



8:30am

Registration

9:00 - 9:15am

Welcome & Opening Remarks

9:15 - 10:30am

Panel Discussion

Back to the basics: Understanding universal paid family and medical leave and why it matters for Vermont.

This panel aims to demystify universal paid family and medical leave and identify best practices. The panel will also explore the impact of paid family and medical leave (or a lack thereof) on Vermont employers, employees, working families and marginalized groups.

Panelists

Michelle Fay, Executive Director, Voices for Vermont's Children
Cary Brown, Executive Director, Vermont Commission on Women
Kelly Stoddard Poor, Associate State Director of Advocacy and Outreach, AARP Vermont
Kiah Morris, Executive Director, Rights and Democracy
Jordan Giaconia, Public Policy Manager, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

Moderator

Lt. Governor Molly Gray

10:30 - 10:45am **Break**

10:45 – 12:00pm **Panel Discussion**

Universal, affordable child care access: Why it matters and opportunities for success.

This panel aims to provide an overview of what is meant by universal, accessible, affordable, high-quality child care. Panelists will discuss current data as well as economic, business and family impacts of a lack of child care access in Vermont.

Panelists

Aly Richards, Chief Executive Officer, Lets Grow Kids

Janet McLaughlin, Executive Director, Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children

Adeline Druart, President, Vermont Creamery & Vice President, Land O'Lakes

Nikki Tetrault, Director of Marketing and E-Commerce, Instrumart

Chris Nelson, Director, Mountain View Child Care

Moderator

House Speaker Jill Krowinski

12:00pm **Closing Remarks**

Panelist Bios:

 <p>Michelle Fay, Executive Director, Voices for Vermont's Children</p>	<p>Michelle Fay is a lifelong advocate for people-centered policies, from community work with families and survivors of intimate partner violence in the Northeast Kingdom to her current position advancing policy at the state level as Executive Director of Voices for Vermont's Children. She taught organizational leadership at Springfield College, and served one term in the Vermont House from 2013-2014, representing the town of St. Johnsbury. Michelle holds a bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Vermont and a Master of Public Administration degree from the Harvard Kennedy School.</p>
 <p>Cary Brown, Executive Director, Vermont Commission on Women</p>	<p>Cary served two terms as a VCW commissioner before joining the staff in 2012. She has worked as the Director of Girls' Programs for Vermont Works for Women, a non-profit organization supporting education, training and careers in non-traditional fields for women and girls, and directed the Women in Technology Project, a national award-winning summer technology camp for girls at Vermont Technical College.</p>



Kelly Stoddard Poor, Associate State Director, AARP VT

Kelly joined the AARP Vermont team in 2013 as the Associate State Director. Kelly's background is in public policy and community organizing with a strong commitment to social justice. She leads the livable community work for AARP VT - establishing a vision and action steps for Vermont communities to meet the needs of its aging population. Prior to AARP Kelly spent eight years at the American Cancer Society where she was the Director of Health and Advocacy Initiatives. She managed the state's cancer control program and advocacy campaigns to reduce tobacco use, increase screening rates and enhance access to health care.



Kiah Morris, Executive Director, Rights and Democracy

Originally from Chicago, Kiah Morris served as a Vermont State Representative for Bennington from 2014-2018. She is the first African-American and person of color elected from Bennington County and the second African-American woman to be elected to the legislature in Vermont history. In that capacity, she served on the House Judiciary Committee and Vermont Judicial Nominating Board and was co-chair of the tri-partisan Legislative Women's Caucus. Her story of success and struggle has been covered in over four dozen media outlets. Kiah became the Executive Director of Rights & Democracy after two years serving as the organization's VT Movement Politics Director.



Jordan Giaconia, Public Policy Manager, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility

An accomplished advocate and campaigner, Jordan joined VBSR in December 2019. He brings several years of experience shaping policy at the local, state, and national levels, most recently serving as Associate Director for Federal and Administrative Policy at the Sierra Club in Washington, DC. Jordan is committed to protecting the natural, economic, and human landscapes of the Green Mountain State and elevating the voices of Vermont's leading businesses in Montpelier.



Aly draws on her extensive experience in state and national politics and her leadership in education policy to spearhead Let's Grow Kids' mission. Prior to joining the organization in 2015, Aly served as the deputy chief of staff for Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin where she led several efforts to support early childhood education, including winning competitive federal grants totaling \$70 million and supporting the passage of universal prekindergarten. Aly was selected as a 2013 Toll Fellow by the Council of State Governments and as the 2014 Vermont Champion for Education by the New England Secondary School Consortium. She also served on the 2008 Obama campaign and graduated with honors from Brown University. Aly currently serves as a Trustee of University of Vermont Medical Center and the Vermont Council on Rural Development and was recently named a Changemaker for Children by Save the Children. Aly grew up in Newbury, VT and now lives in Montpelier with her husband James Pepper, their identical twin boys Beau and Wesley, and two dogs Bella and Ellie.



