

2015-2016

Annual Report



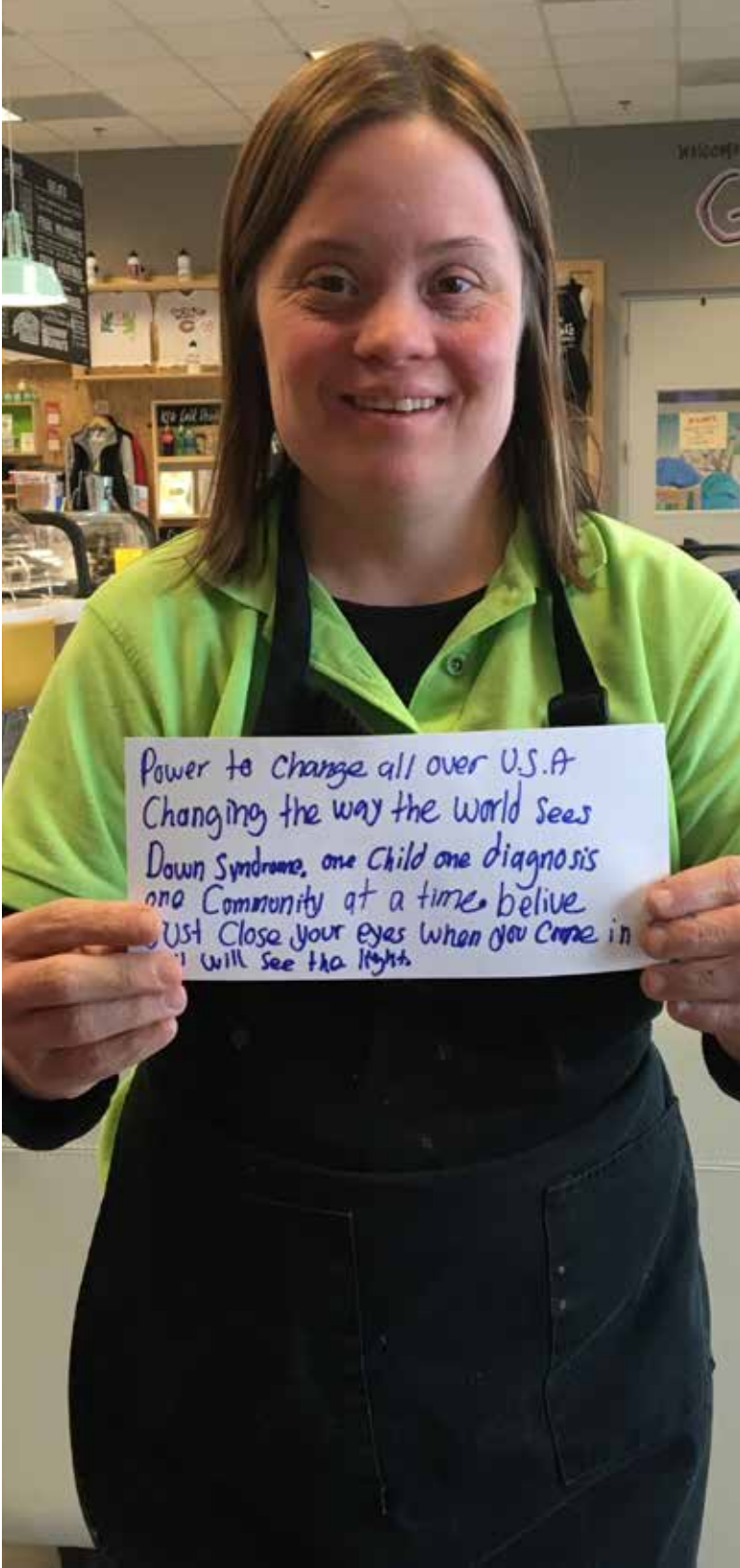
GiGi's
Playhouse™

Down Syndrome Achievement Centers
educate. inspire. believe.



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From The Founder and GiGi's Mom

When I started GiGi's Playhouse 13 years ago I selfishly wanted the community to accept my beautiful daughter as she was. I knew that if I showed the world how amazing GiGi and all of her friends were, it would open up doors for them, but I also wanted to protect my other children from the ignorance of people who judged and bullied people who may appear different. I knew if we equipped GiGi with the tools she needed to succeed in life, the community would stand up and take notice.

