



News for Immediate Release
DuPage Children's MUSEUM
IT'S A COMMUNITY EFFORT
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For additional information, please contact:

Lynne Jele, Marketing & Membership

Phone: (630) 637-8000 ext. 2600

ljjele@dupagechildrensmuseum.org

Early Learning: A Community Effort

Naperville, IL - Did you or do you have a fear of certain subjects in school? Studies show that many people do, and once a child becomes "math phobic" his or her confidence in all subject areas can suffer, which can affect school performance and career choices.

DuPage Children's Museum (DCM) understands that learning fundamental skills in the early years of a child's life are critical to later success. DCM places a high priority on helping children learn to succeed as they develop math and science abilities presented in a way that a child learns best, by helping the child develop a sense of numeracy, early estimation skills, problem solving and spatial awareness. This approach helps kids prepare to succeed in school and in life by helping them develop a fundamental understanding of math, science and the arts.

Children of all backgrounds who visit the Museum are learning in a unique environment designed to support the way they learn best. DuPage Children's Museum is all about early learning, whether it's helping children hone fine motor skills, strengthen estimation skills, think deeply, discover or solve challenges at their *own* pace. Repetition is *very* important for young children and can build early learning, so keeping membership pricing reasonable is also an important objective of the Museum, so that ALL young children have access to the resources there.

301 N. Washington Street, Naperville, IL 60540

www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org

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Page 1 of 3

Did you know that as early as elementary school, children may have already decided against a future in math or science, not because the subjects are too hard, but because they lose confidence in their problem-solving ability? According to Eric Knudsen, Ph.D., professor and chair of neurobiology at Stanford University Medical Center, “Early learning can have long lasting effects on the architecture of the brain.” There is increasing evidence that a child develops math sense and the confidence to approach difficult challenges before ever entering school. Often children who are very bright but learn in different ways fall by the wayside and write off math forever. Today, this is a widespread problem in all school districts for children of diverse backgrounds and one that has grown to national proportions, drawing the attention of policy makers and business leaders.

It takes the support of the community to help the youngest children develop a basic foundation in key subjects. The Museum has been developing successful, original and carefully researched exhibits and programs for children up to 10 years old for over 20 years. In 2006, DCM launched the Kindergarten Math Initiative which will serve over 6,000 young students this year; offers Aunty Math online web challenges and provides free access to the Museum for needy children through over 50 social service organizations that rely on the Museum for free admissions, ESL support and other programs for thousands of families each year.

Although the Museum is hugely popular, admissions and memberships only cover 60% of the total budget needed to operate the Museum. Funding for early learning is scarce and the Museum, a non-profit organization, must raise 40 cents of every dollar of its operating budget every year through donations and sponsorships. Community support from individuals and businesses is needed to help the Museum continue to help children learn to succeed so they are able to successfully address challenges, opportunities and problems in innovative ways throughout their lives.

Funding for projects in the Chicago area suburbs is especially scarce, even for a top cultural organization like the Museum, which is known both regionally and nationally for its expertise in early childhood development. The Museum’s ability to continue to help children gain fundamental skills depends on donations and sponsorships to raise \$1.7 million every year.

As the end of the year approaches, the Museum is asking everyone who cares about the children in our area to consider making a donation to help keep the Museum remain a valuable resource for young children and families. Donations in any amount are a tremendously important

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Page 2 of 3

investment for children now and will pay dividends in homes, our community and our businesses for many years to come as more and more children gain fundamentals for success.

Donations in any amount can be made in person at the Museum, by phone or online at www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org. Planned or deferred gifts, annuities, bequests and such are also accepted as Museum gifts that keep giving to the future of children. More information is available at www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org or by phone, at 630-637-8000 ext. 4550.

DUPAGE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM:

DuPage Children's Museum helps kids learn how to succeed. Throughout any given day, about 1000 visitors come through the Big Red Door of the Museum and engage in three floors of hands-on activities. It is a playful, fun environment where children 6 months to 10 years old and the important adults in their lives learn and play together in thoughtfully planned "neighborhoods", with exhibits and programs designed to promote skill development in math, science and the arts--to prepare for a future where curiosity, creative thinking, imaginative problem solving and learning skills will be needed to interact with technology that is yet to be invented, to solve problems we can't imagine and work in new kinds of jobs that don't exist today.

2007 is an Imagination Celebration of the importance of play for DuPage Children's Museum, a top Chicago area cultural attraction, celebrating 20 years as the place *where learning comes in to play*™! The Museum is a non-profit organization and depends on donations and sponsorships for over \$4 of every \$10 of its annual budget. Your media support helps us reach families and makes a difference in the lives of thousands of children in our community. **Thank you for all you do!**

Location: 301 N. Washington Street
Naperville, IL 60540

Phone: 630-637-8000

Hours* Monday: 9 am - 1 pm
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday: 9 am - 5 pm
Thursday: 9 am - 8 pm
Sunday: 12 - 5 pm
*Call for special seasonal hours.

General Admission: \$7.50 per person, ages one through 59.
\$6.50 per person, ages 60 and over.
Admission is never charged to shop the Explorer Store.
Free Parking. Wheelchair Accessible. Quick walk from Naperville Metra Station.

Annual Memberships: Several types of memberships and gift memberships are available. Please visit www.dupagechildrensmuseum.org or call **630-637-8000** for more information.

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