



Give me a place to stand, and I will move the earth.

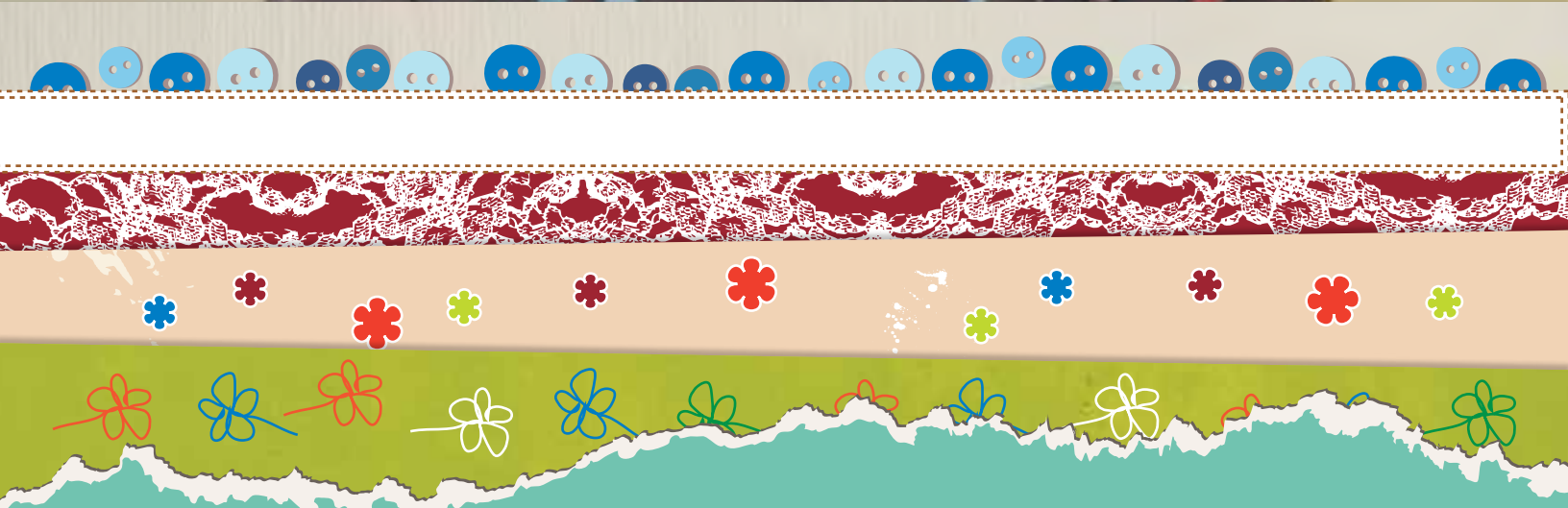
-Archimedes, 287 BC–212 BC mathematician, scientist, dreamer.

{ The π of play: } **the limitless possibility of quality care**

Kids Co.'s mission is to provide and advocate for quality child care that enriches and nurtures all children, supporting their success in school and in life.



FISCAL YEAR 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



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Visit www.kidscompany.org to learn more about our work with kids.

“Give me a place to stand, and I will move the earth,” the ancient, Greek mathematician Archimedes (287-212 B.C.E.) is quoted as saying in the Pappus of Alexandria. One of the countless characters in history whose curiosity shaped the world, Archimedes was actually referring to levers and the moving of objects in this quote. However, he could have easily been referring to the inner “lever” which moved him: curiosity. Like the irrational and mysterious number without an end that fascinated Archimedes— π —his life reflected the radiating, limitless power of curiosity to shape and change the world.

In FY’10, Kids Co. focused on the “inner levers” within children that support encounters with this limitless, potential inherent in their own lives. These “inner levers” are the π of play, movements of curiosity leading to discoveries of what we like and do not like, what we are good at, and who we enjoy, our friends.

Life dreams also unfold within these movements, and at the earliest of ages of our own becoming, make themselves present through ordinary curiosity. This is what makes play so important, and high quality child care like Kids Co., where play and free choice are encouraged, so valuable. We can become as big as our dreams. So let us help children and families dream big.

In these pages you will find three stories that illustrate “the π of play” in relationship to our giving kids and parents a “place to stand where [they] can move the earth”—the twin themes of this annual report. We anticipate that great things will emerge someday as result of the caretaking Kids Co. gave this year. What will come forth is a gift for the future, one we will someday welcome. For now, let us thank the donors, teachers, and community of care-givers who made this fantastic year at Kids Co. possible.

To curiosity,

Susan R. Brown
President and CEO

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Recruit and Retain Exceptional Child Care Professionals for the Children and Families we serve.

Thomas Ko, “The π of Play” modeled in kindness and graciousness.

Thomas Ko radiates intelligent graciousness and kindness. Even his gentle laughter embodies these agreeable qualities. So, it should not surprise that children are drawn to “Mister Thomas” and consider him their friend, a friend they respect.

