



Strategic Plan 2022-2025

London Children's Museum



PREFACE

Recognizing Indigenous land, knowledge, and diversity.

The London Children's Museum is a settler organization situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lunaapeewak, and Attawandaron peoples. Today, the First Nations communities of this area include the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, Munsee-Delaware Nation, and a growing urban Indigenous population.

As both a museum and educational institution, the London Children's Museum has benefited from Indigenous and Inuit traditional knowledge and material culture. From physical artifacts to knowledge and practice, the London Children's Museum recognizes the many ways in which Indigenous excellence has informed exhibits and programs over our organization's 45-year history.

The London Children's Museum honours the heritage, diversity, and contributions of all the Original Peoples of Turtle Island. We acknowledge and celebrate traditional Anishinaabe teachings on children and childhood, specifically, the understanding that every child is unique, sacred, and entitled to the Good Life.

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CONTEXT

A new home, a new future.

In 2018, the London Children's Museum enthusiastically announced the location of our future home - 100 Kellogg Lane. This multi-use redevelopment in the heart of Old East Village will offer London Children's Museum visitors over 35,000 square feet of open concept space, an accessible floor plan, 21-foot ceilings, and ample parking. This historic building will feature eight immersive exhibits, designed with input from community organizations, educators, and over 500 children and families.

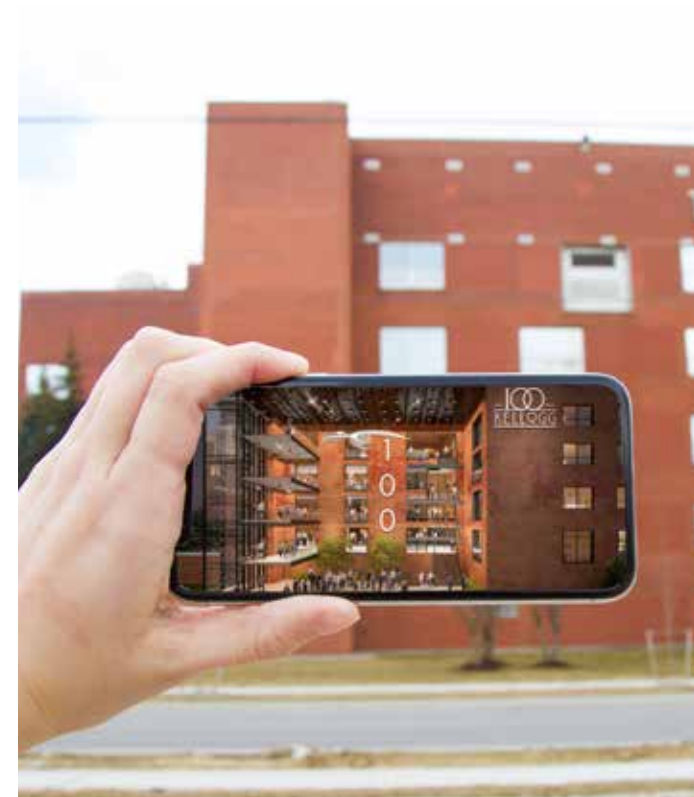
Working alongside Gyroscope Inc., Cornerstone Architecture, Reich & Petch, Skolnick Architecture & Design Partnership, and michael + clark construction, the London Children's Museum completed detailed exhibit design and architectural planning. Construction on this space was set to begin in late 2020. Then, in March 2020, everything stopped.

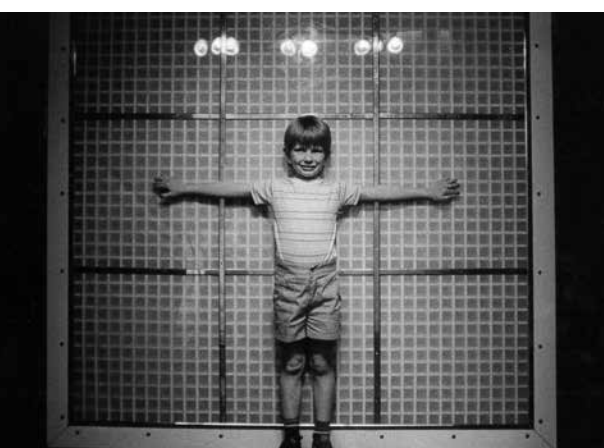
For two years, we watched as COVID-19 dramatically impacted the health, financial well-being, and future of families, organizations, and businesses in our communities. The London Children's Museum was no exception. This period was characterized by unpredictability, endless questions, and even doubt.

