

**2006 METLIFE FOUNDATION AND ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S MUSEUMS
PROMISING PRACTICE AWARD SUMMARIES**



The 2006 Promising Practice Award recognizes innovative children's museums projects that support healthy kids, families and communities. Following are summaries from all children's museums that applied for the award.

Head-to-Toe Health Initiative (2006 Award Recipient)

The Building for Kids (formerly Fox Cities Children's Museum)
Appleton, WI

Patti Habeck
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This initiative is the result of three years of planning by the museum and local hospitals, corporations, agencies and schools to teach children and families about health and healthy habits. Components include parent programming, dental health programming, a teen parent program, a school program with Slim Goodbody, and a partnership with the Children's Health Education Center in Milwaukee to present school programs on a variety of topics.

Wakanheza (2006 Award Recipient)

Minnesota Children's Museum
St. Paul, MN

Sarah Caruso
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Often at museums, schools and other public places, young children act up to the point where parents become so overwhelmed they can't focus on anything else around them. The Wakanheza project teaches museum staff and others how to guide effectively such situations in the moment, rather than judging and attempting to fix an individual or situation. The project also addresses how to approach a group of middle school or high school teens with confidence. Wakanheza is a statewide partnership of the Minnesota Children's Museum, Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association, Minnesota Parent-Teacher Association, Twin Cities Public Television, and the Initiative for Violence Free Families and Communities in Ramsey County. Wakanheza is the Dakota word for child. In English it translates to sacred being.

Museo Móvil (2006 Award Recipient)

Museo Del Niño Puerto Rico
San Juan, PR

Carmen Vega
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Many of the children living in Puerto Rico's rural towns live below the poverty level. The museum conducted yearlong research to determine the major needs of the children living in these areas. Health was the number one concern. With this in mind, the museum developed a community outreach program with a three-pronged focus: healthy bodies, healthy environment and healthy minds. The museum converted a truck into a traveling children's museum, *Museo Móvil*, and outfitted it with exhibits on healthy eating habits, environmental stewardship and literacy. Working with government and local schools, the mobile museum has been able to break through many geographic/social/economic obstacles and promote healthy habits and hands-on learning to children of all backgrounds.

Good For You! Exhibit Gallery and Educational Programs (2006 Honorable Mention)

Hands On Children's Museum
Olympia, WA

Patty Belmonte
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Developed in response to a critical need, the "Good For You!" gallery is an engaging, cost-effective exhibit designed to stimulate healthy lifestyle awareness among children and their families. Targeted around two key messages: making better food choices and get more exercise, the approach can easily be replicated by museums with limited resources. Activity kits, workshops, newsletter features, community collaborations and recipe cards enhance the exhibit and extend the learning beyond the museum.

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VERB Summer Scorecard Program (2006 Honorable Mention)

Explorium of Lexington
Lexington, KY

Sara Holcomb
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Kids need physical activity to stay healthy. To increase awareness of and participation in fun exercise, Explorium created new options for summer activities throughout Lexington and used prizes, discounts and social marketing techniques to inspire kids to get moving. Targeting children ages 9-13 ("tweens"), the museum worked with partners to create and distribute pocket-sized scorecards that listed physical activities around the city and at the museum. Children who completed 24 activities received a backpack and were eligible to win prizes at a grand finale event. The Summer Scorecard Program is featured on the Center for Disease Control's VERB Web site www.cdc.com/youthcampaign.

TWIST Summer Camp (2006 Honorable Mention)

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

Elizabeth Schultheiss
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Kids 'N' Stuff and Albion College partnered to host the Taught with Internalized Skills Techniques (TWIST) Summer Camp. The camp provides all local children, ages 5-9, with access to 25 days of active programming at no charge. TWIST is designed to enhance cognitive and character skills through the use of seven fundamental physical skills: balance, general coordination, body image, eye-hand coordination, laterality, tactile touch and audio expressive/audio receptive language.

Serving Family Childcare Centers

Miami Children's Museum
Miami, FL

Debbie Spiegelman
(305) 373-5437

Sponsored by the Peacock Foundation, the Miami Children's Museum provides targeted services for family childcare centers, with the goal of increasing their quality of care. The museum program consists of interactive seminars for providers focused on arts-based learning models that promote school readiness; curriculum kits with themed activities, educational materials and art supplies; and field trips for childcare groups.

Healthy Family Night

Central Wisconsin Children's Museum
Stevens Point, WI

Tiffany Wilhelm
(715) 344-2003

Healthy Family Night is a once-a-month evening event that provides a time and place for families, especially those with working parents, to spend quality time together and learn about healthy living in a fun and playful environment. Innovative partnerships with a hospital and student volunteers at a local university make this program a promising practice for small children's museums. Programming topics have included Fun with Food, A Happy Heart, Pilates for Kids and Staying Safe. Additionally, the museum hosts a Healthy Halloween Hoedown special event and plans to host a Kids Walk to further help families learn to incorporate healthy habits into their lives.

