



Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago 2007/08 Annual Report





Mission Statement

As a leader in demonstrating the role of interactive play in learning, Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago creates exemplary, developmentally appropriate, hands-on educational experiences for young children in a fun, intimate environment.

Support Us

If you would like more information about supporting Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago, please contact our development office at (847) 832-6911.

2007/08 Annual Report

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Jennifer Oatess

DESIGNED BY:
Ross Bay



Dear Friends,

In 1985, Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago was founded with the proven philosophy that young children learn best through active, self-directed play.

Now, more than twenty years later, the Museum is the Chicago area's leading resource for children, families and educators, promoting the importance of play in early childhood development by offering exhibit environments and discovery-based activities that are interesting and universally inviting to all children.

In this year's Annual Report, we reflect not only on all that we have been able to accomplish over the course of the last year, but also on our greater purpose: to ignite a passion for active learning that will last a lifetime. We do this because we believe that all children have a right to a quality childhood, that all parents deserve support in their role as a child's first and most important teacher, and that all teachers should be given the tools that they need to encourage children to be successful in school and in life.

We do this, in short, because it's the right thing to do.

As we look back on another year of fun and learning here at the Museum, we give thanks to our visionary Board of Trustees, Board of Governors and Women's Board, our dedicated Civic Advisory and Program Advisory Committees, our valued donor and member families, our respected program partners, and our talented staff members and volunteers, all of whom play a critical role in the Museum's important work on behalf of every child, every day. **Our debt to you all is truly beyond measure.**

Thank you for all that you have done, and will continue to do, in support of Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago.

FREDERICK H. WADDELL
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Learning To Grow.™



Permanent Exhibits

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Our 17 permanent interactive exhibits, sponsored by our generous supporters, have continued to delight and inspire more than 350,000 visitors over the course of the last year. Whether shopping for healthy food choices in our *Dominick's* exhibit or learning how to work and play together in *Cooperation Station*, children have been exposed to valuable play opportunities that celebrate childhood and set the foundation for lifelong learning.

This year, we completed the designs for the second phase of our 2-acre outdoor exhibit, *Habitat Park*, which will foster love and appreciation for the natural world while delivering important information about environmental responsibility and essential physical activity.

Like all Museum offerings, our exhibits have been developed using the principles of universal design, enabling accessibility for children of all abilities.



Traveling Exhibits

Over the course of the last year, we have supplemented our permanent offerings with superior traveling exhibits to engage young minds and keep a vibrant, ever-changing Museum environment. Among the most eagerly awaited was *Adventures with Clifford The Big Red Dog™*, which brought in record numbers of visitors to play and learn important social skills and life lessons.

In autumn, *Think Tank* engaged families in cognitive activities and hands-on puzzles, while in the summer the Museum welcomed home its own traveling exhibit, *Chagall for Children*, exposing families to the world of creativity and visual art.



