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Media Contact :

Sean Liphard
Communications Manager
seanl@cfvi.net

**Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands Announces Launch of
Ready4K in the U.S. Virgin Islands**

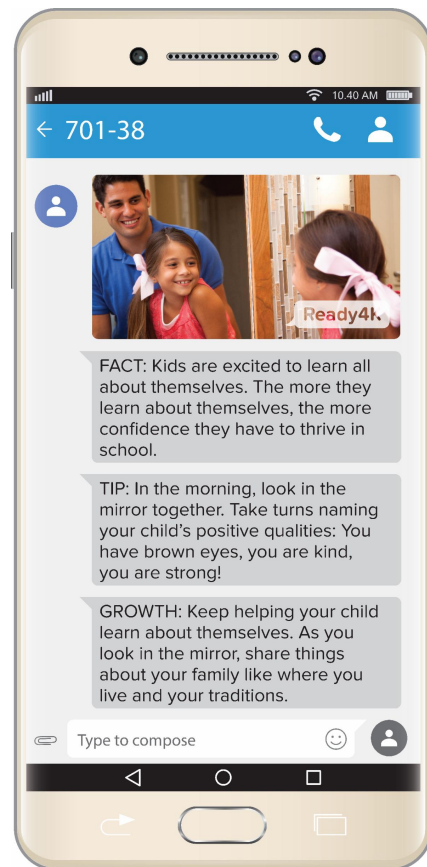
Simply text the code CFVI to 70138 to start receiving messages today

U.S. Virgin Islands, March 20, 2020 — As children and families in the Virgin Islands struggle with the social distancing required in response to the threat of COVID-19, the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) is excited to announce the launch of *Ready4K* in the USVI. Developed by educational researchers, this text-based family engagement curriculum promotes child development from birth to fourth grade. The program furthers the Foundation’s portfolio of efforts supporting children and families in the Territory.



According to CFVI President, Dee Baecher-Brown, “The launch of *Ready4K* has been in the works at the Foundation for several months. Before moving ahead, we wanted to

check in with our community partners – early childhood care and education service providers and other stakeholders such as physicians – to enlist their assistance and support in enrolling parents and encouraging school and center-based engagement with the platform. As it turns out, this is the perfect time to provide this wonderful tool to our Virgin Islands families!”



Each week, parents and caregivers receive three texts (one on Monday, Wednesday and Friday) that consist of fun facts and easy tips on how to promote their child’s development by building on existing family routines – such as pointing out letters on the cereal box at breakfast, counting the number of steps as you walk to the car or bus, or making feeling faces in the mirror after you brush your teeth. In addition, *Ready4K* is incorporating additional support messages focused on COVID-19 topics like hygiene, coping with pandemic anxiety, and social connection in a virtual world. The *Ready4K* curriculum covers the whole child from birth through 4th grade and is available in English, Spanish, and Arabic.

Getting started is easy. Simply text the code **CFVI** to **70138** to start receiving messages today. By entering your cell phone number you agree to enroll in the program and receive ParentPowered text messages from 70138. While there is no cost for enrolling, data and message rates may apply. You can cancel the text messages at any time by texting STOP to 70138.

“ *Ready4K* helps break down the complexity of conscious, positive parenting into bite-sized pieces that are easy to implement by providing helpful information, encouragement, and support to parents continuously over prolonged periods of time,” said CFVI Director of Grants and Programs, Anna Wheatley Scarbriel, Ph.D. “It empowers families with the information and emotional support to act as their child’s first and most important teacher. The whole child curriculum promotes family wellbeing, positive relationships, child transitions, and involvement at school. It’s all about supporting entire families as lifelong learners and leaders.”

CFVI has made an initial three-year commitment to offer the *Ready4K* platform to families in the Territory, with funding support for years one and two coming from a grant awarded from ParentPowered PBC, the company that operates *Ready4K* . The

Foundation is partnering with local Head Start programs to enroll parents and family members of close to 900 children ages three to four in the Territory. In addition, CFVI is working with the Department of Education to enroll thousands more parents of USVI students in grades kindergarten through fourth.

“Our commitment to early childhood education remains steadfast, as does our desire to strengthen the resources available in the USVI, especially during this challenging time” said Scarbriel. “Through our support of initiatives such as Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library, Little Free Libraries, TFC Kindercamp, the Virgin Islands Children’s Museum’s ‘Museums for All’ program, and others, we continue to do what we can so that all children and families in the Territory are provided with the tools, support and opportunities that lead to healthy development.”

Other features of the robust *Ready4K* technology platform include data and analytics on demand, the ability to send custom messages, and teacher newsletters that complement the text messages and loop teachers into the conversation. *Ready4K* also supports ESSA Title 1 Parent and Family Engagement Requirements as well as all of the requirements of the Head Start Compendium of Parenting Interventions.

In addition, *Ready4K* has the strongest evidence base in the field. In a series of randomized controlled trials (RCTs), Stanford University researchers found that the *Ready4K* approach increased parental involvement at home and school, driving two to three months of child learning gains over a school year (York & Loeb, 2014; Doss, Fahle, Loeb & York, 2017; York, Loeb & Doss, forthcoming). This research has been highlighted in *The New York Times*, *Education Week*, and *Huffington Post*.

Scarbriel says results like that would be great in the USVI, where in school year 2018-2019, nearly half (48%) of children entering public kindergarten were six months to over a year behind developmental age-expectations in language and comprehension skills (source: [2019 KIDS COUNT Data Book](#)). She also pointed out that *Ready4K* is designed to complement and reinforce – not replace – more intensive parenting support such as workshops, classes, clinic visits, and home visits.

For schools and other community organizations interested in signing up their parents to use the platform, please contact Anna Scarbriel at annas@cfvi.net. For more information about *Ready4K*, visit ready4k.com.

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About the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands

Since 1990, the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands (CFVI) has been a catalyst for positive change in the Territory through initiatives committed to youth, learning, family support and the environment. With a professional staff and a volunteer Board of Directors composed of community leaders, CFVI is a trusted advocate and supporter of programs that ensure opportunity and sustainability for current and future generations. CFVI is a registered non-profit organization entirely supported by individual donors, grants, trusts, corporate donations and estate planning. For more information, visit cfvi.net.