

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY 2004



CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MUSEUM **creating kids childcare center** creating curriculum

programs of the children's building

Children need a place of their own where they can experience the magic of learning at their own pace, a place full of whimsy and wisdom, a space built to their size and specifications.

Early childhood educators need a place to teach and learn with their children, a place where they can find support and inspiration.

Families need a place full of color, joy and community where they can play and learn together.

The Children's Building is designed to be such a place.

- Creating Kids Childcare Center
- Creating Curriculum
- Connecticut Children's Museum
- Making Murals
- Educational Field Trips
- Saturdays at 2
- Mornings at the Museum
- Creating Readers
- Creating Classrooms
- Museum in the Community
 - ABC's of School Readiness
 - Family Childcare Tool Kit Project
 - PACK—Parents & Communities for Kids

Frog Jumping
by Sivahn Barsade



dear friends ...

In this majestic building on the corner of Orange and Wall Streets, we love to build programs. Reflective of this year's frog theme, we think of them as lily pads, each one representing a green and flowering spot on which to rest a unique early childhood project.

Creating Classrooms – The Environment as Teacher was a new initiative inspired by the design of our early childhood environment and the museum rooms. Teachers from center-based early childhood programs and family childcare homes enrolled in an intensive series of classes where they studied the theory of room design. They drew diagrams of their spaces, consulted with the Museum architect and interior designer and worked with the course instructors to re-create their own spaces as imaginative and inclusive teaching partners.

The 'stars' of early childhood education, the teachers, came to the Museum for the second annual Celebration of Early Childhood Educators. Set to coincide with the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Week of the Young Child, hundreds of educators were honored with a gala dinner and glittering star gifts of appreciation.

Two professional development classes, Children's Literature, a Gateway Community College course, and Creating Curriculum, a seminar series for early childhood educators, were taught here. Both used a multiple intelligences approach, and the model of a literacy-based children's museum, to teach providers how to strengthen the connection of all children to books and to provide them with multiple curriculum entry points to literacy.

The Educational Field Trip program brought thousands of children, their teachers and parent chaperones to the museum for a morning of learning amongst the exhibits. We hosted field trips for college classes in child development, children's literature and curriculum design. High school students studying learning strategies explored the Museum rooms intellectually and interactively.

Our popular Saturdays at 2 program featured dancers, puppeteers and live owls, dramatists and musicians,

storytellers and a yoga instructor – all brought books alive for children and added unique dimension to our literacy work.

The 2004 Bee ... a Kid Again Party was a wonderful evening! Our guests toasted the successes of the Museum and its many programs and snacked on a cheese chalkboard house and quite green Jump, Frog, Jump gummies while listening to jazz musicians play the night away. Our first Silent Auction, through its offering of an amazing array of museum-inspired items, helped us meet our fundraising goal for 2004.

Creating Kids Childcare Center was fully enrolled with a most remarkable group of children. They are builders of elaborate block aquariums and toddler chefs extraordinaire. They are babies who use American Sign Language to talk about their yummy snacks. Together with our accomplished teachers, they impress us all with their vivid imaginations, joy and broad knowledge base.

We continue to deepen our community collaborations working with the Board of Education and Services for the Blind to develop Museum-based programs for families of children with visual disabilities statewide. We work with Mutual Housing Association and the West River Neighborhood Children's Center Committee and the Commission on Children's Parent Leadership Training Institute to train the staff of its parallel course, CLTI — Children's Leadership Training Institute. The Museum was the site for the Community Foundation Early Childhood Initiative's Better by Design Workshop. Each initiative found a spot here, their own lily pad of sorts, to use as a jumping off point back into the community, enriched and inspired by the work being done at The Children's Building.

It has been an expansive and amazing year. Follow our frog and hop through the lily pad pages of this report to you, our community.

Sandra Malmquist
Sandra Malmquist
Director





the art of childcare

creating kids childcare center



Creating Kids was established in 1994 to provide a breadth and depth of childcare services unique in the community. It is an independent, not-for-profit early childhood education program which is open to the community and serving families of infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Creating Kids is licensed by the State of Connecticut and accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Creating Kids is an ethnically and economically diverse community of families with a majority of the families coming from the city's many neighborhoods. It is a community enriched by children with special needs; the space and the curriculum are shaped by Universal Design. It is an approved site for the New Haven Board of Education's School Readiness Initiative and the Care4Kids childcare assistance program; which, together with the funding we receive as a United Way funded agency, supports affordable, quality childcare spaces for families.

Our mission is to serve the childcare needs of area families through the development of an inclusive community and an innovative curriculum inspired by the theory of multiple intelligences.

For example, during Apple Week, children ... eat an array of yummy apples for snack and study shapes in nature as they see as the 'star' revealed in a freshly halved apple, carefully saving the seeds to plant. Donning handmade Johnny Appleseed hats, they read the famous folktale together, in English and American Sign Language, changing the text just enough to include a new character, Josie Appleseed. Children measure the ingredients for apple pies and learn to read A ... is for APPLE in Braille. To complement their week, the children spend a morning in the Naturalist Room of the museum, watching our bees fly in and out of the building, bringing back pollen collected from the blossoms on the City's apple trees.



learning the art of childcare

teachers teaching teachers

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to really 'see' what my job as a pre-school teacher is, in a way that reading about it never could. I once read that a photo is a record of the past. It was educational to look at the [curriculum poster] photos and to be able to see so much more than I thought I was taking!

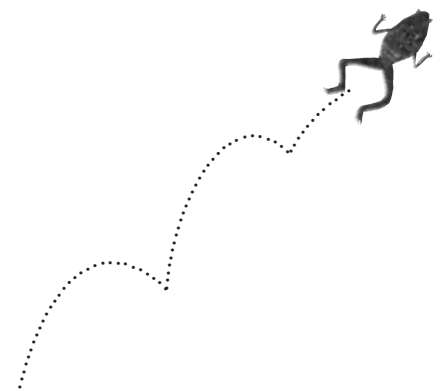
Julia Blue Raspe
Neighborhood Music School
Nursery Program

creating curriculum

Creating Curriculum is an innovative and experiential childcare provider training program. It uses the structure of a children's museum and the program model of multiple intelligences to teach childcare providers how to create developmentally appropriate program based on the multiple intelligences inclusion model and using children's picture books. It is based on a strong developmental foundation.