Long before meeting Thomas, word of his many talents came to the ears of Jennifer Cooke, Kids Co.’s Director of Programs. John Benner, the program director at Kids Co. at South Shore, had befriended Thomas at a leadership class, and he esteemed his colleague’s insights and demeanor. “We must hire him,” John urged Jennifer.

Glowing reports about Thomas and his amazing child care skills continued to make their way to her over the coming months. So, when a position came open that she thought might be a good fit for him, she asked John to approach him. John jumped at the chance, called Thomas immediately, and encouraged him to apply.

Kids Co. was looking for a seasoned child care professional, one who was familiar with the Seward Park demographic where Kids Co. at Graham Hill is located. Being well-versed in Seattle Public School culture and policy, and demonstrating a desire to engage in ongoing professional development, also topped the list of qualities that were wanted.

In all areas, Thomas fit the bill to a “t.”

“In some ways, this was a lateral move for me,” shared Thomas, “but Kids Co. gave me an opportunity to work with a diverse population with a larger population of low-income families. This appealed to me and the fact that Kids Co. has never turned a family away due to inability to cover the cost of care sealed the deal.”

Thomas became an educator because he wanted to serve families. For him, caring for children is more than a job; it is a calling and a mission.

“I have worked for three different nonprofits, and Kids Co.’s mission statement is the first one I remember,” laughed Thomas. Not only does he remember it, he embraces it. Like several members of Kids Co.’s staff, Thomas is also a donor.

At a recent Kids Co. event, Thomas learned that **Kids Co. awards more than \$300,000 a year in child care scholarship.** It touches like this that matter to this kind and gracious man. He cares deeply about the children and families he serves and it shows.



**GREAT
JOB!**

“I have worked for three different nonprofits, and Kids Co.’s mission statement is the first one I remember.”

—Thomas Ko, Program Director, Kids Co. at Graham Hill

STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Provide Uninterrupted Care in the form of tuition assistance to families experiencing financial hardship.

The Bryant Family, “The π of Play” reflected in kept promises

Lyra Bryant was troubled. The U.S. veteran had come so far. She made it through a tour of duty in Bosnia. Survived a divorce and became a single parent for her two girls, KyLécia and NaDia. Along the way, she managed to earn an AA degree and was now accepted by Seattle University to pursue an undergraduate degree in psychology.

Everything was coming together for Lyra and the girls and their future looked promising—that is, until the Department of Social and Human Services (DSHS) got wind that she would be attending college full-time. Lyra had told them herself. Never in a million years would she have believed that DSHS rules would stipulate she could no longer receive a child care subsidy if she pursued the degree which would lead to a career—not just a low paying job.

This DSHS rule did not make sense to her. It does not make sense to Kids Co. either.

Like many hard working low-income parents, Lyra was striving to create a successful future for her family. The path to college would enable her to achieve this goal, but she needed help covering the cost of child care for her girls in order to pursue it.

With all of this weighing on her heart, Lyra approached a Kids Co. program director not expecting that anything could be done. With his response, “I think Kids Co. can help,” her dream became possible.

Since opening the doors in 1989, Kids Co. has held true to a promise not to turn any family away because they could not afford the cost of care. Over the years, the amount awarded has added up. In FY’10, \$274,000 in tuition support was awarded, an amount bumped up to more than \$300,000 the following fiscal year. Lyra, KyLécia, and NaDia are among the families these funds support.

What does this mean for the Bryants and families like theirs? Lyra sums up her experience this way:

“I was told by DSHS that they would not support my girls because I was pursuing a BA degree. I really felt like I was in sinking sand being newly divorced in 2006 and now a single parent until Kids Co. approved me for a scholarship. I believe that they understood that I wanted to further myself and could only do that with education and I couldn’t get that education without support for childcare. I am truly grateful for Kids Co. bridging the gap and giving me this gift because I now have an opportunity to give my children the life I believe they deserve.”

In 2012 Lyra Bryant will graduate from Seattle University with a Bachelor of Arts in psychology, and the Kids Co. family, of which she and the girls are very much a part, helped make this dream come true. A kept promise is a good promise.

“...I believe that they understood that I wanted to further myself and could only do that with education and I couldn’t get that education without support for childcare....”

-Lyra Bryant, Mother of KyLécia and NaDia



STRATEGIC PRIORITY:

Make an uncompromising commitment to Best Practices in Childcare throughout our operation.

Kids Co. at Adams, “The π of Play” in exploration and discovery

On any given day at Kids Co. at Adams, one is likely to encounter “stars”—literally and figuratively—because Kids Co. at Adams teachers believe in the captivating power of wonder in the journey of lifelong learning. Here, children move through the world in a space intentionally designed to promote curiosity.

Creating a welcoming environment that is capable of doing this is an art, and Kids Co. at Adams staff does it beautifully. Each month the teaching staff develops broad, overarching themes that emerge from conversations with the children and then sets about “webbing” a variety of activities that align with and support the children’s active interest and curiosity.