To my surprise, it worked! With 31 locations in the US and Mexico and 200 more inquiries in the works, we are changing the way the world sees Down syndrome. More importantly, we are sending a global message of acceptance for all: one child, one diagnosis, one community at a time.

From a pre-natal diagnosis to career skills, we make a lifetime commitment to our families and we deliver all programs **at no cost** to our families. I am sure there is not a single Fortune 500 CEO who would advocate giving your business away at no cost, but GiGi's is not about profit. GiGi's is about accepting, believing, growing, and **taking action!**

When GiGi was just a baby, I made a promise to her that I would change the way the world viewed a person with Down syndrome and that I would help people see GiGi as so much more than just a diagnosis. With your help, I am keeping my promise – not just for GiGi, but for all of our children and for the future generations to come.

Thank you for believing in us!

Nancy Gianni

Founder and GiGi's Mom

Playhouse Locations



Queretaro, Mexico 🏠

- 🏠 Inquiries
- 🏠 Existing
- 🏠 Emerging

Changing the way the world accepts people with Down syndrome.
One child. One diagnosis. One community at a time.

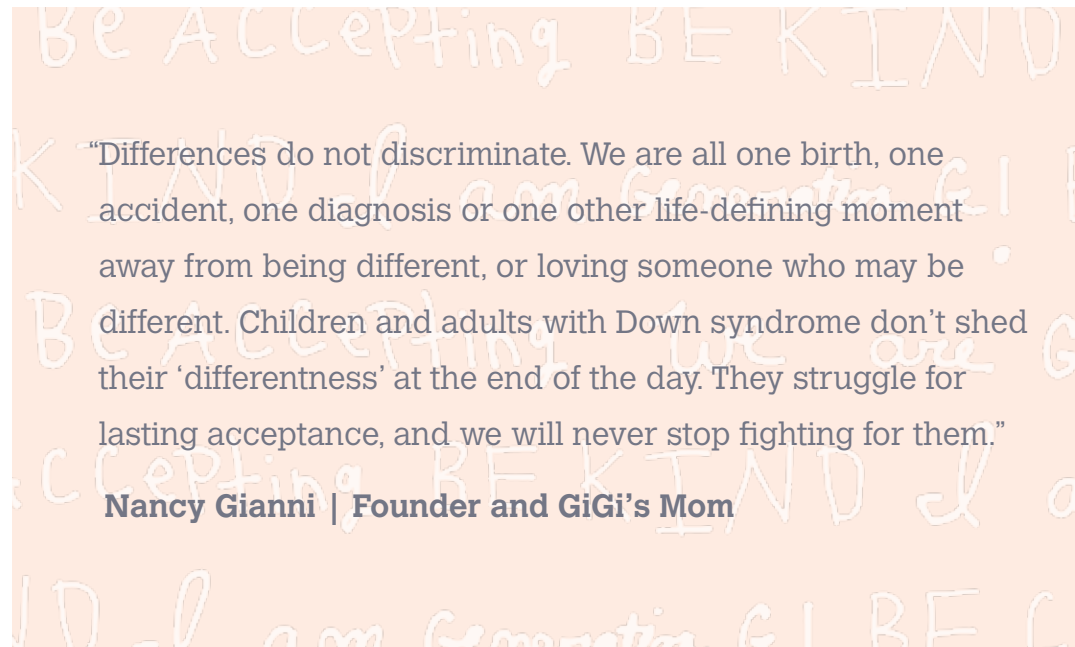
Vision and Mission

Our vision is to see a world where individuals with Down syndrome are accepted and embraced in their families, schools and communities. In doing so, we advance a global vision of acceptance for all.

Our mission is to change the way the world views Down syndrome through national campaigns, educational programs, and by empowering individuals with Down syndrome, their families and the community.

What makes GiGi's Playhouse Unique?

- **Purposeful Programs** – provided at no cost
- **Lifelong Commitments** – to participants of all ages and their families
- **Dedicated Brick & Mortar Playhouses** – across the United States and in Mexico
- **Unbreakable Commitment to Acceptance** – through Playhouse leaders and campaigns





Generation G

GiGi's Playhouse advances its vision of global acceptance for all through Generation G: a campaign for greater acceptance and lasting social change.

