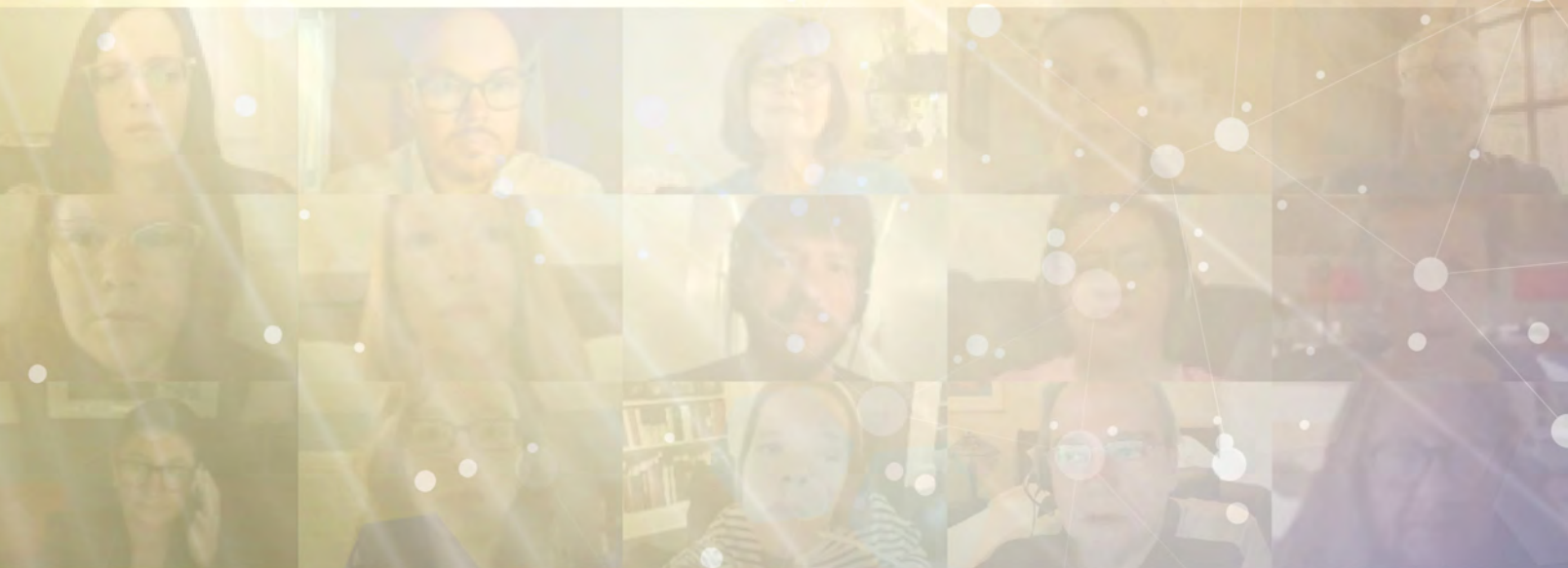


DISCOVERY



VANDERBILT KENNEDY CENTER



Research, Training, and Service from a Distance: The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Adapts and Innovates During COVID-19

No. 47 | Summer 2020 | Vanderbilt University Medical Center



Director's Message

JEFFREY L. NEUL, M.D., PH.D.

COVID-19 has dramatically changed how we all live and how we all work. In March 2020, the Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) encouraged all non-clinical staff to begin working from home to help stall the spread of COVID-19. Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC) employees are counted among 8,000 VUMC employees who still are working remotely as of June 1, 2020.

The transition to virtual workspaces, though undoubtedly unexpected, was made smoother thanks to an already established VKC telepresence in many of the programs and projects we administer. To meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and their families, educators, and providers in rural and underserved sectors of our state, many projects were already using telemedicine and telehealth platforms to do things like assess the risk for autism, train teachers and health care providers, and disseminate information about the disabilities research conducted by our members and investigators.

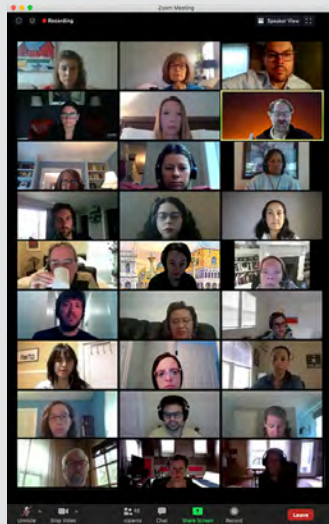
Our unique tele-experience and dedicated staff and faculty, coupled with VUMC issuing Zoom licenses to all employees, meant we were

set to begin adapting what we do to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities and their families from a distance.

This special issue of *Discovery* outlines some of the ways we have adapted and innovated during the COVID-19 pandemic. Research in intellectual and developmental disabilities has not stopped. Virtual endeavors have allowed research to continue and new lines of research to emerge. Though in-person training and activities have been cancelled, virtual learning and services have continued, and connections with new worldwide audiences have been made. Reading through this issue, it is easy to see how the VKC thrives despite challenges associated with COVID-19 and our county's Safer-At-Home order.

However, we all know COVID-19 is not the only issue troubling us at this time.

The racial inequality, injustice, and violence that Black men, women, and children continue to face in our country is abhorrent and unacceptable. We view the nationwide protests that have occurred after the violent death of George Floyd



VKC Director Jeffrey Neul updates VKC staff during a virtual staff meeting on VUMC's transition back to work plan.

and so many before him as a positive catalyst for change. And so much needs to change.