The Charleston Market and Children's Garden

Children's Museum of the Lowcountry
Charleston, SC

Meagan Labriola
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In 2005 Children's Museum of the Lowcountry introduced a new Healthy Living initiative to promote the health and nutrition of Lowcountry families through two new coordinated exhibits: "The Charleston Market" and the "Children's Garden." The new exhibits provide a wealth of education programming, teaching children where food comes from, how it affects their health and how it affects the earth. Children use math skills, learn geography, culture and history through the exploration of healthy foods.

Parenting Partners on the Road!

Children's Museum of Tacoma
Tacoma, WA

Tanya Andrews
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Parenting Partners on the Road is a suite of programs that will travel throughout the Pierce County Library System. Designed to reach children and families of varied socio-economic backgrounds, the program offers children experiences that stimulate development and healthy social learning and it offers parents information and techniques to support and participate in such development. The suite includes "The Learning Lounge: Emotion Coaching," a traveling exhibit; WOW on Wheels, a parent and child program that incorporates singing, dancing and peer interaction; and free "Play Passes" to the museum.

CU.SAME Summer Institute

Shalom Street
West Bloomfield, MI

Wendy Sadler
(248) 432-5454

School leaders across the metropolitan Detroit community have reported increased tension and violence surrounding issues of differences among students, particularly between Arab and Jewish youth. The Cultural Understanding: Students and Teachers through Museum Education (CU.SAME) pilot program encourages children ages 11-14 to look at diversity issues throughout history via museum exhibits and programs in hopes of promoting dialogue among students about diversity issues and inclusion.

Healthy Heads, Hands, and Hearts

Amazement Square
Lynchburg, VA

Mort Sajadian
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The *Amazing Adventures of Scorpy Bug* is a curriculum-based educational cartoon series produced by Amazement Square and published five-days a week in Lynchburg's local newspaper. The museum developed a four-week health theme for the cartoon series to focus attention on the increasing need for school-age children and their caregivers to understand the importance of proper nutrition, regular exercise and physical activity, the negative impact of drug abuse, as well as the importance of character building. Local school divisions promoted the series to students and caregivers and assisted the museum with evaluating the success of the series. At the end of the four weeks, the museum hosted a free Healthy Heads, Hands and Hearts fair in conjunction with its Family Fun Night where local agencies promoted their services and programs available to families. Additionally, the museum plans to publish the health themed *Amazing Adventures of Scorpy Bug* into a comic book, which will be available for sale in the fall of 2006.

Survive Alive House

Hannah Lindahl Children's Museum
Mishawaka, IN

Peggy Marker
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To help reverse the local and national trend of fires started by children, the museum and it's community partners created the Survive Alive House program to give children and parents a hands-on approach to fire safety and prevention. A home environment exhibit that simulates fire and smoke provides children and families the opportunity to practice exit drills and discuss the emotional aspects of a crisis situation.

Campfire USA Partnership

Campfire USA - Redwood Discovery Museum
Eureka, CA

Trey Scott
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The Redwood Discovery Children's Museum merged with Campfire USA to provide child-focused, family-centered programs and services. To help stimulate experiential learning, the museum regularly

2006 MetLife Foundation and Association of Children's Museums Promising Practice Award Applicants—Page 4 of 6 presents over a dozen interactive and creative exhibits. These exhibits highlight everything from a child-size grocery store to an “out-of-this world,” 3-dimensional planetarium experience.

Discovering Healthy Families
Discovery Center at Murfee Spring
Murfreesboro, TN

Rachel Anderson
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The museum has drafted plans for a “Discovering Healthy Families” program targeted towards its family membership. The proposed program include a health fair, a pedometer-based physical activity program, a nutrition educational program and the creation of new (and the adaptation of existing) museum tours all with a “healthy families” focus. The museum’s guiding philosophy is to involve families as complete units. Thus, each tour and activity will address the question of “how will it work for our member families?”

The Littlest Readers
KidSenses Children’s Interactive Museum
Rutherfordton, NC

Sara Margaret Voelker
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The Littlest Readers is an activity-based literacy and language development program targeting the development needs of emerging speakers and readers ages 0-5 years. Concurrently, the program targets parents and caregivers in attempts to model instructional activities to be extended into the child’s home to optimize their developmental health. The program is available to rural counties in Western North Carolina and South Carolina, which report excessive illiteracy rates.

