



Bringing children and families together in a new kind of town square where play inspires lifelong learning.

2004 METLIFE FOUNDATION AND ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S MUSEUMS PROMISING PRACTICE AWARD SUMMARIES

The 2004 Promising Practice Award recognizes innovative children's museums projects that strategically position institutions to thrive in a changing world. Following are summaries from all children's museums that applied for the award.

ACES Program

Please Touch Museum[®], Philadelphia, PA Elaine Wideman-Vaughn: 215-963-0667

Create a museum mentoring program for at-risk, low-income high schools students. The report describes a work-based learning and enrichment program — Achievement Through Community Service, Education and Skill Building (ACES) — that gives students an opportunity to work in a museum environment and attend workshops and field trips. *Grand Prize Winner*

UPCLOSE and Children's Museum, Pittsburgh

Children's Museum, Pittsburgh, PA Jane Werner: 412-322-5058 ext 217

Partner with university learning experts to evaluate prototype exhibits and signage. The summary explains how the academic alliance supports the museums expansion project and permits the university to use the museum as a laboratory for research. *Prize Winner*

Storytelling Guild

Children's Museum of the Brazos Valley, Bryan, TX Shawn Andaya-Pulliam: 979-779-5437

Sponsor a museum reading collaborative to benefit children. The narrative imparts how the museum achieves a leadership role in the literacy community, while partnering with pre-service teachers, the public library, the local PBS affiliate and two of Barbara Bushes literacy organizations. *Prize Winner*

Museum to You

Children's Museum of Portsmouth, NH Denise K. Doleac: 603-436-3853

Eliminate barriers to museum attendance by creating a mobile satellite children's museum. The report offers practical information for bringing museum exhibits, educational programming and artist workshops to neighboring underserved towns. *Honorable Mention*

Math Path

Children's Museum of Houston, Houston, TX Tammie Kahn: 713-522-1138 ext 211

Connect math to real world scenarios for children as young as 2 and up to age 12. The summary explains how the museum incorporated math into a wide range of activities, and provided Math Path training to elementary teachers and after-school caregivers. Math Path activities can be presented to children in any order and require no special materials other than those commonly found in homes and in after-school centers. *Honorable Mention*

Ladder 11

Staten Island Children's Museum, NY

Dina Rosenthal: 718-273-2060

Be a community resource for emotional healing. The description chronicles how the museum proactively responded to the September 11 tragedy, which affected hundreds of families in the Staten Island community. The resulting firefighting exhibit, workshops and outreach is a rare case study on how a museum may take action after a community disaster. *Honorable Mention*

Launch Events for Facility Opening

Miami Children's Museum, FL

Deborah Spiegelman: 305-373-5437ext 118

Celebrate a culturally diverse and inclusive community at a museum's grand opening. The summary describes a series of events which honored the museum's benefactors, members, as well as the multi-ethnic, underserved, and other residents. Especially relevant for emerging museums concerned about building relationships with community groups and businesses while also establishing inclusive standards.

Community-based Recycled Materials Program

Chain O'Lakes Area Artworks Children's Museum,
Ingleside, IL

Sharon White: 847-587-7882

Integrate recycled materials into museum exhibits and crafts projects. The description includes information on how the museum solicits, collects, stores and catalogues second-hand items, and details community partnerships that supported its recycling activities.

Kids Can Help

The Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum, MO

Beth Fitzgerald: 314-822-8900 ext 24

Encourage children to engage in a philanthropic activity. The narrative describes the museum's annual food drive initiative that helps raise awareness and donations for local food banks, and rewards children who donate canned food items with free museum admission.

The Community Corner

Grand Rapids Children's Museum, MI

Andrea Essling: 616-235-4726 ext 201

Educate young persons about safety and wellness issues. The description explains how the museum's rotating *The Community Corner* exhibit space provides a framework to respond effectively to requests from public and private organizations for programs on fire safety, oral hygiene, summer safety, fitness and nutrition.

Dalmatian Station

EdVenture Children's Museum, Columbia, SC

Catherine W. Horne: 803-779-3100 ext 1140

Instill important fire safety behaviors in children and adults. The application reports how the museum worked with a coalition of state and local agencies to design and fund a museum exhibit that teaches children how to handle themselves in emergency situations while engaging them in fun, realistic environments and activities.

Professional Development Workshops

Providence Children's Museum, RI

Louisa Kile: 401-273-5437

Offer professional development workshops for childcare providers, teachers and social workers. The narrative details how the museum successfully models and markets itself as the informal education experts in its region.

OF, BY and FOR the People Thinking

Northwoods Children's Museum, Eagle River, WI

Mike Long: 715-479-4623

Build museum capacity by leveraging the talents of the local community. The application describes how the approach effectively addressed such issues as financing renovations, building a grassroots vetting committee, and identifying volunteers for short-term needs.

Educational Programming

Mid-Hudson Children's Museum, Poughkeepsie, NY

Diane Pedevilland: 845-471-0589

Increase personal attention to museum visitors by drawing on volunteers and allies. The summary provides an overview of all of the museum education programs designed to reach children in playgroups, group tours, middle school and teens.

Discover Reading Hand-in-Hand

Children's Discovery Center, Clinton, IA

Theo A. Smith: 563-243-3600

Enlist retired teachers to run a story hour program for children. The narrative details how the museum recruited teachers to volunteer for the weekly literacy effort aimed at infants, toddlers and elementary students through third-grade.

The Kids' Book Club

Children's Museum of Southeastern Connecticut,
Niantic, CT

Barbara Kingsland: 860-691-1111

Endorse child literacy and reading for pleasure. The application explains the museum's monthly Kids' Book Club, a free program offered after museum hours for children and families.

