

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF PHOENIX

Childhood Dreams Built By You

It's About the Early Education of Children

The research findings can no longer be ignored. *Stimulation changes the very physiology of a young child's brain*, forever interlocking nature and nurture. Brain development takes place when parents, teachers and caregivers provide an environment that builds on and extends a child's own natural instincts and abilities. Quite simply, a supportive environment is crucial to the development of a responsible and responsive adult.



It's no wonder that during the last decade there has been such a tremendous amount of attention devoted to early education for young children. Most Americans believe that education starts at age five — with kindergarten. But children are learning from the moment they are born. In fact, current research proves that young children are much more likely to succeed in school and adulthood if they are exposed to high-quality learning experiences in the first five years of life.

The education of our young children is a priority in Arizona. Business, civic, education, religious and philanthropic leaders all conclude that investment in young children is in the long range interest of a healthy, vital society.

“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play *is* serious learning. Play is really the work of children.”

Fred (Mr.) Rogers
Public television icon and children's educator

Children Learn Through Play

We know that *children learn best through play*. Through play, children gain mastery over their bodies, discover the world and themselves, acquire new skills, and learn how people react and cope with complex and conflicting emotions. Play is essential for children to make sense of their world. A child's world can be as dull and limiting as an unlit closet, or it can be large and expansive, filled with delightfully rich sights, scents, textures, materials, sounds, people, emotions, and explorations of fascinating new experiences and perspectives. *Expanding a child's world expands learning!*

Leading researchers in the field have set out principles essential to child development and learning. Plans for the Children's Museum of Phoenix have been built upon these tenets.

Children learn through play Play provides opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and manipulation essential for constructing knowledge and contributes to the development of representational thought. During play, children examine and refine their learning in light of the feedback they receive from the environment and other people. It is through play that children develop their imaginations and creativity. During the primary grades, children's play becomes more rule-oriented and promotes the development of autonomy and cooperation which contributes to social, emotional, and intellectual growth.

Children construct knowledge Knowledge is constructed through active experimentation. Central to experimentation is making "constructive errors" that are necessary to mental development. Children need to form their own hypotheses and keep trying them out through mental actions and physical manipulations - observing what happens, comparing their findings, asking questions, and discovering answers - and adjust the model or alter the mental structures to account for the new information.

Children learn best when their physical needs are met and they feel psychologically safe and secure. Educators today call for active play and periods of quiet, restful activity. The environment will be physically safe, and experimentation and making mistakes is seen as a positive experience.

Children's interests and "need to know" motivate learning. Children have a need to make sense of their experiences. When we identify what intrigues a child and foster their skills to solve problems, their natural curiosity develops into a love of learning and confidence in their own ability to manage and affect the world around them.

A Children's Museum in Phoenix

Arizona is addressing its profound early childhood education needs in many ways — but one concept stands out as particularly intriguing. The time has come for the creation of a children's museum. And that's why plans to open the Children's Museum of Phoenix are now unfolding.

Children's Museums around the world have redefined the concept of a museum. On the outside it is the classic majestic and special place, while inside it holds magical things that inspire dreaming and exploration. A children's museum is a place to tinker and build magnetic cars, dance in hats and clothing from around the world, paint and sculpt, and make waterfalls, locks and dams.

“And what makes a children's museum different is that it is *for somebody* rather than *about something*...”

Michael Spock

It is where learning is a joy. A place where babies, children, and adults delight in playing together with interactive exhibits to learn about the world. These experiences are universal, regardless of heritage, language, or physical ability.



A place adults can enjoy as much as children. Where adults can take the time to sit and listen to all of their children's wonderful ideas. Where adults learn about how children think, grow, and learn about the world. A safe and comfortable place — where cultural differences are respected and celebrated.



Most of all, a children's museum is a place for learning. Across the nation, children's museums have rapidly grown to meet family needs for an educational, fun place to spend time together. Maybe that is why they are busier than any other type of cultural institution — and why the number of children's museums has doubled in the last decade to over 250, yet Phoenix, the fifth largest city in the country, is the

only major metropolitan area in the country without one.