The Kennedy Center's role throughout this time is to continue to improve the lives of people with disabilities and families, recognizing that people with disabilities are found within every demographic group and subpopulation in America. We recognize that we must continue to work to lessen the health and service disparities that continue to exist for Black individuals with disabilities. While the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center has been committed to this and we have worked hard to overcome the ever-present obstacles, we are now committed to redoubling our efforts in this area.

In light of this commitment, we met with the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Community Advisory Council to review our efforts and to identify new opportunities to support and respect the lives of Black individuals with disabilities, who make up an estimated 5.6 million people in the United States. Additionally, we will partner with the Vanderbilt Office of Health Equity and community and state agencies such as the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to identify specific ways to work towards these efforts.

We know we can do better and we will work to do so, and I ask all of you to help us

in these efforts and to think of ways that each of us can make a difference. Notably, one of the central strategic directions for the Vanderbilt University Medical Center is to "make diversity and inclusion intentional," and the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center has been committed to this goal since its founding in 1965. We remain steady in our resolve to continue and to expand this commitment.

As you read through this issue, I remind you to remember our commitment, our innovation, and our mission to improve the lives of people with disabilities and families. For this time is dramatically changing how we all live and how we all work.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center is to facilitate discoveries and best practices to improve the lives of persons with developmental disabilities and their families.

Adapting and Conducting Research from a Distance

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected how Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC) members and investigators are able to conduct their research. In order to continue the mission to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities through research, VKC members have had to create flexible responses, ranging from developing new methods to continue active studies to opening completely new lines of research directly related to COVID-19 and/or social distancing. Below are examples of some of the ways research continues at the VKC. Learn more about the VKC researchers and their projects at: vkc.vumc.org/people/

Using an App to support families with children with disabilities and challenging behaviors

Erin Barton,
Ph.D., Associate
Professor of
Special Education



We are examining the use of a new mobile technology, the **Family Behavior Support App**, for supporting families with children with disabilities and challenging behaviors. We created the App to support parents in implementing functional assessment-based interventions, which work by determining the purpose (function) that a particular behavior serves for a child. This information is used to develop a plan for reducing and preventing the behavior.

This was always a distance-based project. However, we were originally planning to conduct live observation via video recordings in the home. After the tornados and then the pandemic, we moved to conducting all observations via Zoom. The intervention hasn't changed at all, just the data collection. We also decided to share the infographics and resources for caregivers that we created for the App that support children's social emotional competence and play.

Connecting with loved ones and education from home

Georgene L
Troseth, Ph.D.,
Associate
Professor of
Psychology



During the time of social

distancing, my lab has focused on a couple of things. First, we have been interested in how grandparents are using video chat to keep in touch with their families with new babies. The aim is to understand whether babies can form relationships with grandparents in this way. The study has been conducted completely online and remotely, involving families from their homes and grandparents who are socially isolated from their families. A second study that we have been able to continue explores whether a helpful character in an e-book can support parent-child conversation to build children's language skills. This research is virtual, with the families using the e-book at home.

Improving access to the adult service system

Julie Lounds Taylor, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences



We were mid-way through studying the effects of a parent advocacy intervention called ASSIST (Advocating for SupportS to Improve Service Transition) when the Safer-at-Home order was put into place. ASSIST aims to improve service access and outcomes for youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), who are transitioning from school-based to adult service systems. Our hope is that teaching parents about the different services and supports available to their son or daughter will lead to better service access, and ultimately, better life course outcomes for the youth with ASD.

Because the intervention was designed to be delivered in-person and in a small group format, we were forced to pause the series. Our focus shifted and we quickly got to work developing procedures to deliver ASSIST in an online format. Our plan is to resume the series during the summer, delivering the intervention in a safe and effective way.

Providing services to children with complex communication needs through telepractice

Elizabeth Biggs, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Special Education



Closures of schools and health care facilities forced many speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to turn to telepractice to deliver services to children who use aided augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). We know children who use AAC may be especially affected by interruptions to services because they have slower rates of skill acquisition and more difficulties with generalization and maintenance over time. Therefore, continuing service delivery using telepractice offers great promise. However, there are challenges. It may be difficult for SLPs to use hands-on strategies such as modeling, prompting, and providing behavioral supports via telepractice. And many families

are experiencing telepractice for the first time during a crisis situation.

We decided to collect the perspectives and experiences of SLPs regarding telepractice for children who use aided AAC. The aim is to leverage this unique opportunity where distance services are essential to better understand how they might be leveraged to improve outcomes far beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stress and coping strategies during COVID-19

Bruce Compass Ph.D., Patricia and Rodes Hart Professor of Psychology and Human Development

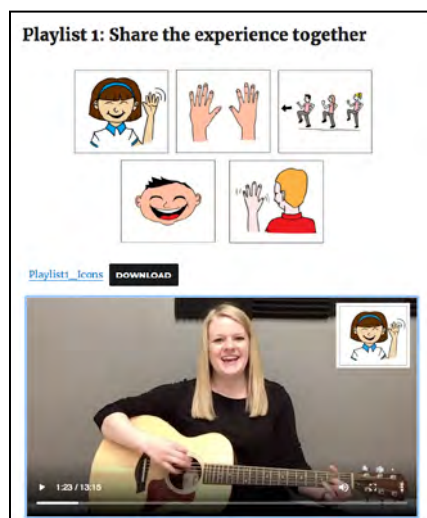
The COVID-19 pandemic has brought unprecedented levels of stress, fears, and uncertainty for children, adults, and families. Individuals and families have been suddenly and unexpectedly confronted with new challenges and threats to their emotional



To learn more about studies related to COVID-19, see
vkc.vumc.org/StudyFinder/COVID-19

and physical health, including job disruptions, closing of schools and daycares, social distancing requirements, getting sick and uncertainty about catching the virus, and difficulty obtaining even basic groceries and supplies.