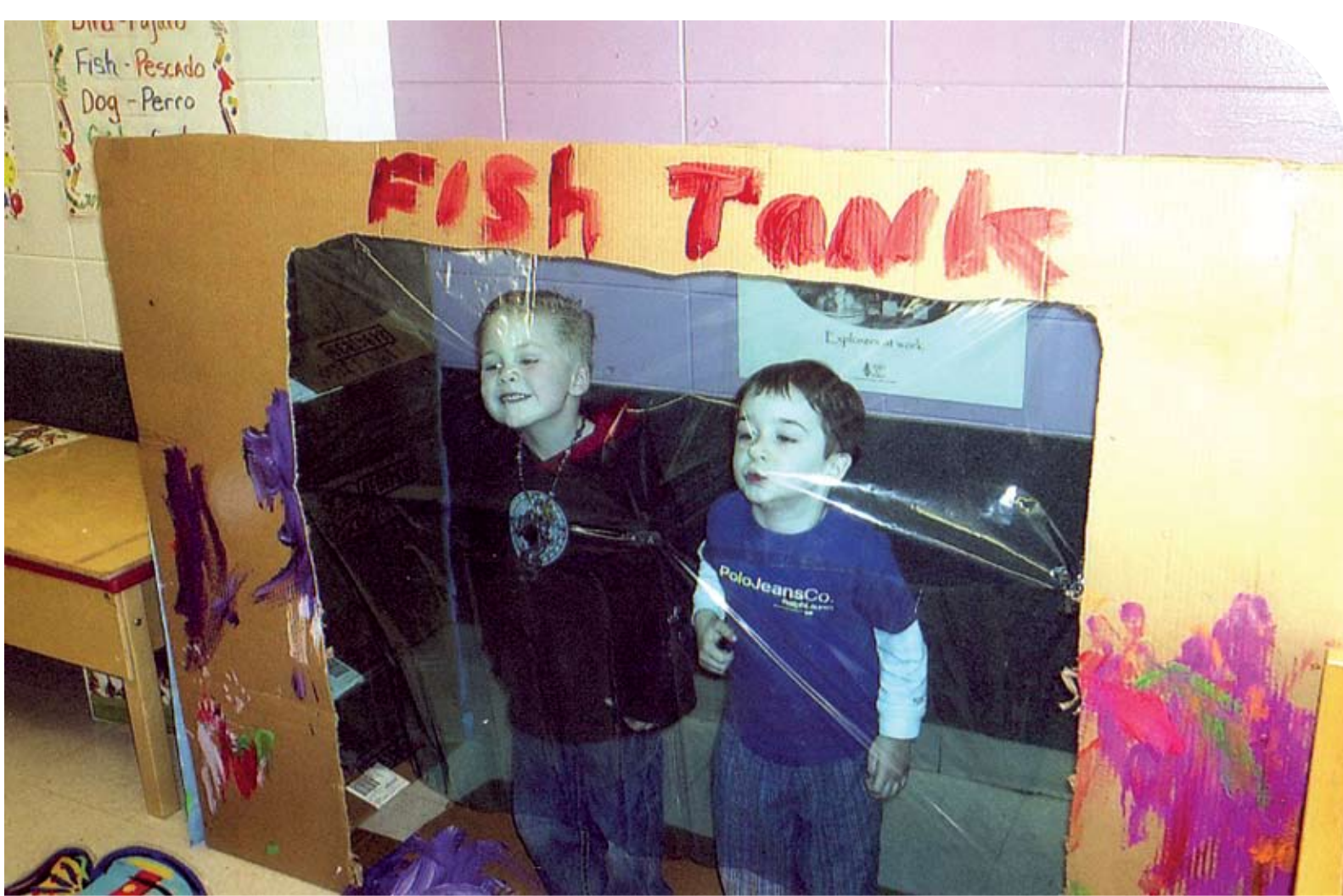
Public Programs

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Although we excel in the area of world-class exhibits, we don't rest there. Our exhibits are augmented by carefully designed programming that is, like all Museum efforts, aligned with state and federal early learning standards and designed for children of all abilities. Programs such as Art Adventures and Daily Discoveries, which allow children to explore critical arts, math and science literacy projects, served more than 230,000 visitors in the last year.

lifestyle changes that will last a lifetime. And over the course of the last year, more than 32,000 visitors came through our doors to play and learn together through our field trip program, with workshops designed to meet the individual and collective needs of children from pre-k to 3rd grade.

Our popular Children's Opera Works program brought students from Northwestern University to the Museum for interactive opera performances to engage children in live arts experiences that are complemented by key learnings in our *Music Makers* exhibit.



Outreach

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We know that in order to be truly successful, we cannot limit access to our programs to those who come through our doors, so we bring the Museum experience and our expertise in early childhood to communities in need through our targeted outreach programs. For more than 15 years, the Museum has been entrenched in some of our area's neediest schools, working with teachers and principals with a clear goal to close the achievement gap for our region's most vulnerable children.

We took on this challenge believing that the impossible is possible, that we can set high expectations for ourselves and demand that our program partners do the same, and that with dedication, hard work, and support, together we can make a world of difference in our community.



Outreach: Early Childhood Connections

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Our flagship outreach program, Early Childhood Connections, reached more than 3,000 children and 1,500 parents in the last year by training nearly 120 public school teachers and center/home-based childcare providers in the project-based approach, a child-centered teaching strategy that empowers children, engages parents, and transforms educators.

To accommodate the needs of a larger audience of early childhood professionals, we hosted the first Project Approach Summer Institute, where more than 300 attendees shared knowledge with nationally-renowned early childhood authors and experts, Dr. Lilian Katz, Dr. Judy Harris Helm, and Dr. Sylvia Chard, along with experienced project approach teachers, through two days of interactive workshops and experiences. Evaluations compiled from participants were extremely positive, noting that the sessions were highly informative, the content was helpful, and that exposure to this important teaching strategy would have a positive impact on their classrooms.



