

Wheeler  
& Cog

children's museum of hutchinson

# Description

- ▶ The Wheel & Cog Children's Museum is a rural non-profit organization established in 2016.
- ▶ Overarching goals of the museum:
  - ▶ To enrich lives of people in the community.
  - ▶ Provide hands-on educational experiences to the community.
    - ▶ S.T.R.E.A.M (science, technology, Reading, engineering, art, math)
  - ▶ Interactive exhibits that tie into curriculums.
  - ▶ To extend educational outreach services to the community.





# The Name

## ▶ Wheel and Cog:

- ▶ The name alludes to the role of the mechanical cog, by engaging other teeth, transmits or receives motion.
- ▶ Much like the goal of the museum to engage the community in interactive and imaginative play through exhibits and learning opportunities.



# Mission & Goal

## ▶ Mission:

- ▶ To strengthen and inspire local communities to support basic education and literacy, and reduce gender disparity in educational through interactive and imaginative play.
- ▶ To enhance economic and community development through partnership opportunities to help strengthen local entrepreneurs and future community leaders, in impoverished communities.

- ▶ Goal: To inspire and educate the public through play.





# The Importance

- ▶ Lack of facilities for constructive interactive and imaginative indoor play
- ▶ No indoor play spaces within 50 miles of Hutchinson
- ▶ Actual time children spend playing continues to decrease
- ▶ #Lovewhereyoulive
- ▶ #MutchinHutch

# Current Stats, and reason to commit to change...

- ▶ 1/3 of kids are either overweight or obese
- ▶ One of every two deaths in America is linked to chronic disease
- ▶ About 80% of health conditions are preventable



Source: Mission Readiness. 2014. Retreat Is Not an Option. Washington, D.C. Available at: <http://missionreadiness.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/MR-NAT-Retreat-Not-an-Option2.pdf>

# What is the need?

- ▶ Hutchinson is a manufacturing hub “Minnesota’s Manufacturing City”
  - ▶ About 34% of everyone that has a job in Hutchinson is employed in manufacturing (compared to 10.5% for the US and 13% for MN)
  - ▶ Ridgewater College (partner)
- ▶ Hutchinson is located at a tri-county hub (Meeker-Sibly-McLeod)
- ▶ Our attendance numbers show exponential need for such a facility
- ▶ Local school(s), home school(s), daycare(s) as well as the local school district(s) show need
  - ▶ Field trips local
  - ▶ Increased time in active play
  - ▶ Safe play

Made in McLeod statistics and TigerPaths stats 2017



# What does this mean for the museum and Hutchinson?

- ▶ An opportunity to connect with the community,
- ▶ Removing barriers such as social determinants,
- ▶ Promoting a population of health
- ▶ A platform to promote healthier and more equitable communities in the Tri-county region
- ▶ Target audience being 3-4 years, prime time to start influencing career choices, as well as health and wellness!



# The Need is there...

- ▶ School Districts
  - ▶ Within McLeod County: 19 schools
- ▶ Child Care Centers
  - ▶ Within McLeod County: 42 licensed providers and group home daycare centers ([www.childcarecenter.us](http://www.childcarecenter.us)) - last search this was 27.
- ▶ Library's
  - ▶ Within McLeod County: 4

Source: [www.childcarecenter.us/mcleod](http://www.childcarecenter.us/mcleod)



# The Benefits of Play

- ▶ Conceptual knowledge development
- ▶ Problem-solving and creativity
- ▶ Convergent and divergent problem solving
- ▶ Language and literacy development
- ▶ Executive function
- ▶ Coping and regulation
- ▶ Understanding ethnicity and culture



# The Passion for Play

- ▶ **Personal Background - Understanding the Importance of Play**
  - ▶ Large family that relied on government assistance and a strong community
  - ▶ Institution of play as a means of productivity and revenue

**It is a language that all can easily engage in and understand.**



# The Passion for Play

## Demographics

- ▶ 26.0% of the enrolled students qualify for free, and 12.3% for reduced lunches (according to <https://mndatamaps.web.health.state.mn>)
- ▶ Underserved area
- ▶ Total population 35,932 (MN Stats)
- ▶ According to the 2016 Community Needs Assessment performed by Hutchinson Health:

**Total Population by Age Groups, Percent**

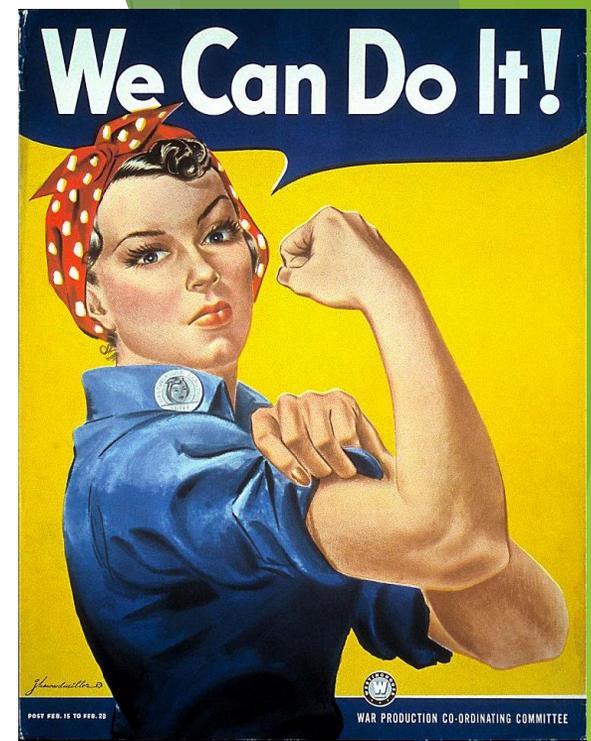
Report Area	Age 0-4	Age 5-17	Age 18-24	Age 25-34	Age 35-44	Age 45-54	Age 55-64	Age 65
McLeod County, MN	6.17%	18.34%	7.44%	12%	12.32%	14.89%	12.37%	16.47%
Minnesota	6.5%	17.28%	9.37%	13.65%	12.47%	14.59%	12.58%	13.57%
United States	6.36%	17.13%	9.96%	13.47%	12.96%	14.09%	12.29%	13.75%

## Developing Lifelong Learners



# The Road Traveled...

- ▶ **Spring 2016:**
  - ▶ Raleigh, NC to Hutchinson, MN (founder Jessica)
  - ▶ Understanding the need, worked with IMPACT group
- ▶ **June 2015** - Moved to Hutchinson
- ▶ **July 2015** - Refocused on Business Plan
- ▶ **August 2015** - Sharing the Idea
- ▶ **October 2015** - Began meeting with strategic community members
- ▶ **January 2016** - First board meeting, requests for funding
- ▶ **February 2016** - Secured a location, meeting with Rotary
- ▶ **March 2016**- Fiscal partnership with Hutchinson's Center for the Arts
- ▶ **April 2016** - First sponsorship/partnership donation from Hutch Health
- ▶ **May 2016**- TapeScape build
- ▶ **June 2016** Soft open



- Opened **July 14, 2016**
- **Grand Opening August 27, 2016** – had over 300 guests play
- **October 2016** – Halloween event co-hosted by Parkview Dental successful
- **December 1st Birthday celebration**
- **December 3rd Llama Llama Holiday drama reading night for families**
- **December 2016** – over 3500 guests had visited and sold over 75 memberships
- **January 2017** – had more than 1000 visitors in a month
- **February 2017** – reached 5053 guests to date, sold over 100 memberships
- **June 2017** – expanded, obtained 2,200 sq ft of exhibit space
- **December 2017** – had 12,012 guests this past year and over 250 memberships
- **December 2018** – had **17,336 guests** (as of December 14th)
- **our goal is 20,000**
- **Currently over 325 memberships**

# Who's at the table?

- ▶ Children's Museum of Southern MN - Mankato
- ▶ Hutchinson Family Dentistry
- ▶ Hutchinson Leadership Group
- ▶ Hutchinson Center for the Arts
- ▶ Innovative Foam, Inc.
- ▶ Hutchinson Mall
- ▶ SBDC (Small Business Development Center)
- ▶ SWIF (Southwest Initiative Funds)
- ▶ Citizens Bank
- ▶ Vivid Image
- ▶ Hutchinson Community Foundation
- ▶ McLeod County United Way
- ▶ Shopko
- ▶ Litchfield Building Supply