Our team is conducting a study about stress, emotions, and social isolation that may be associated with the recent COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of the study is to better understand the ways in which individuals are being affected by COVID-19 and to identify the most helpful coping strategies to deal with stress related to the pandemic. This information will be helpful in developing effective psychological programs to strengthen skills to cope with stress. Although the majority of the research we do in our lab involves meeting face-to-face with individuals and families, we have had to move our research to online surveys.



Connecting youth and adults with disabilities to meaningful employment

Erik Carter,
Ph.D., Cornelius
Vanderbilt Chair
and Professor of
Special Education

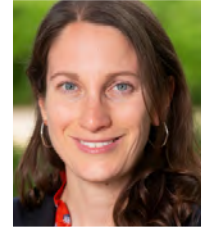


We have been developing and evaluating two interventions designed to connect youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to meaningful employment in their local communities. Many of us know firsthand the impact a good job can have on our lives—a steady income, new relationships, community connections, and sense of purpose can all come from having a job you love.

As so many Tennesseans—especially those with disabilities—lose their jobs in the midst of this pandemic, the importance of our work only elevates. We are asking advice from numerous individuals with disabilities, families, employers, and professionals about how best to design our interventions so they are effective and practical during this time. These conversations have shifted from in-person to Zoom, and we are rethinking how our approach will shift in this changed economy.

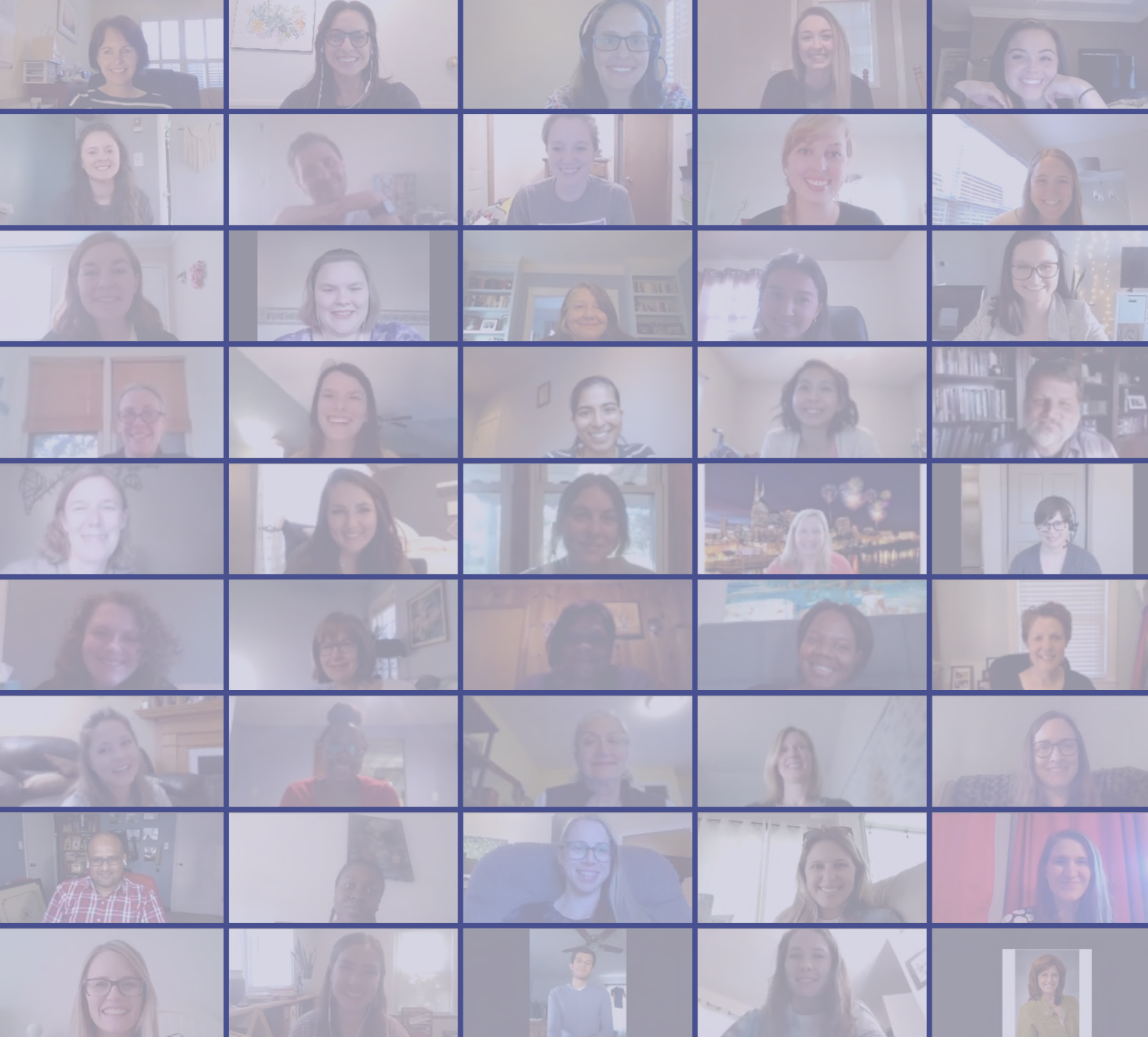
Parent-child music activities and family well-being at home

Miriam Lense,
Ph.D., Assistant
Professor in
Otolaryngology



My lab has been investigating social-emotional well-being and musical engagement in families of young children with and without developmental disabilities. Musical activities in the home (e.g., singing together, dancing together) are a common occurrence across families that include young children. Our research has shown that informal parent-child musical experiences predicts parent-child attachment, or the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors parents have about their child and their relationship.

