

Profiles of the Development of Neighborhood Child-Care Facilities

Prepared for the Development Corporation for Children (DCC)

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Introduction

“Developing early childhood facilities -- child care or Head Start centers – is especially challenging because the public sector subsidies that support these programs are insufficient to cover the cost of quality programs. Facility costs are almost universally deferred in favor of staff salaries and other operating costs (Local Initiatives Support Corporation, LISC).” It is under this premise that the research for this report has been conducted for the Development Corporation for Children (DCC). DCC’s mission is to help children thrive and learn by forging relationships that bring economic power and viability to the business of child care.

The research conducted in preparation of this report has been focused on achieving a compilation of profiles, each explaining the process by which a community child-care facility was developed in the Twin Cities Urban Area.

A number of criteria were established to assist in the creation of the most appropriate form of case study. The format was to:

- Provide sufficient depth of project details.
- Serve as a quick reference for community members and DCC program managers.
- Focus on the significant relationships forged throughout the development process.
- Provide a retrospective account of successful and unsuccessful components of each project.
- Be easily transferable to the web.
- Be publishable for external as well as internal use.

The projects chosen for research were selected to achieve a breadth of urban child-care models. They represent a single center run by a program director, two YWCA child care facilities (one constructed as part of a larger project, and the other a renovation of a leased facility), a home ownership science house, a community coalition, a partnership between a development corporation and social service organization, and a neighborhood early learning center. Despite their differing organization structures, two threads common to all of these projects are creativity and passion for quality child care.

Northstar Learning Development Center
Facility Development Project 1991-1993

Northstar Learning Development Center (NLDC) has been providing early learning child-care to the North Side Community of Minneapolis since 1970. The center, initially established by the Council of Jewish Women in cooperation with active community members, seeks to provide affordable quality child-care to the community. According to a needs assessment by the Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association in 1992, “the communities served by Northstar included the highest percentage of pre-schoolers in the city, the highest percentage of children falling below the poverty line, the highest percentage of mothers receiving AFDC, and the most mothers under 18 years old.” In the early 1990’s the private party from whom NLDC leased its facility placed the property on the market twice. This provided the incentive for NLDC to initiate a project to secure the facility and expand its service. The total project cost of \$568,000 included the site purchase, moderate rehabilitation on the existing building, and a 3,000-foot addition.

Community/Site Information

- Address: * 1915 W. Broadway
Minneapolis MN 55411
- Site Information: * Located in Willard-Homewood Neighborhood (North Minneapolis).
* Faces West Broadway (commercial).
* Adjoined by residential lots to the side and rear.
- Ages Served: * Pre-project: 16 months – school age
* Post-project: infant -school-age
- Licensed Capacity: * Pre-project: 57
* Post-project: 74 (9 infant, 15 toddler, 34 pre-school, 16 school-age)
- Enrollment: * Pre-project: 95%
* Post-project: 95%
- Community Diversity: * African American, Asian, European American, and Native American.
- Methods of Payment: * Federal and state subsidies administered through the county (majority).
* Private Pay (very few).
- Referring Agencies: * GMDCA
* ‘Turning Point/Demand’ chemical dependency treatment program
* Northside Family Connection
* Early Childhood Family Education

Project Development Information

- Project Initiator: * Dan Wielinski (Program Director, Northstar Learning Development Center)
- Key Leadership: * Dan Wielinski
* NLDC Board of Directors

- Important Partners: * Development Corporation for Children (Development Consultant)
 * Peter Kramer (Architect)
 * Flannery Construction (Contractor)
 * Kris Nelson (Neighborhood Consultant)
 * Nancy Latimer (McKnight Foundation)
 * Minneapolis City Council Member Jackie Cherryhomes
- Need Assessment: * There was a demonstrated need for child care in the area, particularly for infant care (based on a formal study by GMDCA and informal assessment by Dan Wielinski and local provider Ruby Hughes).
- Alternative Site: * North Commons Park
 * In order to preserve city parks, the Minneapolis Park Board has a policy that requires any party interested in developing park space for an alternative use to provide park space of equal size and quality in an alternative location.
- Chosen Site: * The private owner demonstrated interest in selling the property.
 * A private party altruistically offered an adjacent lot for a nominal amount.
 * The county provided an additional adjacent lot for use as a playground.
- The City, Inc.: * *The City, Inc.* is a nonprofit organization assisting disadvantaged inner-city youth obtain a high school education, increase parenting skills and prepare for employment. *The City, Inc.* expressed interest in providing a youth training component to the construction in which 3 students would work half-days for 16 weeks as an apprentice to a journeyman carpenter. The communication in this process fell through and this component did not occur.