Creating Curriculum is a collaborative program, now in its eighth year, of the Connecticut Children's Museum and its childcare program, Creating Kids, and the Fair Haven Community Health Center. Childcare providers from inner-city home and center-based settings gather for a fifteen-week, skills-building seminar course, taught by pediatric clinicians and the staff of Creating Kids, in a creative framework of lectures, multi-media presentations and interactive workshops. Participants demonstrate their competence in the course by designing curriculum posters using photos of the children in their childcare settings. These posters are beautiful and informative documents which are shared with colleagues and families.

Creating Curriculum increases the quality of childcare and therefore contributes to school readiness for New Haven's children through staff development with a focus on literacy. It is an early childhood education Quality Enhancement training project supported by the NH Board of Education's School Readiness Initiative. Creating Curriculum has graduated over 150 early childhood educators; all earned credits toward their CDA—Child Development Associate—credential, a critical step in achieving and maintaining professional standards. The Creating Curriculum course is approved by Connecticut-Charts-A-Course, the statewide professional development system for early childhood education. Creating Curriculum supports career development for early childhood educators, which is the under girding for quality early childhood education.





since 2001... a magical place for

46,482 children, their families and teachers

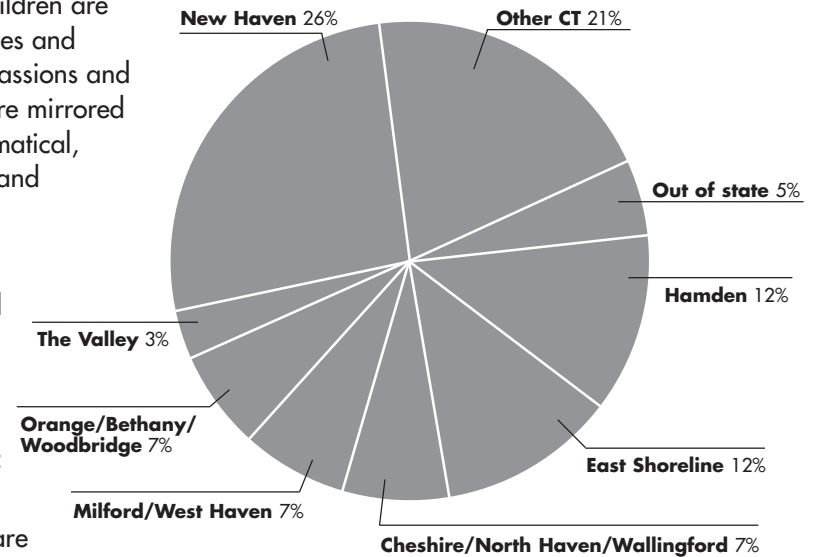
THE CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The Connecticut Children's Museum provides experiences for children in a multiple intelligences-based museum that honors the culture of children. When the doors open, children begin their journey through the museum's eight rooms, immersing themselves in the exhibits which reflect their passions. Knowing that children acquire knowledge in many different ways, each exhibit is designed to provide a kaleidoscope of experiences. The museum uses Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences as the inspiration and template for its design. This theory honors the myriad ways in which children are competent and creative in the world and provides families and teachers with a way to discover their young children's passions and support their learning patterns. The eight intelligences are mirrored throughout the museum rooms: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalist and bodily-kinesthetic.

The museum provides a place rich in resources and unstructured time for children, parents and teachers and is open five days a week for visitors throughout greater New Haven.

Since opening in 2001, the Connecticut Children's Museum has been a destination for tens of thousands of children through the educational field trip program and family visits. Over half of the family visitors each week are returning to the museum, having come through the educational field trip program or visited on a previous weekend. With museum visits ranging from two to four hours, children wander into the exhibits they find most compelling.

Tomorrow's problem-solvers assemble dozens of wooden gears across the Logical-mathematical Room wall, quick to master their cause and effect relationships. Naturalists nestle into the octagonal cells of our child-sized beehive, pondering the mysteries of making sweet honey and musing about the unique smell of authentic beeswax. Story lovers grab a peddler's cap and organize a lively rendering of Caps for Sale, with monkey tails flying, as the tale unfolds. Children step into an imaginative and interactive experience in each museum room.



Paid Museum Weekend Admissions 2004

7,100 people



making murals

The Connecticut Children’s Museum is a place made beautiful with the art of the community. In addition to the choice of a rich and playful color palette used inside the building, the museum is decorated with a unique set of murals which emerged from the arts community.

Art students, professional muralists and 117 school children designed, planned and painted murals in the exhibit spaces of our eight community-inspired, thematic rooms.

Using the very tall walls of the museum as their canvas, artists painted the New Haven Green, replete with the Free Public Library, postage stamp mini-murals from our six Sister City countries and lively musical murals blending children’s art into the ensembles. Botanical paintings highlight unusual trees and plants from around the world with colorful birds on every branch.