We have expanded this line of research to specifically examine family well-being and musical engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic. This data will inform how families have been impacted by the Safer-at-Home order in regard to their everyday well-being and parent-child relationship. We also have developed a Parent-Child Home Music Toolkit that provides strategies and supports for parent-child music activities.



IN 2019-20

68 UCEDD and LEND long-term trainees devoted 300 or more hours to disability-related activities at the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center.

Training That Goes the Distance

The 2019-2020 academic year was a memorable one for the **Vanderbilt Consortium LEND** and the **Vanderbilt Kennedy University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)** trainees. LEND welcomed Evon Lee, Ph.D., as their new training director, and UCEDD trainee facilitators prepared a vision for the next five years as Elise McMillan, J.D., Director, worked with VKC leadership to submit the UCEDD grant renewal application. But the end of the year might be the most memorable part, as COVID-19 forced trainees to turn their end-of-year presentations into digital projects, celebrate the conclusion of the programs through live-streaming, and assist numerous projects into moving online. Nevertheless, these two trainee programs have prepared graduates for their careers in neurodevelopmental disabilities in amazing ways.

Family-centered care

Tonya Bowman, Vanderbilt Consortium LEND Family Trainee

I've been a part of the LEND Advisory Council for a long time. As a staff member with Family Voices of Tennessee, I knew most of the past LEND trainees personally. LEND provides such a great learning experience with connected disciplines. I valued it as a chance to grow personally and professionally. I gained a greater sense of hope that I will strive to share with the families I serve. My fellow trainees, and the faculty and staff, are full of compassion and knowledge of individuals with disabilities.



Patient and Family-Centered Care was a part of every discussion and conversation. That fills my heart with joy and hope for the future.

Closing the gap in communication

Kessy Jean, MSPH student, Meharry Medical College

I wanted to be a LEND trainee because as a public health professional, I was aware of the gap in communication between health professionals of different backgrounds. I primarily wanted to understand the roles that different fields play into health care. It was important to me to understand the challenges they face as well as their contributions to



patient care. I believe that this program educated me in that sense, and I can carry on that knowledge in my career going forward. Through LEND, I learned that the most important part of caring for a patient and their families is to get direct input from the patient or their caretaker. They are experts in the challenges they face regularly.

Beyond the standard curriculum

Zachary Williams, M.D./Ph.D. student, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

I plan to make a career for myself as a clinician-scientist in the field of neurodevelopmental disabilities, but there is relatively little in



the medical school curriculum focused on this population. In order to better serve my future patients, I felt that I needed to find opportunities beyond the standard curriculum. The Vanderbilt Consortium LEND program does that and more, providing students and trainees from all disability-related professions with a wide array of resources and hands-on activities. Even though I applied to the program to improve my clinical knowledge, I also greatly enjoyed the non-clinical topics such as special education policy and practice, disability ethics, and general leadership skills.

Preparing for the future

Michele Schutz, Ph.D. student,
Vanderbilt Department of Special
Education

I feel so fortunate for the wide scope of opportunities with which



I have been provided to contribute in research, practice, and policy as a UCEDD trainee. For example, I disseminated a needs assessment survey to parents across the state and analyzed their views on pre-employment transition services for their youth with disabilities. Moreover, I just finished facilitating focus

group interviews on paid employment for high school students with severe disabilities and am currently working with colleagues to analyze data collected. I continue to contribute as a member of the Transition Tennessee and state transition leadership teams through technical assistance in districts across the state, community conversation events, and development of tools and materials for practitioners. As a UCEDD trainee, I have learned the unparalleled value of collaboration amongst stakeholders across various disciplines for addressing key disability issues.

Support across the lifespan

Chung eun Lee, Ph.D., Postdoctoral
Fellow, Department of General
Pediatrics

Since becoming a VKC UCEDD trainee, I have had the opportunity to be part of



multiple collaborative research projects. I worked on research with Next Steps at Vanderbilt to examine how students with disabilities might be impacted by their involvement in campus life. I also worked with national datasets to understand the residential changes among individuals with Down syndrome from their 20s to 50s. Further,

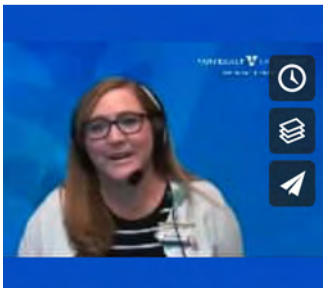
UCEDD trainees included masters, doctoral and post-doctoral students from Special Education, Social Work, Psychology, and Community Research and Action.

LEND trainees included graduate students and postdoctoral fellows from Audiology, Deaf Education, Genetic Counseling, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Nutrition, Medicine, Nursing, Psychology, Public Health, Special Education, Speech-Language Pathology, Social Work—as well as Family trainees.

collaborating with Tennessee Adult Brothers and Sisters (TABS), I have been developing an intervention for future sibling caregivers of individuals with autism spectrum disorders. The VKC UCEDD has provided me interdisciplinary experiences and exposure to other scholars and professionals with different perspectives, beyond my own field. This provided me with a well-rounded approach to supporting individuals with disabilities across the disciplines.

