



Children *today*

USING OUR MISSION TO GUIDE US

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

The mission of Children Today is to provide community-based services to children and families facing homelessness, fostering long-term stability and success.

VISION

Our vision is that all children under age six will have a safe, nurturing environment where they can spend their days playing, learning and growing, while their parents take steps toward stability.



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BOARD PRESIDENT



Joshua Lowenthal

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dora Jacildo

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Like all non-profits, Children Today must carefully navigate the current economic downturn. In order for a non-profit organization to remain viable during this recession, it must have clear and convincing goals and tactics, grounded in a central mission that reflects the needs and priorities of the community. Our mission – to provide community-based services to children and families facing homelessness, fostering long-term stability and success – reflects critical and universal needs; namely housing stability and the care and nurturance of children during the earliest years of childhood. We employ the following tactics, developed through careful research and with the input of board, staff, and experts in the fields of health, mental health, child development, education, and social services, to achieve our mission.

Tactic #1: Through the Play House programs, Children Today provides developmentally appropriate, high quality child care and preschool services to children experiencing homelessness. *Is this tactic appropriate?* The design of The Play House programs is informed by best practices in the fields of child development and early care and education. Accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) reflects the standard of excellence we have achieved. *Is this tactic needed?* It has long been conventional wisdom that children in Early Childhood Development (ECD) programs are better prepared to be successful in later years, and research on the ECD field bears that out. A study by the Economic Policy Institute entitled *Exceptional Returns – Economic, Fiscal, and Social Benefits of Investment in Early Childhood Development* noted significant benefits associated with ECD programs to include: stronger verbal and mathematical skills; reduced grade retention and higher graduation rates, higher employment and earnings, better health outcomes, less welfare dependency, and lower crime rates.

Tactic #2: Children Today provides therapeutic support and resources to families struggling with the traumatic effects of homelessness. *Is this tactic appropriate?* The best child development and early care and education programs understand the social and cultural makeup of their customers, and are responsive to their unique needs, interests, and challenges. Children Today couldn't run effective child development programs without an integrated health and mental health

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

component that addresses the physical, emotional, and behavioral challenges associated with the trauma of homelessness. *Is this tactic needed?* Nearly 20% of children who are homeless between the ages of three and six will have serious emotional problems requiring professional intervention. Children experiencing homelessness are also physically impacted by homelessness. They are sick four times more often than housed children, showing a significant increase in respiratory infections, ear infections, gastrointestinal problems, and asthma.

Tactic #3: Through the Play House programs, Children Today provides crucial child care and preschool services, freeing parents to focus on housing and financial stability. *Is this tactic appropriate?* Children Today is a founding member of the Long Beach Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Program, the City of Long Beach's principal resource for helping homeless residents. Children Today works with numerous partners who provide a range of services designed to help families get back on their feet. *Is this tactic needed?* Families experiencing homelessness make up approximately 34% of the overall homeless population in the U.S. In Long Beach, thousands of families struggle to overcome the obstacles to housing and financial stability every year.

Children Today's mission reflects our core beliefs and values about what's best for children and families. Ensuring that all members of the Children Today team believe in the mission, and understand their responsibilities in carrying it out is integral to the organization's success. Program staff must be skilled at translating the mission into their daily interactions with families in order to provide the best possible care. The management team and board of directors must understand how to best support the program staff, how to steward the organization as it grows, and how to position Children Today as a compelling organization that is worthy of support and consideration as an advocate for the needs of children and families experiencing homelessness.



“Children Today’s mission reflects our core beliefs and values about what’s best for children and families.”

