

Who

It all started in July of 2005 when a woman, her husband and her 2 and a half year old son went to a small Children's Museum in North Carolina. Her husband said, after hours of fun playing in the inventive play areas, looking at the clear descriptive designs on the walls and hanging from the ceilings and playing from area to area... "you could do this in our town."

You see the Mom had wanted to contribute to her community, with the skills and enthusiasm she has for children. Let's create a children's museum that is funded by admissions, underwriting from area businesses, grants and foundations for large projects.

The Vision

...of the *i play Children's Museum* is to support the Northern Virginia community in discovering play, creativity, and imagination through exploration of cultural, visual, musical, performance and literal Arts. What

We will be a place where children and their families can come and play with interactive exhibits, workshops and programs about the arts.

Possibly...

Grabbing some scarves and leaping across a floor painted with special dance steps, while hearing music from India.

Making a musical instrument out of found objects that strums like a guitar.

Walking into an art gallery that is displaying the construction steps to making a go-cart, like the ones you can drive in the parking lot. An unconventional art gallery that opens the mind to seeing how visual art is made from everyday materials. This art gallery will show the development of visual art – making in children for those first twelve years.

Learning how to make alphabets in many languages, feeling the letters, hearing the sounds of the letters or characters coming out of speakers.

Constructing a dramatic set to put on a performance, small scale – and performing it.

Speaking into a machine after you have heard the words and trying to say them faster than the machine.

Where

2 years of outreaching, planning, networking, learning, exploring other museums ~ building our capacity as a children's museum for the Washington DC metropolitan community.

Here we are in January 2008 with our plate full of opportunities. We are presenting our plan for the *i play Children's Museum* to three potential landowners this quarter. Our focus is to find safe property, donated or leased, of 25,000 ~ 40,000 square feet. It is important to have access for children and their families of all abilities and have available free parking, healthy food options, with lighting in parking lot for night-time events.

Why

The area we have been looking in is the Greater Springfield. There is a lack of resources for families to gather safely and have museum-quality educational play experiences offered to them in a modest price-range. This community needs a place where we focus on the children and their families and less on the objects we want them to see.

***i play Children's Museum* would like to offer a service of interactive, educational arts-based exhibits in a safe, visually inspiring, texturally gratifying, smells of foods from many lands, sounds drifting in the air and then when you leave, you can go break bread and share your experiences of the day with family and friends.**

You may have noticed in the news the data showing numerous schools, in the Greater Springfield area and the Mount Vernon area, having low income and receiving free and reduced lunch.

We chose this area of Northern Virginia because of its lack of educational resources available for children and their families.

We will offer support resources to all schools. Our intention is to be a venue for teachers of all schools private, public and home-schools, along with offering our facility to those learning to work with children. High school and college programs can create a liaison with us to work out an internship program.

When

Our intention is to open our facility in the fall of 2010.

How

2008 will be a year of:

- ~ gathering funds**
- ~ mastering design plan**
- ~ developing property**
- ~ maintaining relationships with children and their families**
- ~ creating an information network**
- ~ hiring staff**

Be a part of playing with *i play Children's museum* and donate your time and money to making this place a reality in the Greater Springfield Community for all of the Northern Virginia community.