Expanding Virtual Community and Professional Trainings

Before the pandemic, the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC) had devoted considerable efforts to developing mechanisms for delivering quality, evidence-based training curricula to caregivers and professionals via virtual platforms. With various platforms already in place, the catalogue of virtual trainings, online learning modules, and webinars has been embraced and expanded, providing pertinent and time-sensitive information during the time of social distancing.



Equipping caregivers with practical tools to support their young child with autism

For more than 10 years, families of young children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have come together on Saturday mornings to take part in free monthly workshops that provide them with practical information to support their child's development and learning. The **Treatment and Research Institute for Autism Spectrum Disorders (TRIAD) Families First program** bridges the gap between diagnosis and intervention given the many barriers to intervention families face.



During the Safer-at-Home order, the live and livestream Families First programs were suspended. Instead, 30-minute webinars were created for families, who could register once and then attend whenever feasible. Initially, the webinars were focused on things like how to schedule the day and

specific activities to work on during the pandemic. Topics shifted once the series gained momentum, focusing on goal areas that the attending families requested. View archived webinars at:

➡ vkc.vumc.org/vkc/triad/covid19/ff/

Telehealth trainings for diagnosticians, behavior analysts, and early interventionist providers

Faculty at VKC TRIAD prioritize efforts to develop and evaluate new ways to screen for autism spectrum disorder in young children. During the pandemic, they created training webinars for diagnosticians, outlining the promise and procedures of two telemedicine autism assessment tools: TELE-STAT and TELE-ASD-PEDS. The impetus in providing these virtual trainings at this time is that both models of care can be deployed with children, families, and providers who are sheltering at home. The webinars

Telemedicine-based Autism Spectrum Disorder Assessment in Toddlers and Introduction to the Screening Tool for Autism in Toddlers (STAT™): Overview and discussion of potential telehealth have been archived and may be accessed at: [▼triad.vkclearning.org](https://triad.vkclearning.org).

Registration is required.

Though Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) do not typically provide telemedicine-based services, VKC TRIAD BCBAs regularly use various modes of tele-practice to reach and support

families and educators in rural and low-resource communities. During the pandemic, and in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, webinars were created for BCBAs to share foundational information based on lessons learned and a broad expertise across a variety of telemedicine-based programming. The webinars focused on providing introductory overviews of key ethical considerations in delivering behavior analytic services via telemedicine. [Ethical Considerations for](#)

[Delivering ABA Services via Telemedicine](#) is archived at: [▼vkc.vumc.org/vkc/triad/covid19/bcba/](https://vkc.vumc.org/vkc/triad/covid19/bcba/)

Because many home and clinic-based services were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TRIAD created a web-based series of training opportunities so that early intervention providers could continue in the delivery of services to young children with ASD and related developmental delays and disabilities. The series introduces the remote delivery of early intervention services

VIRTUAL TRAININGS

Participants March 1 - May 18, 2020



767

Families
First



2,192

Telediagnostic
tools



237

ABA Ethical
Telepractice



2,369

Early
Intervention



3,904

New Users

and provides information on utilizing web-based curricula to support families via telehealth. It outlines strategies to support remote coaching and consultation with caregivers, ethical considerations for the delivery of telehealth services, and logistical considerations. The [Early Intervention Focused Telehealth Support Series for Providers](#) is archived at:

👉 vkc.vumc.org/vkc/triad/covid19/ei/

Distance learning model for educators continues serving students with reading challenges

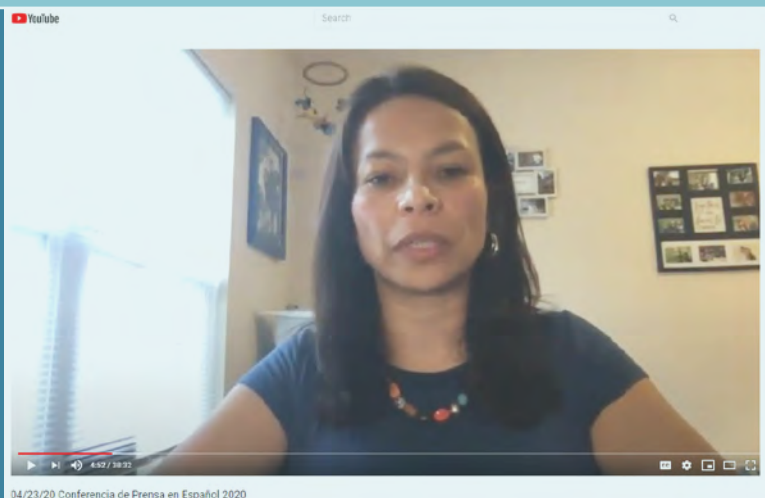
The [Britt Henderson Training Series: Project ECHO Reading](#)

connects educators and specialists through a virtual learning community and is focused on the topic of tutoring in the area of reading. The virtual series began last year. With the impact of COVID-19, which forced many people to work from home, the model has been even more relevant and timely.