The museum walls became a canvas for a broad community of artists.

artists

Kwadwo Adae
Joellen Amend
Jennifer Crane
Cynthia Davis
Eduardo de Soignie
Tanja Geis
Leslie Kwok
Janet Lehmann
Terry Lennox
Cathie-Rose Michaud
Hailey Parnell
Polina Porrás-Cervantes
Rita Sellers
Daniel Stegos
Gar Waterman
Heather Whitehouse
Linda Hali Zucker

Shatavious Crosby
Stephanie Davis
Anthony Day
Ben Della Rocca
Anna Deming
Shanice Dinuzzo
Eliza Doolittle
Aliyah Driesen-Bixby
Semaj Duddley
Jacqueline Duhl
Shaylon Duncan
Hayden Dunham
Robert Durant III
Owen Evans
Nina Fiellin
Rahiim Foster
Hannah Friedman
Yolanda Gardner
Chauntel Garris
Samantha Garris
Ana Geismar
Gianni Gray
Maggie Hofstadter
Will Hofstadter
Emily Hong
Katie Hong
Sarah Hong
James Howard
Victor Hu
Ruby Hunter
Christopher Hurlie-Dunn
Max Hurwitz
Nick Intermaggio
Arnesh Jajoo
Miles Johnson
Sarah Jonathan
Charis Jones
Priya Jones
Maddie Kern
Matthew Kramer
Victor Kuc
Alexandra Larson
Matthew Larson
Alex Lawrence
Nysa Loudon
Seve Loudon
Brian Lowery

Susanna Lustbader
Molly Malmquist-Wessel
Dylan McGuinness
Sean McGuinness
Taylor McGuinness
Kyra Middleleer
Chanelle Mobley
Sophia O’Brien-Udry
Alex Oman
Tyler Outlaw
Danny Pfau
Bryonna Pinero
Miguel Pittman Jr
Nicky Ramsey
Kirill Ravikovitch
Cheliq Reddick
Gemma Regan-Mochrie
James Regan-Mochrie
Michael Richmond
Noah Richmond
Emilio Roth
Eliot Rudnick-Cohen
Jovanni Santiago
Logan Scanlon
Jacob Scheetz
Bryan Schmitt
Charlie Shaddox
Alec Shub
Thomas Sorensen
Riane Sullivan
Tejamah Sullivan
Jailyn Sykes
Nicky Talbott
Nora Thompson
Jack Tiernan
Candelario Torres
Tatiana Trijuillo
Trent Valdez
Iris Wade
Travis Wantchekon
Ariel Weiser
Jermaine Young
Michelle Zackin

making murals kids

Claudette Ahumada
Haitham al-Rahim
Andrew Babbidge
Lucy Balcezak
Mikey Balokoz
Eve Barkin
Itai Barsade
Sivahn Barsade
Yedidya Ben-Avie
Rachel Berkowitz
Zack Biemesderfer
Brian Blake
Jhanā Blake
Willie Blasini
Miles Branch
Mickey Bunbanlu
Avanah Burnett
Alyssa Burroughs
Charlie Chamberlain
Olive Chen
Christian Coassin
Max Coassin
Jacob Cogguillo
Cory Collins
Harrison Congdon
Chelsea Cordova
Tailor Coward

Shatavious Crosby
Stephanie Davis
Anthony Day
Ben Della Rocca
Anna Deming
Shanice Dinuzzo
Eliza Doolittle
Aliyah Driesen-Bixby
Semaj Duddley
Jacqueline Duhl
Shaylon Duncan
Hayden Dunham
Robert Durant III
Owen Evans
Nina Fiellin
Rahiim Foster
Hannah Friedman
Yolanda Gardner
Chauntel Garris
Samantha Garris
Ana Geismar
Gianni Gray
Maggie Hofstadter
Will Hofstadter
Emily Hong
Katie Hong
Sarah Hong
James Howard
Victor Hu
Ruby Hunter
Christopher Hurlie-Dunn
Max Hurwitz
Nick Intermaggio
Arnesh Jajoo
Miles Johnson
Sarah Jonathan
Charis Jones
Priya Jones
Maddie Kern
Matthew Kramer
Victor Kuc
Alexandra Larson
Matthew Larson
Alex Lawrence
Nysa Loudon
Seve Loudon
Brian Lowery





since 2001

16,376 field trip children, their teachers and families

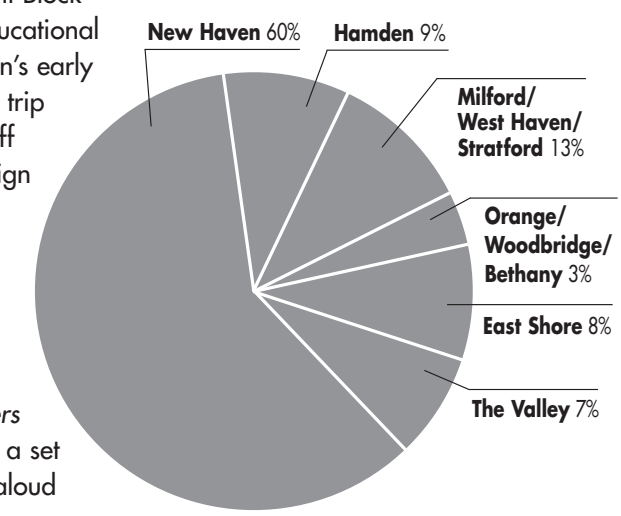
educational field trips

The Connecticut Children's Museum provides a unique educational destination for children's programs where both teachers and students can be inspired by the exhibits and return to their programs prepared to deepen their work. Field trips are organized so that visiting early childhood programs, family childcare homes and schools have exclusive use of the museum.

The museum's educational field trips are part of our affirmative attendance program and supported, in part, through a City of New Haven Community Development Block Grant. On weekday mornings, the museum is reserved specifically for educational field trips, bringing thousands of children from New Haven and the region's early childhood education programs and elementary schools to visit. Each field trip group participates in the *Creating Readers* literacy program. Museum staff read a high-quality children's picture book, accompanied by American Sign Language word signs, and each child is given a copy of the book.

The museum partners with the Connecticut Board of Education and Services for the Blind to organize field trips for children who are blind and have visual disabilities. They explore the museum, finding Braille factoids to complement the hands-on exhibits and dozens of children's picture books that have been transcribed into Braille. The *Creating Readers* program provides books in English, Spanish and Braille accompanied by a set of authentic props to tell the tale in a unique and textured way. Reading aloud *Jump, Frog, Jump* by Byron Barton, the children listen to the amphibious main character croaking, the fly buzzing and the snake slithering into the water on a specially-made audio CD and follow the storyline using their own set of literacy props inspired by the book.

