



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Connecticut Science Center Delivers Online Experiences to Inspire and Educate Amid Coronavirus Crisis

*Families and Educators Find Online Fun, Learning and Connection During COVID Closure*

Hartford, CT, April 17, 2020 — Responding to the urgent need for distance learning and mind-stimulating resources from trusted content providers, the Connecticut Science Center is delivering a robust array of “Science at Home” programs and activities online. These services, ranging from exciting home-based science experiments to live social media animal encounters and an online teacher community, are keeping science awareness and learning in the forefront, even as the world relies on science to bring relief from the ongoing health crisis.

The Science Center, like other public venues, temporarily closed to the public to support social distancing and disease-management strategies starting in March, shifting its program focus to online platforms. Since then, thousands of homebound parents, teachers, and students have brought the Science Center’s valued learning and entertainment resources into their homes by experiencing try-it-at-home science videos, Facebook LIVE *Lunch Bunch* programming, virtual field trips, and by participating in STEM Challenges using simple materials from around the house. Additionally, the science-curious have turned to the [Connecticut Science Center’s Official Blog: Down to a Science](#), offering features on a variety of topics that entertain and inform.

“Our current public health situation highlights the importance of our mission,” said Matt Fleury, Connecticut Science Center President & CEO. “It has never been more important to have a science-literate society and to inspire young people to be the next generation to protect and advance our nation and our community. Science is the answer to these challenges and we are devoted to that purpose through our work both at the Science Center and, when people cannot be here, online.”

### Menu of Online Science at Home Offerings

Parents, students, and educators can plan to make the Science Center part of their routine with online features every day:

- **Science at Play** - A series of popular at-home science videos produced by Science Center educators. These 3-minute DIY videos are engaging and fun.
- **#MuseumFromHome** - Exhibit features and behind-the-scenes from the Science Center exhibit galleries. Fans of ancient civilizations and the Maya-curious will be fascinated by our look inside the blockbuster traveling exhibition *Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed* and find out what stories the ancient artifacts tell.
- **Movie Monday** – Links to educational films released every Monday. Titles are popular museum theater documentaries featuring celebrity narrators, exciting storylines, and stunning cinematography. Supporting study guides and materials are supplied.

- **Facebook LIVE - Lunch Bunch: Tuesday and Thursday, 12 NOON**
  - Animal Encounters and LIVE Science in our exhibits. Ask questions, interact, and take the Kahoot! Challenge to test your knowledge.
- **Field Trip Friday** - Let us be your tour guide as we take a trip to world-class museums, archaeological sites, National Parks, and more. We'll provide links and tips to make the most of our online field trip.

### Especially for Educators

Education professionals from the *Connecticut Science Center's Mandell Academy for Teachers* share their in-depth knowledge through two online programs and a NEW online community for educators:

- **Take 10** - 10 minutes of professional learning designed to meet educators' needs remotely, providing quick and easy strategies.
- **Community of Practice** - Teachers engage in an interactive professional conversation through Zoom online. Upcoming topics include Supporting Student Questions in NGSS and Science Learning at Home. There is no charge to participate but registration is required.
- **Educator Hub Facebook Group** – Recognizing the need for two-way communication, the Hub was created by educators and for educators, offering a supportive community for teachers to connect with their peers, share, and ask questions. Within the first few days of launch, the new group had more than 200 members ranging from grade school classroom teachers and administrators to science coordinators and special education teachers. Mandell Academy Professional Learning Specialists and Science Center STEM Educators offer a supportive community, resources, and strategies for educators. As group moderators, they facilitate conversations and present opportunities for free professional learning and live online interactions.

“The feedback that we have received is that educators and parents are being hit with a firehose of information while being challenged to teach in new ways. There is a need to make sense of the resources and present practical strategies to facilitate learning that looks very different than it does in the classroom,” said Holly Hollander, Director of the *Connecticut Science Center's Mandell Academy for Teachers*. “We’re offering a community and a trusted place for educators to ask questions, find resources, and interact with colleagues.”

All of the educational resources and Science at Play activities are accessible through [Down to a Science – The Official Blog of the Connecticut Science Center](#). For information and to subscribe, visit [CTScienceCenter.org/blog](http://CTScienceCenter.org/blog).

The Science Center’s beloved facility in Downtown Hartford remains closed to the public pending further public health direction concerning COVID-19, and the Connecticut Science Center will continue to follow the state’s recommendations for social distancing. “We eagerly look forward to the time when we can serve our community in-person,” said Matt Fleury. “Until then, we will be innovating relentlessly to deliver on our mission, no matter what, and to make the Science Center better than ever when the doors re-open.”

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**About the Connecticut Science Center:** The LEED-Gold certified Connecticut Science Center, located in downtown Hartford, sparks creative imagination and an appreciation for science by immersing visitors in fun and educational hands-on, minds-on interactive experiences while maintaining an environmentally conscious presence. Serving more than 3.25 million people since opening in 2009, the Science Center features more than 165 exhibits in ten galleries. Covering a range of topics, including space and earth sciences, physical sciences, biology, the Connecticut River watershed, alternative energy sources, Connecticut inventors and innovations, a children’s gallery,

and much more. Other features include the state's only year-round butterfly habitat, five educational labs, a 200-seat 3D digital theater, function room, gift store, and ongoing events for all ages.

The Science Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing science education throughout the state of Connecticut and New England, providing learning opportunities for students and adults of all ages, and engaging the community in scientific exploration. The Connecticut Science Center is also the home to the **Joyce D. and Andrew J. Mandell Academy for Teachers**, offering powerful Professional Development for educators. *More information:* [CTScienceCenter.org](http://CTScienceCenter.org) or (860) SCIENCE.

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