

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Audrey Duck asks, "Who is 'Corona Virus'?"

DEY Offers Guidance, Resources to Support Young Children and Their Families Through COVID-19 Crisis; Audrey Duck Video Helps Answer Questions and Concerns

BOSTON/NEW YORK, April 7, 2020 -- With the sudden disruption of our daily lives in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, [Defending the Early Years \(DEY\)](#) today released special [guidance and resources](#) to help parents and educators support young children in adjusting and getting the most out of this unfamiliar experience. Resources include a [video](#) featuring author, psychologist and award-winning ventriloquist, [Dr. Susan Linn](#), and her puppet, Audrey Duck. Together they address questions and concerns children likely need help with during these uncertain times, from "Will I get sick?" to "Who is 'Corona Virus' and why won't he let me play with my friends?"



"Children are being asked not to see their friends or grandparents; to learn at home; to play independently while adults in the home are working. Add the anxiety of overhearing conversations between adults or on news coverage and it can be very unsettling," said Nancy Carlsson-Paige, co-Founder and senior advisor of Defending the Early Years. "Audrey Duck's video is a wonderful way to start important conversations with children about these issues. Susan and Audrey are captivating, and Audrey asks the questions that many children are needing answered right now, but may not be able to articulate to caregivers."



Photo by Susan Nolan

The new [DEY Guidance for Supporting Children through COVID-19](#) offers insights for helping young children adjust to new restrictions and routines including recommendations for new approaches to screen time, academic expectations and learning through play. Dozens of thoughtful ideas encourage using the time to teach children new skills, from baking and musical instruments to first aid and new chores. The guide also connects to resources from respected organizations including [Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment \(TRUCE\)](#) and [Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood \(CCFC\)](#), who offer a deeper dive into recommendations and ideas.

"We want to help parents and educators discover some worthwhile possibilities even in the midst of this crisis," said Carlsson-Paige. "We hope our guidance and resources inspire even more ideas that can help young children feel safe and be creative at this challenging time."

About Susan Linn and Audrey Duck

[Susan Linn, Ed.D.](#), is a world renowned expert on creative play and the impact of media and commercial marketing on children. Her book, *Consuming Kids* has been praised in publications as diverse as *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Mother Jones* and helped launch the movement to reclaim childhood from corporate marketers. The *Boston Globe* called her book *The Case for Make Believe* "a wonderful look at how play can heal children." Her work has been featured on *Good Morning America*, *Today*, *Sixty Minutes*, *Dateline*, *The Colbert Report*, and the acclaimed documentary *The Corporation*. Dr. Linn was Founding Director of Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood from 2000-2015. She is currently Research Associate at Boston Children's Hospital and Lecturer on Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. She has lectured on the importance of creative play, the impact of media and marketing on children, and the use of puppetry as a therapeutic tool in venues throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

About Defending the Early Years

Defending the Early Years (DEY) is a nonprofit organization advocating for developmentally-appropriate learning in early childhood and early elementary school years. Founded by respected experts in early childhood education, Nancy Carlsson-Paige, Ed.D. and Diane Levin, Ph.D., and steered by a National Advisory Board, DEY aims to educate parents, teachers and administrators on the evidence-based approaches to how young children learn best; to embolden a return to a model of active, play-based and experiential learning and ongoing observations and formative assessments over time; and to make these opportunities available to every young child. For information, visit dey.org, Facebook: [@DefendingtheEarlyYears](https://www.facebook.com/DefendingtheEarlyYears), Twitter: [@DEY_Project](https://twitter.com/DEY_Project), and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/DefendingtheEarlyYears).

###

NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRODUCERS: If you would like to schedule an interview with Susan Linn, headquarter in Brooklyn, or Nancy Carlsson-Paige, headquartered in Boston, please contact:

Nancy Retherford, media advisor at: +1.317.460.6838; nancy.retherford@dey.org