The Children's Museum of Phoenix

The Children's Museum of Phoenix will engage the minds, muscles and imaginations of children... and the grownups who care about them. For children up to the age of ten it will foster a joy of learning and . . .

- ❖ Provide engaging projects, exhibits and programming for young children and their families
- ❖ Educate parents and caregivers about child development and parenting techniques
- ❖ Build cultural understanding, positive social interaction, and celebrate diversity
- ❖ Act as a gateway to other cultural institutions and community programs

Prepare Parents and Caregivers

The Children’s Museum of Phoenix will prepare parents and caregivers to better understand their children and their own role in developing their child’s potential. Museum educational staff will serve as role models for new parents. Museum education programs and materials will provide important parent/caregiver skills training that extend into the home, and collaborations will bring the resources of social service and health resource organizations into the museum where young families can benefit from a broad network of support. Visits to the Children’s Museum will help parents place their child’s development in context, and provide opportunities for them to observe a variety of parenting styles at a time when they are open and seeking this input. Many visitors will be grandparents – reflecting Arizona’s growing population of multi-generational households and its appeal as a retirement state. Bringing experiences based on current early childhood theory to these families will help them foster their young children to develop skills needed in our global community.

New Life for an Old Landmark

Initially a grassroots effort, the notion of a children’s museum in Phoenix caught on quickly. In 2001, Phoenix voters overwhelmingly approved \$10.5 million in bond financing to purchase and partially renovate the former Monroe School to serve as the new home of the Children’s Museum of Phoenix.



The Monroe School could not be in a more perfect location. It’s centrally located – at the corner of 7th Street and Van Buren – near downtown yet part of a residential neighborhood including other cultural organizations. Inside, the 65,000 square foot building is a combination of dramatic high spaces and smaller, more intimate rooms. It’s a perfect place for children of all abilities to safely explore.

Under an agreement with the City of Phoenix, the Children’s Museum will enhance the facility improvements, design and construct the exhibits, manage day-to-day operations and provide staffing. The city will own the building and provide major maintenance.

Planning and opening such a substantial community resource is no small undertaking. The museum’s board of directors is proud of its accomplishments. It has developed a solid business plan, and staff and volunteers have implemented demonstration projects and presented interactive activities to more than 230,000 people at almost 100 schools, festivals and events. The board is also proud of its fiscal responsibility. The organization has nothing but a clear record of audited annual financial statements and a solid balance sheet.

Within walking distance:

- Arizona Science Center
 - America West Arena
 - Heritage Square
 - Bank One Ballpark
 - Civic Plaza
 - Herberger Theater
 - Light Rail stop
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Experienced Leadership

In late 2004, the Children’s Museum of Phoenix named Deborah J. Gilpin to serve as its executive director. She has twenty years of experience in leadership of children’s museums and is considered an expert in the field.

The board is grateful for generous and visionary support it has received from many local foundations, corporations and philanthropic-minded individuals. Capacity-building grants have been provided by the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, the Arizona Community Foundation, Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, the Rodel Foundation, the Bruce T. Halle Family Foundation, the Arizona Commission for the Arts, the Lodestar Foundation, the Levine family, and the Stardust Foundation, among others.

In Partnership with Arizona State University and Others

A comprehensive early childhood education and care center will be developed and run by Arizona State University at the Children’s Museum of Phoenix. The center will offer preschool and kindergarten education and wrap-around full-day (7 a.m. to 6 p.m.) care. ASU is planning for classes of 15 three-year-olds, 15 four-year-olds and 20 five-year olds, for a total enrollment of 50 children.

The program will be bi-lingual, with the staff speaking English and Spanish. The families served will be diverse, with a combination of low-income children from Spanish speaking families in the neighborhood, children of ASU staff and students located at the downtown campus, and children of middle-class parents who work and live downtown.