Culture for Kids

Explore & More... a children's museum,
East Aurora, NY

Barbara Park Leggett: 716-655-5131

Teach children about world culture inside and outside the museum. The report lists how the museum uses hands-on exhibits, curriculum inspired programs and Web-based activities to reach to a broad audience.

Outreach and Scholarship Program

Children's Museum of Montana, Great Falls, MT

Darlene Bos: 406-452-6661

Invite Head Start and Title 1 schools to attend fieldtrips to the museum. The description emphasizes how the project aligns with elementary school curriculum and offers low-income families and families at risk hands-on educational experiences.

The Children's Museum Family Learning Model

The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, IN

Kay Cunningham: 317-334-3815

Create a museum environment that encourages family participation. The application reports on a three-year partnership with the Institute for Learning Innovation to develop staff seminars, family learning projects and exhibit and program assessment tools that increase family involvement.

Standards of Excellence in Early Learning

Chicago Children's Museum, Chicago, IL

Stacia Whitmore: 312-464-7717

Increase early learning opportunities for museum's youngest visitors. The narrative explains how the museum is developing an early learning model with the Erikson Institute (a graduate school in child development), Civitas (a national, not-for-profit communication group benefiting children) and Gyroscope (a museum planning and exhibit design firm). The resulting model promises to offer children's museums — regardless of audience, size and budget — ideas on what types of aesthetics, exhibits, staffing, training, programs, partnerships, research and amenity services will most encourage early learning.

Collaboration with the Laural Regional School

Amazement Square, Lynchburg, VA

Mort Sajadian: 434-845-1888

Improve the educational, social and recreational opportunities available to special needs students. The summary outlines a weekly program that brings profoundly mentally and physically handicapped students, ages 4-21, to the museum and to a regional school for hands-on creative workshops.

Science and Literacy Collaborative

Children's Museum of Denver, CO

Linda Farley: 303-561-0119

Promote integrated learning environments to benefit low-income children and families. The report reviews how the museum designed science and literacy activities for the museum, the classroom and the home. Created for second-graders, the related exercises reinforce concepts in a variety of settings for greater understanding.

The New York City Museum School

Children's Museum of Manhattan, New York, NY

Andrew S. Ackerman: 212-721-1223

Partner with the local public school system to create a museum-learning curriculum. The application summarizes the foundation of the Museum Learning Process™, a six-pronged learning style that consists of extended observation, questioning, research, synthesis and analysis, presentation, and reflection.

Open Doors

Children's Museum of Maine, Portland, ME

Sheryl Kingery Mays: 207-828-1234 ext 228

Welcome new communities to the museum while fostering diversity awareness. The narrative describes how the museum responded to the rapidly growing refugee population in its community which had been relatively homogenous. The museum's *Open Doors* program provides a set of criteria to ensure programs, exhibits, marketing, fundraising and community outreach is effective and respectful of a multi-ethnic population.

Kits for All

The Children's Museum, Boston, MA

Virginia Vogel Zanger: 617-426-6500 ext 284

Partner with existing after-school programs to provide museum activities and content. The report describes how the museum created training and discovery-based learning activities that span culture, art, technology and science. The project helps communities respond to the learning agenda set by No Child Left Behind.

Collaboration with ArtWorks!

Children's Museum of Acadiana, Inc. Lafayette, LA

Brenda Petro: 337-232-8500

Provide at-risk students with museum volunteer opportunities. The summary explains how the museum partnered with a local arts council program for troubled teens to offer the teens work-based learning and enrichment opportunities, which included creating backdrop paintings for an exhibit.

After School/Summer Camp Programs for Homeless Youth

A. C. Gilbert's Discovery Village, Salem, OR

Kim Baldwin: 503-371-3631

Offer museum after-school programs for homeless children. The report details the activities, transportation, meals and supervision provided by its 32-week after-school program. Activities expose elementary age homeless students to the arts, sciences and humanities. The museum also offers a similar summer camp program for homeless junior-high school students.

Beyond the Classroom

Kids 'N' Stuff: An Interactive Experience for Kids,
Albion, MI

Elizabeth N. Schultheiss: 517-629-8023

Provide museum after-school programs without using an in-house education department. The description includes information about recruiting teacher candidates to develop and teach curriculum for exhibits and museum classes that meet state educational benchmarks. The project is especially relevant for start-up museums or museums with small budgets.

Hands On English

Children's Museum at La Habra, CA

Kimberly Albarian: 562-905-9634

Help Limited English Proficient (LEP) elementary students succeed in school. The narrative explains how the museum works with schools and parents to provide hands-on language activities for children who enter kindergarten with out knowing English.

Hot Rock'n Fourth of July Event / American History Exhibits and Programming

Treehouse Children's Museum Ogden, UT

Lynne Goodwin: 801-394-9663

Fire-up children's interest in American History. The report describes the museum's partnership with the American Dream Foundation and local organizations to sponsor ticketed events featuring museum-quality exhibits on American history, civics and geography.

Junior Achievement Curriculum

Interactive Neighborhood for Kids, Gainesville, GA

Sheri Hooper: 770-536-1900

Expose children to the world of business and commerce. The summary describes the museum's partnership with the local Junior Achievement chapter to create a kids-sized bank, grocery store, medical office and restaurant exhibits. Designed for elementary and middle-school students, the exhibit activities encourage role play and introduce kids to supply chain concepts and careers.

Free Birthday Parties for Underprivileged Children

ImagineU Children's Museum, Visalia, CA

Angela Reyna: 559-733-5975

Host birthday parties for disadvantaged children. The narrative explains how the museum works with local charities to offer low-income children and their families a traditional celebration in an educational environment and an introduction to the museum .