Central to the field trip program, and an integral part of our mission, is outreach to families. Families of children who visit learn about the museum in four related ways: (1) Parents often accompany their child's early childhood education program or school group to the museum and participate in the field trip experience firsthand. (2) Each child receives a book for his or her home library through the *Creating Readers* literacy program. (3) All families receive written information about the Connecticut Children's Museum directly through a bi-lingual brochure. (4) Teachers encourage families to visit with their children and participate in the weekly *Creating Readers* Saturdays at 2 literacy program.



Field Trip Attendance 2004
4,954 people



Adam Sliwinski • Alisa Bowers • Angela Early • Anna Brathwaite • April Ruiz • Betty Baisden & the Giggle Puppets • Children's Theater Stage & Story Troupe •



The Wind Over Wings program was supported by the Norman C. Heilman Fund, an initiative to honor the Museum Director's father, who loved both books and birds.

Norman C Heilman Saturdays at 2 Fund

Nancy Abrahams
Elizabeth Brandl
Philip Burton
Mary Cunningham
Patti Eastland
Lorraine and Sebastian Fazzino
Frank Gruz
Lois Heilman
James and Carolyn Malone
Helen Molloy
Board of Directors
Creating Kids Teachers

Daniel Barash • David Blocher • Erica Sapp • Franky Gutierrez • Hector Arroyo • Lot Therrio • Maria Tecocoatzl • Peg Oliveira • Wind Over Wings

saturdays at 2

To enrich family visits, the museum organizes the Saturdays at 2, arts-based, *Creating Readers* program. This program offers an opportunity for children to listen to a story be read, danced, dramatized or presented in American Sign Language. Local artists and educators are invited to come to the museum to read a children's book aloud and use the book as a base for an entertaining rendition using their particular artistic expertise.

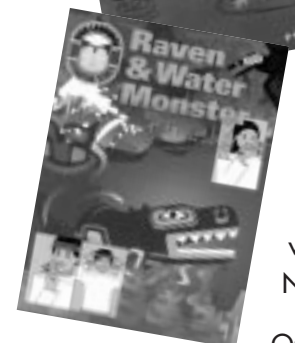
Each week, a book is chosen which integrates reading with the museum's exhibits. The reader invites the children to gather around as they read aloud descriptively and interactively, techniques shown to increase interest and retention. After listening to the story, each child receives a Spanish, English or Braille copy of the book-of-the-week to hold and to have; an addition to their library. For example ...



... on a day in the Musical Room, children hear the sounds of the violin calling them together to hear Mole Music by David McPhail. Following the tale of a small and shy mole that dreams of making beautiful music and changing the world, the children are entranced. The violinist takes them on melodic literacy experience through the pages of this beautifully illustrated book, linking song and story to create readers.



... or a day in the Naturalist Room, where children listen to educators from the Wind Over Wings reading Owl Moon by Jane Yolen, the story of a little girl and her father trekking into the snowy woods at night. Under the full 'owl moon', they wait and hope to see a great horned owl. Our little museum visitors are awestruck as the live owls appear ... perched and ready to spread their silent flying wings, connecting children and books and owls together in an extraordinary marriage of literacy and love of wildlife. Saturdays at 2 is supported by funding from the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism.



Our readers are rooted in the community; the Saturdays at 2 program draws talented artists, actors and musicians, storytellers and educators, to tell the tales and read the books. All model a love of reading; *Creating Readers* gives them a place to put this passion to work in the lives of children.





I look forward to meeting fellow caregivers at Mornings!

Claudette Kidd Scott
family childcare provider

Mornings at the Museum gives me books and creative things and ways to teach in my home daycare.

Ernestine McGee
family childcare provider

mornings at the museum

Mornings at the Museum is an ongoing project which brings inner-city, center-based childcare programs, family childcare programs and informal childcare providers to the Connecticut Children's Museum. The program provides access for childcare providers to the resources they need to support early childhood education and to help the children in their care acquire the skills and knowledge they need to be ready for school.

Family childcare providers from the City, and the young children they care for, participate in a series of bi-weekly field trips as part of Mornings at the Museum. This program supports childcare providers with the experiences and resources they need to provide quality early care and education and to help the children in their settings acquire the skills and knowledge they need to be ready for school.

Mornings at the Museum brings together family childcare providers from the City's many neighborhoods. Staff from myriad programs working with this important group of early care educators, such as the New Haven Public Schools Family Resource Centers, All Our Kin Family Childcare Network and Casa Otoñal, join them for a morning at the Children's Museum.

At each Morning session, providers, and each child enrolled in their program, are given bi-lingual children's picture books and, to enhance the childcare setting, literacy props are provided to complement the stories. One wonderful morning in March, the children enjoyed all the museum rooms and then gathered round to read Lois Ehlert's colorful book, Growing Vegetable Soup or A sembar sopa de verduras, in English and Spanish. Each childcare setting was given a curriculum bag with a collection of play vegetables to expand the concept of the featured book. The bag also contained seeds to plant so the children could grow their very own vegetable soup.

Mornings at the Museum is supported by multiple funding streams and provides hundreds of children and their teachers annually with the opportunity to spend quality time learning at the Connecticut Children's Museum. This year, the program was funded by the School Readiness Quality Enhancement grant and a City of New Haven Community Development Block Grant.

I especially like that Mornings at the Museum provides me with ideas and supplies for my curriculum. Also my daycare parents love the books that the children bring home.

Rosa Torres, family childcare provider





Giving children books increases their imagination and lets them visit places that they may never get to visit otherwise

...which can bring them to a higher level of learning... Kim Landry family childcare provider



creating readers

The museum's distinct footprint is *Creating Readers*, its literacy program. *Creating Readers* is a diverse and inclusive literacy initiative that recognizes that all children need strong literacy learning skills to succeed in school and in life. All are poised to become, with support, accomplished readers.

