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Children's Museum of Pittsburgh Launches Campaign to Help Children Express Kindness and Explore Their Feelings

Pittsburgh, PA (June 15, 2020) — At last night's virtual star-studded Gala, The Great Night In (available to watch here: <https://pittsburghkids.org/support/great-night-gala-2020>) we celebrated the best of Children's Museum of Pittsburgh's arts and joyful experiences. The event also encouraged children and families to discuss messages of love and kindness, with a focus on how children can process all of the recent events impacting our lives.

During the event, the Children's Museum introduced the newest phase of its **Museum at Home** program with a video from the actor Zachary Quinto (Pittsburgh native and Carnegie Mellon University graduate) encouraging children and families to share messages of kindness to family, friends, the community and the world. Quinto, who has starred in hit films and television shows, including *Heroes* and the newest *Star Trek* movie series, spoke about it during the Gala: "Now more than ever, kids need to see examples of love and kindness in the world around them. So we are asking kids and families to write letters expressing their feelings about what's happening in the world today or talk about the joys they feel, or share a story about someone that treated them with extraordinary kindness."

You can watch his **Great Night In** Gala appearance here: <https://youtu.be/xv021dQ06eA>

We believe the voices of children and families can help communities express love and kindness towards each other, and the world, especially in these challenging times. The new kindness initiative offers a platform to share letters expressing those feelings. And it isn't restricted to letters - whatever personal form of expression is chosen, we encourage sharing it with the Children's Museum through a letter, photo or video - poems, chalked signs, painted rocks, song and dance.

Here's how kids and families can share:

- Email to hi@pittsburghkids.org.
- Drop your kindness letter or poem in the mail to the Children's Museum, 10 Children's Way, Pittsburgh, PA, 15212, or
- Visit the Children's Museum's social channels and post a message, drawing, photo or video in a comment or direct message:
 - Facebook - facebook.com/pittsburghkids
 - Instagram or Twitter - [@pghkids](#)

Submissions will be featured online and displayed in the Museum when it reopens.

This activity was introduced during the hour-long Gala program, which featured appearances by stars of the stage and screen including: Billy Porter, Conner John Gillooly, Patina Miller, Corey Cott, Katharine McPhee, Desmond Child, Jonas Rivera and James Gilmer. As well as sports and media figures including Bob Pompeani, Franco Harris, Kris Letang, Josh Bell and Don Kelly. There were segments featuring renowned children's authors Mo Willems and Hervé Tullet. The evening featured performances by Jackie Evancho, Montgomery Lamb, Elise Duckworth, Jau'mair Garland, Liam Kress, Jordan McNeal, Moriah Carey, and Aria Ramanathan. The event was produced by Erich Bergen.

The Gala was a fun, family friendly evening of food and entertainment in support of Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. However, as the latest developments around COVID-19, social issues, and race are so dramatically impacting our community and nation, we also encouraged a conversation on these pressing topics. Specifically, how do families address - and enable parents and children to have heartfelt discussions about – race, equality, and social justice and the events impacting our city, region, nation, and beyond.

These topics can be very difficult for children to comprehend. Kids may not know how to talk about everything they are watching on television or reading on the internet. They may not fully grasp the conversations that adults are having around them. We want to ensure that our work reaches them, and gives them an outlet for speaking and asking questions, understanding and learning.

Our mission calls on us to inspire joy, creativity, and curiosity - and - to be a partner and resource for those who work with or on behalf of children, youth, and families. To better achieve that goal we have begun to compile resources and guides for how parents can talk to their children about race and equality (available here: <https://pittsburghkids.org/education/talking-to-children-about-tragic-events>).

In the past we have explored themes of kindness and love to explore how children reacted to tragic events, such as through the exhibit *XOXO: An Exhibit about Love & Forgiveness*. This exhibit debuted in 2011 with activities that help families and school groups creatively explore and discuss love, anger, forgiveness and other emotions. A pop-up version of the exhibit was created for Pittsburgh in the aftermath of the Tree of Life shooting in 2018, and can be deployed free for cities experiencing traumatic events. We recently created two videos that encourage kindness in the community, **New Ways to Say Hi** (<https://youtu.be/ndf2IWe-BHA>) and **Won't You Be My Neighbor Singalong** (<https://youtu.be/L1AmLvvploQ>), with content crowd-sourced from children and families.

We're asking the media to help spread the word by sharing this with their readers, viewers & listeners and sending along a message of kindness themselves!

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About [Museum at Home](#)

Museum at Home is a new [Children's Museum of Pittsburgh](#) and [MuseumLab](#) online platform where kids and families can discover how to make the most out of this challenging time by creating at home together. The **Museum at Home** web page (<https://pittsburghkids.org/museumathome>) is a place that provides children of all ages ideas, inspiration and instructions on creative, do-it-yourself activities and projects that inspire joy, creativity and curiosity for all ages. Content is updated regularly and available whenever and wherever you are.