



Neighborhood Outreach/Community Initiatives

The Children's Museum takes pride in its record of support for a wide variety of neighborhood and community initiatives. The museum works with neighborhood residents, civic leaders, law enforcement officers, local business representatives, and various associations to improve safety, decrease crime, attract and retain local businesses and community assets, and beautify the community.

Since 2004, the partnership has leveraged construction or rehabilitation of more than 35 homes to accommodate both new and existing neighborhood residents, demolished 40 vacant and abandoned properties, and provided home repair assistance to 80 homeowners. Habitat for Humanity is also a partner in the revitalization effort.

In 2011 the museum engaged in a similar partnership with Mapleton-Fall Creek Development Corporation to provide support for its housing redevelopment initiative.

The Mid-North Neighborhoods Quality of Life Plan

In 2009, the Local Initiative Support Corporation Indianapolis (LISC) selected The Children's Museum of Indianapolis as the convening organization to bring together neighborhood groups to draft and implement a Quality of Life Plan. The goal is to make the Mid-North Neighborhoods one of the best communities in Indianapolis in which to live, work, learn, play, visit, and grow. The plan addresses aesthetics, business, development, crime and safety, education, housing, senior advocacy, and youth engagement. Destination: Fall Creek, is an offshoot of the aesthetics area.

Six Mid-North neighborhoods—Crown Hill, Highland Vicinity, Historic Meridian Park, Mapleton-Fall Creek, Meridian Highland, and Watson-McCord—are partnering with The Children's Museum, Ivy Tech, and other stakeholders in executing the plan, which was developed with support from LISC and the museum.

In 2010, area residents and other stakeholders began outreach to members of the community, learning what they



New home construction in The Children's Museum District

Neighborhood Revitalization

Since 2001, The Children's Museum has maintained a \$3 million Neighborhood Improvement Fund for housing development, home repairs, and beautification initiatives.

In 2004, the museum adopted The Children's Museum District Plan, which calls for housing rehabilitation and new construction in a concentrated area near the museum. The Near North Development Corporation is a partner in the plan.



viewed as assets and strengths of their neighborhoods, and what they wanted to improve. These interviews led to a Visioning Summit in 2011 when community stakeholders collaborated to identify the issues, priorities, and a shared vision.

Following the summit, action teams developed goals, strategies, and action steps to be captured in the community-approved and directed Quality of Life Plan. The Mid-North Quality of Life Plan was unveiled during a celebration at the museum on Jan. 23, 2012.

The plan's goals are actionable within three to five years and a community organization is responsible for each goal. Through the process, the neighborhoods developed a workable plan and identified for funders a set of initiatives for potential investment.

Accessible to All

The Children's Museum endeavors to make its offerings accessible to all through a variety of free and reduced admission programs including:

- Free Days and First Thursdays—The museum offers free admission 16 times a year, including Target Free Family Nights on the first Thursday of each month, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Presidents Day, El Día de los Niños, and Christmas Eve.
- Foster Family Program—In collaboration with the Indiana Department of Child Services, the museum offers a free one-year membership to licensed Indiana foster parents and their families.
- Access Pass Program—The Children's Museum developed the Access Pass program, which allows qualifying low-income families to attend the museum for only \$1 per person per visit.

The Children's Museum Neighborhood Club

The Children's Museum Neighborhood Club offers free memberships to anyone living in the six Mid-North Neighborhoods, and there are now more than 700 Neighborhood Club members. Area residents also enjoy connecting with neighbors at the museum's free quarterly Neighborhood Nights.

Mentoring Youth

The Children's Museum has two ongoing programs that directly involve youth.

- StarPoint is an affordable, curriculum-based summer program for neighborhood youths.
- The Museum Apprentice Program (MAP) provides youths ages 13 to 18 with an exciting program that introduces them to the arts, sciences, and humanities in a real work environment.

Next in the Neighborhood

In addition to the work done to revitalize housing, the museum has also worked to reclaim brownfields and remove neighborhood eyesores.

Now The Children's Museum of Indianapolis is looking toward one of the greatest challenges facing both the museum and its neighborhood—the site of the former Winona Hospital, which was razed by the city in late 2011.

The City of Indianapolis engaged the museum to oversee redevelopment the four-acre site in a way that supports the museum and the neighborhood. In May 2012, The Whitsett Group was selected as developer. The completed site will include affordable housing and a museum green space.