Alongside the pandemic, our communities have been called to reckon with widening economic inequities, racial injustice, and urgent calls for Truth and Reconciliation. In some ways, this great pause created time and space for re-evaluation. It has provided our communities the opportunity to rebuild around the values of kindness, inclusion, and accessibility.

It is *not in spite of*, but *because of* this cultural context that our work at the London Children's Museum continues. The new London Children's Museum will be a safe and welcoming a space that serves *all* children and families. It will act as a community hub, where children share ideas, perspectives, and experiences. It will celebrate the inherent competence and curiosity of every child.

Our staff and Board remain steadfast in our commitment to bringing the community's vision for the new London Children's Museum to life. Now, more than ever, we understand play is essential to every child's healthy growth and development.





HISTORY

Carol's legacy and our community's story.

In 1973, Londoner Carol Johnston travelled with her family to the Boston Children's Museum. There, they were thrilled to discover a museum unlike any other; an engaging space, full of laughter and hands-on learning. Carol, a teacher herself, watched as her children transformed into astronauts, engineers, and artists. Carol became convinced this was the best way for children to learn.

Carol returned home with a vision. Children in her city would have a museum of their own! By 1975, a group of forward-thinking educators, leaders, and volunteers had been assembled to test museum ideas in parks and garages.

With a wealth of grit and determination, the London Children's Museum's first home was secured at One Dundas Place. Quickly outgrowing this space, the London Children's Museum team embarked on a fundraising campaign. With the help of donors, volunteers, and community leaders, an old school on Wharncliffe Road South was transformed into the London Children's Museum's new home.

Over the next 45 years, the London Children's Museum evolved to house dozens of exhibits, hundreds of education programs, 7,000 artifacts, and more than 2 million visitors.

By 2014, a new dream was formed. It was clear that the needs of current children, families, and the London community could no longer be met in the London Children's Museum's current space. Supported by community organizations, educators, and visitors, the London Children's Museum began to envision a new home, full of accessible and immersive exhibits, designed to ignite children's wonder and curiosity.

In 2021, the London Children's Museum lost its best friend and founder in her 89th year. Over the decades, Carol's passion for education did not wane. An active Board Member until her passing, Carol continued to make meaningful contributions and shape the vision for the new London Children's Museum, under construction at 100 Kellogg Lane. It is in her honour that this work continues.



VISION

A community where children's voices are honoured, play is valued, and lives are transformed by a love of learning.

MISSION

The London Children's Museum curates powerful play experiences through immersive environments, authentic materials, and meaningful relationships. As a champion for children, we advocate for their unique perspectives, contributions, and ways of learning.

VALUES

Listen Closely. We listen to our community and prioritize children's voices as the primary consideration in our decision making.

Stay Curious. We encourage wonder, discovery, and creativity, empowering individuals to take charge of their own learning.

Include Everyone. We ensure equitable access to play through collaboration with community partners, and the continuous evaluation of our programs and services. We foster a sense of belonging by building a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Be Awesome. We acknowledge the innate strength, competence, and capability of each person. We value diverse perspectives and encourage people to be their authentic selves.

Be Helpful. We recognize and respond to the needs of those around us, both inside our walls and out in our community.

Dream Big. We celebrate innovative ideas, risk taking, and continuous growth. We challenge ourselves and others to reimagine possibilities.

Have Fun. We share in the inherent joy of play.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1.

We commit to equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

Objectives

1. We intentionally build relationships and seek continuous feedback to inform equitable policies, practices, and decision making.
2. We create equitable access to play opportunities by delivering our services where they are needed most, both inside our walls and out in our community.
3. We actively participate in reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and communities.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2.

Through advocacy and awareness, we influence the way the community views, values, and respects children and play.

Objectives

1. We communicate and tell stories that demonstrate the value of the London Children's Museum in our community.
2. We amplify children's voices and extend our values into the community.
3. We are an active leader in immersive play experiences and community-informed decision making.
We cultivate deep cross-sector partnerships to best serve all children and families and address critical social issues affecting them.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3.

We are a responsible and sustainable organization.

Objectives

1. We engage staff, volunteers, and donors in a culture of philanthropy, deepening relationships through stewardship.
2. We engage in continuous evaluation and improvement of our exhibits, programs, services, policies, and procedures.
3. We build strategic collaborations with business, government, non-profit organizations, community groups, and educational institutions that support both partners' goals.
4. We consider our environmental impact in our decision making.





Children's MUSEUM

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