

# A Transformative Model for Calgary's Children and Early Childhood Development

Creating the Best Public Library in the World for Calgarians

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“Development can only take place when children are actively involved, when they are occupied with a high, non-stop degree of concentration, when they are interested, when they give themselves completely, when they use all their mental abilities to invent and make new things and when this gives them a high degree of satisfaction and pleasure.” Ferre Laevers

## Executive Summary

Early childhood development sets the course for a child's future and largely determines how well children will do in school, their physical and mental health, behaviour, relationships and general well-being. While parents are a child's first teacher, the public library is recognized nationally "as the only public institution responding to the learning needs of the pre-school child."<sup>1</sup>

The Calgary Public Library is our city's largest provider of free, high quality early learning support and annually welcomes more than 500,000 children under five and their parents across its network of eighteen community libraries. (growing to 21 by 2018). The Library also leverages its network to deliver targeted community outreach to support underrepresented citizens, including at-risk and vulnerable populations, and newcomers to Canada.

The Calgary Public Library Foundation's vision is to create the best public library in the world for Calgarians. We believe this is possible through *Add In*—the Campaign for Calgary's Library and the strategic philanthropic investment of Calgarians.

Guided by the priorities of Calgarians, and to support Calgary's children and families, we are creating a transformative model for early childhood learning. To establish and develop this global leadership model, we require \$19,750,000 of philanthropic investment to ignite the potential of Calgary's children and support the future social and economic prosperity of our city.

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<sup>1</sup> Newman, W. (2004). Public libraries in the priorities of Canada: Acting on the assets and opportunities. Prepared for the Provincial and Territorial Library Directors Council (PTLDC), (July).

## Goals

- Establish a city-wide network of high-quality, innovative spaces to engage children and parents in play-based learning; transform Library early childhood learning programs and services through knowledge and research; enrich and inspire every child's potential through quality collections and services.
- Position the Calgary Public Library as a global leader in early childhood learning and as an essential contributor to Alberta's Children's Charter, the Child Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development.
- Create a social impact model that can be adapted and implemented by public libraries everywhere that ensure all children have the opportunity to succeed and thrive in life.

## Outcomes

- Ensure all Calgary's children and parents have access and opportunity to maximize their learning potential
  - Support ImagineCALGARY Plan target #110 which calls for 95% of Calgary children aged two to five to exhibit high levels of emotional well-being and age-appropriate levels of attention span and control.
  - Contribute to long term economic benefits realized through improved literacy in adult populations—while low literacy starts in childhood, it impacts adult life.
- Enhance Calgary's reputation as a global leader in early childhood learning
  - Augment and enhance the leadership of Palix Foundation, Mount Royal University's Centre for Child Well-Being, United Way Calgary's Thrive By Five initiative, and the Alberta Early Child Development Mapping Initiative.
- Leverage impact beyond Calgary
  - Disseminate knowledge and evidence-based practices through the network of Public Libraries; providing early learning tools to children globally.

## Our Vision for Calgary's Children

### Innovative Spaces

Community Library Early Learning Centres: \$2.5 million

The focus of the Calgary Public Library over the next three years is to pilot Early Learning Centres in all 18 libraries (growing to 21) throughout the city. Each centre will feature experiential and moveable furniture and will provide hands-on activities, props and games to support play and active learning. Using play as a building block for development of critical foundation skills, these early learning spaces will nurture hundreds of thousands of children annually and will support children and their caregivers as they discover the five stages of early learning; talking, singing, reading, writing and play.

#### Existing Libraries

- Bowness Library
- Crowfoot Library
- Louise Riley Library
- Nose Hill Library
- Alexander Calhoun Library
- Memorial Park Library
- Nicholls Family Library at Westbrook Station
- Signal Hill Library
- Southwood Library
- Country Hills Library
- Saddletowne Library
- Judith Umbach Library
- Village Square Library
- Fish Creek Library
- Forest Lawn Library
- Shawnessy Library
- Quarry Park Library

#### Future Libraries

- Symon's Valley Library
- Rocky Ridge Library
- Seton Library

## New Central Library Feature Spaces

Children's Library: \$7 Million

The New Central Library will house the city's first Children's Library offering over 16,000 square feet of space for children to read, learn and explore. This modern take on a Children's Library will engage our youngest patrons with reading nooks, spaces for storytimes, play areas, and of course, lots of room for books. The Children's Library will promote early learning and provide the tools to set Calgary's children up for life-long success.

