

Little Friends® Plans for a Safe Return to In-Person Schooling

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Background

Since 1965, the [Little Friends](#) nonprofit agency has been fulfilling lives regardless of challenge. Their groundbreaking programs empower people of all ages experiencing autism and other intellectual and developmental disabilities to live, learn, work and thrive in their communities.

Not long ago, Little Friends moved to a new facility and can now provide more programming to the growing needs of those they serve. As school closures caused by the pandemic started to lift, Little Friends began preparing for students to safely return to full-time, in-person learning.

Challenge

Health and Safety Concerns

Before coming back to in-person learning, staff and students' health and safety were top priorities. Plexiglass partitions were installed, social distancing and mask protocols were adopted, and a nightly cleaning schedule was implemented. In addition to these mitigation measures, Little Friends sought a way to give parents peace of mind that shared iPad devices would also be routinely sanitized.

Variety of Devices Needs

The organization prides itself on providing programs for people of all ages, from toddlers to seniors—so it's no surprise that device needs vary. Staff use mobile devices for record keeping, while teachers have laptops. iPads are available in Pre-K to 3rd-grade classrooms, and 4th graders and up are assigned Chromebooks. Various technology needs resulted in the need for a flexible solution to store, charge and lock many device types.

Smaller Class Sizes

Because class sizes are small with a max of 8 students per classroom, selecting compact charging and disinfection solutions was key. Products that are easily accessible and fit well in the daily routine for both staff and students were an essential requirement.

Solution

Like the comprehensive plan Little Friends creates for each child, they also needed a comprehensive strategy for charging, storing, securing and sanitizing shared iPad devices. Having worked with LocknCharge before, Mike Briggs, President & CEO of Little Friends, was very familiar with LocknCharge solutions. He made what he referred to as an "easy decision" to purchase 25 [Carrier™ 10 Charging Stations](#) and 25 [UVone™ UV-C Disinfection Stations](#).



Because the UVone units are mounted right next to Carrier 10 Charging Stations in classrooms, devices can be quickly sanitized before storing and charging overnight. The ability to select the proper charging station and pair it with a disinfection station ensured that the complete solution was tailored to their needs. Here are some other benefits these two solutions offer:

Rapid UV-C Technology with UVone

- » The [UVone Station fits nicely in their overall in-person learning plans](#), and teachers are excited to have this technology in their classrooms.
- » Because iPad devices are shared by several students, UVone gives parents peace of mind that added precautions are being taken for mobile device disinfection.
- » With touchless sensors, UVone reduces cross-contamination and is simple for kids to operate.
- » Like many schools across the U.S. that have tapped into the funding set aside in the [CARES Act](#), Little Friends was able to leverage allocations through the allowable use for sanitization and cleaning to purchase UVone devices.

“UVone provides parents the confidence that shared devices are disinfected.”

- Mike Briggs, President & CEO of Little Friends

Wall-Mountable Carrier Charging Stations

- » These compact charging stations look great and don't occupy floor or counter space when mounted to a wall.
- » Carrier 10 easily does the job it's supposed to do—charging, storing and securing devices. Cables and charging supplies stay organized in a separate compartment, allowing for quick plug-in after each use.
- » With eight students max per class, a smaller charging station with a lower capacity met the needs of their 1:1 program.
- » Carrier Stations are universal, meaning they work with most devices—including iPads, Chromebooks, laptops and tablets—which can be deployed with ease using Baskets.

What's Next?

With grants, Little Friends will continue to invest in state-of-the-art technology, including robots to assist children with speech therapy. They're committed to creating tech champions who explore innovative digital technology. The leadership team at Little Friends understands that these investments bring an incredible opportunity to incorporate new methods of teaching and learning.

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