

Village Learning Place

LINK Summer 2021

PreK-6th Enrollment and Attendance: 57 Pre-K through 6th graders enrolled, 36 of these students joined for VLP's online and/or onsite classroom the remainder utilized at-home learning kits.

LINK (Let's Invest in Neighborhood Kids) Summer at the Village Learning Place is an educational and creative program offering lessons in literacy, math, and science, plus enrichment workshops and weekly field trips! LINK Summer was open for hybrid learning for grades 1st-6th in 2021. Over six weeks, students enjoyed four weeks of virtual learning and families had the option for students to attend two weeks of onsite, in-person learning.

All registered students received a supply kit at the start of summer programming with materials to get them ready to learn and play—paper, markers, crayons, scissors, composition book, sketch pad, etc. Additional supply materials were available to restock at-home kits, if needed, throughout summer. Students also received learning kits with directions and materials for projects, games, and experiments to explore at home.

For our Pre-K/Kindergarten students, we designed Early Learner Totes which featured learning games, puzzles, and books. Totes were brought back to the VLP Library and exchanged for a new tote by appointment. Our PreK/K students were invited to join our virtual, online sessions with the 1st/2nd grade cohort but did not have in-person session in summer 2021.

Online, grades 1-6 were split into three classes: 1st/2nd Grades, 3rd/4th Grades, and 5th/6th grades. Each class had a virtual classroom hosted on Zoom, Monday-Thursday. LINK Staff lead students through a day of STEM projects, art, dance, storytime, cooking, and games. On Fridays, families were invited to pick up tickets to local attractions for family field trips.

In our classrooms, grades 1-6 were split into three classes: 1st/2nd Grades, 3rd/4th Grades, and 5th/6th grades. Four weeks of virtual programming were available for all students enrolled in these classes. In addition to virtual programming, VLP offered onsite learning for two weeks for each class for students and families who were interested. Over the six weeks of summer programming, each class took a two-week turn onsite: 5th/6th grades were onsite for the first two weeks of program (June 28-July 9), 1st/2nd grades were onsite for the middle two weeks of program (July 12-23), and 3rd/4th grades were onsite for the final two weeks of program (July 26-August 6). While onsite, the class was split into three smaller pods of eight students staffed by one Academic Teacher and one Classroom Assistant. These pods remained isolated from the other pods onsite simultaneously. When onsite, students and staff were required to wear masks, practice social distancing, and practice frequent hand washing and sanitizing. Students received breakfast and lunch through our partnership with Baltimore Housing Authority's Summer Meals Program.

While onsite, students worked with LINK Staff to reinforce and expand math and reading skills, to explore new ideas in enrichment classes, and to make new friends. Monday-Thursday students were found in their classrooms, in our garden, or on the community playground. On Fridays, students and LINK Staff attended a local, outdoor field trip or field day in one of our neighborhood parks.

Goals & Outcomes

1. Close the achievement gap for all students: 80% of students will avert summer learning loss by maintaining or gaining academic skills in math and literacy.

Outcome: Teachers planned to administer informal assessments to in-person students at the close of their 2-week onsite sprint. Due to low attendance and intermittent attendance, these informal assessments were rendered useless.

Instead, after program, we used a survey to determine if students who participated in LINK Summer felt that they can learn and succeed in school. We had 21 responses from students, and 95% reported feeling like they could learn and succeed in school.

2. Promote positive social development. 80% of students will demonstrate a specific virtue, know a conflict resolution strategy, and receive direct instruction in character education. Students will demonstrate understanding of a selected virtue within an appropriate context. Students will articulate two or more conflict resolution strategies.

Outcome: To meet our goal of promoting positive social development, we chose to administer a post-program survey that asked students whether they felt a sense of belonging while at LINK Summer programming. We had 21 responses from students, and 95% reported feeling like they belonged while in program.

3. Engage families in their students' academic and social success. 75% of families will be represented at a program event.

Outcome: 76% of families engaged in program offerings this summer. We counted family engagement as attending our End of Summer Carnival, picking up supplies, and/or opting into a family field trip opportunity.

