

Impact Report 2021



Peoria PlayHouse
children's museum
A Peoria Park District Facility

Peoria**Parks**.org
#TheresMoreToExplore



Greetings from the PlayHouse

Dear Friends:

The past few years have been a roller coaster. The 12 months of 2021 in particular included five months during which the PlayHouse was closed to the public, an array of off-site and virtual programs, a staggered reopening, and the slow process of getting back to “normal.” Thank you to all the families who joined us and supported us during this journey. We heard from so many of you that we wanted to share your voices in telling the story of 2021.

During the first half of 2021, the PlayHouse offered 67 virtual and off-site programs serving over 500 children. These included cooking classes, maker classes, play-based events for young children, and more. Participants told us:

My daughter had so much fun. She looked forward to it all day and in the middle of the class she said, “This is so much fun! When can we do another class?”

I liked [the Virtual Circuitry Field Trip] because everything came prepackaged and the video was very self-explanatory. The kids loved helping each other and finding different ways to make things work. The self-exploration time making their house was very fun to watch and to see how they tried different things to make it finally work. Some kids said it was the best thing we did all year.

In late Spring 2021 the State of Illinois changed museum guidelines to allow children’s museums to reopen, and we announced a May 28th opening date. One visitor wrote:

My 3 year old son has been asking almost daily since Covid started when the PlayHouse will open! We definitely plan to come back... not sure how often, but based on the new guidelines, whenever we can get a time slot every few weeks, we will be there!





From May 28-December 31, 2021, despite the challenges of COVID, over 17,000 visitors enjoyed playing at the PlayHouse. They told us:

After a first visit to the PlayHouse with her 16 month old, one mother wrote us, "I think this is the most fun Ari has ever had. . . . We went for almost two hours and definitely could have stayed longer."

In September, a family visited the PlayHouse for the first time. When they rounded the corner on the stairs to the lower level and saw the water table, the young girl exclaimed, "Whooooaaa. . . This is a miracle!"

At 4pm one day a mother told her 3 year old son that the museum was closing so that staff could clean, sleep, etc. Her son replied, "No they can't leave because I'll never leave! I would live here and stay forever!"

We are grateful to all our members and visitors who remained a part of the PlayHouse community and helped us through 2021. We love playing with you, in the PlayHouse and beyond!

Reflecting on the past year is particularly poignant for me this year, as June 2022 is my last month at the Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum. Over the past seven years I have seen the PlayHouse grow from infancy, and watched staff figure out how to facilitate play and creative experiences, keep the museum and all its exhibits sparkling clean, grow close to the members who visit regularly, and put smiles on children's faces on a daily basis.

My time at the Peoria Park District has been a wonderful experience. I could not ask for a better place to work, or a more supportive environment. And I am so proud of the team here and the work they all do to engage children in exploring and creating through play. And I am incredibly grateful for the PlayHouse community: thank you all for everything you have done over the past seven years to help shape this phenomenal museum. I look forward to reading the 2022 Impact Report, and finding new ways to support the PlayHouse and this amazing community.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Shulman, Director
Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum

We focused on our mission, rather than our BUILDING

In 2020 and 2021, the PlayHouse was closed for a total of 15 months.
That's 442 days. That's approximately 2500 hours of lost play....

We froze all our memberships for the full 15 months, to ensure that everyone received their full year of member benefits, supporting the PlayHouse and being supported by our facility and team.

In order to continue to support and engage families, we launched PlayHouse Everywhere, which engaged families virtually and in alternate spaces all around Peoria.

This was a transformative experience for staff, helping us realize that the PlayHouse is bigger than our beautiful building. We have a commitment to achieving our mission for all children around our region, helping them to become explorers and creators of the world. That means offering open-ended play-based experiences to as many children and families, in as many spaces, as possible.

BY THE NUMBERS...

533 Children served through programs while the museum was closed (2021 only)

104 members donated their remainder of their membership to support the PlayHouse

442 days closed to the public (2020 and 2021)

67 Virtual and off-site programs (2021 only)

250k in lost membership revenue





Programs offered January through May 2021 included:

- Virtual and live outdoor weekly PlayDates for children ages 2-5
- Preschool Parties at Forest Park Nature Center for children ages 2-5
- Kappas for Kidz virtual storytimes, in partnership with the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity
- “Kappas in the Kitchen” Virtual Cooking Nights with Triple Dipple, Sugar, and Big Ev’s Bites
- KidTastic Kits for Kids, with 5 different themed sets each offering material for 3 activities, offered in partnership with ART Inc.
- Virtual Maker Workshops, including building with cardboard, creating simple machines, making prints, collaging Valentine’s Day cards, designing board games, and building leprechaun traps
- MLK Day Virtual Volunteer Opportunity during which participants created cards given to children at Children’s Hospital of Illinois
- Real Tools workshops offered in person at the Noble Center
- Mural Workshop in partnership with Big Picture Peoria

The 15 months our building was closed (5 of them in 2021) helped us redefine ourselves as a mission, not a building. The PlayHouse is not just a fun place to play: we are an organization that helps children become explorers and creators of the world anywhere they happen to be.



