



## 2020 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



You have wonderful programming. Wholesome family entertainment and values. I donate because I would hate to lose your programs and I want my son to grow up with you too.

*-Angela (Berrien Springs, MI)*

**Mission Statement: WNIT is a trusted, community owned public media source that is dedicated to inspire, inform, educate, entertain and unify the communities we serve.**



### **WNIT is a valuable part of the Michiana community.**

Our **Vision** is to foster enlightenment in our community anytime, every time and everywhere.

Our **Promise** is to uphold and foster our most valued asset, the public trust. We will actively embrace this promise by adhering to these values and principles:

- We will provide communication content that inspires, educates and entertains.
- We will champion and provide free access to the multi-media world and all WNIT content.
- We will manage a fiscally responsible organization without seeking profit.

### **WNIT's local services have a deep impact throughout the Michiana region.**

- In addition to our 6 weekly local programs, we added special programming in 2020 with multi-episode series focused on the local facts about the COVID19 pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement and Mental Health and Wellness surrounding both.
- WNIT increased our educational outreach to support area schools in the area of At-Home Learning during the pandemic.
- All programming and services are available through broadcast and streaming on our web site.

### **In 2020, WNIT provided these key local services:**

- Faced with the COVID19 Pandemic in 2020, WNIT responded by producing topical programs to educate our viewers and increased our educational outreach to support At-Home Learning. These programs assisted the Health Dept in getting accurate, detailed information out to the community and the Schools in providing learning resources for children and families.
- We continued to air our six local programs during the pandemic, but shifted to Zoom interviews and pivoted to topics that were more applicable during the pandemic.

WNIT continues to maintain an active and involved presence throughout the Michiana community. During 2020, much of our efforts took on a new look in the face of the global pandemic. We pivoted to provide increased At-Home Learning resources, shifted topics of our local programs to be more timely with the issues facing our viewers and produced new programs focusing on both the COVID19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter.

While we continued to produce six local weekly shows, many looked different in 2020. Education Counts Michiana, for example, increased its focus on in-home learning to share best practices and strategies with parents and teachers. Experience Michiana focused on safe entertainment still available in our community. Economic Outlook looked at the challenges during the pandemic. All of the shows relied on Zoom interviews to continue these local conversations.

WNIT continued to provide quality arts and cultural programming, which was essential to our viewers as the local theatres, orchestras and entertainment venues were closed to the public. We focused on continuing to provide, not only accurate news and information, but entertainment over-the-air when there was none to be found in-person.

We produced several local programs on the challenges of the year. COVID19: What You Need to Know featured local health experts early on in the pandemic to provide accurate local information on the health environment and virus. We followed this with a series of 5 episodes on Mental Health and Wellness during the pandemic.

When the Black Lives Matter movement took place, we aired a series that looked not at the protests, but at understanding what led to these challenges and how our local community was impacted. This too was followed by a special that looked at Mental Health and Wellness surrounding the Black Lives Matter movement and traumas faced by our African American community.

Our print viewing guide, the WNIT *Planner* remained a staple of membership benefits, with over 6,800 copies printed and distributed each bi-monthly issue. This publication offers program highlights, and features about our Membership, Development, Production, Kids Club and Directors' Circle. It was a great tool to detail the important programming coming up and share insight into the productions of WNIT.

WNIT maintains an active and energetic presence in social media. In addition to our web site and social media, we moved our monthly e-newsletter to daily in March of 2020 to share programs with our viewers that they could plan around for at-home learning and education or entertainment. The e-newsletter was shifted to weekly, but with the same important content in the face of the pandemic in June.

While many of our communication tools were used for donor, member and viewer interaction in the past, they became critical means of sharing information and interacting with our community during the COVID pandemic. We took our role very seriously and tried to help provide solutions where challenges arose in our community.

Another area that grew in importance this year, was our management of the local public access channel for St. Joseph County and the cities of South Bend and Mishawaka, Indiana. With citizens unable to attend council meetings in person, the public access channel became a main means of keeping up on council business. The county also utilized this channel for a "Town Hall" style meeting to address concerns and questions surrounding the COVID outbreak locally.