Dedicated locations, purposeful programs offered at no cost, and high accountability do not guarantee long-term acceptance. While over the last 12 years, GiGi's Playhouse has made significant progress and impact in supporting individuals with Down syndrome, we have only scratched the surface. Still, new parents are not receiving the positive encouragement they need from medical professionals. Young people with Down syndrome experience discrimination at school and on social media. Qualified adults with Down syndrome can't access jobs. There is still so much more to do.



Generation G has a very simple philosophy:
make a conscious decision
to be better every day.

Be Accepting. Be Generous. Be Kind.

#GenerationG

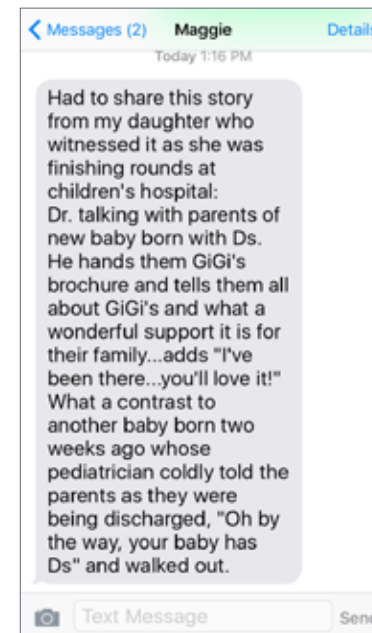
Generation G In Action

In El Paso, TX a local medical school recently assigned students to participate in a rotation at the local GiGi's Playhouse. Doctors required to do a rotation at GiGi's Playhouse? Life changing! They also took the Generation G pledge!

Soon after, a doctor from the local children's hospital delivered a Down syndrome diagnosis – and is excited to tell the new parents about GiGi's Playhouse! He says he has been there and even gives them a brochure.

This life-changing moment is a result of **taking action** for greater acceptance, generosity, and kindness.

Over 250 team members from across the US and Mexico come together for inspiration, education, training, and networking at the Annual GiGi's Playhouse International Conference.



Reach and Impact

1,200,000+ Organic Reach

Annual organic reach of GiGi's Playhouse national Facebook Page

850,000+ Page Views

Annual page views across GiGi's Playhouse network web sites

150,000+ Families Influenced

Families touched via programs and community engagement

50,000+ No Cost Sessions

Annual **no cost** program sessions delivered to Playhouse families

10,000+ Families Served

Families served via Playhouse programs (educational, therapeutic, career training)

3,000 New Families

New families served per year; equating to 50% of all new babies born with Down syndrome in the US

200 Inquiries

Number of current inquiries from families who want to bring a new Playhouse to their community

100 Volunteers to Every 1 Staff

Average number of volunteers to every 1 staff member throughout the national Playhouse network

31 Operating Playhouses


Number of Playhouses operating through 2016 in the United States and Mexico

1 Voice

A single united voice taking action for lasting acceptance for people with all abilities

0 Cost

Cost of programs to families. Cost will never be a barrier to achievement or acceptance

A young child with a joyful expression is wearing a blue superhero costume with a prominent yellow 'S' on the chest. The child is holding a yellow shield. The background is a warm, yellow-toned image of a playhouse with various signs, including one that says 'GiGi's'.

“There is an urgent need to improve the lives of those with Down syndrome and those touched by it.”

“GiGi’s Playhouse taught me how to be the Mom I needed to be. All the steps, tools and skills we need to succeed are right here at GiGi’s. There is also high accountability for parents and children. We will need GiGi’s Playhouse all along the way.”

Families at GiGi’s Playhouse

Down syndrome 101

Over 450,000 individuals with Down syndrome currently live in the United States, and including affected parents and siblings, more than two million people face this diagnosis every day. There is an urgent need to improve the lives of those with Down syndrome and those touched by it. And because of fear and lack of understanding, the pregnancy termination rate is at a shocking 75-80%. GiGi's Playhouse is changing the way the world views Down syndrome and send a global message of acceptance for all.