Financing Secured

- Greater Minneapolis Metropolitan Housing Corporation (GMMHC) Pre-Development Loan
- \$18,000
 - This loan was used to cover fees during pre-development and was paid back at closing.
 - Application was received on a rolling basis and granted within a week.

- Hennepin County Revenue Bond:
- \$325,000 at 5.414% to be paid back over 20 years.

- Greater Minneapolis Daycare Association (GMDCA) Renovation Loan
- \$100,000 at 5%, to be paid back over 20 years.
 - 80% of the loan is forgiven after 5 years of successful business.

- McKnight Foundation Grant
- \$125,000
 - Submitted the proposal to the board, which reviews project proposals four times a year.

- Northstar Learning Development Center
- \$6,786 private equity.

Financing Sought but not obtained

- A letter was sent to city council member Cherryhomes in an attempt to have Minneapolis special assessment costs waived (\$7,000). Council member Cherryhomes forwarded the letter to the Minneapolis Community Development Agency, who noted that based on previous precedent it would be nearly impossible to have such a request granted.
- A Community Development Block Grant (funded through the Clinton Economic Stimulus Package) had money earmarked for the project but congress did not approve this funding.
- \$241,250 of Hennepin County NRP Initiatives Funds was requested (of which there was a balance of \$436,529). These funds were denied because NRP funding is for actions/strategies included in Neighborhood Action Plans (per letter from Hennepin County Commissioner Sandra Hilary), and the Northstar project was not being pursued in conjunction with such a plan.

Completed Project

- Total Project Cost: * \$575,000
- Duration: * Fall 1991 - September 1993
* This project progressed quicker than expected. Financing from Hennepin County, the McKnight Foundation and GMDCA came together in a timely fashion.
- Project Components: * Site Purchase.
* Moderate Rehabilitation on existing building.
* 3,000 square foot addition.
- Costs not Budgeted: * Increase in insurance expense resulting from renovation.
* Phone and security system upgrades.
- Budget: * The Metro Council provided a small loan toward the end of the project to cover unexpected closing costs. GMDCA provided a grant 1-2 years after the completion of the project to finish the construction of the playground.
- Project Cuts * Plans for a full-kitchen were reduced to a mere prep-kitchen.
- Property Ownership: * Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority
* 15-year lease to NLDC (option to buy at a nominal amount in 15 yrs.).
- Challenges: * Lack of focus within the local neighborhood organization.
* Neighborhood Revitalization Program (Minneapolis City Revitalization Plan) funding could not be obtained.
- In Retrospect: * Building design should have included full-kitchen and additional storage space.
* Maintenance costs could be reduced by careful selection of construction materials.

Phillips YWCA
Facility Development Project 2000-2002

In 1989 the Minneapolis Community Development Agency planned to transform a closed down junior high school in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis into a community center. The Minneapolis YWCA expressed interest in providing child care within such a center. As a part of the ensuing project, the Minneapolis School District sold the facility to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Department. Minneapolis Park and Recreation then contracted the facility to the Boys and Girls Club Twin Cities. In turn, the Boys and Girls Club leased the facility to the YWCA. Ten years later, the YWCA was well aware that the existing facility could be renovated to better meet their needs. This has led to the planning and construction of the \$400,000 renovation of the YWCA's child care facility.

Community/Site Information

- Address: * 2323 11th Avenue South
Minneapolis MN 55404
- Site Information: * Phillips Neighborhood.
* Residential location within walking distance of library and commercial area.
* Access to bus line.
- Child Care Area: * 4,698 ft² , plus access to an additional gymnasium.
- Ages Served: * Infant through school age.
- Licensed Capacity: * 66
- Enrollment: * 95%
- Community Diversity: * African American, Native American, Latin American, Somali, European American
- Method of Payment: * Hennepin County Strong Beginnings Program
- Referring Agencies: * Hennepin County

Project Development Information

- Project Initiators: * Katie Williams (YWCA, Director of Early Childhood Programs)
* Phillips YWCA Staff
- Key Leadership: * Katie Williams
- Important Partners: * Karen Clark (state representative)
* Peter Kramer (architect)
* Jerry Flannery (contractor)
- Need Assessment: * The previous facility was not meeting the center's needs.

