

PRESS KIT

FOREVER CURIOUS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM



**Children's Museums bring
a world of possibilities
to families who want
the best for their
children**

Mission

Forever Curious Children's Museum encourages children, of all ages and abilities, to experience hands on learning by offering safe, fun, inviting exhibits and programs.

Statement of Values

- Rural families and schools deserve the same educational advantages that children's museums provide.
- Recognize and respect that play is essential to the healthy development of a child; all children deserve a chance to play no matter what.
- Create a strong sense of wonder, awe and inspiration in every person that interacts with us.
- Create a welcoming environment that provides opportunities for exploration, communication and social interaction.
- Create exhibits that encourage choices, problem solving and discovery.



Educational Philosophy

The Forever Curious Children's Museum (FCCM) echo's the belief of educators' world wide that play is essential to the healthy development of a child. In order to succeed in an ever-changing world, children need to develop habits of inquiry that will last a lifetime.

Of the 350 children's museum's established worldwide the majority of them are located in urban areas. The FCCM strongly believe that our rural and low-income families deserve the same opportunities that many urban families, schools, and day-care providers have on a daily basis within close approximation of their homes and schools.

The FCCM is a dynamic educational setting where all types of informal learning occur, because children, like adults, have different ways of acquiring knowledge. We provide culturally rich programs to increase the chance of school success and positive family experiences. Our exhibits encourage choices, problem solving and discovery. Our facility provides a welcoming environment that provides opportunities for exploration, communication and social interaction.

The FCCM is a place where learning is more than an education – it's fun and entertaining!



History of the Museum

The journey began in 1999 by a “stay at home mom” that had an idea. Mary Cone Kasprzyk’s love and passion for children and family values directed her down the path of developing a hands-on educational children’s museum. Inspired in 1999 by events in her life, she made a personal commitment to give back to the community that her family loved and dedicated their lives to. She dreamed of creating a facility that would provide the same opportunities and advantages for our rural families that children’s museums provide.

Mary completed her independent research late August of 2000. A public announcement was made on Sept. 30 and a meeting was arranged for Oct. 17, 2000. A board of directors was formed as a result of this gathering. An informal survey and feasibility study was conducted that indicated that the community was in full support of the project. The wheels were set in motion for the development of what was then known as the Allegan County Children’s Museum.

The development of the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization began on Jan. 22, 2001 acquiring its non-profit status one year later. There were several brick hurdles that tried to halt the process throughout the early development stage. The tragedy of Sept. 11 afflicted the nation; setting the non-profit process on hold. Doubts began to inflict the board; members resigned and were replaced. A traveling museum was established while searching for a place to call home. The traveling museum allowed the museum to operate as a museum without walls visiting numerous schools throughout the county. For two years the museum searched for a location to house the museum. Those brick hurdles and community support only fueled Mary’s confidence and motivated the board to continue on with the development of the project. It was Mary’s perseverance, passion and commitment to the project that inspired everyone to keep moving ahead.

After several presentations and offers the opportunity presented it’s self at a town hall meeting in a small community in Fennville, MI. Overwhelmingly received by city officials and residents, the offer of a potential home for the museum was identified. This idea came to fruition 7 years later on Dec. 27, 2005. This goal was achieved without any monetary gains by any board member or Mary herself.



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Volunteer support continues to assist the museum in its operations. Mary is now the Executive Director and has two employee and several volunteers. In 2007 the name was legally changed to The Children’s Museum of Fennville.

In 2012, the museum underwent a logo and branding update and the name was once again changed to the current legal name: Forever Curious Children’s Museum.

Forever Curious Children’s Museum played an intricate part in the redevelopment of downtown Fennville, Michigan.

In 2013 it received its first outside the state recognition when travel editor, Julie Henning of Road Trips for Families named the museum, “Favorite Find of the Entire Summer” and called Forever Curious Children’s Museum “A True Gem”

In 2015 FCCM was among the finalist in the WGVU Engage Award: “I HAVE made a difference” awards ceremony in the category of Education Non-Profit. Recognized for its hands-on educational contribution it provides to southwest Michigan area families, schools, and for providing a destination and area attraction for visitors from across the world.

State Senator, Tonya Schuitmaker presented two certificates in 2015 & 2016 recognizing Mary & the museum for is hard work and commitment to hands-on education, and for the continued involvement and service to friends and neighbors.



“Children’s Museums are unique places that bring children, families and communities together for quality interaction.”

The Importance of Play

There are approximately 350 children's museums worldwide introducing families to a world of possibilities every day, only 10% are located in rural communities. They are cultural institutions committed to preparing developing minds and nurture ever-growing intellects to see the world as a sphere of opportunities that they can understand and interact within a meaningful way.

The FCCM is an extension of that global community dedicated to creating a strong sense of wonder, awe and inspiration in every person that interacts with us. It is our mission to encourage children of all ages and abilities to experience hands-on learning by offering safe, fun, inviting exhibits and programs. We realize that in order to succeed in an ever-changing world, children need to develop habits of inquiry that will last a lifetime. The FCCM knows that because play is essential to the healthy development of a child; all children deserve a chance to play no matter what. Of the 350 children's museums established the majority of them are located in urban areas. We strongly believe that our rural families and schools deserve the same educational advantages that children's museums provide.

The FCCM is a dynamic educational setting where all types of informal learning occur. Because children, like adults, have different ways of acquiring knowledge. We provide culturally rich programs to increase the chance of schools success and positive family experiences. The single main purpose of a hands-on center is to promote the wider public understanding of science and technology through the use of interactive hands-on exhibits.

Through our exhibition areas we encourage choices, problem solving and discovery. We provide a welcoming environment, here at the FCCM, which provides opportunities for exploration, communication and social interaction.



“Some people talk about play as if it were a relief from serious learning or even worse; as a waste of time. But for children, play is exceedingly serious...and important! In fact, play is a way for children to learn who they are, how the world works, solve problems and to express feelings. Yes, play is the real work of childhood and for young people today, many children's museums offer play experiences that other settings are not able to give them.”

-Fred Rogers

Lasting Impact

Children's museums worldwide share in the celebration of childhood. They help children develop essential foundational skills. Museums light a creative spark for discovery and lifelong learning and provide an environment where families connect in meaningful ways. Children's museums expose adults and children to unfamiliar concepts in a non-threatening, hands-on learning approach.

The FCCM ensures that the museum experience is accessible to those of special abilities and backgrounds. We provide a unique place that brings families and communities together for quality interaction.

The FCCM is dedicated to creating a play environment that will develop the habits of inquiry that will last a lifetime.



“We cannot always build the future for our youth,
But we can build our youth for the future.”

-Franklin D. Roosevelt