To help 'create readers' we: (1) integrate children's picture books into the Museum exhibits, creating a tapestry of literature to support children's diverse learning styles, (2) read aloud to children in English and Spanish and using American Sign Language so that they hear and see vibrant vocabularies, (3) infuse family visits and educational field trips with interactive and enriched, arts-based literacy experiences and (4) provide each visiting child with a book in English, Spanish or Braille.

We watch as tomorrow's builders strap on their tool belts, filling them with the tools of their trade, and then navigate the bulldozer through the Spatial Room construction site. There, peering through their goggles, they flip the pages of *Tools*, a cross-cultural picture book by Ann Morris. Future architects busily build at the Box Architecture workbench, inspired to create by the children's books, *Building a House* by Byron Barton and *Simply Wright: A Journey Into the Ideas of Frank Lloyd Wright's Architecture* by Diane Fleming.

In the Linguistic Room, children of all ages are enchanted when they enter ... for this is a child-sized replica of the great, green room from the classic children's picture book, *Goodnight Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown. Here is where children can find and touch the telephone, the two little kittens and the pair of mittens, the toy house and the young mouse ... as they call out, with perfect recall, each and every word of the book, and then tuck themselves, just like the bunny from the beloved book, into bed. Parents and teachers become the 'quiet old lady who is whispering hush', rocking rhythmically while reading the classic picture book aloud in English, Spanish, Hebrew or Japanese while the little bunnies on their laps glide their fingers across the Brailled words.

Children need books of their own and early childhood settings need ample and varied literacy resources. Through *Creating Readers*, the number of books in both children's home libraries and the book collections in their early childhood programs are increased, and reading opportunities are broadened, by the gift of 5,500 picture books annually. This program is funded through a grant from the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and the City of New Haven Community Development Block Grant, community supporters and the museum's operating budget.



Before Creating Classrooms



After Creating Classrooms

creating classrooms

Creating Classrooms — *The Environment as Teacher* — is a twelve-session course for early childhood educators, taught by the Director and Sharon Adams, an early childhood consultant. The Museum's early childhood program, *Creating Kids*, served as a classroom and model environment. *Creating Classrooms* embraces the idea that the early childhood environment itself is a partner in the education of young children. Participants received professional development credit and re-designed their settings using the course mini-grants.

Rosa Torres is a dedicated early childhood teacher who has created a high-quality family childcare setting in her home in the Fair Haven section of New Haven. She enrolled in *Creating Classrooms* to help her re-design the childcare environment. Rosa has converted the first floor of her home into a lovely space for children, full of sunlight, well-chosen materials and the warmth of wooden floors. She has selected beautifully crafted wooden furniture and educational toys for her setting. Rosa wanted to enhance her setting by re-arranging the rooms to be attractive and inviting and by organizing her materials to provide simplicity, order and color, and make the space more open with clearly defined places for children to spend time.

Reading and books provide a central theme to Rosa's Family Home Child Care, so the literacy corner was designed to welcome children and draw their attention to the books and cozy space there. The room was reconfigured so that families would see that space first when entering Rosa's Family Home Child Care. It was a way of signaling the importance of literacy to everyone who visited and provides a soft space for families to say goodbye in the morning.

Creating Classrooms was supported by a Community Response Fund grant from the United Way of Greater New Haven.

All Our Kin Family Childcare
Centro San Jose Child Development Center
Cookie Monster Home Daycare
Dollie Day Care
Howe Street YMCA Preschool Program
Kidd's World Family Child Care
Phyllis Bodel Childcare Center
Rosa's Family Home Child Care
St. Andrews Child Care Center
St. Francis Pre-K Program

give a kid a mat! yoga project

Peg Oliveira, a developmental psychologist and yoga teacher, designed a series of yoga classes for young children. Based on The Connecticut Framework: Preschool Curricular Goals and Benchmarks, the Give a Kid a Mat! yoga project guided 24 children enrolled at Creating Kids, ages two to five years old, through a weekly class, helping children direct their energy, focus their creativity, develop concentration, manage stress and improve overall physical fitness.

Contributors

Scott Abbott
Charles & Barbara Angelo
Giselle Balabon
Joy Barwikowski
David Herbst
Alison Buchan
Paula Burkhard
Christopher and Priscilla Canny
Christina Casavina
Robert Deasy
Jennifer Kaczmarcyk
Debbie Ferreira
Juan and Helene Figueroa

Marybeth Frosco
Allison Hoffman
Nancy Milillo
Mary and Brian Moore
Cynthia Petrillo
Peter Gootjes
Patricia Roscoe
Sumi Shah
Bonnie and Shaun Sullivan
Laura Sundstrom
Joshua Sloat
Brian Valzania
Lisa Donofrio
Fresh Yoga, LLC

universal design

Universal Design sets the tempo and shapes the template for our early childhood programs and the exhibits in the *Connecticut Children's Museum*. This tapestry of accessibility greets visitors to the building with four sculptured children dance nimbly on the Museum lawn – frolicking right side up, upside down and using a wheelchair. Our logo replicates this joyous, multi-abled quartet.

The Museum underwent a rigorous Accessibility Evaluation in March of 2004, commissioned by the City of New Haven's Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities. The evaluator summarized her findings thus: "The [*Connecticut*] *Children's Museum* is the most exceptionally disability-aware arts institution this evaluator has ever surveyed." She continues, "... they have not only Brailled all books used in the regular storybook sessions, but have developed original tactile signage that makes the experience of Museum-going as accessible as possible for visually impaired guests."