Early Learning Centre: \$1.5 Million

The Early Learning Centre in the New Central Library will be an extraordinary space that will deliver play based activity critical to the development of foundational learning skills. Imagine a parent and child leaving their tiny downtown apartment in 2018 and entering the inspiring and spacious new Early Learning Centre located in the East Village.

Raising Of The Child: \$1 Million

Parents will benefit from a New Central Library space close to the Early Learning Centre named Raising of the Child. This innovative service at the New Central Library will provide the tools that parents and caregivers need to support their children's development and encourage a life-long love of learning.

Existing resources include the award winning, donor funded *Grow A Reader* Early Literacy mobile app, which adapts the Library's high quality learning early learning programs and delivers it to parents via their smartphone or tablet. Videos of Library staff performing rhymes, fingerplays and songs, recommended booklists, and literacy tips to help Calgary parents to nurture their child's development.

## Research

World's First Library Based Applied Research Centre for Early Childhood Learning: \$5,000,000

Anchoring the Library's transformative model for Calgary's children is a collaboration with Mount Royal University on an Early Childhood Research program. The Centre will be the first in the world within a public library, and its research and findings will inform programs and spaces, as well as engage the community to ensure all Calgary children, parents and caregivers have access to high quality, free early childhood enrichment and support.

Utilizing the latest research and expertise in early childhood development, the co-creation between the Calgary Public Library and Mount Royal University will build on findings from other post-secondary partners such as Harvard University's Centre for the Developing Child to develop and implement cutting-edge early childhood learning programs. As our city's most utilized, trusted learning resource for Calgary's children and parents, the Library is primed to become a living laboratory through which to trial and test innovative new ways to help unlock the potential that lives within all of us.

## Programs and Outreach

Early Learning Programs: \$2.5 million goal with programs ranging from \$10,000 to \$150,000 annually

The Library has helped generations of Calgarians to foster a love of reading and build foundational literacy skills essential to personal and professional success. Building on this tradition, the Library developed an early literacy initiative, Read Early and Learn (REAL), in 2008 and has progressively developed a suite of programs around the five early literacy practices (talk, sing, read, write and play) which help children to develop skills that prepare them for reading.

Free early literacy programs provide a high-touch, personalized experience that support bonding between parents and infant while building the critical foundational skills that will last a lifetime.

The Library offers early literacy programs for babies, toddlers, and pre-schoolers which are improved and updated on a regular basis. These are the Library's highest demand programs and require philanthropic support to meet the needs of Calgary's parents.

- *Baby Rhyme Time* – Welcomes baby to the Library with songs, rhymes and stories that will set the stage for future literacy.
- *Baby Bookworms* – Connects parents and children with books, rhymes and songs
- *Baby's Big Playdate* – A fun and social hour of discovery and exploration
- *Papa Time* – A chance for fathers and their babies to share books, learn new skills and enjoy fun language activities together
- *Read with Engine 23* – A special family Storytime at the Library's exciting new firetruck exhibit led by a Calgary Fire Department Firefighter
- *Words and Wiggles* – This new six-week program for preschoolers focuses on the five early learning practices, with a special emphasis on literacy and movement.
- *1-2-3 Count with Me* – An introduction to numeracy using rhymes, songs, books and active play
- *A-B-C You and Me* – Read, sing, talk and play together in this interactive circle time
- *Colossal Playdates* – Join the Library for a playdate and build the foundation for a lifetime of learning
- *Drop-in Family Storytime* – Drop in for stories, songs and finger plays the whole family can enjoy
- *Dual Language Storytime* - A storytime for newcomer parents and children in their native language.