Originally developed for clinical consultation in 2003, the Project ECHO model is flexible and has evolved to serve a variety of learners and communities. It is not a passive webinar format. It is interactive and designed to empower each participant to share their

extensive knowledge, and to support other participants in finding solutions to challenges. This collaborative case-based learning approach aims to help bridge the gap between research and practice in reading instruction, while connecting various disciplines. For now, Project ECHO Reading is reserved for educators, practitioners, occupational and physical therapists, school counselors, psychologists, researchers, paraprofessionals, and student teachers. For more information on the Britt Henderson Training Series: Project ECHO Reading, see: [👉 vkc.vumc.org/echoreading](https://vkc.vumc.org/echoreading)

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder's Angelica Deaton was invited to participate in Mayor John Cooper's Conferencia de Prensa en Español (COVID-19 press conference). This is held with Spanish language media representatives concerning Nashville's response to the pandemic.



Rethinking Delivery of Services and Supports and Graduation

Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC) programs and events that typically take place in-person were halted once social distancing measures were put into place. Activities like walking in a graduation ceremony, attending a support group, improving reading skills with a tutor, and learning how to lower stress levels are some examples. Faculty and staff were forced to regroup and adapt quickly!



Next Steps at Vanderbilt honors first class of four-year graduates with online celebration

The **Next Steps at Vanderbilt** Class of 2020 was the first to experience several momentous occasions: the first class of Next Steps students to attend four years of the inclusive higher education program; the class who graduated during Next Steps' 10th anniversary; and the very first Next Steps class to complete the program online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and early closure of Vanderbilt's campus.

Next Steps staff members did not let social distancing stop them from honoring this year's graduates and their supportive families. Instead, they facilitated an online Senior Salute through Zoom technology, where graduates, family members, Ambassadors, and faculty and staff could come together one last time to share fond memories and wish each other congratulations and good luck.

More than 60 people logged on to join the celebration, held May 14. Families and friends were present from the safety of their homes to honor this year's

graduates: Daniel Brawner, Peach Chinratanalab, Charles Feddeman, Rob Funk, Jack Pipkorn, Darko Osman, Charles Webster, and Alex Zarabi.

Luckily, this will not be the last time the students will be together. Originally scheduled to participate in 2020's graduation commencement, the Next Steps graduating seniors are still invited to participate when all of Vanderbilt University's Class of 2020 reconvenes to celebrate their momentous achievements and to walk as part of a formal graduation ceremony.

Transition Tennessee hosts online forums and virtual job fairs

Transition Tennessee is a statewide project with the goal of improving transition outcomes for youth and young adults with disabilities. It is an online hub of trainings and resources for schools, families, and communities and a partnership between the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Department of Human Services, Vanderbilt University, and the VKC University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD).

When social distancing measures began, project coordinators came together to convene online forums to help educators and service providers learn how to deliver strong transition remotely. Likewise, they hosted the first-ever online transition fairs in Tennessee to help students with disabilities and their families learn about the resources that can help them prepare for adulthood and employment. Topic areas included inclusive higher education programs, postsecondary education resources, and employment programs. Register for an account on the Transition Tennessee website to access archived versions of the virtual fairs at:

👉 transitiontn.org

90 people
attended the
first-ever online
transition fair in
Tennessee

Hosting virtual conversations for siblings of people with disabilities

Tennessee Adult Brothers and Sisters (TABS) is a statewide network that provides information and peer support for siblings of individuals with all types of disabilities. While typical activities for TABS include in-person social gatherings and conferences, the group quickly organized after the Safer-at-Home order was issued and hosted online informal conversations to continue its mission of supporting siblings.

The conversations included discussions on strategies for supporting siblings' health and medical care during the challenges of COVID-19 and understanding the various public policy issues related to the pandemic and the disability community. Of course,

time was left at the end for socializing! The chats were sponsored by the VKC UCEDD and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities. For more information on TABS, see: [👉vkc.vumc.org/vkc/tabs](https://vkc.vumc.org/vkc/tabs)

Zooming with athletes to build strong minds

The 2020 State Summer Games looked very different for Tennessee's Special Olympians this year. The suspension of all in-person, large group events dictated that fitness challenges and the Healthy Athletes programming move online. The VKC UCEDD and LEND partners with Special Olympics Tennessee to provide **Strong Minds**, which is a project within the Healthy Athletes program that teaches athletes life skills that can reduce stress and improve their well-being and athletic performance.

Through an interactive hour-long Zoom session, facilitators walked the athletes through activities such as stretching, deep breathing, positive self-talk, and muscle relaxation.



Virtual Music Camp

Though the ACM Lifting Lives Music Camp moved to a virtual format, campers still experienced songwriting, music lessons, talent shows, social time, and more!



Though facilitators were hesitant about the effectiveness a virtual format might have, they reached 318 athletes that day, and the athletes who completed evaluations reported 100% satisfaction!

➡ resources.specialolympics.org/health/strong-minds

As Tennessee Special Olympics explores Return to Play, UCEDD Director Elise McMillan joined a State Level Advisory Committee to help develop program guidance.

Continuing information and referral for callers with disabilities

Though **Tennessee Disability Pathfinder** staff were working from their homes, they continued to provide information and referral by answering calls and emails to provide connections and resources for individuals with disabilities and their families, caregivers, agency staff, and health care providers. They fielded calls about everything from unemployment benefits to resources for supplies. This commitment to share

information and resources continues as Pathfinder expands to include support from the Tennessee Department of Education and Tennessee Department of Human Services/ Vocational Rehabilitation.