- Alternative Site: * Various alternative sites were considered, but did not provide the residential atmosphere, convenient bus transportation, sufficient parking and 'green space.'
- Chosen Site: * The child care facility is subleased to the YWCA by the Boys and Girls Club, and is owned by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

Financing Secured:

MN Department of Children, Families and Learning (CFL) Facilities Bonding

- \$200,000
- 25% of the project cost is to be constructed through Youthbuild Minneapolis (a program that provides work experience to at risk youth).
- The facility must be publicly owned.

Minneapolis Empowerment Zone Grant (Federally Funded Initiative, HUD)

- \$150,000

Phillips Foundation Grant

- \$40,000

Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association Grant

- \$20,000 (renovations) and \$6,500 (school-age care)

Beim Foundation Grant

- \$6,000

Completed Project

Project Cost: * \$417,806

Project Duration: * Spring 2000 - July 2002

Project Components: * Renovation of existing facility
* Playground Addition
* Storage Units and Equipment

Budget: * The project has remained on budget.
* YWCA did not start construction until they had raised all of the funds.

Property Ownership: * Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

Challenges: * The decision to undergo a project of this magnitude on a facility that is not owned by the YWCA.
* Fulfilling the Youthbuild component (\$50,000) on such a small project (\$400,000). This was been accomplished through the creativity of the contractor (through painting, cleanup, and shed and picnic table construction).

Unique Characteristics

Strong Beginnings: * The Phillips YWCA is a Hennepin County Strong Beginnings Center receiving a special needs rate because they serve a population of at risk children and provide a higher level of service.

Design: * The decoration/design of each room in the center has been determined by each teacher. This explicitly expresses the personality of each teacher/team. The center has chosen to continue caring for the children on-site while construction is underway, enabling teachers to offer first hand input.

Midtown YWCA
Facility Development Project 1994-2000

In an attempt to revitalize their community, the Seward and Longfellow neighborhoods of Minneapolis contacted the YWCA in 1994 to determine their interest in developing a community center. In response to the local interest, the Minneapolis YWCA conducted marketing and capital campaign feasibility studies. These studies affirmed a need for, and interest in, health and fitness options, child care, and youth and senior programs. With the support of the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating board, the YWCA partnered with the Minneapolis School District and Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission to develop such a facility. A child care center licensed to care for 96 children opened on September 6, 2000 as a component of this project.

Community/Site Information

- Address: * 2121 East Lake Street
Minneapolis, MN 55408
- Site Information: * Within walking distance of Seward, Phillips, Longfellow, Corcoran and Powderhorn Park neighborhoods of Minneapolis.
* Adjacent to South High School.
- Child Care Area: * 10,600 ft², including large muscle rooms.
- Ages Served: * Infant through school age.
- Licensed Capacity: * 96
- Enrollment: * 90-95%
- Community Diversity: * African, African American, Latino and European American
- Methods of Payment: * Federal and state subsidies administered through the county (majority).
* Private Pay
- Referring Agencies: * Reputation in the Community
* Greater Minneapolis Daycare Association (R&R)
* Hennepin County

Project Development Information

- Project Initiators: * Seward Neighborhood Group
* Longfellow Community Council
- Key Leadership: * YWCA
- Important Partners: * Minneapolis School District
* Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission
* Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board
* County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin
* State Senator Carol Flynn
* Minneapolis Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton

Need Assessment: * Minnesota Department of Planning estimates.
 * Child Care WORKS estimates.
 * Marketing and Capital Campaign feasibility study by YWCA.

Chosen Site: * The Minneapolis School district and the Minneapolis City Council conferred to make the site recommendation.

Financing Secured

Public Funding:	* City of Minneapolis	\$716,017
	* Corcoran Neighborhood Association	\$200,000
	* Hennepin County	\$537,000
	* Longfellow Community Council	\$500,000
	* MCDA In-kind Services	\$90,000
	* Minneapolis Community Development Agency	\$330,000
	* Minneapolis Public Schools	\$2,012,500
	* Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board	\$1,000,000
	* Minnesota Amateur Sports Commission	\$4,000,000
	* Minnesota Youth Initiative	\$660,000
	* Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Assoc.	\$350,000
	* Standish Ericsson Neighborhood Assoc.	\$25,000
	* MN CFL Facilities Bonding	<u>\$300,000</u>
	* TOTAL	\$10,720,517

Capital Campaign: * \$11,000,000 (consists of many private donations and corporate donations given for the sports facilities).
 * It took 2 years to secure \$11 million in private funding.