- ▶ Hutchinson Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Heart of Hutch
- ▶ **Looking for you, come PLAY with us!**



# Examples of Exhibits -

- ▶ Hand washing station with “glo-germ” and black light
  - ▶ Handwashing is like a "do-it-yourself" vaccine—it involves five simple and effective steps (Wet, Lather, Scrub, Rinse, Dry) you can take to reduce the spread of diarrheal and respiratory illness so you can stay healthy.
  - ▶ Target age: all guests



# Examples of Exhibits

## Studying role play / dramatic play

- ▶ Rural livability
  - ▶ exhibits that reflect our region, are practical and presentable
- ▶ Working with the Children's Museum of Southern MN - Mankato
- ▶ Design of exhibit is circuit play - children are able to utilize items and play in multiple exhibit spaces
- ▶ Target audience: age 18 months-12 years



# Examples of Exhibits “Community Helpers”

- ▶ Featuring 800 pound Fire Truck
  - ▶ Goal to become a place where kids learn to lead healthier lives, eat nutritious foods, are physically active and better prepared to learn each day.
  - ▶ Motivate young people to exercise and “show” the impact in heart rate, respiratory rate, and blood pressure before during and after exercise.
  - ▶ Target age: 4 years-12 years
- ▶ The Clinic
  - ▶ Infants and cribs
  - ▶ Provide information regarding wellness, vaccines, and to encourage regular visits
  - ▶ Would encourage Hutch Health to offer monthly wellness program
  - ▶ Target audience: 2 years-6 years



# Examples of Exhibits “The Healthy Family”

## ► Farmers Market

- Wood structures for fresh produce and livestock
- Wheel barrows and grocery carts
- Experience a lot of fun while learning about how foods we eat make their way from seed to table.
- Target audience: 18 mo - 12 years



## Examples of exhibits

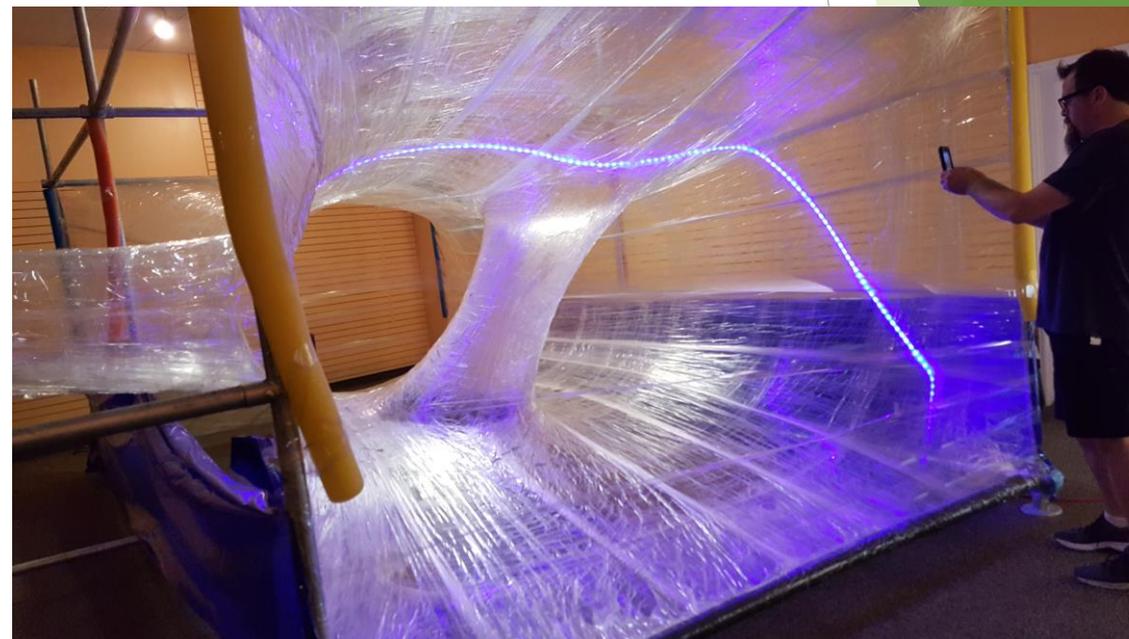
### Infant play area

- ▶ Soft play area designed for infants and toddlers
- ▶ Offer Kindermusic program and parent programs (yoga) to encourage bonding and healthy habits and healthy bonding time
- ▶ Target audience: infant-18 months