We reopened CAREFULLY, prioritizing community SAFETY

The PlayHouse reopened to the public on May 28, 2021, committed to both engaging children in play and ensuring the safety of our community. In order to do this, we worked closely with the Peoria City/County Health Department to create guidelines for safety. This included:

- Removing toys that were not easily cleanable
- Adding hand sanitizer stations throughout the building
- Conducting daily health checks for staff
- Selling tickets online in our initial open weeks, to monitor capacity and ensure the capacity for contact tracing
- Taking visitors' temperatures at the door
- Adding additional cleaning to our already-rigorous cleaning regimen, including cleaning all surfaces daily with an electrostatic sprayer and a food-safe cleaner that would not harm children if ingested
- Requiring visitors to wear masks while in the building, and dedicating significant staff energy to ensuring that masks were worn correctly



BY THE NUMBERS...

17,738 visitors to the PlayHouse building

8 staff members (who had been laid off) returned to work at the PlayHouse when the museum re-opened

\$7,625 spent on new toys that can be changed out and cleaned throughout the day



We PLANNED for the FUTURE

When the PlayHouse closed in 2020 we were in the final year of a 3 year strategic plan that launched in 2018. Not surprisingly, by Fall 2021, we felt we needed a new strategic plan to guide us over the next few years. To create the plan we talked to parents, community partners, staff, and Board and committee members. These conversations led us to create a plan that focused on making the PlayHouse more visible in our community, entitled “From Hidden Gem to Gem.”

“From Hidden Gem to Gem” KEY PRIORITIES:

1★

Identify and implement strategies for helping children become explorers and creators beyond the PlayHouse building. As part of this priority, staff are focusing on creating opportunities for visitors to play in Glen Oak Park, we are offering experiences around Peoria, and we are supporting partners throughout the region in creating open-ended play based experiences that help children become explorers and creators of the world.

2★

Actively engage new audiences through marketing, partnerships, and programming. In part through a new full-time marketing and community outreach position, the PlayHouse plans to focus in 2022 on ensuring that we reach as diverse an audience as possible to let them know what we offer. Our goal is to spend at least 25% of our marketing money and efforts on reaching underrepresented visitor groups. We are also focusing on better engaging the 8-12 year olds that are starting to age out of our offerings. In addition, we made plans for a DEI assessment, and we continue to work with our partner OSF HealthCare to ensure that children throughout our region have access to healthy play.

3★

Clarify and leverage the role of the PlayHouse within the Peoria Park District. We are proud to be a facility of the Peoria Park District. We believe that the PlayHouse is of value to the Park District not only as a building and place to play, but as a staff with educational expertise and a commitment to helping foster future creators and explorers of the world. Over the next few years we are committed to using our skills to benefit the Park District as a whole, while also ensuring that we don't duplicate work that is better done by our Park District colleagues.

BY THE NUMBERS...

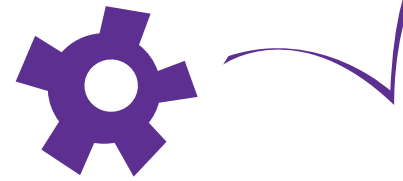
3 priorities

75 people, representing various a diversity of stakeholders, were invited to contribute to this plan

11 goals

135 action items for 2022

FINANCES



EXPENSES

	2019	2020	2021
Staff	\$440,585.11	\$215,822.00	\$253,156.56
Administrative Expenses	\$123,861.79	\$94,703.00	\$98,722.99
Supplies and Equipment	\$35,403.38	\$20,755.00	\$26,794.92
Facility and Exhibits	\$40,228.83	\$14,356.00	\$22,430.13
Marketing and Promotion	\$27,514.26	\$7,494.00	\$22,609.56
Utilities	\$28,467.00	\$21,222.00	\$24,010.79
Fundraising	\$13,798.01	\$14,589.00	\$18,368.79
Total Expenses	\$709,858.38	\$388,941.00	\$466,093.74

REVENUE

	2019	2020	2021
Memberships	\$197,239.00	\$47,295.00	\$71,210.60
Admissions	\$180,101.00	\$31,384.00	\$68,326.00
Grants	\$89,876.13	\$57,086.00	\$164,791.00*
Events	\$71,494.47	\$62,830.00	\$46,249.50
Donations	\$59,451.60	\$64,980.00	\$57,928.60
Retail	\$46,681.61	\$16,088.00	\$22,077.60
Rentals	\$29,197.49	\$6,129.00	\$6,080.00
Park District Tax Revenue	\$7,305.08	\$98,386.00	\$23,142.60
Programming	\$28,512.00	\$4,763.00	\$6,288.00
Total Revenue	\$709,858.38	\$388,941.00	\$466,094.00

*A Federal Shuttered Venue Operating Grant accounts for \$121,755.95 of grant revenue



THANK YOU 2021 Supporters!

