

**2007 MetLife Foundation and Association of Children's Museums  
Promising Practice Awards Summaries**



**Healthy Children, Healthy Communities**

Stepping Stones Museum for Children  
Norwalk, CT

**(2007 Award Recipient)**

Rhonda Kiest  
203-899-0606

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Healthy Children, Healthy Communities is a four-year, stateside initiative promoting health and wellness among Connecticut's children and families. Lead by Stepping Stones Museum for Children, the initiative includes "Healthyville," a traveling exhibit; educational programs; statewide community outreach and a series of health vignettes for broadcast on Connecticut Public Television. More than 50 community organizations, hospitals, health professionals, state agencies, policy makers, educators and schools provided critical support to the project's development, launch and implementation.

**Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies**

The Children's Museum of Houston  
Houston, TX

**(2007 Award Recipient)**

Tammie Kahn  
713-522-1138

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Designed not as a stand-alone program, Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies is integrated with long-standing and familiar programs at 30 elementary schools and at 20 branches of the city public library system and the museum. By presenting new material in settings where low-income families already visit and trust, the barriers to reach these families are reduced. Three separate evaluations of the Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies program conducted by university and public sector researchers have indicated 100 percent satisfaction among Spanish-speaking audiences and school administrators.

**Sponsored Month Program with Special Events**

Children's Museum of Skagit County  
Mount Vernon, WA

**(2007 Award Recipient)**

Cate Melcher  
360-419-7474

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Children's Museum of Skagit County works with different cultural groups and community agencies to promote its monthly health programs, Community Free Days and events. The museum also coordinated transportation for families to the museum and other destinations. Through signage and interpretation services in multiple languages, the museum is able to provide essential healthy information to a diverse group of families.

**Madison Children's Museum Fundraising Practices**

Madison Children's Museum  
Madison, WI

**(2007 Honorable Mention)**

Jenny Collins  
608-268-1231

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The museum has aligned its fundraising practices to support and promote its Health and Sustainability Initiatives. For example, the museum's fundraising policy states that the museum will seek corporate sponsors whose projects or services are consistent with what the museum values: respect for all children, community connections, sustainability and play as the natural way to learn. Additionally, the museum seeks to build relationships with sponsors to broaden collaborations with community health organizations and to implement sponsorship recognition and museum communication using sustainable materials and practices.

**Discovering Healthy Families**  
Discovery Center at Murfree Spring  
Murfreesboro, TN

**(2007 Honorable Mention)**  
Rachel Anderson  
615-890-2300

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Discovering Healthy Families is a four-month, family-focused nutrition and exercise program, which is run in partnership with Middle Tennessee State University, StoneCrest Medical Center and the local American Heart Association. The emphasis on goal setting, hands-on learning, repeated assessments and repeated participation by the entire family, along with follow-up with the above listed partners helps families to create healthy, lifelong habits.

**Healthy Heads, Hands and Hearts**  
Amazement Square, The Rightmire Children's Museum  
Lynchburg, VA

**(2007 Honorable Mention)**  
Mort Sajadian  
434-845-1888

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Amazement Square, The Rightmire Children's Museum's "Healthy Heads, Hands and Hearts" program is carried out through a unique educational cartoon series published daily in the local newspaper and through series of in-house and outreach programs. The program brings attention to the importance of nutrition and physical activity and the negative impact of drug abuse.

**Face to Face: Dealing with Prejudice and Discrimination**  
Kidsbridge Children's Museum  
Trenton, NJ

Lynne Azarchi  
609-581-0239

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Kidsbridge partnered with The College of New Jersey to create a tolerance mini-museum on the college campus for at-risk elementary school students. Education and psychology college students and professors use the featured exhibit "Face to Face: Dealing with Prejudice and Discrimination" to teach, assess and inspire elementary students. Kidsbridge suggests this project, which aims to improve a child's health and emotional intelligence especially in the areas of self-esteem, empathy and perseverance to achieve goals, could be implemented by either an open or emerging children's museum.

**Building a Better Me**  
Staten Island Children's Museum  
Staten Island, NY

Dina Rosenthal  
718-273-2060

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Building a Better Me is an afterschool program offered to Title I elementary school students in grades 1-3, that teaches proper nutrition, exercise and constructive mood management. The museum partners with the Staten Island Chapter of the American Cancer Society, the Jewish Community Center and the Staten Island Heart Society. The museum's Teen Ambassadors participate in the program as mentors/leaders in the Constructive Mood Management module that addresses anger-management, conflict resolution and self-awareness. The program also invites parents to participate at the museum to understand their role as the children's first and most influential teacher and to join in for some of the walking/recreation activities.