## Examples of exhibits Interactive / Active play

- ▶ Climbing Wall
- ▶ TapeScape
- ▶ Tower





Examples of exhibits  
STEAM specific

# Filling a Gap in Minnesota

## Striving to serve the Hutchinson community through good will

- free little library
- offering low-income families scholarships
- providing educationally based local field trip destination
- In the month of November 2018 alone, the museum had **1,830** guests.

## Greater Minnesota

- Wheel and Cog is Minnesota's sixth children's museum
- Filling a gap not only for our community members, but also for surrounding communities in central Minnesota.

# Unique capacity to...

- ▶ Gathering place for all (no limitation)
- ▶ Playfully engage and enrich visitors
  - ▶ with arts
  - ▶ culture, and
  - ▶ historical content and participatory experiences that are woven into every facet of a Museum visit
- ▶ Demonstrate that the stewardship of arts and cultural heritage
  - ▶ funding is directed in a way such that ALL MN residents have the opportunity to experience arts and cultural heritage learning - including our State's very youngest residents;
- ▶ Promote the work of MN artists and craftsmen and women (e.g.: Tape Scape and Yarn Bomber from Mpls)
- ▶ Spotlight the unique culture and history of our State
  - ▶ expand awareness and increase knowledge
  - ▶ ultimately serving to inspire and inform the next generation of leaders and decision-makers.



# Stats & Sustainability - since 2016 Legacy Funding

## ▶ Current Plan:

- ▶ Hours of operation expanded open Tues, Thursday, Friday's 9a-6p, and Saturdays 9 am-4 pm
- ▶ Field trips/day care groups available M, W, and Sunday
- ▶ Special events (birthdays) are available evenings and weekends after hours due to space constraints.

## ▶ Time studies at other children's museums indicate:

- ▶ Children play an average of 34 minutes within exhibits that allow circuit play.
- ▶ Children play an average of 42 minutes within exhibits that allow active and imaginative play.
- ▶ Currently, on average, we are finding families play about **2.5-3 hours in our current space (about 30 minutes longer than 2 years ago).**

# Stats & Sustainability Continued

# Guests	# Infants	# New Member	# Re-nawal	# ACM Mem	Volunteer Hours
31824	768	287	87	6	2362

- ▶ Average age of children’s museum visitors is 3.4 years
- ▶ Reviews exceptional (in person and on Facebook)
- ▶ The museum will depend on community partnership with key stakeholders for annual contributions, in-kind donations, volunteers, and government funds (Legacy Funds) to ensure sustainability.



# Goals for Legacy funding for 2019-2021...

- ▶ \$50k for program development - expanding staffing
  - ▶ Plan to add 4 more staff, 2 specific to strategically enhance programs, build community partners, and further develop
  - ▶ STEAM activities (connect with other programs such as TigerPaths and students at Ridgewater Community College) - enhance hands-on learning opportunities
- ▶ \$30k developing Community program (outreach) + Trailer
- ▶ \$50k for Exhibit build-out
  - ▶ Current exhibits difficult to maintain
  - ▶ Looking to incorporate exhibits requiring less maintenance
- ▶ \$20k for Community Outreach Projects
- ▶ \$20k for expansion and improvements (cohesive signage, improved desk (security))...
- ▶ **Total \$170,000.00**

# Recap

- ▶ There are NO offerings for indoor interactive/imaginative play within a 50 mile radius of Hutchinson
- ▶ The museum is designed to offer youth within the community opportunities for additional learning and options for play they may not otherwise get on their own
- ▶ The concept of the museum will enhance community vibrancy, potentially attracting other families with children or possibly grandchildren, to the area. We are a rural, underserved area with potential.
- ▶ Opportunity for business to partner with the museum to help offer learning opportunities such as Rocket Launching, and B-bots, and child safety to name a few.
- ▶ Asking for support for **\$170,000.00**

**Come on let's play!**