Four Universal Challenges Associated with Down syndrome:

Hypotonia (Low Muscle Tone)

- Impacts speech, digestion, fitness, fine and gross motor skills and more.
- Our children's biggest obstacle. Every person with Down syndrome has low muscle tone. If you do not have strong core muscles you cannot sit up straight. If you cannot sit up straight you cannot take proper breaths. If you cannot take proper breaths you cannot speak properly.

Cognitive Challenges

- Delays in speaking and processing verbal information. This means a child may struggle with expressive language even though she/he understands what is communicated.

Limited Adult Opportunities

- Insufficient employment and overall social expectations resulting in ignorance about their full capabilities.

Acceptance

- People with Down syndrome wear their diagnosis on their faces, and so are often subject to bullying, prejudice and cruelty.



Signature Program Overview

GiGi's Playhouse provides therapeutic, educational and career training programs for individuals with Down syndrome of all ages. From pre-natal diagnosis through career skills for our adults we make a lifetime commitment to our families. Each program is purposeful, progressive and always delivered at no cost to Playhouse families.

All of our programs have specific and purposeful measurement strategies. GiGi's Playhouse offers more than 30 programs including the signature programs highlighted below:



Therapeutic Programs

- LMNOP (Language, Music N Our Peeps)
- Speech and Language Therapy: Oral Motor, Pronunciation, Articulation
- Destination Discovery: Therapeutic Fitness and Games
- Fantastic Friends: developmental therapy and socialization
- Crawlers & Walkers: occupational therapy and physical fitness



Educational Programs

- 1-on-1 Literacy Tutoring
- 1-on-1 Math Tutoring



Career Programs

- GiGi University (Confident U Healthy U Whole U): Advanced Communication Skills, Fitness, Nutrition, Self-Advocacy
- Hugs & Mugs: Career Training Internship, Real World Job Skills, Workplace Communications



Program Commitments

Educational

National program participation hours
delivered at no cost to families

27,355 hrs

National volunteer hours committed
to helping playhouse families

20,904 hrs

Therapeutic

National program participation hours
delivered at no cost to families

66,714 hrs

National volunteer hours committed to
helping playhouse families

27,066 hrs

Career

National program participation hours
delivered at no cost to families

4,107 hrs

National volunteer hours committed
to helping playhouse families

1,430 hrs



"Mitchell is feeling on top of the world because of his participation in speech and language therapy. At his bowling league on Tuesday a friend of ours was telling us that she can really understand Mitchell so much better lately. His speech and the way he makes eye contact and speaks with his head up has really made a difference. So grateful to you. You have been the best therapist and inspiration to Mitch his entire life."



Program Feature: The Amina Grace Speech & Language Program

The Amina Grace Speech and Language Program was created in loving memory of Amina Grace by her parents Maura and Munawar.

Effective pronunciation, clarity, order and meaning while reading are paramount to fostering greater self-confidence, reading comprehension, literacy rates, problem-solving, school readiness, social skills, independence, and overall quality of life.

To initiate the program, a group of 13 Playhouse participants were chosen to be a part of the 2015 fall pilot session, ranging in age from 3 to 34 years old. The fall session was wildly successful and it was determined that in order to best serve participants and their families, the Amina Grace Speech and Language Program needed to expand. As a result, 23 more families of varying age ranges were offered 30-minute individual sessions on a weekly basis for the winter 2015 session. Each participant was evaluated using formal and informal measures and families' input regarding goals and direction of therapy was encouraged to ensure parents played a role in their child's success. Goals were tracked session-to-session by the therapist and families were given take-home folders to create more accountability and ensure carryover outside of the Playhouse.



High Level Goals: Speech & Language Therapy

- Improve overall oral motor strength, range of motion and stability.
- Increase intelligibility to improve clarity of speech sounds.
- Improve language comprehension and expression to benefit overall communication.
- Educate families on purpose of services and provide at-home exercises/activities.

“I was so happy that there is now going to be an expanded focus on speech communication because it is such an important part of every child’s future.”

