

Dear Believers -

At GiGi's Playhouse Milwaukee, 2024 has been a year defined by connection — connection to our participants, our families, our volunteers, our generous donors, and the vibrant Milwaukee community that surrounds us.

Our Playhouse is a magical place where every milestone is celebrated, and every individual deserves to be embraced and accepted for their unique selves. This year, our impact has been made possible by the countless hours our volunteers have given, the unwavering support of our donors, and the trust of families who walk through our doors seeking hope, resources, and belonging.

Together, we have built a network of support that extends beyond our Playhouse walls. Our partnerships with local businesses, colleges, and nonprofits have allowed us to offer innovative, free programming that empowers individuals with Down syndrome to achieve their "Best of All." Our volunteers — over 230 strong — have led more than 4,000 hours of programming, ensuring that every participant and family feels seen, valued, and included.

None of this would be possible without you. Whether you are a parent, a volunteer, a donor, or a community partner, your commitment fuels our mission and inspires us to reach higher. You are the reason GiGi's Playhouse Milwaukee continues to grow, innovate, and change lives. Thank you for being part of our story, for believing in acceptance for all, and for helping us build a future where every individual is celebrated.

With gratitude,

Erin Anderson

GiGi's Playhouse Milwaukee, Board President

2024 At-A-Glance



GIGI'S MILWAUKEE #22 OPENED 3/21/2015 <small>9 years ago on World Down Syndrome Day</small>	Across the U.S. & in Mexico 61 Playhouses were open in 2024	264 VOLUNTEERS donated 5,375 hours in 2024	143 unique DS participants joined our 30 different virtual & in-person programs	PURPOSEFUL PROGRAMS 4,300+ academic, therapeutic & social programming hours
122 participants in SPEECH & LANGUAGE = 1,085 hours	Literacy tutors supported 2,790 program hours & 387 participants	Math tutors supported 680 program hours & 99 participants	2024 launched our 1st FASHION SHOW with 30 models	336 PARTICIPANTS ARE GETTING HEALTHY AT GIGIT with 2,260 hours of fitness!
GIGI'S MILWAUKEE WELCOMED 37 NEW FAMILIES	CELEBRATES COMMUNITY 447 Families in Wisconsin 557 Families in total	GIGI'S MILWAUKEE GAVE 86 TOURS TO NEW FAMILIES & VOLUNTEERS	AWARDS... Center of Excellence HR & Volunteer Mgmt Marketing Operations & Facility Strong Family & Community Development & Fundraising Programs	 Down Syndrome Achievement Centers enhance inspire better Milwaukee, WI

OUR CONNECTION IMPACT

Meet Emily! She has been attending our adult programs since we opened. Here, Emily shares a portion of what GiGi's Playhouse Milwaukee means to her:

"By participating in GiGi's activities, I get the opportunity to meet in a safe space with friends and activity leaders where I can visit, discuss, and explore thoughts, ideas, and new skills. Being involved with GiGi's has given me new opportunities and experiences that have helped to increase my self-confidence and to realize I am capable of many things and try new and different things."



LINK WITH OUR STAFF

Sara Van Deurzen: As the face of the Playhouse since 2017, Sara is the doer of all the things. She manages all of our data, keeps the programs humming, manages the events, connects with our community and is often the first face a new family sees when they enter the Playhouse. We are lucky to have her passion and dedication advocating for our mission every day.

Jim Pulliam: Jim has found his footing as our Program and Volunteer Coordinator. He really stepped up this summer to train and assist our volunteers with programs for all ages. Our participants have enjoyed connecting with his sense of humor and no nonsense leadership during his time at the Playhouse.

Marie Burrows: Marie's main focus is connecting our community through engaging social media posts, mailings and event signage. She brings fun and creativity to our team as the marketing coordinator.

CONNECTIONS COMMUNITY FAMILIES

GiGi's By The Numbers



INCOME

Grants	40%
Donations	14%
Fundraisers	45%
Miscellaneous	1%

EXPENSES

Payroll	46%
Facilities	19%
Program/Marketing/Events	23%
National Support	12%



EVENT CONNECTIONS

DASH FOR DOWN SYNDROME

We welcomed over 300 registrants to our 3rd Annual Dash for Down Syndrome on May 5th. Community members and families enjoyed a 1 mile walk or a 5K run through Lake Park in Milwaukee. There were cheerleaders, dinosaurs and princesses cheering everyone on as we raised funds for our programs.