The center will offer comprehensive services to young children: there will be a clinic onsite offering health screenings and social work services. This clinic will be staff and run by faculty members and interns from the ASU Schools of Social Work and Nursing.

The center will be integrated closely with the Children’s Museum, allowing opportunities for supporting and studying children’s learning in diverse settings, for research on children’s play and their engagement with exhibits and for professional preparation for working with young children outside of formal school settings. Museum staff will work collaboratively

Estimated Project Costs	
Purchase of Monroe School	\$5,000,000
Building renovations	9,500,000
Exhibits and equipment	3,950,000
Construction financing	<u>622,500</u>
Direct costs	\$19,072,500
Working capital	500,000
Startup costs through 2006/2007	2,650,000
Development costs	450,000
Contingency and other	<u>127,500</u>
Indirect costs	\$3,725,500
Total project costs	\$22,800,000
<i>Less city bond funding</i>	<i>[10,500,000]</i>
Funding needs	\$12,300,000

with ASU faculty and graduate students and with the Center’s teachers and young children to develop and test new exhibits. ASU students will intern in the museum as educational aides.

The 6,000 square foot center will include four classrooms, an indoor gym/large movement room, an outdoor play area, a large room for meetings with parents, staff and seminar classes, a kitchen, offices, bathrooms and the clinic for health and social work services. Lease fees paid by ASU to the Children’s Museum will help offset the museum’s annual operating expenses.

Additional partnerships. The Children’s Museum of Phoenix has already entered into discussions and, once opened, anticipates collaborative programming with Southwest Human Development, the Phoenix Public Library, the Arizona Museum of Youth, Free Arts and others.

Exhibit Design and Development

Exhibits have been developed through a thoughtful process combining visionary design and specific expertise from relevant fields with the unique needs of the Maricopa County population we will serve.

To create a successful and sustainable exhibit environment, the design process has had several phases. An initial comprehensive review of more than 30 children’s museums generated a compendium of the most successful exhibits and museums across the country. Simultaneously the exhibit design team was assembled to include expertise in learning (museum and non-museum), early childhood development, exhibit design and fabrication, museum operations, visual arts, preschool through university level teaching and learning, playground, graphic-, and universal design. Together this team developed physical, educational, social, and creative guidelines for the exhibits.

Open invitations to “community imagining sessions” resulted in hundreds of individuals sharing their hopes and dreams for the new environment. These sessions were held for the general public as well as identified groups, such as special needs educators, and staff of other local museums and social service agencies.

Armed with these local perspectives and the best practices of existing successful museums, the design team developed theme areas and specific exhibit plans. These exhibits, now in the schematic design phase, are rich in opportunity for all kinds of learners. They inspire the senses, and they are designed as a constantly evolving environment.

Opening 2008

Construction work on the Monroe School has begun and the Children’s Museum of Phoenix plans to open its doors to the public in 2008. Annual attendance is projected at 300,000 and the annual operating budget will be about \$3.0 million. Ongoing funding will come from earned sources (memberships, admissions and program fees), public and private grants, corporate sponsorships, and contributions. The conservative business plan projections rely on continued volunteer support and assistance.

Annual visitors:

- Children’s Museum of Phoenix (*proj*) 300,000
 - Arizona Science Center 300,000
 - Phoenix Art Museum 290,000
 - Desert Botanical Garden 250,000
 - Heard Museum 250,000
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Worthy of Philanthropic Investment

The opening of a children's museum in Phoenix has caught the attention of civic leaders because of the incredible benefits it will bring to this community:

- ❖ **School readiness.** School readiness depends on a child's curiosity, confidence, and social development. Successful learners are comfortable seeking assistance, able to get along with others, and interested in leveraging their knowledge and experiences to master new challenges.
- ❖ **Children hungry to know.** Childhood is the time for preparing minds to learn. At a time when Arizona's high school dropout rate is the second highest in the nation, and key indicators of children's well being rank near the bottom, Phoenix needs opportunities that enrich and expand the world of its young children. Children's museums open doors to a larger world of experiences that engage the minds, muscles and imaginations through play.
- ❖ **Informed parents and caregivers.** Confident parents capable of nurturing their child to his/her full potential.
- ❖ **A gateway.** For many families, the Children's Museum of Phoenix will be the first step into a broader world of cultural institutions and activities.
- ❖ **Preservation.** There could be no better or more fitting use of this significant landmark.
- ❖ **Connection.** Introduces families to a sense of civic engagement and connection to the world around them.
- ❖ **Values.** Time spent together in a children's museum is spent talking and sharing, and exploring ways of thinking about the world. This is how values are transferred from one generation to the next.
- ❖ **Destination.** An attraction for Arizona visitors and residents that brings greater vitality to the downtown area.

The *Childhood Dreams Built By You* Campaign

To complete the renovations, install quality exhibits and fund the startup of the museum, the board of directors is seeking \$12.3 million in gift commitments from individuals, foundations and corporations that share its commitment and dedication to the advancement of early childhood education. Gifts can be paid over a period of three to five years.

However, the *Childhood Dreams Built By You* campaign — a volunteer-led program to create broad philanthropic support for the project — will do much more than generate funding. The goals of the campaign are to:

- ❖ Bring to the attention of the public the critical importance of early childhood education.
- ❖ Advance the mission of the Children's Museum of Phoenix, by funding the creation of educational exhibits and programs to engage the minds, muscles and imagination of children and their families — while promoting cooperative interaction, fostering cultural understanding and enhancing parenting skills.

- ❖ Provide \$8.8 million through gifts paid over three to five years for additional renovations to the former Monroe School and exhibit design and fabrication.
- ❖ Provide \$2.6 million in funding for exhibit and operational planning, as well as funds for ramp up, training and start-up expenses prior to the opening of the museum in 2008.
- ❖ Provide \$500,000 for working capital, as well as funding for development costs and marketing.
- ❖ Build a base of at least 500 campaign donors who are likely to continue to support the museum with annual gifts to strengthen operations and conduct special projects.
- ❖ Build internal organizational capacity, institutional governance and volunteer engagement to insure continued growth of philanthropic support for the Children's Museum of Phoenix beyond the life of the campaign.

Robert G. Sarver and Jerry Colangelo of the Phoenix Suns chair the *Childhood Dreams Built By You* Campaign. Together, they have personally committed the lead gift of \$1.25 million to the campaign.

The campaign has raised \$4.5 million or close to one-third of its goal after completing the Leadership Gifts Phase (gifts from board members and campaign leaders). The Leadership Gifts phase secured 33 gifts and 100 percent participation from the current board, former board members and campaign leaders. These Leadership Gifts represent over \$2.8 million or 23 percent of the \$12.3 million campaign goal.

The Ron and Daron Barness Foundation made a gift of \$1 million. This gift was officially announced at the groundbreaking ceremony on April 8, 2006. At that time, the Barness' were named as the campaign's honorary chairs.



It's About Early Childhood Education and It's About You!

As you can see, this project is about the early education of children — education at a critical age when a small amount of investment can unlock enormous potential. Through thoughtful planning and the vision of Phoenix voters, all of the key elements are in place: A strong governance system, startup funding, a unique location, experienced management and inventive plans.

It is a powerful project. The outcomes for our region will be on a grand scale, yet it will touch young lives one family at a time.

At this unique moment in time, the directors of the Children’s Museum of Phoenix call on you — and everyone who has ever read a book, played a game, built a castle, crawled on the floor, made funny faces, blown bubbles or gazed quietly into the night with a child — to join in this effort. The Children’s Museum will only attain its full potential with the encouragement, talent, time and generous financial support of everyone who cares about kids.

The reasons to say “yes” are many. In fact, there are hundreds of thousands. And, on opening day in 2008, they will line up with anticipation on their faces and burst through the doors of the Children’s Museum of Phoenix for the very first time.

