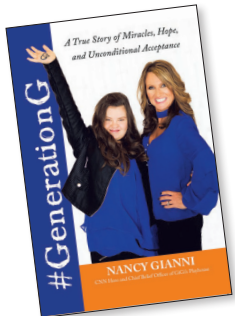


Biography: Nancy Gianni

Nancy Gianni is the Founder and Chief Belief Officer of GiGi's Playhouse, and the visionary behind the organization's launch and dramatic growth. In 2002, Nancy gave birth to her daughter, GiGi. When she received the diagnosis that GiGi had Down syndrome, her fears, coupled with the negative reactions of the medical staff, made Nancy believe that her life, as she knew it, was over. Nancy soon realized that GiGi could do the very same things that her other children do! What began as a mother's vision to change perception, and maximize her daughter's successes, has evolved into a global movement of acceptance that is changing lives every day.

Today, Nancy leads 40 GiGi's Playhouse locations, where thousands of individuals and families with Down syndrome nationwide and in Mexico, celebrate their diagnosis and participate in FREE educational, therapeutic and career training programs. Nancy's entrepreneurial spirit and unmatched ability to inspire others to act, as seen through the rapidly growing replicable Playhouse model, is helping hundreds of communities' world wide open their eyes to change.



The 2016 launch of Generation G stemmed from Nancy's passion to change the world, emphasizing a global message of acceptance for all and a pledge to BE ACCEPTING, BE GENEROUS, BE KIND. In her inspiring memoir, #GenerationG, Nancy chronicles the growth of the GiGi's Playhouse empire while sharing details of how she learned to tap into her inner strength and rise above negativity, preconceptions, and the unfiltered views of outside observers. Through her personal struggles and joys, Nancy Gianni gently reminds us that it is possible to make a conscious decision to be better every day at loving everyone. All profits from the sale of #GenerationG go toward GiGi's Playhouse and furthering the mission of global acceptance for all through Generation G!

The demands of running a \$10,000,000 international non-profit organization are high, but Nancy never loses touch with the organization's heartbeat – Playhouse families. With no rest for the driven and pure of heart, Nancy and GiGi pack up and hit the road whenever needed; inspiring Playhouse start-up groups, visiting existing Playhouse locations and co-hosting new Playhouse grand openings. With GiGi as Nancy's faithful "co-pilot," Nancy and GiGi selflessly live and breathe the Playhouse mission 24-7-365.

Referred to as a "tour de force" by friends and supporters, Nancy tirelessly serves Playhouses and families, while inspiring partners and donors to expand their impact. For these efforts, Nancy has been named a 2016 CNN Hero, an honor reserved for only a handful of individuals globally. She has been recognized by national media including the Today Show, NBC Nightly News, The Steve Harvey Show, Windy City Live, Today's Chicago Woman, Chicago Parent and more. She has also been voted "Chicagoan of the Year" in 2008, and received an honorary doctorate, receiving the Social Entrepreneur Award from Stevenson University in Maryland. Celebrities like Mario Lopez help host GiGi's Playhouse events and recently the POPSUGAR viral video showcasing the outcomes of GiGi's career training program, Hugs + Mugs, surpassed 9 million views.



As a recognized authority within the Down syndrome and leadership communities, Nancy is a sought-after speaker on the topics of Down syndrome, team building, grassroots organizing, marketing, fundraising and what can happen when you truly BELIEVE!

Typically, when a business works as hard as we do, your profits grow. That's why you go into business! Well, GiGi's growth is extraordinary but our profits are not measured in dollars, but in the lives we are changing every day. I know our model of FREE educational and therapeutic programming would not fit into any Fortune 500 CEO's business plan! But you know who wins in this plan? The kids and the world!

A higher power is driving GiGi's Playhouse mission, I am just blessed to be sitting in the driver's seat! Our families need us. Please remember, GiGi and her friends don't get a break from their diagnosis. People who are different don't get to shed that 'differentness' at the end of the day. They struggle constantly for acceptance, and that's why we'll never stop fighting for them. Together, we're changing the world: one child, one diagnosis, and one community at a time!"

– Nancy Gianni, Founder and Chief Belief Officer, GiGi's Playhouse
Nancy Gianni resides in South Barrington, Illinois, just minutes from the very first Playhouse with her husband Paul, son Franco, and daughters Romina, Bella and of course, GiGi.