Outreach: Enrichment Programming

.....

This year, we launched a new addition to our popular summer camp program in partnership with the Glenview Education Foundation to help prepare children who have been identified as at risk of academic failure for a lifetime of learning. As a result of their participation in this program, our campers exhibited meaningful skill improvements that readied them for the more formal learning environment in the classroom.

We also completed the final year of a three-year pilot program, the Allstate Foundation Positive Play program, designed to introduce anti-bias curriculum into both urban and suburban public schools. Encouraging children of different backgrounds to learn and play together and providing teachers with the tools that they need to foster a supportive classroom is something that we believe is important to do, especially with very young children, so that we can move towards a more inclusive society based on kindness, respect, and understanding.



Measuring Our Impact

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In the past, we would report on a year's worth of activities and state quite confidently that "the numbers say it all." Just think: each year we serve more than 350,000 visitors, including 7,800 member families and 10,000 outreach program participants.

This year, however, we've decided to dig deeper. Using our business plan as a guide, we looked back on all that we have been able to accomplish together and set new, higher goals for ourselves by creating a

strategic plan that will inform our activities in the next three years. We then asked our board, donors, members, program partners, staff and visitors to share their experiences with us so that we can better understand their needs. Now, with continued investment and involvement from the communities we serve, we are well prepared to move forward together with new and innovative ideas that invest in our nation's most precious natural resource: our children.



The Right Thing to Do

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We've often asked ourselves just how we were able to do so much for so many children, but we have never had to ask ourselves why.

For more than 20 years, we have been in the business of providing experiences that will help the children of today become the leaders of tomorrow.

We do this because, as advocates for all children, we know that every dollar invested in a child means seven to ten dollars saved by helping children embark on a life of positive choices.

We do this because we know that if we can ignite a passion for learning that will last a lifetime, then we can make a difference in the life of a young child.

In short, we are in the business of child's play not simply because we believe we are the best ones to do it.

We are in the business of child's play because it's the right thing to do.

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We would not be able to achieve our goals without the support of our generous funders. We thank the following donors for their investment in our work and in the futures of all children.