While we were unable to hold in-person events, we quickly realized that we could utilize our unique collection of assets to host virtual activities. Through a partnership with Fred Rogers Productions and PNC Grow Up Great, WNIT hosted Daniel Tiger's "Be My Neighbor Days." This activity allowed children the chance to send in a recorded message of hope and inspiration to loved ones, seniors and the community as a whole. We aired these messages on our web site and on all three WNIT channels throughout the day from August through December. We also shared a "thinking of you" message from the station combined with several of the inspirational messages from children with area senior living facilities. The entire effort was a way for children to spread hope and cheer to their neighbors and hopefully bring a smile to viewers' faces during a challenging time. We received videos from over 40 children. We thanked the children with a gift package that included a tshirt, coloring/activity book, draw string bag, certificate and Daniel Tiger stickers. Below is a photo of the gift package and the videos can be viewed at this link:

<https://www.wnit.org/page/virtualhug-videos.html>



## COVID-19: What You Need to Know

*Aired On*

*March 13, 2020 at 7pm*

WNIT spoke with a panel of health experts on a special local production, Coronavirus: What You Need to Know. These experts provided information specific to our region's health needs, plans and challenges.



## COVID-19: Mental Health and Wellness

*Aired On*

*April 24th @ 7:30pm and April 27th @ 5:00pm  
(Part 1)*

*May 1st @ 7:30pm and May 4th 5:00pm (Part 2)*

*May 8th @ 7:30pm and May 11th 5:00pm (Part 3)*

*May 15th @ 7:30pm and May 18th 5:00pm (Part 4)*

Host Gary Sieber, along with a panel of medical professionals and therapists, discussed the here, now and future of Mental Health and Wellness with the COVID-19 outbreak.

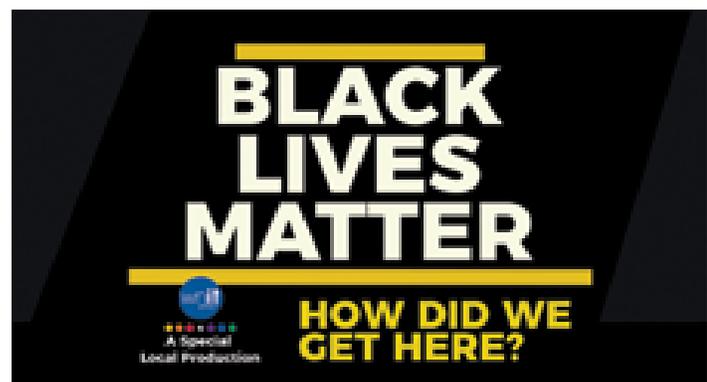


## Black Lives Matter: How Did We Get Here?

*Aired On*

*June 5th @ 7:00pm (34.1), June 5th @ 11:00pm  
(34.2), June 6th @ 7:00pm (34.2), June 7th @  
1:00pm (34.1), June 7th @ 3:00pm (34.2)*

In this conversation we strove to focus less on the protests taking place and rather tried to make sense of the things that led the black lives matter movement to this tipping point. Through this program, we hope our viewers gained a bigger-picture view of this particular movement.



## **Black Lives Matter: Mental Health**

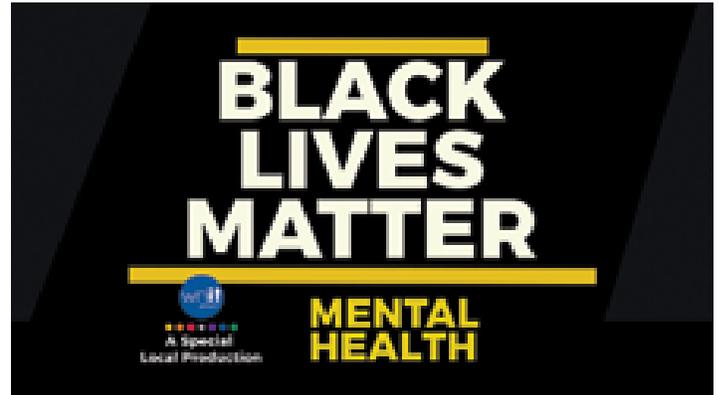
*Aired On*

*June 26th @ 7:00pm (34.1)*

*June 28th @ 2:00pm (34.1)*

*June 29th @ 5:00pm (34.2)*

In this special production we strove to have an open conversation about Black trauma (and mental health in general) in hopes that our viewers would feel equipped to take steps towards bettering their health.





I am grateful to WNIT for helping our parents. Parents are very grateful for the information you have sent us that we have forwarded to them. It's worthwhile programming and working!!

*-Dr. Kathy Guajardo, Executive Director  
Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties (IN) Head Start Consortium*

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**Faced with many challenges in 2020, WNIT quickly shifted our focus to maintain our traditional community programming while providing new resources to help our community better understand and deal with the challenges being faced. From adjusting to the COVID19 pandemic to understanding the Black Lives Matter movement to providing resources to teachers and parents to support At-Home Learning, WNIT was there, making a positive impact on the Michiana community.**

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