Restrictions: * Public funds were contingent on \$11 million of private funding.
 * The State Facilities Bonding required that 25% of the project cost be constructed through Youthbuild Minneapolis, and that the facility be publicly owned.

Completed Project

Total Project Cost: * \$21.1 Million

Project Components: * Field House, Fitness Center and Aerobics Studio
 * Aquatic Center (Lap Pool, Leisure Pool, Whirlpool)
 * Child Care Center

Budget: * Bridge financing in the form of private contributions was used for start-up costs until pledges came in.

Property Ownership: * YWCA

Challenges: * In order to receive public funding the YWCA needed to demonstrate that it would serve low-income segments of the local and extended community.

* Construction of the child care facility was complicated by the fact that the architectural firm had not previously designed a child care facility. Nevertheless, working within a larger project provided benefits to well offset the costs.

Dayton's Bluff Science House
Facility Development Project 1996-1997

The Development Corporation for Children began working with the Dayton's Bluff Community Council in 1993 to find a way to provide quality programming for young, lower income children in the neighborhood. The Development Corporation for Children (DCC) and Dayton's Bluff Center for Civic Life assessed the need for child care in the Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood. DCC then worked with Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services to build a homeownership Science House, to be sold at a cost significantly below the development cost, to a family earning 80 percent or less of Metropolitan Standard Income (MSI). The home provides residential living space for the family child care provider and her family and dedicated space for a mixed age child care program. While the program is not exclusively a science program, it has offered hands-on learning and science projects as part of its ongoing curriculum.

Community/Site Information

Address: * 736 Euclid Street
St. Paul, MN

Site Information: * Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood.
* Across the street from Dayton's Bluff Elementary School.

Ages Served: * Toddlers – School Age

Licensed Capacity: * 12

Enrollment: * 8-10

Community Diversity: * European American, Asian/Pacific Islander, African American,
American Indian.

Methods of Payment: * Federal and state subsidies administered through the county (majority).
* Private Pay

Referring Agencies: * Ramsey County
* Adult and Child Alliance
* Resources for Child Care
* Eastside Provider Network

Project Development Information

Project Initiator: * Development Corporation for Children

Key Leadership: * Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Neighborhood Housing Services
(DBNHS)
* Development Corporation for Children

Important Partners: * Dayton's Bluff Center for Civic Life
* Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services

- Need Assessment: * Formal survey of 14 neighborhood providers.
- Alternative Sites: * A number of sites in St. Paul were considered.
- Chosen Site: * This site was chosen because of its location across the street from Dayton's Bluff elementary school and strong neighborhood support for the project.

Financing Secured

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

- \$73,800 loan
- \$8,200 predevelopment loan (no interest)

St. Paul Community Development Block Grant

- \$55,000 grant

Development Corporation for Children

- \$21,000 package that includes funding from St. Paul companies, Mardag Foundation, Bigelow Foundations, 3M, and LISC.

Neighborhood Reinvestment Grant Funds

- \$5,000 grant
- To be used only as needed to fill the final gap at closeout.

Completed Project

Total Project Cost: * \$163,000 (\$55,000 child care component)

Project Components: * Construction of Science House

Ownership: * Private Ownership (Latesa and Larry Pye)

Challenges: * Providing science activities to the youngest age group.
* An important consideration was how to maintain child care if the ownership of the house changes. In order to ensure the provision of child care, the developer holds the first right of refusal to choose an owner that will provide child care.

In Retrospect: * A larger (physical size) child care facility would provide greater privacy to each age group.