2008 YEAR IN REVIEW

IN 2008, CHILDREN TODAY:

- Expanded our board of directors. In 2008 we welcomed Masy Bunnell from Total Network Solutions and Marsha Naify from the Marshall Foundation as the newest members to our board of directors. These two women bring with them tremendous energy and resources and have become a dynamic part of the board of directors.
- Added to our executive staff. Miles Nevin joined Children Today as the Marketing and Public Relations Manager and Janice Toppen joined the team as the new Fiscal and Office Manager. Great additions to the organization, Miles and Janice have helped Children Today grow smartly and sustainably.
- Enjoyed higher visibility than ever receiving considerable media coverage from the Press Telegram, Long Beach Magazine, The District Weekly, The Grunion Gazette, The Long Beach Post and other print, radio and television outlets.
- Was recognized for excellence in the fields of early childhood education and social services. Executive Director Dora Jacildo was honored as a community hero by Safeco Insurance and awarded \$15,000 for Children Today. Former Children Today head teacher Janelle Holt was awarded a Preschool Teacher of Year award by LA County and Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) for her work with children.
- Maintained government contracts through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and The California Department of Education's Child and Adult Care Food Program totaling nearly \$260,000.
- Was awarded a new contract by the California Department of Education's Child Development Division for our second child care facility, The Play House North, totaling nearly \$215,000. Received numerous foundation grants amounting to over \$100,000.
- Hosted and was the lucky beneficiary of several fundraising events with proceeds amounting to nearly \$270,000. Notable fundraisers for 2008 included: the 11th Annual Holiday Cheer held at The ARCO Center; the Halloween Party held at the Long Beach Yacht Club; the Academy Awards event held at Smooth's Sports Grille; and the Taste of the Coast event put on by Long Beach Kids Connection.



The Fire Department visits The Play House North

SERVICES TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The mission of Children Today is to provide community-based services to children and families facing homelessness, fostering long-term stability and success. In 2008, the staff at The Play House programs worked with other service providers and partnered with dozens of families to help them achieve stability.

FAMILIES SERVED IN 2008

- The Play House Programs served 75 families with 104 children.
- 70% of families had single heads of household, the vast majority of them women.
- Families identified themselves as 41% African-American; 26% Latino; 16% Multi-Racial; 10% Caucasian; and 7% American-Indian or Pacific Islander.
- Children stayed an average of 5 ½ months. The shortest stay was two days; the longest stay was 29 months.
- The average household income was \$700 per month, or \$8,400 per year.



SERVICES PROVIDED IN 2008

- The Play House Programs provided 7,415 days of unduplicated high quality child care and preschool services to 104 infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.
- Our cook prepared over 22,000 healthy meals and snacks.
- Staff distributed thousands of diapers, food, clothing, and hygiene products to families.
- Staff worked in collaboration with dozens of social service organizations to ensure seamless coordination of services to families.
- Children Today provided advocacy and support through community forums, presentations, and testimonials to highlight the unique needs and challenges of families who are homeless and have young children.



THE PLAY HOUSE WEST

Opened in 2000, The Play House West provides free emergency child care, preschool, and family support services to families experiencing homelessness in Long Beach. The Play House West has the capacity to care for 6 infants, 8 toddlers, and 18 preschoolers.



*Program Director
Danielle Holmes*

THE PLAY HOUSE NORTH

Opened in 2008, The Play House North provides free child care, preschool, and family support services to families who are currently homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. The Play House North can serve 8 toddlers and 24 preschoolers.



*Program Director
Gina Guffy*

THE PLAY HOUSE PROGRAMS

In order for children to thrive they need to be safe, have their physical needs met, and feel psychologically secure. Sadly, children who have experienced homelessness may at times confront a world that is unsafe, where their physical needs are not met, and where they are exposed to stressors that are far beyond their intellectual capacity to comprehend. That is why the Play House Programs take great care to create environments that address the unique circumstances of each child and promote social-emotional development, the basis of all learning.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD ENROLLS

When a child first starts coming to a Play House Program, he or she is assigned a primary caregiver. That teacher is responsible for ensuring that the child's social, emotional, physical, and educational needs are met. Within the first few weeks of enrollment an individualized curriculum plan is developed based on the child's unique history and interests. During this time, the primary caregiver is nurturing this new relationship to help that child develop a healthy and secure attachment with him or her. Attachment is a theory concerned with the bond that develops between child and caretaker that allows the child to build a sense of security in the world. Children who have experienced homelessness have a susceptibility to attachment disorders, either becoming overly trusting of any adult, or incapable of being separated from their parent.