Pathfinder's **Multicultural Outreach Program** staff worked with callers and community agencies serving the Spanish community. They had a surge of calls from families asking questions about prevention measures, actions to follow if coronavirus symptoms were present, where to go in case

of emergency, and how their therapies were going to be addressed. In trying to meet these needs, staff reached out to different official sources of information in Spanish such as the CDC, UNICEF, Disability Rights of Tennessee, the Metro Nashville Health Department, and community partners. Staff also provided translation of documents and instructions written in English and assisted some providers with interpretation on a one-to-one basis. Pathfinder staff may be reached by phone (800-640-4636) or email (tnpathfinder@vumc.org). For Spanish assistance, call (615) 875-9850.

VKC Reading Clinic goes digital

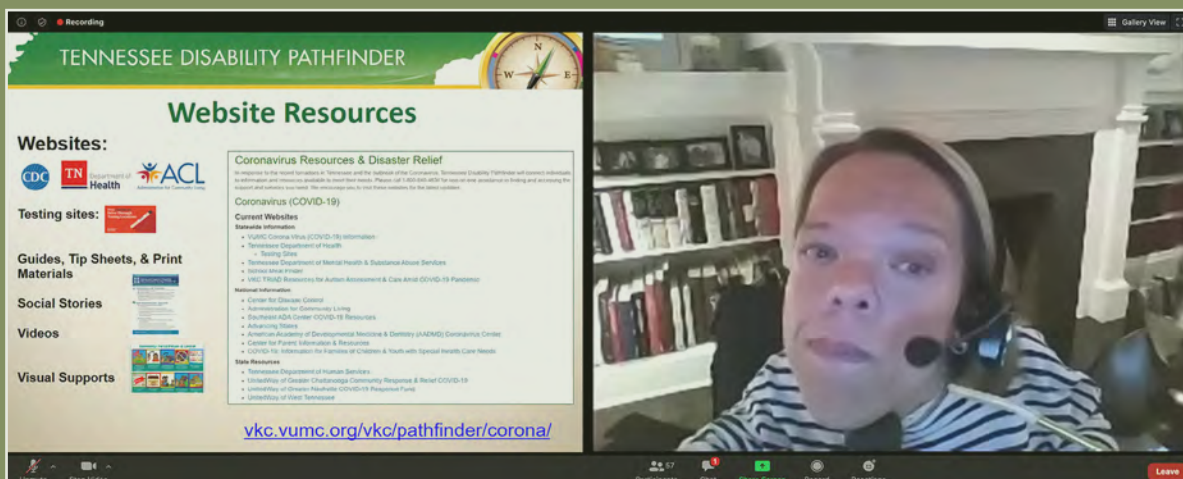
The VKC Reading Clinic traditionally operates on in-person visits to the office to conduct one-to-one reading tutoring sessions. To continue serving their students safely, faculty and staff consulted with educators and designed a model to facilitate the end of the 2020 spring session and the 2020 summer session via livestream. To make tutoring sessions dynamic, factors such as engagement, opportunities and ways to respond, parent involvement, innovative ways to accurately assess progress, and curricular modifications were considered. The 2020 summer



session operated at full capacity and tutoring will continue to operate fully online until further notice.

➡ vkc.vumc.org/reading

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder's Director Megan Hart presents at a VKC staff meeting on the program's response to compiling resources for individuals with disabilities, families, and providers.



Meeting Needs and Concerns by Developing Resources

Vanderbilt Kennedy Center (VKC) faculty and staff created a variety of resources that address concerns about the coronavirus in individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Navigating the Path to Disability Resources (English and Spanish)

Immediately following the Safer-at-Home order in Tennessee, a comprehensive list of coronavirus-related resources was developed and housed on the [Tennessee Disability Pathfinder](https://tennesseedisabilitypathfinder.org) website. The list includes helpful state and national websites, guides and print materials, visual supports, social stories, videos from other disability support organizations, and links to many of the trainings outlined in this issue of *Discovery*. To access the Coronavirus and Disaster Relief resources, see: vkc.vumc.org/vkc/pathfinder/corona/

A list of coronavirus resources and information in Spanish may be accessed through [Camino Seguro](https://vkc.vumc.org/vkc/pathfinder/corona/es/), see: vkc.vumc.org/vkc/pathfinder/corona/es/

Resources to assist health care providers and patients with issues related to the coronavirus pandemic are available on the

VKC's [IDD Health Care Toolkit](https://iddtoolkit.vkcsites.org/coronavirus-resources/) website at:

iddtoolkit.vkcsites.org/coronavirus-resources/

Communicating disabilities research in plain language

The Promise of Discovery podcast highlights research in intellectual and developmental disabilities in plain language, making it accessible to the general public. The conversations with VKC researchers cover why the research matters in the lives of people with disabilities and families, how the research impacts and enhances what we know already and/or raises additional questions in the field, and what implications the research might have for policy.

While recording began before the Safer-at-Home order, they continued after via Zoom. New episodes are released on the first Friday of each month. The podcast is accessible through the VKC Podcast page, Soundcloud, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts.