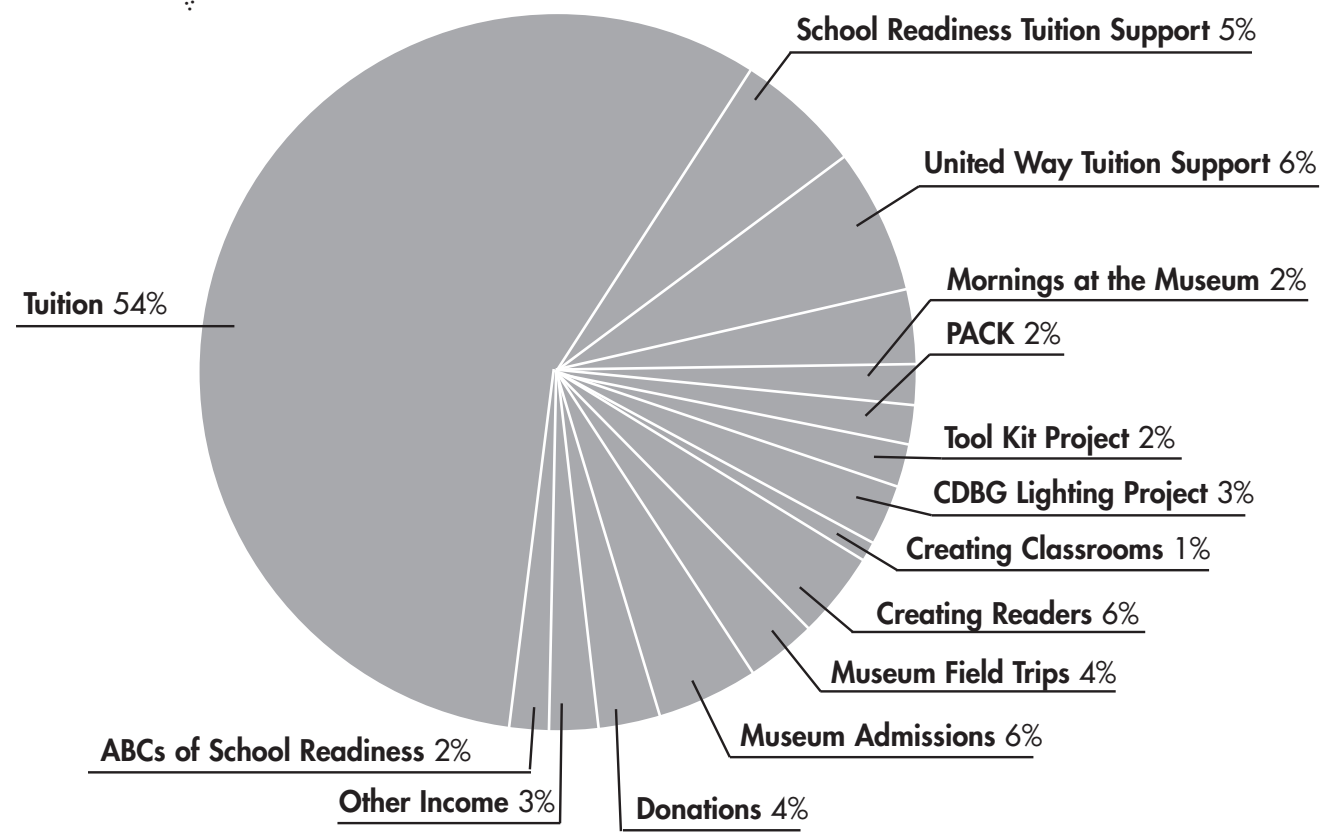
In October of 2004, we received statewide recognition by being given the Artful Access Award from the Americans with Disabilities Act Coalition of Connecticut, Inc. This prestigious award was given "in recognition of the [*Connecticut*] *Children's Museum's* commitment to removing barriers and providing an accessible environment so children with disabilities can experience and enjoy the wonderful activities at the Museum."



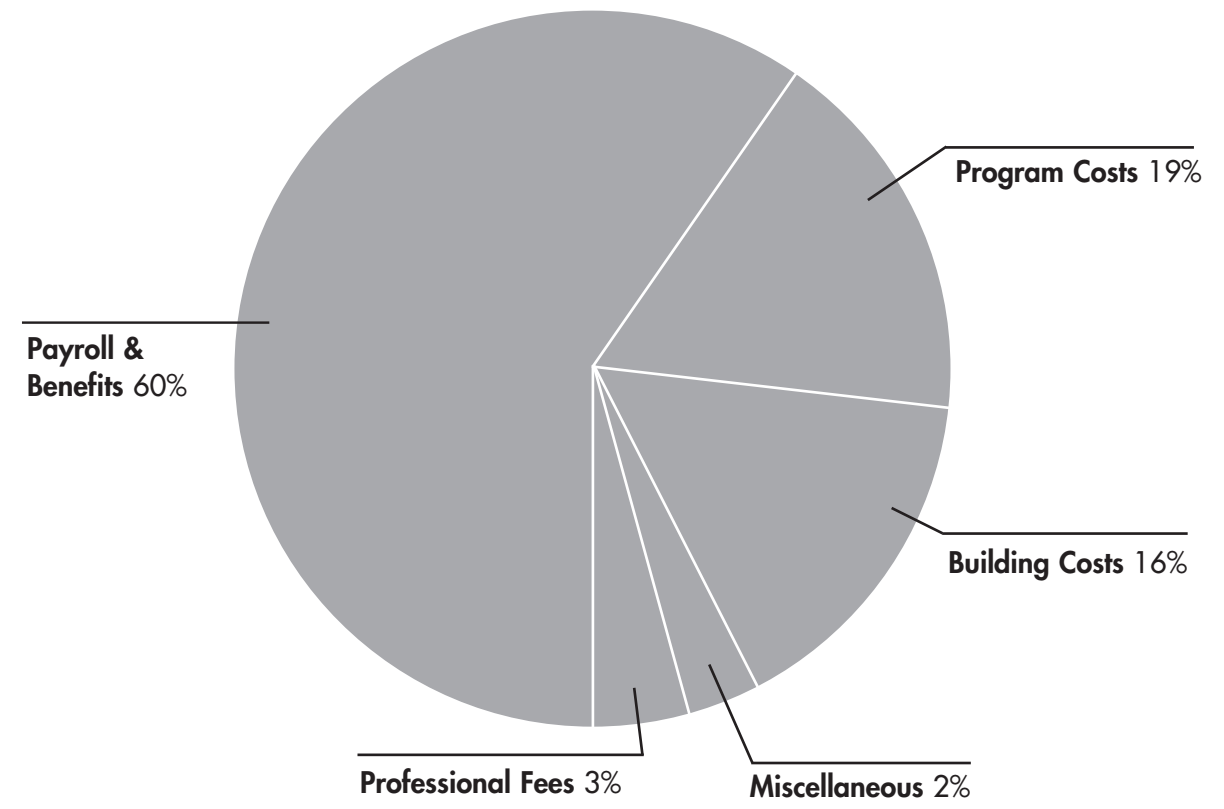
The *Connecticut Children's Museum* is included in a unique guide written for families of children with disabilities to help them identify accessible learning spots in Connecticut. As part of her statewide research, Nora Ellen Groce, the author of [Accessible Connecticut: A Guide to Recreation for Children with Disabilities and Their Families](#) (Yale University 2002) spent several afternoons at the *Connecticut Children's Museum*. Of her experience, she states: "This museum is child centered, and children will leave feeling that they have had a chance to explore and think. ... [it] has been designed with children with disabilities specifically in mind."



