



FRED ROGERS CENTER
for early learning and children's media
at Saint Vincent College

STAYING CONNECTED

Message from the Executive Director

There has been much talk lately about the issue of the digital divide and equity. Recently, *The New York Times* published an article, [Bridging a Digital Divide That Leaves Schoolchildren Behind](#), about how some school children are being left behind due to their lack of access to internet at home, which is needed to complete assignments. Kids are forced to stand outside school buildings in the dark on their electronic devices in order to have access to Wi-Fi or find other places outside of their homes to work.

This is a serious issue that needs to be addressed, but I am troubled that often the solution to technology issues such as these is to buy more technology, or in this case, buy broadband for the home. The problem is that it's creating an endless cycle. Today's technology will be outdated in a few years. Broadband will be considered yesterday's dial-up in the near future. Today's inkjet printers--which printer ink is an expensive item for many families--will be replaced by 3D printers. To introduce children to these advances is a necessity in school, but should not be pushed on families at home.

Why are schools mandating children do assignments outside of their walls that are not possible for a portion of the population? Schools need to be the great equalizer for students. Parents have enough pressure in today's world without having well-intentioned school districts adding additional strains. In the race for efficiency and modernity, we have effectively created a new divide that did not exist long ago.

I hope I don't come off as anti-technology--I'm a real tech geek and see the benefit of technology filling certain voids in a classroom. We even have a joint position statement with the National Association for the Education of Young Children on technology in classrooms serving children birth through age 8. But we can't mandate that parents and students join the never ending cycle of consumerism to complete school assignments.

A solution that can resolve many of these ongoing

New On the Blog

This month is all about love on the blog. Digital Media and Learning Project Manager Tanya Baronti showed librarians some love in [Librarians: The Visionaries and Appreciators in Our Neighborhoods](#). Our Archivist Emily Uhrin explores the topic of love in the Fred Rogers Archive in [Beyond the Heart Shaped Box: Lessons on Love from Fred Rogers](#). Not surprisingly, love is the most popular topic in the Archive.

UnConference

Our friends at PAEYC are hosting an [UnConference: Total Leadership on March 9](#), from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the University of Pittsburgh. The role of an early childhood educator has never been more important. Today's world needs "total leadership" where we actively look for win-wins

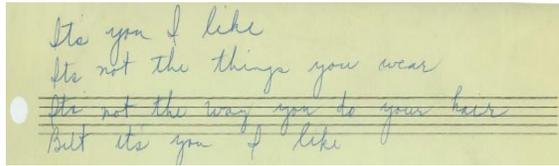
technology issues is to simply not have children do homework requiring tech tools that are not in their homes. Those assignments should be completed in school. Schools may have to rethink their coursework and assignments, but forcing children to stand outside a fence at dusk to find a Wi-Fi signal is not the right way to prepare them for the future.

I hope this is a 21st century idea that we can all stand behind.

Sincerely,



Rick Fernandes



In the Archive

In this piece you can see a portion of Fred Rogers' handwritten lyrics for the song "It's You I Like." Fred wrote all of the songs you hear on *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, and most of them started like this, handwritten in blue ink. This song is appropriate for the month of February and the Valentine's Day season because it tells you that you do not have to do anything special to receive love. You do not have to look or act a certain way; people can love you just as you are. This song reminds you, too, that you should care for others in the same way. "It's You I Like" encourages you to love without expectations.

Fred sang "It's You I Like" in many *Neighborhood* episodes. Introducing the song in 1971, Fred sang it multiple times until the very last week of programming in 2001. Because the song is so well-known, it is exciting to have this handwritten piece in the Fred Rogers Archive.

Carrying the Legacy Forward -- In My Own Words

Watching *Mister Rogers Neighborhood* was the highlight of my days growing up. Mister Rogers was the only adult that was there everyday, always nice and never yelled. He was a true hero to the little girl that I was.

Always your neighbor,
Amy

among work, community, families, and self. Join PAEYC for hands-on immersive training to focus on the various aspects of leadership.

Casbah Dinner

Big Burrito Restaurant Group is generously sponsoring a fundraising dinner for the Fred Rogers Center at their beautiful Mediterranean-inspired restaurant, Casbah, on Thursday, March 31, at 7:00 p.m. Proceeds from this five course dinner with wine pairings will directly benefit the Center's mission to help children become confident, competent, and caring. Tickets are \$120 per person and seating is limited. To make a reservation, please call (724) 805-2750.

Words of Wisdom



"When I say it's you I like, I'm talking about that part of you that knows that life is far more than anything you can ever see or hear or touch. That deep part of you that allows you to stand for

those things without which humankind cannot survive. Love that conquers hate, peace that rises triumphant over war, and justice that proves more powerful than greed." -Fred Rogers

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