FASHION SHOW

Enthusiasm and acceptance were on display at our first Runway of Joy Fashion Show in August at Journey 21. Twenty-nine models with Down syndrome and other disabilities showed our nearly 200 supporters that beauty and confidence comes in all shapes and sizes.

BREW HAHA

Friends and community supporters connected at our 7th Annual Brew HaHa at the Pabst Historic Brewery in Milwaukee in October. This 'fun'draising event featured a beer tasting, small plate buffet, silent auction, comedic musical entertainment by Pat McCurdy and a VIP spirit tasting in the Speakeasy.

GiGi's
Playhouse™
Down Syndrome Achievement Centers
educate. inspire. believe.
Milwaukee, WI



SUPPORTER CONNECTIONS

GiGi's Playhouse Milwaukee could not provide the programs and family support we offer without our donors. Donations at all levels allow us to connect with our families and participants. Please scan the code below for a list of the generous foundations, businesses and private donors that support our mission to change the way the world views Down syndrome.

YOU can join our 321 Champions Club with a monthly commitment.

<https://gigisplayhouse.org/milwaukee/321-champions/>



NATIONAL CONNECTION

A connection to a national network of Playhouses helps make our Milwaukee Playhouse better. Our national mission is celebrating 21 years of providing FREE purposeful programming across 60+ Playhouses across the nation. The national office provides programming guidelines, valuable resources, peer connections and non-profit education. Our staff, volunteers and an advocate attended our national conference in November to learn and be inspired.

VOLUNTEER CONNECTIONS

We were grateful to connect with three fabulous volunteers working with the Community Health Internship Program (CHIP) through the Milwaukee Area Health Education Center (AHEC). This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Each of these interns were able to quickly pivot and step in to offer a fabulous slate of summer programming. 60 participants enjoyed 6 different weekly programs for all ages. Together they provided 395 volunteer hours as they planned, set-up and executed these programs. A warm thank you goes out to:

- Delaney Marwood
- Susan Davies
- Grace Zhang Wang-Meingast

"GiGi's Playhouse Milwaukee showed me the power of community and positivity. Being part of such an uplifting and inclusive space was one of the most meaningful experiences of my college journey."

Delaney Marwood,
CHIP Intern



CONNECT WITH OUR PROGRAMMING

Thanks to the efforts of our CHIP Interns, we were able to offer a full slate of programs this summer.

GIGIFIT

Preschoolers and Kids – Summer fun was had by our 3-5 year old preschoolers and 6-12 year old kids at St. Francis Children's Center. Leaders led them through exercises designed to improve their fitness goals and have fun.

GIGI KITCHEN KIDS AND ADULTS

Separate sessions for kids and adults met weekly to learn new kitchen skills and important nutritional lessons. They also enjoyed taste testing!

TEENTASTIC

Teens met throughout the summer to socialize, play games and have adventures.

GIGI PREP

Young adults learned important new skills about self-advocacy, job responsibilities, time management and communication.

GIGIFIT ADULT

Our adults love socializing and moving with fun purpose. Activities are designed to address the physical needs of our population.





Down Syndrome Achievement Centers
educate. inspire. believe.

Milwaukee, WI

8685 N. Port Washington Road
Milwaukee, WI 53217
(414) 797-0522
Text (847) 232-8268



Virtually Visit Us!
<https://gigisplayhouse.org/milwaukee/>



OUR MISSION: We make a lifetime commitment to changing lives and providing hope through the consistent delivery of FREE educational, therapeutic, and career development programs for individuals with Down syndrome, their families, and the community, using a replicable playhouse model.

OUR VISION: To see a world where individuals with Down syndrome are accepted and embraced in their families, schools, and communities.



Down Syndrome Achievement Centers
educate. inspire. believe.

GiGi's
Playhouse™

Milwaukee, WI

Fiscal Year 2024
Annual Impact Report

Connecting
With Our

Community