64

Number of participants served (pilot session)

116

Hours of no cost therapy (pilot session)



Program Feature: Hugs & Mugs


After completing GiGi University, participants progress to a career training internship at Hugs & Mugs. Located inside the National Achievement Center, Hugs & Mugs is a live retail store that delivers training for various job skills including money management, public speaking, interviewing, customer service, sales, marketing and more. The interns are coached by mentors: other adults with Down syndrome who excel in their internship and employment opportunities outside of Hugs & Mugs. 1-2 store staff members and a career coordinator help oversee store operations and training curriculum. A pilot retail store opens at the Ft. Wayne Playhouse and the Des Moines Playhouse too. Hugs & Mugs offers:

- Coffee and café drinks.
- Authentic Italian gelato.
- Healthy smoothies.
- Vitamin cookies (V21) packed with nutritious ingredients.
- Gluten free cookie (G-21).
- Personalized mugs, water bottles, cell phone cases, travel mugs, key chains and other customizable products.
- Merchandise and accessories for GiGi's Playhouse and the Generation G campaign includes men's/women's/youth apparel, bracelets, custom products and more.



Empowering Generations: Career Training Program Outcomes

# of GiGi University sessions:	10
# of students completing GiGi Prep:	29
# of students completed GiGi University:	45
# of students enrolled in career development program at Hugs & Mugs:	42
# of students completed career development program at Hugs & Mugs:	24
# of students with jobs secured:	15



“We were so grateful to receive support from somewhere that has always been there for us: GiGi’s Playhouse. We’ve been coming to GiGi’s since Louise was 7 months old and now at age 7, they are still here for us.”

Media and Business Achievements



CNN

After months of vetting and validation and inspired by Nancy's commitment to empowering the lives of thousands of individuals with Down syndrome, CNN chose Nancy Gianni as a 2016 CNN Hero. Nancy challenges the status quo and works exhaustively to foster greater acceptance, dignity and opportunities that Playhouse families so desperately need and deserve. Since the announcement, Nancy has appeared on Chicago's Windy City Live, the Steve Harvey show, Fox News Chicago and will continue to share her story with the world.



"Born This Way"

Reaching over 150,000 families through programs and social media, GiGi's Playhouse was invited to partner with A&E Television to promote Season 2 of the Emmy-Award Winning series "Born This Way": a nationally televised reality TV show following the lives of seven individuals with Down syndrome. The new partnership included pre-season launch marketing and communications via e-mail, social media, Playhouse web sites, window clings, press releases and more. In addition to supporting GiGi's Playhouse mission, A&E highlighted GiGi's Playhouse on their social media platforms.



The Steve Harvey Show

GiGi's Playhouse founder and "Chief Belief Officer" Nancy Gianni was invited to appear on the nationally broadcast Steve Harvey Show, appearing on NBC and other affiliates. Nancy was honored as a leader making a significant difference in her communities.



CRM Technology Implementation:

After vetting several prospective partners, GiGi's Playhouse chose to initiate and invest in a relationship with Salesforce and Intacct as service providers for CRM, marketing and finance technology platforms. GiGi's Playhouse also engaged Classy as the new preferred peer to peer fundraising platform. This relationship will manifest network-wide at all GiGi's Playhouse locations with the help of GiGi's Playhouse National Office and implementation partners. GiGi's Playhouse specifically thanks the national Playhouse Network for co-funding this game-changing technology project.



#playforchange

Northwestern University Dance Marathon (NUDM)

After six years of candidacy, GiGi's Playhouse was selected as the 2017 primary beneficiary for Northwestern University Dance Marathon (NUDM). NUDM is one of the largest entirely student-run organizations in the country, raising more than \$1 million for its beneficiaries in each of the past six years. **Sponsorship opportunities to engage students and alumni are available throughout the fall and during the marathon itself.**



Insperity

In 2016, GiGi's Playhouse partnered with Insperity to offer benefits including health insurance and 401K to all Playhouse network staff. These additional benefits for staff will help attract top talent to serve our families and communities in which Playhouses reside. In addition to these benefits, Insperity manages the payroll administration, taxes, worker's compensation and all benefit administration ensuring GiGi's Playhouse is compliant with all state and federal laws. Insperity has become a truly valued partner to the GiGi's Playhouse network! Thank you Insperity for your partnership and your generosity towards our Playhouse families.