PAUL AND HIS TEACHER ALISON

Paul is 4 years old. He and his younger brother attend The Play House North. When they first arrived, he and his family were living in a homeless shelter. At enrollment, Paul was assigned preschool teacher Alison as his primary caregiver. Paul and Alison have formed a strong bond. When he arrives at school, he runs into the classroom looking for her, eager to connect. They eat their meals together, and she makes sure his basic needs are met (toileting, hygiene, napping).

“In order for children to thrive, they need to be safe, have their physical needs met, and feel psychologically secure.”

THE PLAY HOUSE PROGRAMS

When he is playing or engaged in an activity, Alison observes him as a way to gather information on how to develop an educational plan that will help him meet developmental milestones. Through careful observation, it has been detected that Paul is very sensitive to sensory stimuli. He hears a trash truck blocks away, he enjoys sensory/tactile activities, and he rubs and touches things often. Because of this sensitivity, Paul has difficulty if the environment is overly stimulating (too loud, too bright, too many options). Paul also struggles when there are unexpected changes to his routine. Alison and the other teachers respond to his individual needs by making sure he has access to plenty of small group activities, by offering one-on-one interactions, and by giving him specific tasks or responsibilities that not only allow him to focus in on something, but also make him feel proud to contribute. And, whenever possible, teachers give Paul plenty of notice if there is to be change in his regular routine.

In the dramatic play area, Paul has dressed up as a police officer. While playing, he often checks in with Alison. He reconnects by touching her, hugging her, and asking her to play. Alison responds with mutual attention, taking his interests and conversation seriously:

Paul: "Ali, I'm gonna take you to jail."

Alison: "I don't want to go to jail, though!"

Paul: "You're just gonna go for 2 hours and that's it."

Alison: "That's a long time. What did I do, Paul?"

Paul: "Nothing. Just don't let it happen again."

Paul will be starting kindergarten next September. Until then Alison will help Paul build the skills he needs to be socially and academically successful. For now, her priority is making sure Paul receives all the love and support he needs to feel rooted at The Play House North.

"... Alison will help Paul build the skills he needs to be socially and academically successful."



THE VASQUEZ FAMILY

The Vasquez family was among the first to enroll in The Play House North when we opened our doors in February, 2008. Big brother Noah stayed in the program until kindergarten and little sister Claire stayed with us until the family moved out of town. According to mom Samantha, the family is happy and settled in their new life.



FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

In November 2007, Samantha Vasquez lost her job. One month later her husband Frankie lost his job. What came next was the startling reality of becoming homeless, living in a shelter, and wondering how they would feed their children – five year old Noah and two year old Claire. Because of Children Today, Samantha and Frankie were able to find jobs and an apartment while their children were well cared for. The children are safe, happy, and fortunate to receive the quality education that will continue to prepare them for a life of success.

Samantha's priority was never allowing her children to feel the sorrow and worry of being homeless. She credits Children Today with being her family's partner and advocate, and wrote this poem to communicate her appreciation for a program that has stood by her side during trying times.

Giving Thanks...

Jobs are lost
And homes are gone
As parents, we must
Still be strong.
Children need not
Know our plight
They deserve
Sound sleep at night.

In the morning when
When we rise
And our little angels
Open their eyes,
May they have a
Warm safe place to go
Where the stress of the day
They'll never know.

Where values are taught
And lessons are learned
Respect is given and
Respect is earned
Bellies full and
Talents molded,
Bad behavior
Never scolded.

Loving hugs and
Hands to hold
Circle time where
Stories are told.
A place where the innocent
Know no sorrow
Children Today
Brings a brighter tomorrow.

By Samantha Vasquez

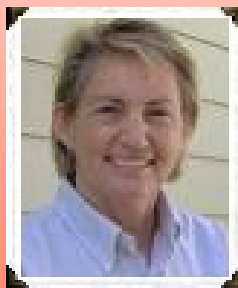
“Samantha's priority was never allowing her children to feel the sorrow and worry of being homeless.”

