator supports

- Wage supports, scholarships

Still working to make child care more affordable and accessible for families

- Strengthening CCFAP

Still focusing on system supports

- New IT system for CDD



# The BIG Picture



People are talking...

[Child Care Sector Stabilized](#) (May 1 – *Williston Observer*)

[Vermont Child Care Centers Critical to Economy Post-Pandemic: How They Maintain Readiness](#) (April 28 – *Burlington Free Press*)

[Pandemic Brings Attention to Child Care Need](#) (April 28 – *Brattleboro Reformer*)

[Child Care During COVID-19 and How It's Changing](#) (April 28 – *Vermont Edition*)



# How can I help?



- Check our [COVID-19 resource page](#), updated regularly!
- Thank your legislator and the Governor through our [Legislator Dashboard](#)
- Join a (virtual) Action Team! Learn more about Action Teams and other engagement opportunities on our [Mobilize](#) page. Or just reach out to your local Field Manager! They are here to help keep you informed and connected.



**Shayla Zammuto**  
Chittenden, Grand Isle,  
Franklin, & Lamoille  
[shayla@letsgrowkids.org](mailto:shayla@letsgrowkids.org)



**Stephanie Mackevich**  
Addison, Caledonia, &  
Washington  
[stephanie@letsgrowkids.org](mailto:stephanie@letsgrowkids.org)



**Rex Butt**  
North Bennington,  
Orange, & Rutland  
[rex@letsgrowkids.org](mailto:rex@letsgrowkids.org)



**Emily Wagner**  
South Bennington,  
Windham, & Windsor  
[emilyw@letsgrowkids.org](mailto:emilyw@letsgrowkids.org)



**Lisa Duncan**  
Orleans & Essex  
[lisad@letsgrowkids.org](mailto:lisad@letsgrowkids.org)

# THANK YOU!



*Thank you so much for all that you do!!*