“ More than 450,000 people in the U.S.
have Down syndrome, and over
2 million are affected by it, and we are
beyond excited that NUDM has the
opportunity to help improve the lives of
these incredibly inspiring people.”

– NUDM 2017 Executive Co-Chairs



GiGi's Playhouse On the Road

Through the generosity of Nationwide Rail Services and Wickstrom Auto Group, GiGi's Playhouse families can be seen "on the road" by way of a 55' semi-trailer and Jeep Wrangler. Both are branded with GiGi's Playhouse messaging and images and show the world that individuals with Down syndrome will always be accepted wherever they go!



“We wanted to give back, and when we read about how GiGi's Playhouse helps families through its many locations, no-cost programs, and unconditional acceptance for everyone, it was a no-brainer. All of our employees are pleased to partner with an organization that is driving real change. We can't wait to bring the truck to all of GiGi's locations.”

– Joe Barton, Nationwide Rail Services

Financial Overview

INC Income (2015 audited financials):

Contributions:	\$1,783,087
Grants:	\$433,093
Merchandise:	\$161,063
In-Kind:	\$372,769
Special Events:	\$848,038
Interest Income:	\$0
Miscellaneous Income:	\$11,379
National Mission Support (Intercompany):	\$345,753
Total:	\$3,956,182





Network Income (2015 audited financials):

Contributions:	\$3,646,407
Grants:	\$498,114
Merchandise:	\$135,774
In-Kind:	\$ 675,175
Special Events:	\$ 4,345,490
Interest Income:	\$0
Total:	\$9,298,296

Event Summaries and Highlights


Galas:

In 2016 alone GiGi's Playhouse hosted 24 "i Have a Voice" gala events representing 26 Playhouses. GiGi's Playhouse Phoenix added a local flare to their event with a 'Rhinestone Cowboy' theme. GiGi's Playhouse Des Moines provided their guests and event of mystery and intrigue at their "i Have a Voice" Masquerade Gala!

Run/Walks:

In 2016, GiGi's Playhouse also hosted 14 run/walk events representing 17 locations. Runs and walk give families a platform to shine, and they create a place for perceptions to change! Kids and adults of all ages dash, run and walk towards greater acceptance! GiGi's Playhouse Indianapolis has created a 3.21 event length as a way to make reference to chromosome 21. GiGi's Playhouse Quad Cities invites all of their families and community members to show us their superpowers by dressing up as their favorite super heroes for their run/walk event!



A photograph of two men smiling, overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The man on the left has Down syndrome and is wearing a dark blue apron with white text. The man on the right is wearing sunglasses and a white t-shirt with a graphic. A quote is centered over the image in white text.

“We truly celebrate their diagnosis and the families know they will never be alone and that we will be with them every step of the way. To be a part of a community that truly believes in your child is life changing.”

Hugs + Mugs
COFFEE • GELATO • designABILITY

Brian



Take Action: Advancing Our Mission

Growth and Demand

An additional 240 families per month are joining GiGi's Playhouses nationwide and in Mexico, representing 16% growth every single month just this year alone. More than 200 new communities are asking for a GiGi's Playhouse and/or mobile program units to serve additional communities. This unprecedented growth affirms the credibility and impact of GiGi's Playhouse replicable model, and reinforces the need for additional donations.

Fundraising Needs

GiGi's Playhouse fully survives on the generosity of donations. Funds provide children and adults with Down syndrome the lifelong access to no-cost purposeful programs without barriers or conditions. Every program dollar invested enriches lives and supplements many resources families seek beyond the Playhouse.

Donations also advance our vision for global acceptance. GiGi's Playhouse is not just for our participants and families, **it's for the whole community**. Every supporter creates a widening circle of dialog regarding our children's potential. As the circle of communication, engagement and investment expands; so does lasting acceptance.

Future Goals

GiGi's Playhouse goal is to establish more than 100 Playhouses or mobile units by 2021 and serve every state in the US and every major metro market with a population of over 300,000. We also intend to expand speech and language therapy and career training programs to every Playhouse.



Take Action: Invest In Our Families



ENGAGE

- Host a private donor cultivation event in your home.
- Host the GiGi's Playhouse galleries at your business headquarters.
- Choose GiGi's Playhouse as the primary beneficiary of your national employee giving, matching gift, and volunteer match campaigns.