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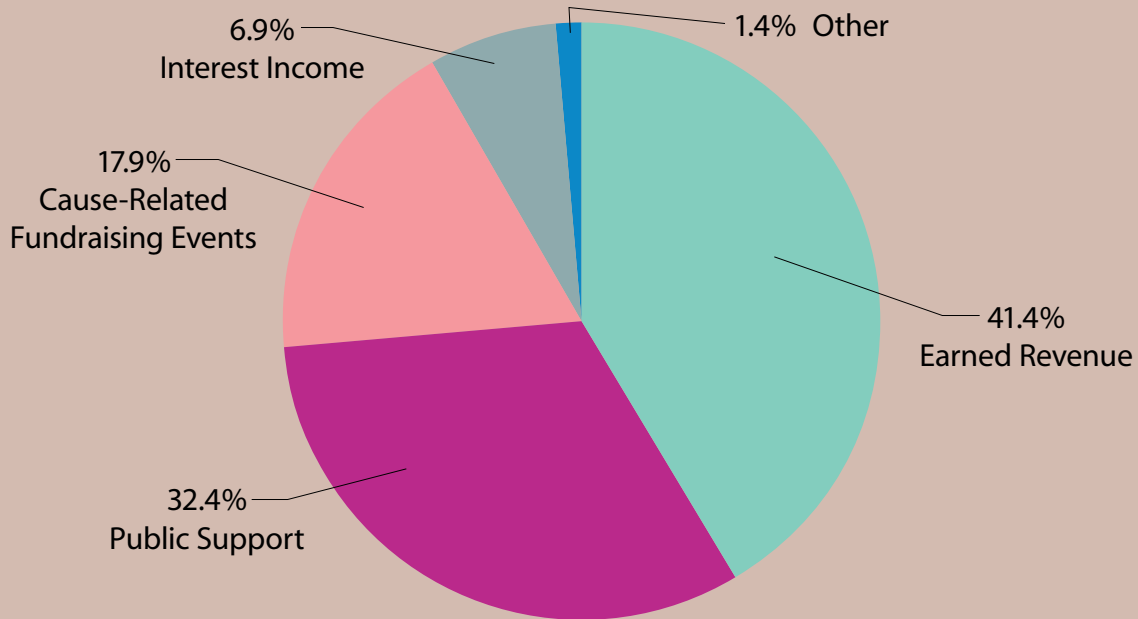
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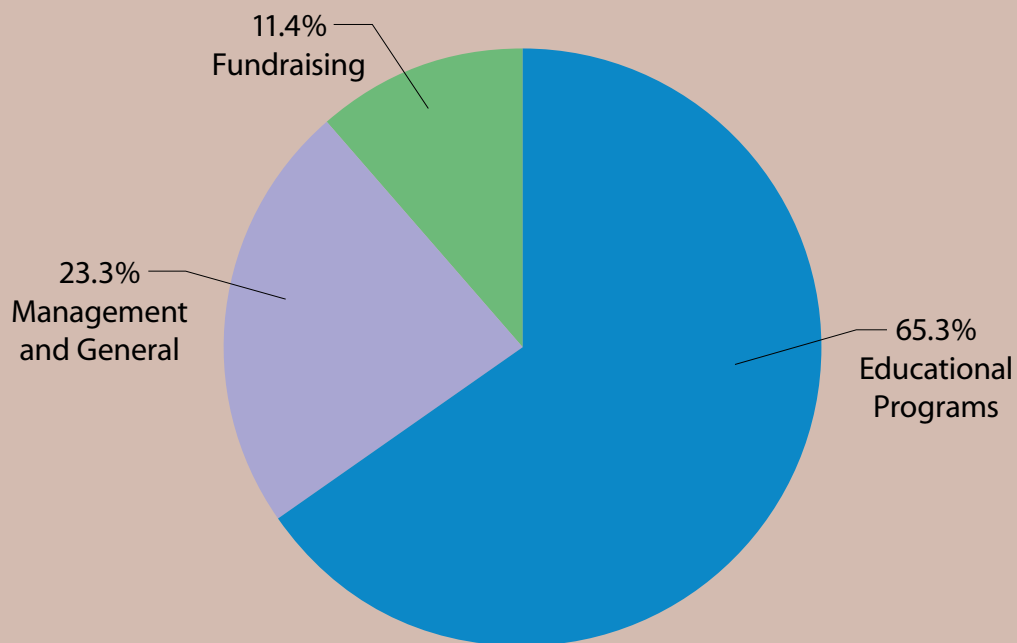
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Never Ending Child Care, Gages Lake
New Field Primary School, Chicago
New Trier High School, Winnetka
Niles North High School, Skokie
North Shore Country Day School, Winnetka
Northwestern University, Opera Department
Oakton School, Evanston
Off the Street Club
Our Little Playland, Hillside
PACE Program, National-Louis University
Pioneer Press
Powell's Playhouse Home Day Care, Chicago
Ernst Prussing Elementary, Chicago

Ravenswood Elementary, Chicago
Ravinia Festival
William Claude Reavis School, Chicago
Reinberg Elementary, Chicago
Tom Richey, Abbott Laboratories
Ricky Recycle
Carole Robertson Center for Learning, Chicago
Imelda Rodriguez, Home Day Care Provider, Chicago
William Rudolph Learning Center, Chicago
S/S Learning Place, Chicago
Ruben Salazar Bilingual Education Center, Chicago
Scholastic Books
Tricia Sebastian
Sherman School of Excellence, Chicago
Smyser Elementary, Chicago
South Loop School, Chicago
Stevenson High School, Chicago
Anne Stewart, Anti-Bias Consultant
Harriet Beecher Stowe Academy, Chicago
Sandi Sylver
Synergy Brass Quartet
TJ's Heavenly Angels Home Day Care, Chicago
Mark Twain Elementary, Wheeling
The University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital
Usborne Books
James Ward School, Chicago
Washington School, Evanston
Webster Dental Associates
Wee Are the World Home Day Care, Calumet City
Wesley Child Care Center, Glenview
West Elementary, Zion
Walt Whitman School, Wheeling
Willard School, Evanston
Williams Elementary, Chicago
Carter G. Woodson School, Chicago
Yeager School, North Chicago

Revenues



Expenses





It's important for us to be good stewards of the environment in order to maintain a world that our children can enjoy for many years to come. As a silver-level LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building, Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago is committed to using environmentally-friendly materials.



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