For example, one month last winter hibernation was the theme for the two preschool groups—the Little Dippers and the Super Novas. They made snakes out of ties, sang songs about hibernation and hibernating animals, discussed what animals might be hibernating in the holes they came across on their daily outdoor walks, chose the stories they wanted read to them about hibernating animals, and even “practiced” hibernation for themselves. (Two boys took this last actively especially seriously, crawling under a table and staying there for a full 10 minutes in hibernation!)

This layering of activities that emerge from the children’s innate curiosity helps young people with short attention spans explore complex concepts and acquire developmental skills

that ready them for school. It also helps prepare them to become active lifelong learners.

This emergent curriculum approach, as it is called, positions the inherent curiosity of young people as the primary shaper of the curriculum itself. It helps children recognize, frame, and explore questions as they arise, both individually and communally.

The emergent curricula approach works well with children of all ages. Its potency is that it helps kids develop the confidence they need to explore.

Kids Co. at Adams after school Explorers Club, for children grades 2-5, superbly models how effective this approach is. Teacher Brandon Blake has worked with the kids to create a community of “chief scientists” (the regulars) and “visiting scientists” (the kids who come occasionally). Together, this little community of scientists is entering a NASA competition for high school students to design a vehicle capable of landing on an asteroid. When he shared news of the competition with the group, the kids asked teacher Brandon if they could enter it. So, he called NASA and NASA gave the Explorers Club the green light to enter. It is a big endeavor, but these kids are not dissuaded by the challenges, questions, and or even age gap.

They are explorers who are playing their way into life-changing discoveries.



SUPERSTAR



Kids Co. would like to thank the following people, businesses, foundations, and organizations for supporting our work during Fiscal Year 2010, which closed on August 31, 2010.

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Assets

August 31,

2010

Current Assets:

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$676,368
Accounts Receivable, Net	52,985
Prepaid Expenses	10,485
Total Current Assets	739,838
Property and Equipment, Net	76,115
	\$815,953

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities:

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	\$121,988
Refundable Deposits	32,900
Unearned Program Fees	36,274
Total Current Liabilities	191,162
Capital Lease Obligations	4,740
Total Liabilities	195,902
Unrestricted Net Assets	620,051
	\$815,953

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

August 31,

2010

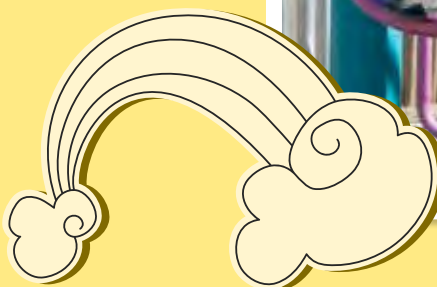
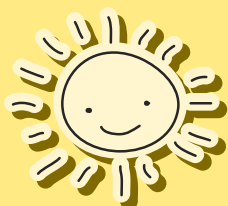
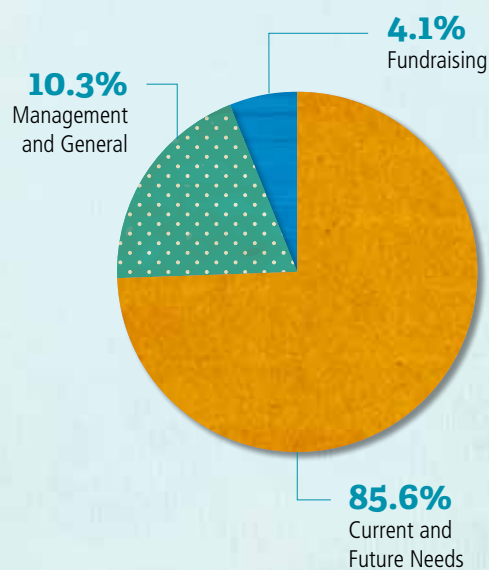
Revenue and Support:

Program Service Fees	\$1,843,445
Grants and Contributions	68,407
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,314
Investment Income	2,958
Total Revenue and Support	1,914,366

Expenses:

Program Services	1,639,278
Management and General	197,371
Fundraising	77,717
Total Expenses	1,971,664
Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	1,758
Unrestricted Net Assets, Beginning of Year	618,293
Unrestricted Net Assets, End of Year	\$620,051

Allocation of Funds Received for Fiscal Year 2010



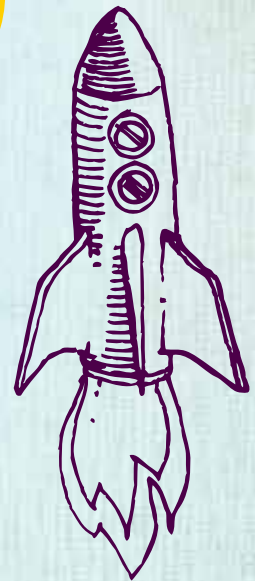


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www.kidscompany.org/sharing







Kids Co.

2208 NW Market Street, Ste. 510

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206.781.8062

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