SHARE

- Market and publicize GiGi's Playhouse on your corporate web sites and social media pages.
- Donate broadcast and digital advertising to help GiGi's Playhouse reach more families.
- Advance the Generation G Acceptance Campaign as a national promotional partner.



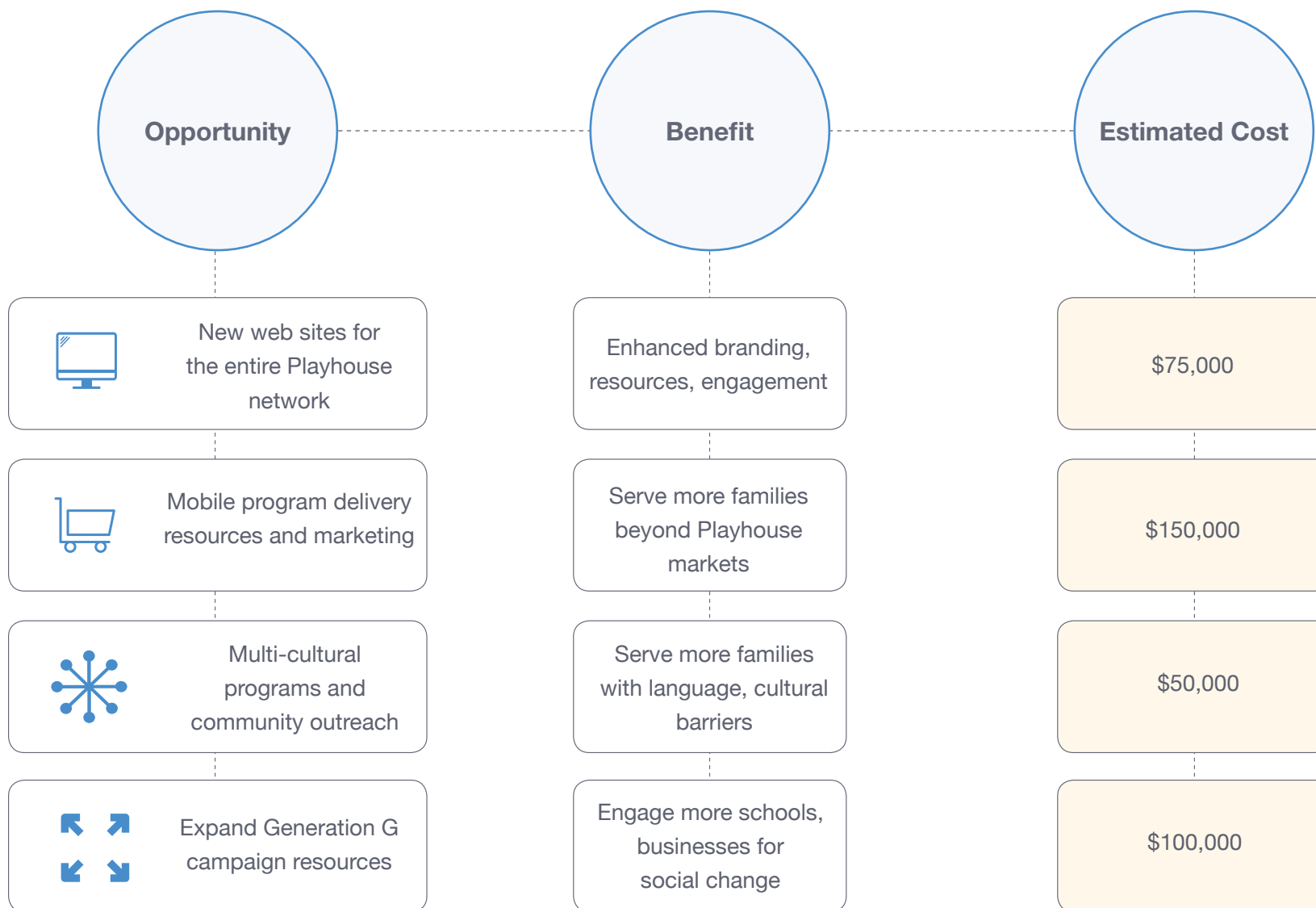
PARTNER

- Engage all constituents network wide as a national sponsor of GiGi's Playhouse.
- Underwrite retail operations of the Hugs & Mugs National Career Training Center.
- Create an endowment or donor advised fund to provide sustainable support for Playhouse families and programs.