income



expenses



Based on an annual budget of \$587,615 for the fiscal year ending August 31, 2004 as reflected in the year end financial statement.

museum in the community

The ABC's of School Readiness®

The ABC's of School Readiness® is a community engagement campaign to raise awareness of the importance of early childhood care and education. It is designed for families and early childhood educators and is part of a broad outreach and education campaign to improve the school readiness of each child. Using the alphabet as a framework, the ABC's of School Readiness® highlights twenty-six important ideas that support children's development. It makes an innovative contribution by blending child development and policy issues and by providing an alphabetical action plan for school readiness.

The ABC's of School Readiness® campaign is a project of the New Haven School Readiness Council in partnership with WTNH News Channel 8, the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, the Connecticut Children's Museum and CT Voices for Children.

The mission of the New Haven School Readiness Council, which is appointed by the Mayor and the Superintendent of Schools, is to ensure that every child in the City of New Haven has access to quality, affordable early care and education and arrives at school with the skills, knowledge and support that prepare him or her to succeed.

ABC's of School Readiness alphabet boxes are housed at the Early Childhood Resource Center and available for early childhood programs to borrow. Through the generosity of the Gini Fund at Read to Grow, additional sets of boxes were created specifically for family childcare providers who are part of the All Our Kin Family Childcare Network.

B ... is for Build

"Did you know that building with blocks is the beginning of your child's math education?"

-Building builds math skills.

-Building helps children learn to plan and solve problems.

-Building together builds friendships.

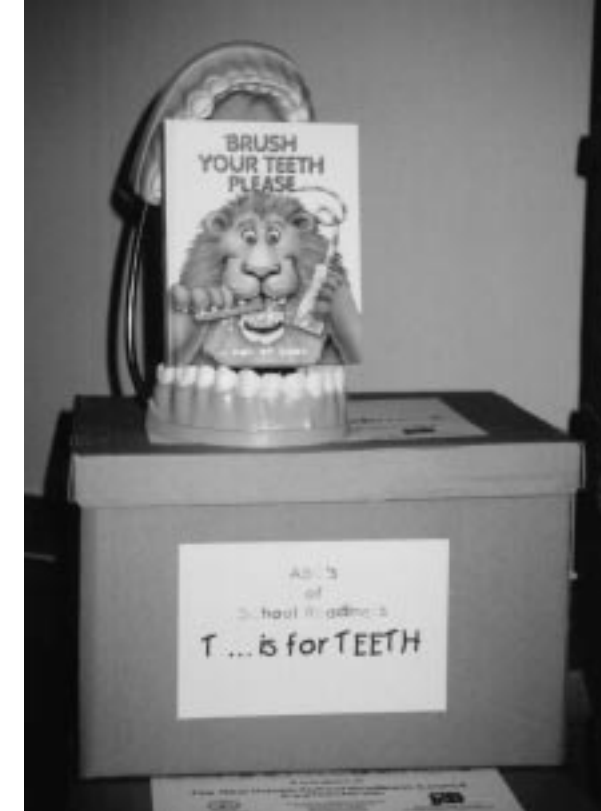
- A ... is for ASK
- B ... is for BUILD
- C ... is for CLIMB
- D ... is for DRAW
- E ... is for EAT
- F ... is for FEELINGS
- G ... is for GRANDPARENTS
- H ... is for HEALTH
- I ... is for IMMUNIZE
- J ... is for JOKE
- K ... is for KINDNESS
- L ... is for LIMITS
- M ... is for MUSIC
- N ... is for NUMBERS
- O ... is for OOPS
- P ... is for PUPPETS
- Q ... is for QUIET
- R ... is for READ
- S ... is for SLEEP
- T ... is for TEETH
- U ... is for UPSIDE DOWN
- V ... is for VOICE
- W ... is for WATER
- X ... is for XYLOPHONE
- Y ... is for YES
- Z ... is for ZIPPER

Celebration of Early Childhood Educators

As part of the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Week of the Young Child, the Museum hosts the annual Celebration of Early Childhood Educators. This festive event honors the educators working in School Readiness center-based early childhood programs and family childcare homes throughout the City. Over 150 teachers gather for a celebratory evening; each are given a gift of appreciation and feted as 'stars' in the world of young children.

Early childhood programs are provided with a curriculum box from the ABC's of School Readiness project. These boxes make a unique contribution to the ongoing work in early childhood settings and include teacher resource books, high-quality children's picture books and curriculum materials.

Events for the Week of the Young Child are organized by the New Haven School Readiness Council and supported through gifts from the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven and the United Way of Greater New Haven.