**Healthy Kids!**  
Children's Museum of the Brazos Valley  
Bryan, TX

Shawn Andaya-Pulliam  
979-779-5437

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The Healthy Kids! program incorporates nutrition, physical fitness and healthy choices into a variety of educational programs offered at the museum, with the goal of teaching children how to incorporate healthy choices into daily routines. The program consists of two mini-chef workshops, two circus summer camps, two cooking summer camps, two science summer camps, weekly summer and periodic daily programming and Rudolph's 5k Fun Run and Walk.

**Open Arms: Support for the Autism Spectrum Disorder Community**

Garden State Discovery Museum's Center for Learning  
Cherry Hill, NJ

Coniqua Abdul-Malik  
856-424-1233

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Open Arms: Support for the Autism Spectrum Disorder Community is a program that offers exclusive events for children with autism, their parents, siblings and extended family. The program consists of both exclusive family evenings and parent-only speaker events, all of which are free to participants.

**All About Me Health Program**

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

Brenda Petro  
337-232-8500

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The Children's Museum of Acadiana, Inc., and the local nursing college at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette partnered to develop and facilitate a health program geared toward second and third grade students. The program entitled "All About Me" teaches children about their digestive, circulatory and respiratory systems and related health information in a hands-on, fun format.

**Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Initiative**

Children's Discovery Museum  
Normal, IL

Shari Buckellew  
309-433-3444

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The Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Initiative at the Children's Discovery Museum is a holistic approach to improve the physical and emotional health of children and families. Phase one is the implementation of a "healthy" culture throughout the museum staff, operations and programs. Phase two is a three-part exhibit gallery that emphasizes the physical and emotional health of a child through an outdoor experience, a pizza café and fresh market exhibit and an exhibit with an anti-bullying, respect message.

**Healthy First Saturdays**

Port Discovery, The Children's Museum of Baltimore  
Baltimore, MD

Bryn Parchman  
410-864-2654

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Port Discovery's Healthy First Saturdays program is a combination of exhibits, programs and activities that address childhood obesity, mental health, safety and the importance of healthy communities. Designed with community partners, the museum is leveraging the success of Healthy First Saturdays to create a Center for Healthy Families/Healthy Communities so that health will be visible every day.

**Precious Minds, New Connections**

McKenna Children's Museum  
New Braunfels, TX

Alice Jewell  
830-620-0939

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The McKenna Children's Museum executes a promising practice through our partnership with the Precious Minds, New Connections program that assists in the education of young and low-income families. The Precious Minds, New Connections community initiative provides services for early childhood development, primarily through parenting education. The museum has taken an active role in ensuring that the parents' education is one that is well-rounded to include nutrition, exercise and disease prevention through free passes and other intervention methods.

**Kohl Children’s Museum’s Healthy Lifestyles**

Kohl Children’s Museum of Greater Chicago  
Glenview, IL

Jennifer Oatess  
847-832-6911

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As part of its commitment to children’s physical and intellectual development, Kohl Children’s Museum’s Healthy Lifestyles program promotes nutrition and exercise for children at an early age. With both school- and museum-based activities, Healthy Lifestyles teaches children the importance of nutrition and exercise through integrated activities, including a focused field trip for school groups and interactions based on the museum’s grocery store exhibit. Children from low-income communities participate in free field trips and other activities as part of the Healthy Lifestyles program.

**Me & You Bus**

Orpheum Children’s Science Museum  
Champaign, IL

Sonya Darter  
217-721-8162

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Me & You Bus is a mobile exhibit that explores health, nutrition and physical activity. This program is dedicated to educating youth and their families on how a balanced diet and physical activity can have positive effects on preventing such chronic diseases as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and obesity. Each exhibit component was developed according to Illinois learning standards and was informed by focus groups of elementary school teachers and administrators.

**X5’s Summer of Magic**

Explorations V Children’s Museum  
Lakeland, FL

Georgann Carlton  
863-687-3869

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X5’s Summer of Magic is a new partnership between the Lakeland Housing Authority, Lighthouse Ministries Homeless Shelter, Lazydays Foundation, Disney, Community Foundation of Greater Lakeland and Explorations V Children’s Museum and debuted as the museum’s first full-time summer camp program. The museum aggressively sought multiple partnerships to integrate underserved children with non-scholarship children in a full-day, eight-week camp. Programming including hands-on nutrition, literacy, science, art, outdoor exploration, communication, performing arts and world culture modules.

**Enrichment and Empowerment Day Camp**

Imagine Children’s Museum  
Everett, WA

Nancy Johnson  
425-258-1006

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Imagine Children’s Museum planned and implemented a three-week long enrichment and empowerment day camp for low-income English Language Learner Hispanic/Latino children. The goal was to help youth develop the skills to overcome overwhelming daily life challenges that are largely a result of language barriers and low-economic status. Children ages 7-11 years learn healthy choices and essential life skills, are introduced to community resources and realize their self-worth and value to the community.