MARSHA NAIFY

Children Today spotlights board member Marsha Naify for her generosity, leadership and support.

Currently, Ms. Naify runs a real estate investment and management company. Prior to this she worked in the retail hospitality market, including a stint as owner of the Long Beach Hot Java coffee house. She spent 15 years working with United Artist Theaters – the company founded by her father – in advertising, film booking, and operations.

Ms. Naify lives in Long Beach with her spouse Ana Pinheiro. Together they are restoring a 1920's home in the historic Bluff Park District, which will become their new home upon completion.



Board Member
Marsha Naify

CONTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHT

For non-profits, organizational stability depends on sound advice and visionary leadership from members of the board. For Children Today, this is achieved with the help of Marsha Naify – an avid community servant and accomplished businesswoman who joined our cause in 2007.

Children Today is just one of many of Ms. Naify's passions. A lifelong owner and trainer of thoroughbred horses, Ms. Naify currently serves as the first female board chair of the Thoroughbred Owners of California, a non-profit organization mandated by the state to represent the interests of over 10,000 thoroughbred owners. She recently led efforts to establish the California Retirement Management Account (CARMA), which funds the care of injured and retired thoroughbreds in California. Locally, Ms. Naify served as president of the Lambda Democratic Club for three years and helped organize the AIDS Walk of Long Beach. She also serves as president of the Marshall Foundation named after her late father, Marshall Naify. The Marshall Foundation funds worthy children's rights, human rights, and animal causes globally.

It is her commitment to the Marshall Foundation, her service to the board of Children Today, and her leadership in recruiting outside community interest that places Marsha Naify onto our 2008 Contributor Spotlight. She leads our Eco House Steering Committee – a group charged with finding, purchasing, and developing property in Long Beach in order to expand Children Today's reach by opening a third facility; the first we will own outright. Ms. Naify's vision is a marriage of business and passion. To her, Children Today should think like a business and own property in order to ensure its long-term stability. It should do so by addressing a growing need – combating the effects of homelessness on young children – while making a smart investment. In spearheading this project, Ms. Naify and the Marshall Foundation awarded \$1 million to initiate the Eco House development process. However, just as beneficial as her financial support are her passion, business acumen, and experience.

“It is her commitment to the Marshall Foundation, her service to the board of Children Today, and her leadership in recruiting outside community interest that places Marsha Naify onto our 2008 Contributor Spotlight.”

FUTURE PLANS



In early 2008, Children Today marked a major accomplishment when The Play House West achieved accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), making it one of three programs of its kind worldwide to receive this honor. Between 2009 and 2010, The Play House North will conduct the 18-month self study and subsequent application process to achieve accreditation as well. Recognition from NAEYC is important for Children Today as a provider of early care and education, as it signifies the quality of our teaching staff and the philosophy used in nurturing and educating young children.

CAPACITY EXPANSION

Children Today is committed to the goal of procuring property and developing a third child development center in Long Beach. Tentatively named The Eco House, this expansion will increase our capacity by serving an additional 100 children and families in need. The board of directors and staff continue to work closely in researching potential properties and developing preliminary plans to sustain the facility long term.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.childrentoday.org

DONATIONS IN 2008

Children Today couldn't operate without the involvement of our generous donors. Thank you.

Individuals

\$1-\$100

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Yuhwei Yang

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Kevin Peterson

\$5,001-\$7,500

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Peter Leparulo

\$7,501-\$10,000

Richard Rucker

\$20,000-\$25,000

Lula Hatfield

\$35,000-\$40,000

John Wavell

**Businesses/
Corporations**

\$1-\$500

Artisan Coatings
Better Home Exteriors
Bianca's Historic Costumes
Bryant Investment Group

