

Hi friends,

We're writing to you today [to ask you for a gift that will provide children an opportunity to build crucial mental and emotional health skills.](#)

With everything going on in the world today, it's no wonder that mental and emotional health challenges among children are on the rise.

Did you know that children under the age of 5 have now spent half or more of their lives in relative isolation? The impacts of that are emerging as challenging behaviors affecting learning, relationship development, and in some cases, overall safety of childcare communities.

That's why, this year we introduced Arts First: a new arm of Start With The Arts that supports childcare providers in building social and emotional skills in kids ages 0-5.

A recent report from the Vermont Department of Mental Health states that following the pandemic, ***"children are struggling with problem-solving; increased sensory sensitivity; struggling with transitions; regression in toileting; struggles following directions; and trouble getting along with peers."***

Childcare providers have told us the same. They are struggling to meet the increased behavioral and emotional needs of children in their care, with no additional training or support.

So, we stepped up, and developed Arts First to help them out. [Will you help them out, too? A gift of \\$50 provides 1-on-1 mentoring for a childcare provider to better meet the needs of the children in their care.](#)

The pilot sessions of Art First are underway now. In order for this important work to continue, we need your help.

[Your gift today will give a child the chance for positive self-expression through creativity.](#) Can we count on you to help us ensure that children with mental and emotional struggles receive support and build skills crucial to their long-term success?

Every child deserves to feel safe and included in their learning environment. You make this work possible. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Many thanks,

Abbey & Kat

Abbey Pratt, President of the Board of Directors & Kat Redniss, Director of Communications and Development



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