LINK Summer Highlights & Successes

- LINK Summer collaborated on interdisciplinary, project-based learning with our in-person partnership with InDiGO. Our online classrooms hosted partners JHU Cooking & Nutrition Club, Dance & B'more, FutureMakers, Clayworks, Art with a Heart, Blakwater Music Productions, and DiscoverME/RecoverME.
- In Summer 2021, Friday Field Trips returned to LINK Summer programming. Students and staff were excited to safely explore the National Aquarium, Maryland Science Center, Fort McHenry, the Baltimore Zoo, the obstacles at Outward Bound, and sailing the Inner Harbor with Living Classrooms. We also offered families the opportunity to pick up family tickets to the Zoo and Maryland Science Center to enjoy together during the weekends.
- Our End-createStudents, families, and LINK staff enjoyed STEM activities, painting, henna, beat making, carnival games, and an inflatable obstacle course. At this event, Rosie, a 3rd grade LINK Summer student, met her online friend, fellow LINK Summer 3rd grader, Hoda, in person for the first time.



LINK staff were excited to meet this family in person at the End of Summer Celebration!

1st/2nd grade class enjoys circle time in the VLP library.



LINK Leaders Summer

7th+ Enrollment and Attendance: 20 teens enrolled and participated in summer programming

LINK Leaders Summer (7th+ grade) programs were fully virtual in 2021 (with the exception of Friday field trips) and were open for 6 weeks from June 28 to August 6, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Online learning included service learning projects, college and career skill building, enrichment sessions, and a supply box with all materials needed to engage in programming.

Goals & Outcomes

1. Close the achievement gap for all students. 75% of students will feel that they gained skills or knowledge through enrichment activities. 75% of students will report an increased awareness of college and career opportunities available to them.

Outcome: Nine out of 20 students responded to a survey measuring student-reported knowledge acquired and awareness. Seven students reported feeling that they gained skills or knowledge. Additionally, seven students reported an increased awareness about career and college opportunities. Those seven represent 35% of the class.

2. Promote positive social development. 90% of students will participate in at least 15 hours of character education and/or service-learning.

Outcome: 70% of students participated in at least 15 hours of character education and/or service learning this summer.

3. Engage families in their students' academic and social success. 50% of families will engage with program offerings.

Outcome: This summer, 50% of LINK Leaders families engaged with VLP. Engagement looked like attending our LINK End of Summer Carnival, picking up student supplies from the library, or holding a volunteer position at VLP.

LINK Leaders Summer Highlights & Successes

A Summer to Remember: Going on field trips again for the first time

By: Kim Jolley, Teen Programs Coordinator

One of the most exciting parts of preparing for the Summer 2021 session of LINK Leaders, was our ability to order buses and plan for in-person field trips. We would have six summer Fridays to scheme, execute, and enjoy. For me, it was the highlight of my summer and, after over a year online, reminded me how much I love being around youth and their ridiculous energy. Maybe I was imagining it, but every Friday seemed infused with a little extra joy and a little less complaining. Everyone just seemed grateful for the chance to get out and interact with people we weren't related to.

Once Upon a Step Campaign

Everyone deserves to kick the school year off on the right foot, but many are worried about the ridicule they will receive for what they are wearing on their feet. The LINK Leaders of the Village Learning Place are hosting a t-shirt fundraiser to bring awareness, show support, and raise money to buy “first-day of school” shoes for children in need. We all know that it is easier to think on your feet if you are wearing new shoes.

Shoes are one of the most expensive items that families must purchase for their children. Shoes are required to attend school, and too many children miss school altogether or cannot fully participate because they have shoes that are inappropriate, do not fit, or are completely worn out. This can lead to pain, shame, and embarrassment.

Our LINK Leaders started and designed the **Once Upon a Step** campaign as a part of their summer service-learning project. They produced the plan, the campaign, and the logo, and are anxious to see all of it come to fruition. We are asking our community to put their best foot forward by helping Baltimore Youth stand on their own two feet. [Show your support for this campaign by purchasing a hoodie or t-shirt today](#) and following us on social media to see the campaign evolve!



Two students enjoy a field trip with Living Classrooms sailing in the Inner Harbor.



The Leaders class learns about the hospitality industry at the Pendry Hotel.