C'est Tres Chic
Coast Commercial Painting
Community Hospital of Long
Beach
Dave Schneider Fine Jewelry
Dreyfuss Construction
Ecliptic Enterprises
Entretec, Inc.
Freespirit Yoga
HMR Architects, AIA
Kerr Floors, Inc.
Lucky's Glass
Kroger
Momentous Insurance
Brokerage
Naples Rib Company
Pallmar & Company
Purple Berries
Rad Real Estate Management,
Inc.
Raghtin More, LLC
Seal Beach Center for Spiritual
Living
Sentry Control Systems
Shamrock Group, Inc.
Southwest Electric Contractors
Stumbaugh & Associates, Inc.
Superior Gypsum Enterprises,
Inc.
Tuppan Cabinets
Vilander Stone & Tile
Virginia Plaza Medical, LLC
World Trade Office Supplies
Worldwise Education

\$501-\$1,000

3777+ Partners
Able Engineering
Bantry Holdings
Cal Coast Plumbing
Eagle Flooring Solutions, Inc.
Lamb Fire Protection
Long Beach Area Convention &
Visitor's Bureau
MVP Energy, LLC

Select Heating & Air
Conditioning

\$1,001-\$2,500

ADJG, Inc.
Angeles Electric
Burton G. Bettingen Corp.
Free Conferencing Corp.
Har-bro Inc.
Pacific Retail Partners
Pyro-Comm Systems
Strategic Equity Group
United Building Services
Universal Protection Services

\$2,501-\$5,000

Long Beach City College
Molina Healthcare
Novatel Wireless
TABC, Inc.
Union Bank of California

\$5,001-\$10,000

Chacon Trucking
Citibank
Ernst & Young LLP
Kelty Co.
Port of Long Beach
Sound Energy Solutions
The Swig Company

\$15,000

Safeco Insurance Company

\$25,000

Wavell-Huber Wood Products

**Civic Groups/ Associations
\$1-\$1,000**

Alpert Jewish Community
Center
Artesia Christian Church
Better Balance Long Beach
Girlfriends LBC Inc.
Hot Springs Valley Property
Owner's Association

Hot Springs Valley Tennis Association
Long Beach Chamber of Commerce
Long Beach Gay & Lesbian Pride
Los Altos United Church
North Long Beach Women's Club
The Sandlarks Auxiliary

\$1,001-\$5,000

Cars 4 Causes
Club Latino Americano de Long Beach
Downtown Long Beach Associates
Rotary Club of Long Beach

\$10,000-\$15,000

Long Beach Kids Connection

Foundations

Bess J. Hodges Foundation
\$5,000
Boeing – Employees
Community Fund
\$2,000
Cherese Mari Lauhlere
Foundation
\$10,000
Disneyland Resort Cast
Community Fund
\$5,000
Earl B. & Loraine H. Miller
Foundation
\$25,000
George Hoag Family
Foundation
\$15,000
J.B. & Emily Van Nuys
Charities
\$7,500
The Marshall Foundation
\$47,787
Marisla Foundation
\$15,000
Pacific Life Foundation
\$5,000
Pimco Foundation
\$400
Union Pacific Foundation
\$10,000

Government Funding

California Department of
Education
\$23,791
Department of Housing &
Urban Development
\$258,542

Major In-Kind Contributors

Ampco Parking
Associated Group
AVIDD
Bovis Lend Lease
Ernst & Young, LLP
Graff Towne Center
Lee Hatter
Lance & Julie Jackson
Angela Loya
Matsunaga Landscape
Maintenance
Momentous Insurance
Brokerage
The Morales family
Lynda Muenzer
Otis Elevator
RGS Incorporated
Mike & Mary Ellen Roide
The Sandlarks Auxiliary
Yvette Severtson
Jim & Vickie Sullos
The Swig Company
TGIS Catering

Children Today has made every effort to include all donors who contributed in 2008. We apologize if your name was omitted or misspelled. We will continue to be as thorough as possible.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

ANNUAL SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS

Sources	For the year ending December 31,			
	2008	2007	2006	2005
Board Fees	4,471	7,571	9,687	-
Fundraising:				
Corporate Donations	30,108	35,198	20,162	8,916
Grants	120,620	210,900	119,500	80,742
Private Donations	119,524	74,198	89,208	68,109
Holiday Cheer	243,146	214,584	192,438	173,624
Other	71,774	26,983	20,794	12,991
Total Fundraising:	589,643	561,863	442,102	344,382
Government Funding:				
HUD SHP	258,542	425,367	246,557	242,132
LA County, 4 th District	-	48,000	-	-
California CACFP	25,781	18,506	22,630	20,673
Total Government Funding:	284,323	491,873	269,187	262,805
Other Income	10,076	7,389	922	172
Total Sources	884,042	1,068,696	721,898	607,359

