

## **SAMPLE DEVELOPMENT APPEAL**

Dear Friend:

How old were you when you forgot how to play? Do you remember how you played as a child? What changed?

The artist Pablo Picasso famously said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." The same is true for play - every child is born an explorer and creator of the world. The challenge is how to keep our children exploring and creating as they grow older.

**Julian, age 9, has enjoyed the PlayHouse since he was 3 years old.** At first he has spent countless hours at the train tables, the CAT trucks, and Real Tools; as he grew older, he explored new areas and expanded his play interests into science and dinosaurs. During the pandemic, when the PlayHouse was closed, Julian's favorite types of play shifted towards video games, mythological books, and independent play. He played virtual Dungeons and Dragons while e-learning, and was part of the small group of tweens who piloted our PlayHouse Dungeons and Dragons with us in 2021. Now, every Sunday Julian becomes Bowhands, a dwarf skilled in archery, who goes on adventures to slay foes and collect treasures. **Through this program, Julian has gained social skills, like perspective-taking and negotiation, and can experiment with different solutions when problem-solving.**

**In 2022, one of our areas of focus is to improve exhibits and programs for 8-12 year old children like Julian.** This is a high-risk age group in terms of emotional and social development, and an age group that has previously been underserved by the PlayHouse. We want to support our young visitors a few years longer in order to give them a solid footing into the high school years.

Here are three initiatives the PlayHouse is taking this year to help 8-12 year olds continue to explore and create. Your support will help us make these possible. We are halfway to our fundraising goal - thank you to everyone who has already donated!

### **#1: New programs designed for children ages 8 and up:**

Earlier this year, we launched Dungeons & Dragons, a program that allows 8-11 year olds to build and explore their own imaginary worlds. We also revamped our Maker Workshops to serve 8-18 year olds, focusing our first workshop on Architecture.

*Funding required for this initiative: \$2,000 | Funding received as of March 1, 2022: \$500*

## **#2: Improving our Motion Commotion exhibit**

Motion Commotion is a popular exhibit that has potential to better engage all ages while also teaching about math and engineering. Proposed changes include offering children new ways to manipulate balls sent through the colorful air tubes, replacing the conveyor with a hand-crank that teaches about gears and fosters collaboration, and enhancing the magnet wall where children can create their own marble runs.

*Funding required for this initiative: \$20,000 | Funding received as of March 1, 2022: \$8,000*

## **#3: Tween Council**

In 2022 we are engaging a group of 10-13 year olds to help us create, test, and launch new ways for older children to experience the PlayHouse during a visit. We can't wait to hear what they have to tell us!

*Funding required for this initiative: \$1,000 | Funding received as of March 1, 2022: \$0*

A donation of any size helps to make this work possible. We are grateful for your support.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Shulman, Director, Peoria PlayHouse Children's Museum



*Left: Julian at age 3 playing with the PlayHouse excavator.*

*Right: Julian at age 9, playing Dungeons and Dragons at the PlayHouse.*