JANET MCLAUGHLIN
Executive Director
Vermont Association for the Education
of Young Children

Early childhood education is essential. Through exploration and play arranged by skilled teachers, children learn self-regulation, teamwork, cause-and-effect, motor skills, and hundreds of skills older children and adults are expected to use fluently and constantly. Without safe access, children lose opportunities to develop age-appropriate social behavior and critical thinking. **Ask any parent of a young child whose program closed due to COVID-19 or the early childhood education staffing crisis. The impacts are both immediate and long-lasting.**

Corporate Sponsor Campaign Endorser

Janet McLaughlin has served as Executive Director of Vermont AEYC since April 2021. She has a Masters of Public Administration with a specialization in Nonprofit Management from Syracuse University and her undergraduate degree from Harvard University. Janet's passion for a more equitable society has driven her two decades in nonprofit leadership. Her passion for early childhood education developed as a parent, a Board member of a nonprofit early childhood education program, and previously as a senior leader at Let's Grow Kids. Janet had a deep respect for the work of Vermont's early childhood educators and a commitment to ensuring that all children benefit from their expertise. Prior to her work in early childhood education, Janet headed the Vermont Community Foundation's Food and Farm Initiative, a collaborative effort to fight hunger in Vermont while strengthening its local food system. From 2004 to 2013, Janet oversaw the growth of Cooking Matters, a food skills education program for low-income families, while at DC-based nonprofit Share Our Strength. Janet currently serves on the board of the J. Warren and Lois McClure Foundation, and Spectrum Youth and Family Services.



VERMONT CREAMERY

ADELINE DRUART
President
Vermont Creamery

Child care is ESSENTIAL state infrastructure. It will set our state apart as a leader in the nation, attract and retain a vibrant workforce, support its businesses, and propel Vermont into a thriving economy.

Corporate Sponsor Campaign Endorser

A foodie by nature and an artisan cheesemaker by trade, Adeline Druart is President of Vermont Creamery, one of the leading American specialty cheese and premium dairy maker based in Websterville, Vermont. Born and raised in the countryside of France with strong dairy farming heritage, Adeline studied dairy science earning a Master Degree at the prestigious National Dairy School of France. Looking to learn English, Adeline flew from France to USA to join Vermont Creamery as a summer intern cheesemaker in 2002. What started as a two-month internship became an 18-year experience with a developed authentic passion for the mission-based business. Over the years Adeline scaled the operations and infrastructure while growing the portfolio to become one of the fastest growing premium dairy brand. Additionally, Adeline led the efforts to achieve Business B Corp certification status in 2014 and positioned the company to be recently recognized amongst the Top 20 most Purposeful Brand by Inc Magazine. Adeline joined Land O Lakes officers as a Vice-President through the company acquisition in 2017. She has served as judge in international cheese competitions, is a member of the American Cheese Society, serve on the board of Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility and Let's Vermont Grow Kids CEO Think Tank. Adeline lives in Vermont with her husband Marc and two young children Matisse, 10, and Hugo, 5. As a mother it is her intent to pass along her belief in gender equality (both parents do the dishes), a deep cultural awareness through travel, a knowledge of where food comes from, and the belief that you can do anything you put your mind to. Adeline holds a Master's degree in Biotechnology and Bio-industry from the Institut Universitaire Professionel – Alimentec, France, a Bachelor's degree in Biotechnology Bio-Industrie from the Institut Universitaire Professionel, and a BTS in Dairy Technology and Science from Ecole Nationale d'Industrie Laitiere.



INSTRUMART
NIKKI TETRAULT
Director of Marketing

As a working professional and a parent I know first-hand how hard it is to find quality, affordable child care in Vermont. Like so many of my colleagues at Instrumart I've been on lengthy waiting lists and have been forced to adjust my work schedule because of child care. Unfortunately, I know thousands of working parents throughout Vermont share in this struggle.

LetsGrowKids.org Corporate Sponsor Campaign Endorser

Nikki Tetrault is the Director of Marketing and E-Commerce at Instrumart, a South Burlington-based industrial instrumentation distributor. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, Marketing, from Champlain College and is in graduate school pursuing her MBA from Suffolk University. In 2018, she was nominated and awarded Vermont Business Magazine's 40 Under 40 award while employed by Dealer.com as a Program Manager. Nikki's involvement with the Vermont's Child Care Campaign is vast. She supports the campaign as an employer endorser, a regional action team participant, as well as a parent of a young child. She has first-hand experience in the difficulties of finding quality, affordable child care in Vermont. That is why she is invested in the solution: investing more public dollars in our state's child care system.



CHRIS NELSON
Director
Mountain View Child Care

“ If I could afford to do all that I know how to do, all that research shows is best practice and makes the biggest impact for our children, instead of raindrops, I could make waves.”

Campaign Endorser

Chris has been involved with the early childhood profession for over 20 years as the owner and educator of a 5-star home-based program, the first program in the state to achieve stars. She has provided support to peers and the profession as an instructor, a professional development specialist for the Council of Professional Recognition, a qualified observer for the Northern Lights career ladder, and as a member of the VTAEYC board. Chris also serves as a Provider in Residence with Home Grown, a national collaborative committed to improving the quality of and access to home-based child care. In 2016, Chris was recognized as an Early Childhood Superhero as well as a VTAEYC Magnificent Mentor. Her current role with Let's Grow Kids as community and program specialist allows her to continue her passion of working with the profession to ensure all children have the opportunity for high-quality, affordable early childhood care and education.