PACK parents and communities for kids

PACK, Parents and Communities for Kids, is an initiative to promote learning in family and community settings, supported by a partnership of The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, the Wallace Foundation and the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund.

The Museum's PACK Project is a partnership with the Welch Annex School in the Hill neighborhood of New Haven, a school that has a strong bi-lingual education program. The project begins with a school-based field trip to the museum. Each of the 200 kindergarten and 1st grade children is given a bi-lingual children's picture book and a literacy 'prop' that is coordinated with the book to encourage him or her to read and enact the story at home. For example, each child receives a paint set and brushes with the book, *Diego*, by Jeanette Winter so s/he can create a masterpiece. They also receive a series of passes to return to the museum with their family.

During the subsequent family visits, the children, as experienced museum visitors, lead their families through the different rooms, sharing knowledge of the museum exhibits and inviting their families to play with them.

family childcare tool kit project

The Family Childcare Tool Kit project is designed to advance the work of the New Haven School Readiness Council in supporting the development of licensed, quality, home-based childcare. The Connecticut Children's Museum produces the Tool Kit boxes.

The Tool Kit project is a set of four boxes, each with a notebook outlining, step-by-step, the process to achieve State of Connecticut licensing as a family childcare home. The boxes contain all the paperwork needed for licensure and supporting materials to complete those requirements. The boxes include a collection of high-quality children's picture books and curriculum materials. A family childcare coordinator distributes the Tool Kit Boxes and provides staff support to family childcare providers seeking licensure.

The implementation of the Family Childcare Tool Kit Project is a partnership of All Our Kin and the Connecticut Children's Museum and is funded by the New Haven School Readiness Council, Empower New Haven and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

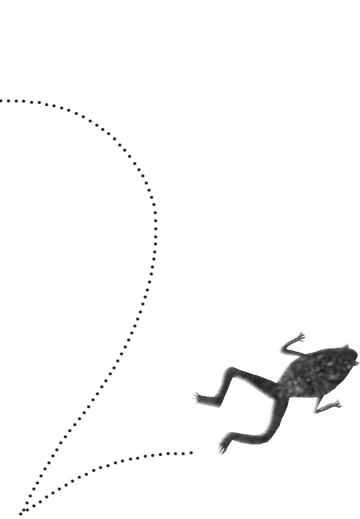


board of directors 2004

The Board of Directors of The Children's Building is a working board. They are: Budget balancers. Early childhood enthusiasts. Financial wizards. Fundraisers. Museum mentors. Policymakers. Grant editors. Program inspirers.

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staff

The staff of The Children's Building are magic makers. They create experiences for children that blend academics and aesthetics—they infuse the day with love, literacy and lyricism. Our early childhood teachers know that child development takes myriad paths and they design programs woven on inspired curriculum webs using the Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Everyday happenings happen in American Sign Language and in song. Our teachers celebrate the diversity of our community of children. They have been recognized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children with the award of accreditation for work done with excellence. As teachers of teachers, the Creating Kids staff share their expertise with the participants of Creating Curriculum and they mentor students dreaming of becoming early childhood educators. We honor our teachers as magic makers, making each day full of study and sparkle.

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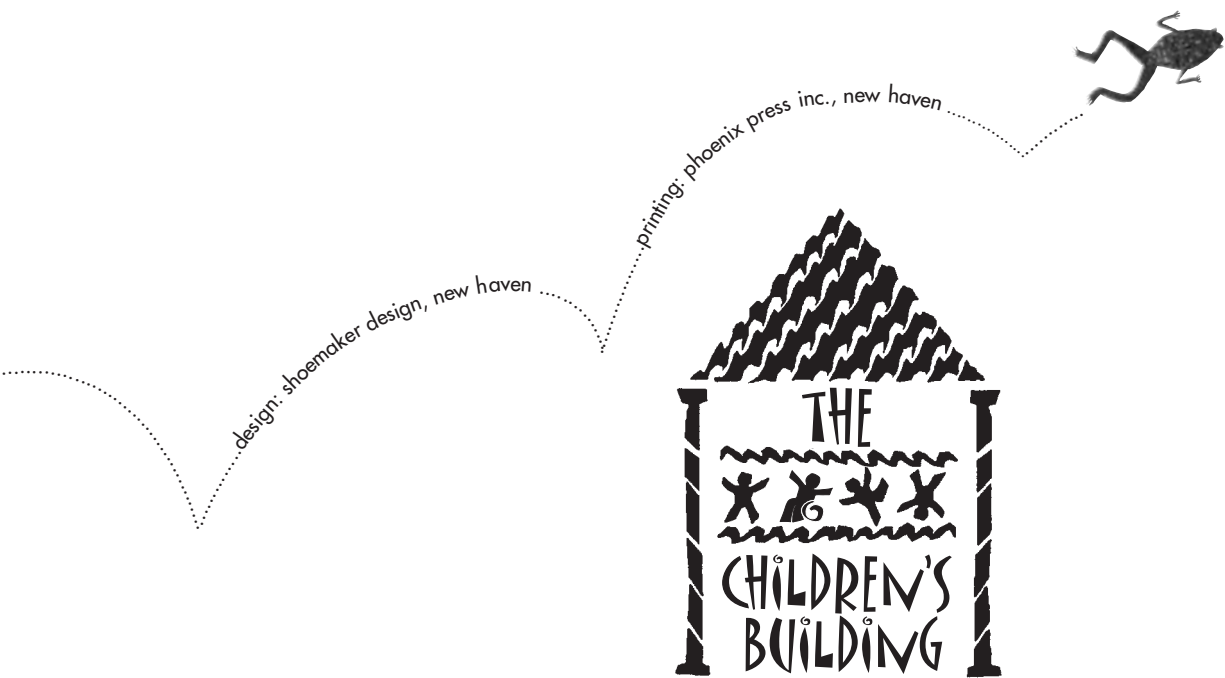
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