Thank you to all our supporters in 2021! We could not exist without you. Our corporate and foundation partnerships are something we value and are grateful to join forces to create a special and unique place for the children of Peoria. And to our individual donors, we thank you for showing your support and are humbled by your generosity.

Please inform us of any errors or omissions found by contacting us at PlayHouse@PeoriaParks.org or (309) 323-6900. Again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for being a part of the PlayHouse family!

Corporate and Foundation Partners

\$100 - \$999

Busey Bank
Crafted
Davis and Campbell
Growing Smiles Pediatric Dentistry
Illinois Central College
Illinois Eye Center
Komatsu
OSF HealthCare
Peoria Disposal Company
River City Construction
TMobile
UnityPoint
Williams Brothers Construction

\$1,000-\$4,999

Barton Family Foundation
Bob Lindsay Honda & Acura
Church Women's United
Communication Junction
Foster-Jacob Inc
Greater Peoria Economic Development Council
Just Kidz Dentistry
Oyler Real Estate
RLI Insurance Company

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Caterpillar Foundation
CEFCU
Junior League of Peoria
Monticello College Foundation
Roth Armstrong Hayes Foundation

Individual Supporters

\$50 - \$99

Jennifer Brady and Andrew Kelley
Katherine and Dirk DeDecker
Pamela Jean Gonigam
Jenna Hague
Susan Kelly
Katie Neidetcher
Michelle Nielsen Ott and Adam Ott
Lindsay Sherwood
Bonnie Urquhart
Leslie Vonderhaar and Blake Kennedy

\$100 - \$499

Gregory Arnett
Anne and David Bartolo
Jo Anne Barton
Valerie and Brandon Blee
Lisa and Bruce Brown
Beth and Andrew Bussan
Eric Bystrom
Linda Chasteen
Thembi Conner-Garcia
Lynzi Hostetler and Ethan Wise
Gleissner Family
Jeffrey Gress
Lawrence Haynes

\$100 - \$499, continued..

Judy and Richard Helm
Nathaniel Herz
Mary Johnson
Barb and Jim Kane
Laura Kumin and Kevin Mulshine
Meredith and Evan Lagouros
Ellen and Roy McRae
Cisty and Doug Mills
Alyssa Moore
Corrine and Joey Olson
Diane O'Malley
Emily and Bart Pieper
Henry and Felix Pieper
Monica and Stewart Regnier
Anni Reinking
Kristen Schick
Jessica and Jay Scholl
Laura Schussele
Rebecca Shulman
Brooke Spellman and Patrick Urich
Robin Tandeski
Margaret Hanley and Greg Tomlins
Alissa Williams
Janay and Jerry Yotter

\$500 - \$999

Christina and Matt Dean
Elizabeth Gualandri
Monica and Matt Hendrickson
Lisa and Gino Plantamura
Christine and James Sinclair
Janâ and Jeff Stevens

\$1,000+

Chandrika and Ashvin Babu
Colleen and Paul DiGiallonardo
Cynthia Duley
Sharon Holling
Sheryl Cohen and Michael Bork
Robin Robins
Holly Shulman
Jamie and Joshua Smith
Christa Spates-Bell
Jane Velazquez



2021 Board Members

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE MEMBERS OF OUR ADVISORY BOARD for giving their time, talent, and treasure to the PlayHouse. The expertise and guidance they provide helps us keep our mission and vision alive so that we can continue to provide children with the tools and inspiration they need to be explorers and creators of the world.

PlayHouse Advisory Board

Laura Gleissner, Chair
 PNC

Emily Cahill
 Peoria Park District

Dr. Lindsey Ma
 Peoria Women's Health

Janâ Stevens
 CEFCU

Jay Scholl, Vice Chair
 Davis and Campbell, LLC

Abbey Cook
 Communication Junction

Ashley Miller
 National Labor Relations Board

Andrea Tortora
 Junior League of Peoria

Greg Tomlins, Treasurer
 Caterpillar, Inc.

Christina Dean
 RLI

Lisa Plantamura
 Unity Point Health-Methodist

Janay Yotter
 Caterpillar, Inc.

Alissa Williams, Secretary
 Morton Public Library

Colleen DiGiallonardo
 Community Volunteer

Joshua Smith
 Morris, Dluski & Smith, LLC

Ashvin Babu
 Surya Technologies

Dr. Terry Ho
 OSF Medical Group –
 Center for Health Pediatrics

Christa Spates-Bell
 Just Kidz Dentistry