Free to Be

Development of Community Child Care Center 1999-2001

A number of recent immigrants from The Sudan began attending Trinity Episcopal Church in Anoka in the early 1990's. Rev. Barbara Dumke, the church's pastor, quickly became aware that this group had a pressing need for culturally competent child care. In an effort to address this need, Rev. Dumke began working with Anoka County Community Action Program (ACCAP) Capacity Planner Kim Lind to apply for funding for a child care center specifically for Sudanese immigrants. In the fall of 1999, Rev. Dumke received a letter from Rev. Jerry O'Neill of Advent Lutheran Church. The letter welcomed a number of local churches to join a coalition to serve Anoka County residents seeking economic security and self-sufficiency. Rev. Dumke brought her vision of culturally competent child care to the coalition, and soon after learned that the Minnesota Department of Children Families and Learning would provide a grant to start up a child care center to serve refugees and American families. Having secured funding for a child care center, the coalition approached seven local churches to provide their facilities as a temporary child care site, but for a variety of reasons none were able to provide such support. Through the connection of ACCAP Capacity Planner Kim Lind, *Free to Be!* partnered with Crestview Community, a senior service continuum of care campus. Crest View had previously housed a Montessori school, but saw needs growing among the staff and wanted to offer child care from 0-12 on site. This partnership was the solution to meet both parties needs.

The *Free to Be! Community Coalition*, of which Rev. Dumke became executive director, is a coalition of Anoka County faith communities, schools, businesses, human service organizations, health providers, civic organizations, government agencies and families who had successfully made the transitions from welfare to work. The coalition's purpose is to establish a one-stop resource and guidance center for people entering the workforce as a result of welfare reform or recent immigration. In addition to child care, *Free to Be!* offers a car care program. Through this program, volunteer mechanics repair vehicles for those who would otherwise be unable to pay for repairs. Donated and repaired cars are also given to eligible Anoka County residents. Providing child care and car care service serves two pressing needs for financially burdened families in Anoka County.

Community/Site Information

- Address: * 1515 44th Avenue NE
Columbia Heights MN
- Site Information: * Crest View Community (senior residence)
* Child care space was previously a Montessori school
- Ages Served: * infant – school-age
- Licensed Capacity: * 60 (8 infants, 7 toddlers, 30 pre-school, 15 school-age)
* Eighteen of the pre-school slots are designated Head Start.
- Enrollment: * Has steadily increased since opening.
- Community Diversity: * Sudanese, Somali, Pakistani, Mexican, Latino, Vietnamese, African American, European-American.
- Methods of Payment: * Federal and state subsidies administered through the county (majority).

* Private pay

Referring Agencies: * Anoka County
* Head Start
* Child Care Resource and Referral
* ACCAP (Anoka County Community Action Program)
* ECFE (Early Childhood Family Education)

Project Development Information

Project Initiators: * Reverend Barbara Dumke (Former Pastor, Trinity Episcopal Church, Anoka MN)

Key Leadership: * *Free to Be! Community Coalition Inc.*

Important Partners: * Shirley Barnes (C.E.O., Crest View Corporation)
* ACCAP
* Head Start
* University of Minnesota Extension Services
* Jerry Soma (Anoka County Director of Human Services)

Need Assessment: * A preliminary needs assessment was conducted by *Free to Be!* in April 2000 based on data from ACCAP Child Care Resource and Referral.

Alternative Sites: * Seven local churches were approached as temporary child care sites but for a variety of reasons were not able to provide such support.

Chosen Site: * Crest View Community formerly housed a Montessori school.

Fundraising Duration: * Winter 1999 – Fall 2000

Fundraise Consultants * Weber Lundquist Fundraising and Management Consulting for Non-Profits (Margaret Weber and Rhonda Lundquist)

Financing Secured (2002 Funding unless noted)

Minnesota Department of Children Families and Learning Grants

- \$32,500 (1999) \$100,000 (2000) and \$72,500

Anoka County Community Action Program Grants

- \$17,000 and \$33,500

Community Development Block Grant

- \$8,900

Bush Foundation Grant

- \$25,000
- Solely devoted to the car care component of *Free to Be!*

Church Sponsors

- \$25,000 (allocated to car care)

Child Care Resource and Referral Grants

- \$3,500 for startup
- \$3,500 for the infant-toddler program
- \$2,000 for service development
- \$15,000 for school age care (ACCAP)

McKnight Foundation Grant

- \$18,256

Medtronic Grant

- \$2,000

Beim Foundation Grant

- \$5,000

Common Bond (Church Foundation) Grant

- \$50,000

Completed Project

Facility: * The facility had previously been used for a Montessori school program. For this reason, the expense of renovating the facility was limited to minor changes made for the convenience and safety of the center's staff and younger children. In addition to these minor renovations, toys and equipment for the facility were also purchased.

Playground * Rather than construct a permanent playground structure in their limited outdoor play space, *Free to Be!* elected to use portable play structures. In addition to saving money, this provides the children the opportunity to experiment with natural structures such as plants and mud.