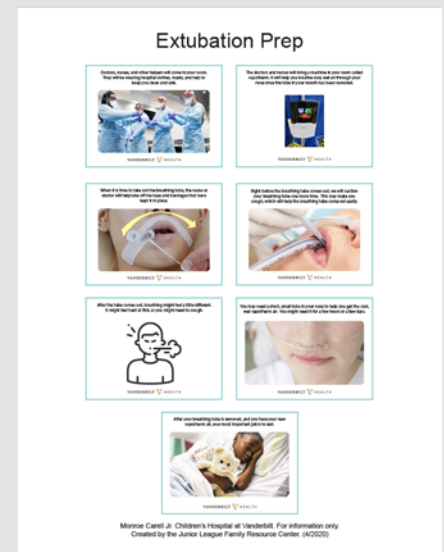
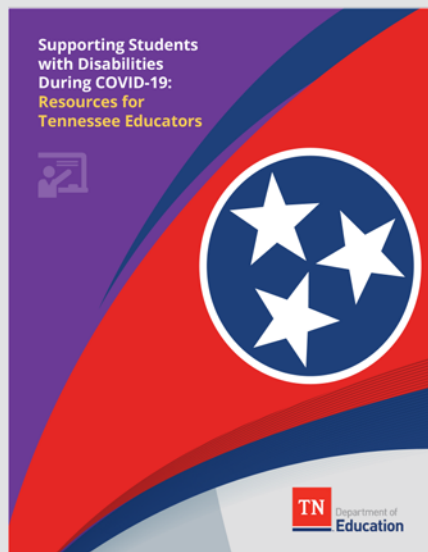
The Promise of Discovery podcast

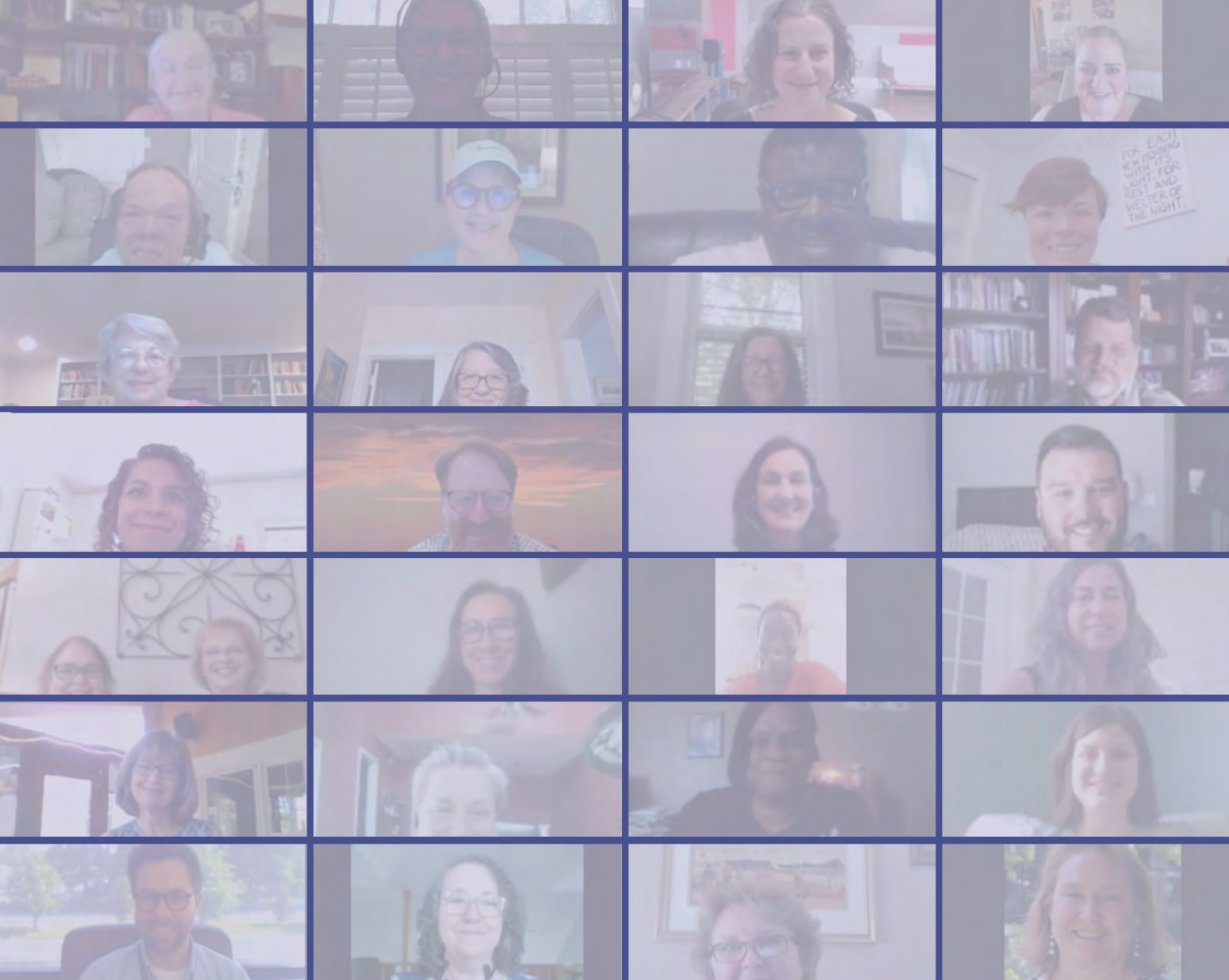
vkc.vumc.org/vkc/resources/podcasts/

PRINTABLE RESOURCES

VKC faculty and staff developed or facilitated the development of resources focused on easing some of the unique challenges that arose during the pandemic. Resources such as social stories and visual supports use plain language to explain necessary precautions like social distancing and thorough handwashing and outline related medical procedures such as intubation and extubation. vkc.vumc.org/vkc/pathfinder/corona

Additionally, VKC faculty worked with the Tennessee Department of Education and its grantees providing services to special populations within public schools to identify, develop, and share resources that educators can use to serve their students and families. triad.vumc.org/covid19





COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Vanderbilt Kennedy Center Community Advisory Council is a full partner in advising VKC leadership and in planning, implementing, and evaluating activities (even from a distance).

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