**Minnesota Youth Foundation**

Duluth Children’s Museum  
Duluth, Minnesota

Michael Garcia  
218-733-7543

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The Minnesota Youth Foundation is a program operated by the Duluth Children’s Museum that gives children first-hand experience in philanthropy. The program is conducted in partnership with area schools and other youth organizations and it leads children through a process to address local needs through grants making. The Minnesota Youth Foundation affirms the philosophy that everyone can give, no matter their socio-economic standing in the community, and that children can make a difference.

### **Little Hands...Big Difference**

Imagine It! The Children's Museum of Atlanta  
Atlanta, GA

Jane Turner  
404-527-5966

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Teaching civic engagement and the concept of "giving back" is essential to growing healthy children and healthy communities. Little Hands...Big Difference was an exhibit developed by Imagine It! The Children's Museum of Atlanta, in partnership with Hands On Atlanta, which encouraged and promoted the importance of community service and volunteerism among young children and families. Little Hands introduced volunteerism as a fun and easily manageable family activity as it involved children and families in actual service projects and connected families to on-going service opportunities in our community.

### **Art2Go**

Children's Museum of Los Angeles  
Van Nuys, CA

Helen Marish  
818-786-2656 ex. 121

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The Children's Museum of Los Angeles's Art2Go outreach program partners with local Ready for School centers to teach parents how art activities open doors to skills that lead to school readiness. Parents are shown how integrating arts into play and activities develops creative thinking, communications, pre-literacy, cultural literacy and self-esteem. Armed with this knowledge, parents, as their child's first teachers, are able encourage their children to make healthy play choices and utilize museums as a teaching tool.

### **Kindergarten Literacy Connection**

Kids 'N' Stuff  
Albion, MI

Elizabeth Schultheiss  
517-629-8023

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Kids 'N' Stuff Kindergarten Literacy Connections supports healthy kids and families by providing opportunities for kindergarteners at-risk in their literacy skills to gain confidence and strengthen skills to help decrease the need for retention and special services. Designed as a twice a week extended day kindergarten class, students are bused to Kids N Stuff for a period of seven weeks to get a more in-depth exposure to the literacy model used by Harrington Elementary School. Program participants were specifically chosen by their teachers and all were from low-income families.

### **The Littlest Readers**

KidSenses Children's InterActive  
Rutherfordton, NC

Julia Phillips  
828-286-2120

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The Littlest Raders is an activity-based literacy and language development program targeting the developmental needs of emerging speakers and readers ages 0-5 years. Concurrently, the program models instructional activities for parents and caregivers to extend into the child's home to optimize the child's developmental health. The program is available for free to a primary service area that includes rural counties in Western North Carolina and South Carolina experiencing excessive illiteracy rates.

### **Creating Readers**

Connecticut Children's Museum  
New Haven, CT

Sandra Malmquist  
203-562-5437

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Creating Readers is a literacy initiative at the Connecticut Children's Museum that recognizes that all children need strong literacy learning skills to succeed in school and in life. To "create readers" the museum takes on a multi-pronged programming. First, the museum integrates children's picture books into the museum exhibits, creating a tapestry of literature to support children's diverse learning styles. Second, the museum helps children acquire vibrant language by reading aloud to them in English and Spanish and using American Sign Language. Third, programming targeted to families and educational field trips are infused with interactive and enriched, arts-based literacy experiences. Finally, the museum provides each visiting child with a book in English, Spanish or Braille.

**Go!Play**

The Children’s Museum of Denver  
Denver, CO

Caroline Elliott  
303-561-0130

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Through Go!Play (formerly known as the Adult Learning Initiative), the museum takes a broad-based approach to educating caregivers that visit the museum with their children. Go!Play is a system that helps parents understand the educational value of the museum experiences and how they can enhance that educational value while at the museum and most importantly how they can take those lessons home. The museum works with Mile High United Way and uses Born Learning resource materials. Additionally, Mile High United Way has provided funding needed to offer free museum memberships to qualifying low-income families.

**My First Museum**

Bay Area Discovery Children’s Museum  
Sausalito, CA

Stacey Stern  
415-339-3956

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The My First Museum is a developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant program for families, caregivers, teachers and schools of multicultural preschool-aged children. Developed in partnership with local community organizations, the goals of My First Museum are to respond to the unique needs of culturally diverse preschools and their communities; assist teachers in utilizing museums as resources for curriculum support and development; encourage parents to participate in their children’s play and learning; develop a sense of ownership and connection between the community and museum.

**PPR/WOW/Learning Lounge**

Children’s Museum of Tacoma  
Tacoma, WA

Tanya Andrews  
253-627-6031

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Parenting Partners on the Road! (PPR) is a suite of programs designed to promote the value of childhood through exhibits and programs for both children and their adults. Traveling throughout the Pierce County Library System, the programs incorporate the hands-on exhibit “The Learning Lounge: Emotional Coaching,” an instructor-led parent/child program called WOW on Wheels, and Children’s Museum of Tacoma Play Passes. The programs enable the museum to engage families in low-income and rural areas of Tacoma.