Project Duration: * Fall 1999 – January 2001

Challenges: * *Free to Be!* found significant difficulty securing a facility. The coalition unsuccessfully requested the use of the facilities of seven local churches before reaching an agreement with Crest View.

* The child care center does not have indoor space for large muscle activities. For this reason, *Free to Be!* is currently communicating with the local YMCA to forge an agreement to provide their school age children with a large muscle play space. Through the provision of bus transportation and gym space, the YMCA is looking forward to serving another segment of their local community.

Unique Characteristics

Senior Residence: * As a result of being located on a senior campus, *Free to Be!* students are able to visit the Crest View residents a few times a week, for an

intergenerational exchange. In addition, a few Crest View residents have become regular volunteers at the child care center; spending time with the children and assisting in daily tasks at the center.

Multicultural:

* Providing culturally responsive child care to recent immigrants to Anoka County continues to be a goal of the *Free to Be! Community Coalition*. Today, a brief observation of teachers and children at the center quickly demonstrates the achievement of this goal. The teachers and children at *Free to Be!* represent a variety of cultures, and programming at the center emphasizes cultural responsiveness. The teachers at *Free to Be!* speak a total of nine different languages, considerably enabling communication with the children and their families.

Hawthorne Family Child Care Homes

Facility Development Project 1993-1994

In 1993, the Development Corporation for Children (DCC) worked with the Hawthorne Community Council to assess the neighborhood's need for child care. With the encouragement of the City of Minneapolis, DCC partnered with the Twin City Housing Development Corporation (TCHDC), to build a duplex and a single-family home in the Hawthorne neighborhood of Minneapolis. This partnership was structured as a leasehold-cooperative in order to increase tenant input and involvement, to maximize the financing tools available, and to reduce the property taxes. Licensed, low-income child care providers were recruited to live in the homes and provide child care to the community. The homes contain living space and a child care addition designed for a licensed family child care business. The Science House (the single family home) has a child care program separate from the rental unit.

Community/Site Information

- Addresses: * 2601 6th Street North, Minneapolis MN (Science House)
 * 2801-2803 Lyndale Avenue North, Minneapolis MN (Mixed-Age Duplex)
- Site Information: * Hawthorne Neighborhood of North Minneapolis
 * Across from a city park.
- Child Care Area: * Science House: 1600 ft² plus 11,000 ft² outdoor play area and gardening space.
- Ages Served: * Science House: Mixed Age
 * 2801 Duplex: Mixed Age
 * 2803 Duplex: Mixed Age
- Licensed Capacity: * Science House: 12 children
 * 2801 Duplex: 14 children
 * 2803 Duplex: currently being licensed
- Current Enrollment: * Science House: 8-10 children
 * 2801 Duplex: 8 children
 * 2803 Duplex: new tenant
- Client Characteristics: * Drawn from North/Northeast Minneapolis Neighborhoods.
- Methods of Payment: * Federal and state subsidies administered through the county (majority).
 * Private pay
- Referring Agencies: * Reputation in the community

Project Development Information

- Project Initiator: * Development Corporation for Children
- Key Leadership: * Development Corporation for Children

- Challenges: * Hawthorne Family Child Care Homes seeks to provide rental property that is affordable to low income households providing licensed family childcare. Financial strains are inevitable for recruited tenants attempting to support a family with child care as their sole source of income (given the several month start-up time and the unpredictability of the child care business). This creates management challenges in recruiting and supporting the best tenant.
- Science House: * Programming at the science house focuses on opportunities for children to explore science and its application to the world around them in concrete, hands-on, fun ways. The programs seek to expand on science concepts learned in school.
- Leasehold Co-op: * The initial housing co-op consisting of the three tenants proved to be ineffective because of its small size and its has remained rather dormant.
- Ownership Transfer: * Neither of the original partners (DCC or TCHDC) is organized to do property management. For this reason, the partners shared the responsibilities of asset management and resident relations and contracted with an independent property management firm to handle the day-to-day tasks associated with property maintenance and enforcement of the leases. Based on financial projections completed in 2000, TCHDC determined that it would be economically unsustainable for the partnership to continue hiring out the property management duties for such a small development (3 units). Based on these projections it was beneficial to all parties for TCHDC to transfer its ownership to Pillsbury United Communities. Pillsbury is a human services organization with child care and property management experience in the Minneapolis community.