EDDIE®
EdVenture Children’s Museum
Columbia, SC

Catherine Horne
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Human health and healthy living occupies a gigantic presence at EdVenture. EDDIE®, a life-like, interactive model measuring 40 feet and weighing 35,000 pounds, teaches children the ins and outs of healthy living by allowing them to climb in and explore the inside of the EDDIE’s structure. Health and safety education are dynamic themes that occupy more than 20 percent of EdVenture’s 40,000 square feet of hands-on exhibits. Through the innovative use of exhibits and programs, the museum has developed a powerful model for communication and collaboration on the critical issue of children’s health.

Healthy Beginnings Program
Staten Island Children’s Museum
Staten Island, NY

Dina Rosenthal
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With increased focus on teaching healthy habits to children at an earlier age, the museum has initiated the Healthy Beginnings program. The initiative includes an exhibit called “The Big Game,” which features various sport stations; “Kidz Cook,” a cooking class that promotes healthy eating habits and; “Music, Movement and Make Believe,” a movement class for toddlers.

Annual Health-Related Exhibit
Imagine It! The Children’s Museum of Atlanta
Atlanta, GA

Shannan Reese
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Beginning in 2005, the museum has partnered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and CARE, to host annual health-related exhibits. The exhibits serve as a platform for communicating important information about the development of healthy children. The first major exhibit “Tummy Town,” included a “Food Fuel Maze” that teaches kids about the importance of choose healthy foods; a “Good Food Farm” that reinforces the idea that fresh foods are best; a “Tummy Town Grocery Store” where kids are reminded the importance food proportion; and an interactive, super-sized doll, “Felicia,”

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who brings to life the concept of overeating. In 2006, the museum introduced the exhibit "Take a Deep Breath," which explores breathing and the ways that kids can make their bodies healthier by doing their part to promote clean air efforts.

Environmental Stewardship
Children's Discovery Museum
Normal, IL

Shari Buckellew
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The Children's Discovery Museum is shaping the choices of children and the health of its community through a three-phase, museum-wide approach to environmental stewardship. The museum completed design and construction of a new museum building utilizing the highest environmental stewardship practices (becoming the first children's museum to earn a Silver rating in U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). Museum programs and exhibits such as, "Oh Garbage," help influence the attitudes and behaviors of visitors. By working with public policy decision makers and organizations, the museum continues to demonstrate its commitment to healthy children, families and communities.

Health Programming for Preschool Children and their Families
Arizona Museum for Youth
Mesa, AZ

Sunnee Spencer
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The museum offers drop-in and pre-registered programs for preschool age children and their families to play and learn about healthy eating and the importance of exercise. Classes such as Kiddie Kitchen allow families to create edible masterpieces using a variety of healthy foods. Busy Bees is a class that gets kids moving and introduces fun ways to keep children active and learning. The museum also offers a series of parent workshops that address topics such as positive discipline and enhancing language skills.

Lighten Up! Running is Fun!
HealthWorks! Kids' Museum
South Bend, IN

Rebecca Zakowski
(574) 647-2690

Lighten Up! Running is Fun! takes kids ages 8-16 "from the couch to a 5K in 10 weeks." Participants are self-described "non-athletes" and meet with HealthWorks! High-Flying Kid Motivators weekly to prepare for a 5K race. Along with physical training, the children learn a variety of new ways to exercise and eat healthy. Parents are also involved, allowing the program to impact entire families and their intent to practice healthy lifestyle principles.

What's Inside?
The Woodlands Children's Museum
The Woodlands, TX

Melissa Thomas
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"What's Inside" was created through a collaboration among the museum, health and medical professionals and local agencies. "What's Inside?" participants explore the human body, discover fitness for the mind and body and learn safe practices to maintain their health while exploring a collection of five exhibits: "Brainworks," "Got Germs," "Café de Fun," "Open Wide" and "Operating Room." In addition, a mobile health cart and related educational programs and events complement the hands-on learning experience. As a result of "What's Inside," children and adults become more comfortable in a medical setting and have greater vocabulary skills to better communicate their own health issues.

Leadership Transition Project

A.M. Chisholm Museum and Duluth Children's Museum
Duluth, MN

Michael Garcia
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In preparation for the retirement of its long-time director, the museum created a transition plan that honors the organization's past while preparing for a healthy future. Transition steps include implementing a new management structure, preserving and organizing historical records, and building financial resources. The Leadership Transition Program provides a model for how small museums can manage change and create a seamless transition to new leadership.

Hands-on Child Centered Learning for Children 0-5

Kidzone Museum
Truckee, CA

Carol Meagher
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To counter the trend in public education that is driven by standards, which results in little to no time for children to play or act as a creative participant in learning, the museum has developed child centered learning exhibits and programs. The museum has partnerships with local Head Start and school districts, where children visit the museum and teachers are trained in the *Reggio Emilia* approach of early childhood education.