"Whereas, awareness of Down syndrome, while important, needs to be surpassed by the act of acceptance. I challenge you today to talk to someone with Down syndrome. Ask them about who they are, what they dream about and what their passion is; and Whereas, for those already comfortable engaging with people with Down syndrome I urge you to take extra actions to further develop meaningful relationships. Offer a job to someone with Down syndrome, teach a skill or provide one on one mentorship. Your actions will pay off in unbelievable ways."

-Hoffman Estates IL Mayor Bill McLeod

Take Action: Wish List



Appendix

Leadership Team



Nancy Gianni, Founder and GiGi's Mom



Kristin Malek, Chief Operating Officer and Katelynn's Mom

Founders Circle

Adrienne Mulligan – GiGi's Playhouse Atlanta
 Amy Jackson – GiGi's Playhouse Twin Cities
 Jennifer Gage – GiGi's Playhouse Phoenix
 Megan Christofferson – GiGi's Playhouse Des Moines
 Nancy Gianni – GiGi's Playhouse Inc.

National Executive Board of Directors

Paul Gianni	Kevin Wever	Greg Giancola
Nancy Gianni	Michael Wohlwend	Richard Fischer
Randy Allen	Tony Sindt	Mari Hargan
Troy Cowdrey	Rocco Armocida	Sue Schultz

INC Contact information

2350 West Higgins Road | Hoffman Estates, IL 60169
847.885.PLAY | GiGisPlayhouse.org | #GenerationG

Network contact information (phone numbers)

Atlanta, GA 404-872-PLAY	McHenry, IL 815-385-PLAY
Bradley, IL 815-939-PLAY	Milwaukee, WI 414-797-0522
Cedar Rapids, IA 319-200-4821	Nashville, TN 615-370-1500
Chicago, IL 773-583-PLAY	New York, NY 646-801-PLAY
Cleveland, OH 216-529-3333	Phoenix, AZ 480-451-PLAY
Des Moines, IA 515-252-PLAY	Quad Cities, IA 309-762-PLAY
El Paso, TX 915-779-PLAY	Queretaro, MEXICO
Fargo, ND 701-551-PLAY	Raleigh, NC 919-307-3952
Fort Wayne, IN 260-482-PLAY	Rockford, IL 815-654-PLAY
Fox Valley, IL 630-778-PLAY	Sioux City, IA 712-226-PLAY
Gainesville, FL 352-224-5722	Sugar Land, TX 832-939-9919
Hillsborough, NJ 908-829-5331	Syracuse, NY 315-288-PLAY
Hoffman Estates, IL 847-885-PLAY	Tinley Park, IL 708-597-PLAY
Indianapolis, IN 317-288-8235	Twin Cities, MN 952-926-3660
Layton, UT 801-784-7429	Westchester, NY 914-479-5566
Madison, WI 608-709-1411	



Start-up Locations

- Albuquerque NM
- Annapolis MD
- Deerfield IL
- Ft. Meyers FL
- Houston TX
- Lancaster PA
- New Orleans LA
- Rochester NY
- San Diego CA
- Tampa FL

Snapshot: Press Coverage

Press Release & Coverage

- [GiGi's Playhouse campaign for Down syndrome Acceptance Month](#)
- [Northwestern University Dance Marathon Announcement](#)
- [Nancy Gianni chosen as 2016 CNN Hero](#)



Video 1

Video 2



Video 1



Video 1



Video 1

YouTube Links



Official Generation PSA



2016 Chicagoland Gala Recap



2015 Chicagoland, 5K Walk and Dash



2015 GiGi Fest Recap (Family Fest)



2016 Gala Program Video



2016 CBS 2 Special Report

For more examples of GiGi's Playhouse National media coverage please [click here](#) or visit the media page on GiGisPlayhouse.org.



Thank you for **taking action** to help children and adults with Down syndrome.
Through your generosity and acceptance, together we will change the world!



Down Syndrome Achievement Centers
educate. inspire. believe.



#generationG