

“We came up with the idea shortly after the lockdown was declared and children were suddenly thrust into a different world. Children no longer had the routines they were used to. The schools were closed and there was a lot of unstructured time when they couldn’t do their normal activities,” said Cohen.

AME, together with its partners, the University of Washington’s Northwest Center for Excellence in Media Literacy (of which Cohen is the director), Child Rights in Action, and the International Janusz Korczak Association, saw an opportunity in this vacuum to encourage children to engage in creative activities. AME put out a call for entries on the website coronashowcase.org (which has information in multiple languages).

Children ages 3-19 and their families have until Oct. 9 to submit their creations on the project website. There is no entry fee. An adult is required to complete the submission form. All submissions will be shared on the [showcase website](#) during [Media Literacy Week](#), which begins Oct. 26. The showcase will be organized by age group and medium and will remain online indefinitely.

“The project is really a celebration of creativity of children around the world and to have them share across borders during this historic time,” says Cohen.

National coordinators are being recruited to promote the showcase in their respective countries. So far, coordinators from 45 countries have joined the effort.

“It’s not a competition, it’s a festival, and we want to support everyone who submits something they consider their best work,” said Cohen. “For this project we encourage children to use whatever their favorite medium might be. The choices are very broad and are limited only by the imagination.”

However, if ideas are in short supply, age-based creative prompts on the website can be used as catalysts to get started and AME is sharing selected submissions on its social media channels to illustrate the variety of possible projects.

The showcase has already received submissions as varied as a Ukrainian toddler’s drawing; a Washington state family’s short film, “When Corona Hits Legotown” (complete with toilet-paper hoarding); and a Russian teen’s piano performance of Chopin’s Nocturne No. 20.

“The creative projects that children produce are of interest and should have impact everywhere. Their voices need to be heard. I think it’s fascinating for everyone to look

at and consider what the voices of children are telling us,” said Cohen.

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