Uses	2008	2007	2006	2005
Children Today Corp.	246,027	167,393	103,827	71,827
Programs:				
Play House West:				
Support/Supplies	45,547	79,802	67,959	46,286
Personnel	372,793	383,044	351,129	333,418
Total PHW	418,340	462,846	419,088	379,704
Play House North:				
Support/Supplies	78,029	29,907	-	-
Personnel	176,431	11,038	-	-
Total PHW	254,460	40,945	0	0
Total Uses	918,827	671,184	536,734	483,511
Excess source of funds	-34,785	397,512	185,164	123,848

Statement of Financial Position December 31,

	2008	2007	2006	2005
Cash	733,479	739,006	470,069	284,620
Government Receivables	168,137	167,567	55,423	74,184
Other Current Assets	3,809	8,679	4,024	146
Furniture & Equipment	42,846	58,046	55,902	14,997
Total Assets	948,271	973,298	585,418	373,947
Total Equity	948,271	973,298	585,418	373,947

BOARD OF DIRECTORS/ADVISORS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2008 - 2009

Josh Lowenthal – President
Telejunctions

Theresa Bixby – Vice President
Co-Founder

Cory Kristoff – Vice President
The Swig Company

Justine Hunter – Treasurer
Moss Adams, LLP

Christine Lorenzetti - Secretary
Senn-Delaney Leadership

Chimene Armstrong
Community Liaison

Masy Bunnell
Total Network Solutions

Byron Breland, PhD - 2009
Long Beach City College

Alex Cherin
Port of Long Beach

Michael Chun - 2009
Certified Public Accountant

Robert Garcia
Long Beach City Council

Marie Morales
Community Liaison

Marsha Naify
The Marshall Foundation

Marisa Semense
LB Community Action Partnership

John Walsh
TABC, Inc.

Ex-Officio
Dora Jacildo
Executive Director

Natalie Ernst
Sandlarks Auxiliary

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Becky Blair

Susan Collida

Drake Cruz

Tracy Cunningham

Dave Erickson

Diana Fisk

Steve Goodling

Martin Howard

Julie Jackson

Carl Kemp

Greg Kight

Jeff Klaus

Gary Lamb

John Morris

Cara Mullio

Sharon Piercecchi

Mary Ellen Roide

Steve Sheldon

John Thomas

Brian Ulaszewski

Erin Vince

A.J. Yager

PROGRAM ADVISORY MEMBERS

Ruth Beaglehole

Patrick Burkhardt

Leslie Larsen

LeAnn Mora

Jyotsna Pattnaik, PhD

Kyrie Sankaran, PhD

Gregory Uba

CHILDREN TODAY STAFF MEMBERS

STAFF MEMBERS

Children Today Personnel

Dora Jacildo
Executive Director

Elia Rocha
Grants & Contracts Manager

Janice Toppen
Fiscal & Office Manager

Play House Personnel

Reyna Gudino
Cook

Lisa Taub
Child & Family Counselor

Play House North Personnel

Gina Guffy
Program Director

Melissa Jansen
Toddler Associate

Melissa Noel
Floater

Annie Ocampo
Preschool Teacher

Alison Pico
Preschool Teacher

Kea Sao
Lead Toddler Teacher

Daniela Troya
Lead Preschool Teacher

Play House West Personnel

Danielle Holmes
Program Director

Rachel Gutierrez
Floater

Angelica Moreno
Toddler Teacher

Annastacia Patton
Infant Teacher

Laura Reyna
Lead Infant/Toddler Teacher

Araceli Salcido
Toddler Teacher

Margaret Valentine
Preschool Teacher

Alexis Vazquez
Preschool Teacher

Marisela Villalobos
Lead Preschool Teacher

