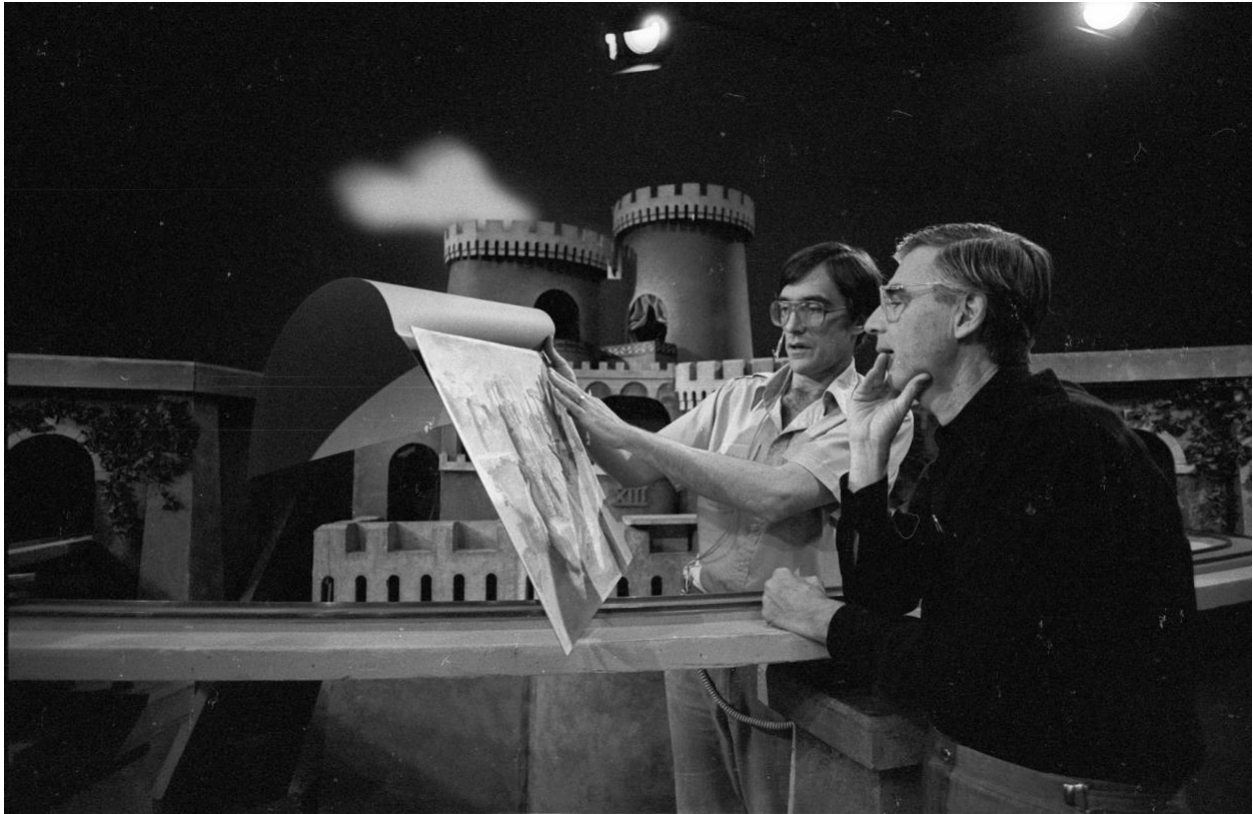


October 2020

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Staying Connected



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings, Dear Friends and Colleagues, from the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College.

Wherever you are, I am sure that you have not experienced a "back-to-school" autumn quite like this one. We offer sincere gratitude to all of you---parents, caregivers, teachers, support workers, neighbors, and others who are helping children during this mix of face-to-face schooling and virtual gatherings. No matter

how old our children are, they are facing disruptions that most of us have never even imagined. I hope that each of you will join me in extending gratitude to someone you know who has helped make this experience easier for children. A short note, a kind word, a grateful smile, or a small treat can let others know how much they are valued. The future of our world is in the hands of our children. We want to be sure they are well-cared for as they grow, learn, discover, and thrive during this period of disruption. We can do this together!

Fred Rogers often said that things that are “mentionable can be more manageable.” Everyone is feeling a little bit stressed during these times and children can often sense that things are not going as usual. Some children might be puzzled by the intensity of the emotions they see around them. Others may even think that they could be the cause of the problems. Talking with children about their questions and concerns can be immensely helpful. Some children can talk about their feelings; others may express their feelings by drawing, playing, or singing about their feelings. When we help children find creative outlets that encourage playing, drawing, building, singing, or telling stories about their feelings, that can be a way of “talking” also.

In reflecting on the wisdom of Fred Rogers, I was drawn back to one of my favorite quotes related to kindness. There is much divisiveness around us right now and it’s easy to want to find someone to blame for everything that is going wrong. Fred reminds us that it’s the way we treat each other that matters the most. In Fred Rogers’ words:

“Imagine what our real neighborhoods would be like if each of us offered, as a matter of course, just one kind word to another person. “

Let’s not forget to be kind to each other.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roberta L. Schomburg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, decorative flourish at the end of the name.

Roberta L. Schomburg, Ph.D.

“Anyone who does anything to help a child in this life is a hero to me.” –Fred Rogers

IN THE ARCHIVE

FEATURE

E-mail to the Neighborhood

by Fred Rogers

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood

Fred Rogers' week of programs about going to school originally aired in 1979. Nearly twenty years later, Fred wrote an article about how children were communicating with him about that week—now through email, a change from the handwritten cards and letters he had received thousands of over the years. He questioned if he was losing a bit of that human connection by not seeing the children's handwriting or their choice of stationery. But he found that the

questions and comments coming in through email were the same that he had received in 1979. Even though they were communicating through a new medium, children were still sharing their fears and concerns about starting school. And Fred, a trusted adult, was still there to help them through the stressful time.

FROM THE CENTER

Outside Inside

The outside things of life certainly do change and often quickly, but the inside things remain. Our parents and their parents and their parents—all of us—were created by Love. Love with a capital L. And we spend our lives trying to recognize that we truly *are* lovable and capable of loving.

So much of the world around us is uncertain and changing – sometimes it feels like everything is different and nothing remains the same. We are reminded of Fred’s thinking about the essential needs of children on the inside versus the ever-changing outsides. Fred offered these words:

“Although children’s “outsides” may have changed a lot over the years, their inner needs have remained very much the same. Society seems to be pushing children to grow faster, but their developmental tasks have remained constant. No matter what lies ahead, children always need to know they are loved and capable of loving. Anything adults can do to help in this discovery will be our greatest gift to the

future.”

Earlier this month, Fred Rogers Center’s, Dr. Dana Winters, and Fred Rogers Center Senior Fellow, Dr. Junlei Li, joined Remake Learning for a Tomorrow Conversation about the timeless wisdom of Fred Rogers in the future of teaching and learning. Dr. Winters and Dr. Li talked about the importance of remembering that children’s inside needs remain the same, although the outsides of the worlds seem very different today. You can see their talk [here](#).

WORDS OF WISDOM

"There's never been a time in our history when there have been so many changes, so many unusual things to deal with for which we have no experience. It's as if our whole society were walking along a road through a wilderness of constant change with strangers we think we should know, but don't quite understand." - Fred Rogers

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