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VI Children's Museum to Help Keep Children Occupied This Summer by Providing 'Discovery Kits'

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To help supply families with the tools needed to keep kids engaged and inspired to create and learn at home this summer, the Virgin Islands Children's Museum and its partners are providing "At Home Discovery Kits" to local low-income families, the nonprofit announced this week. Community support is needed to expand this program to reach those in need on all islands in the territory, VICM said.

The first distribution of early learner Discovery Kits has already started and is tailored to younger kids, toddler - 5th grade, and includes items such as activity books, crayons, chalk, coloring sheets, early reader books, and stickers. The early learner Discovery Kits will be delivered to Catholic Charities of the Virgin Islands, Longpath Community Center, and Nana Baby Children's Home for distribution to children in their networks. A second disbursement of a more advanced

Science, Technology, Reading, Engineer-ing, Art, Math (STREAM) based kit for youth 6th - 12th grade is planned for mid-July.

Discovery Kit items for the first disbursement were donated by Catherine Perlich, Dr David Smith, Kate Rake Williams, Division of Fish and Wildlife of USVI Department of Planning and Natural Resources, National Informal STEM Education Network, OrangeWave Innovative Science, LLC, St. Thomas Astronomy Resources Society, The University of the Virgin Islands Etelman Observatory, Virgin Islands Marine Advisory Service, USVI Storm Strong, and Virgin Islands Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research and Virgin Islands Council for the Arts.

Charitable donations to fund the second disbursement of Discovery Kits are essential. These more advanced kits will provide youth with the materials and instructions needed to do hands-on, STREAM activities in their homes. Financial contributions can be made by mail or through the VICM donation button found on their website: www.vichildrensmuseum.org

The VICM said it is committed to continuing to be an informal education resource for the community while the museum doors are closed. This two phase Discovery Kit initiative may be scaled up and extended to families on St Croix and St John through the Fall if there is public interest and financial support to do so. Coordinators of youth oriented organizations are encouraged to contact the VICM to learn how they may be able to receive Discovery Kits, according to the release.

Since closing its doors in March the VICM said it has remained committed to being an informal education resource for Virgin Islanders, giving access to education resources on social media and gifting books to children throughout the territory as an affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library.

The VICM is a Museum for all and with the help of community partners, the Discovery Kits are another way they are helping to ensure that children throughout the community have opportunities to Explore, Play, Discover.

For more information, contact the Virgin Islands Children's Museum, Director of Programs, Amber McCammon at amber@vichildrensmuseum.org