Whittier Neighborhood Early Learning Center

Facility Development Project 1996-1998

(Summarized from an extended case-study constructed by Janet Contursi, 2002)

In the fall of 1996, the Whittier neighborhood of Minneapolis was chosen by the National Economic Development and Law Center to participate in a national demonstration project to assess and plan for community child care development. The Minnesota Youth Coordinating Board (YCB) and the Surdna Foundation provided funding for various aspects of the planning process. The YCB requested that the Development Corporation for Children (DCC) assist in the planning and development of a Neighborhood Early Learning Center (NELC) aimed at improving school readiness among children by providing neighborhood-based support services for families with children up to six years old. Presented with the concept of a NELC, the Whittier community decided to develop the NELC through its Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (NRP), and to incorporate the NELC into the new Whittier Community Elementary School. The Whittier Alliance, the neighborhood based NRP coordinating agency, then established a task force to coordinate the project. The Whittier NELC Task Force was composed of key community groups including child care and early education providers, neighborhood residents, representatives of the Whittier Alliance, and representatives from other city and neighborhood organizations. The main priority of the task force was to replace previously isolated community services with holistic and integrated services. The NELC Task Force selected Way To Grow as the NELC's lead agency and the Children's Home Society as its child care service provider. The Whittier NELC began providing child care, health care, dental care and Way To Grow services in August of 1998.

Community/Site Information

- Address: * 2610 Grand Avenue South
Minneapolis MN 55408
- Site Information: * Located in Whittier Neighborhood (South Minneapolis).
- Ages Served: * 16 months - Kindergarten
- Licensed Capacity: * 33 children (recently added another room for an additional 14)
- Enrollment: * 31 (will expand with the addition of the additional room)
- Community Diversity: * African American, Latino-Chicano, Asian, European American, and Native American.
- Methods of Payment: * Federal and state subsidies administered through the county (majority).
* Private Pay (few)
- Referring Agencies: * GMDCA
* Hennepin County
* Reputation in the community

Project Development Information

- Project Initiator: * Whittier Neighborhood

- Key Leadership: * Whittier NELC Task Force
 * Development Corporation for Children
- Important Partners: * Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board
 * Whittier Development Corporation
- Need Assessment: * The needs of the Whittier community were assessed through a family survey, parent focus group, and interviews with health care providers between April and June of 1997.
 * The existing supply of early education services included one child care center serving preschool children, and eight family child care homes serving about 90 children (ages two months to 13 years). There was no center based care for school age children. The demand for child care was expected to increase in the neighborhood due to the opening of the new Whittier Community Elementary School, and to welfare reform.
- Chosen Site: * The community determined that the center would be incorporated into the new Whittier Community Elementary School.

Financing Secured

The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board provided more than \$1 million of funding with revenues from the convention center. The Whittier Alliance provided \$100,000 of Whittier NRP funds. Additional funding for the project was received from foundations and private parties.

Completed Project

- Duration: * Fall 1996 - August 1998
- Property Ownership: * Whittier Neighborhood Early Learning Center
- Challenges: * Tensions between neighborhood groups regarding housing issues were an early obstacle to agreement early in the process. DCC met with the various neighborhood groups to get beyond the housing dispute and focus on the common goal of child care.

 * Establishing a body of governance proved to be a difficult task. The final form of governance includes two bodies; *The Tenants Council* and *The Neighborhood Advisory Council*. These two bodies represent the interests of the lead agency, tenants, the school, the park, parents, and residents. A stipend to cover time, transportation, and child care is offered to parents/residents who attend the bimonthly meetings of *The Neighborhood Advisory Council*.
- Child Care Center: * The child care center is one of two Strong Beginnings programs run by Children's Home Society. The facility is rented from the Whittier Neighborhood Early Learning Center.

Unique Characteristics

NELC: * The NELC initiative, overseen by YCB and the Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA) is a bricks and mortar project that seeks to create physical spaces in neighborhood settings for existing or developing early childhood and family programs and support services to occupy. The programs housed in each NELC are determined by community residents, parents and program providers. Typically services include health care, family support, early childhood education, parent education and child care.

Way To Grow: * Way to Grow is the lead agency for the Whittier NELC. Way to Grow is a community-based program that supports parents in preparing their children, newborn to age six, to be ready for school. Way to Grow emphasizes local leadership and community-specific programming.

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