## Outreach Initiatives

Library Month at Your Daycare: \$400,000

Library Month at Your Daycare is a four-week program that enables Library staff to connect with children aged two to five, their parents, and daycare staff within a child-care setting. The streamlined model gives community libraries the opportunity to visit an increasing number of daycares in their catchment each year, while making a real connection and delivering impact.

Read and Play Kits, Presented by Imperial: \$350,000 (Secured)

*Read and Play* is a joint Calgary Public Library/YMCA Calgary initiative to support the development of early literacy, numeracy and physical literacy. This pilot project is currently being trialled at Quarry Park Library and allows patrons to check out kits that include a *Read and Play* booklet for parents, five books and several toys themed to their child's interests.

Early Learning Endowment: \$1,000,000

Early Learning sets the course of a child's future and largely determines how well children do in school, their physical and mental health, behavior, relationships and general well-being.

The Early Learning Endowment will support new and existing programming, special collections and enrichment for children from birth to five and their parents—ensuring all children in Calgary have access to learning opportunities.

## Collections

### Early Learning Collection: \$1,000,000

The Early Learning Collection complements our Collections Endowment, which supports system-wide material acquisition.

Themed Collections bring together children's books, Readalongs, DVDs, CDs, magazines and digital resources. These are available online and in community libraries and are presented in fun, colourful display units to increase access to reading materials and encourage discovery. Themes for children from birth to five include ABC123, Sleepy Time, Animals, Dinosaurs, and Things that Go.

The Calgary Public Library currently invests more than \$1 million annually on children's collections, adding 80,000 high demand and well-used resources. An investment in the Early Learning Collection will increase the Library's capacity to increase the amount of materials that support early learning.

## Training

Early Learning Training: \$1,000,000

The most important component of the Library's Early Learning Strategy is the training of its staff and volunteers—without a knowledgeable and educated staff, all other efforts will not be successful.

Early Learning Training will provide the financial resources to ensure that staff and volunteers are provided with the professional development training and tools they need to enhance the delivery of Early Learning Outreach, Programming and Early Learning Spaces. An engaged, knowledgeable staff will provide children and families with the maximum benefit from the Library's Early Learning efforts.

The Library has also developed a new volunteer role to support the Early Learning spaces being created—the Early Literacy Corps. Volunteers will participate in training to learn about early literacy development and why play builds the brain. Once their training is complete, they will run small activities in play spaces, engage one-on-one with children using the space and their parents, and will help keep the play spaces stocked and the toys cleaned.

By investing in the Library's Human Capital—the staff and volunteers who support the millions of patrons who visit the Library annually—we will establish a new, innovative model for talent and early learning training. In addition to acting as a tool for the attraction and recruitment of new Library staff, this model for early learning training can then be shared worldwide with other libraries via conferences and other gatherings.

## Conclusion

Creating a smart, literate city is essential to sustaining Calgary's social and economic prosperity. Early learning enrichment delivers a powerful return on investment with direct lifetime benefit for children and profound social impact for our communities.

To support children and families, the Calgary Public Library is undertaking an innovative model for Early Childhood Learning, which will provide children the foundations they need for future success and inspire lifelong learning, and, as a result, ignite human potential. This model will incorporate innovative spaces to engage children and parents, an early childhood research centre in collaboration with Mount Royal University, outreach and programs to ensure all children in Calgary have access to the Library's resources, inspiring collections, and training to provide Library staff and volunteers with the tools they need.

The Calgary Public Library is one of the only civic services that supports individuals throughout their life.

## The Calgary Public Library Foundation

Early literacy is an investment in our collective future and we invite you to participate in this ambitious leadership opportunity that is at the heart of *Add In*—the Campaign for Calgary’s Library.

We are at a unique moment in our city’s development with an unprecedented opportunity to create a legacy that will have a profound impact on the lives of Calgarians today and for generations to come. *Add In*—the Campaign for Calgary’s Library, is a bold, audacious vision to take a great library system and transform it into the best in the world.

In what will be the largest fundraising campaign for a library in Canadian history, *Add In* will redefine the role of a library in our rapidly-changing society. The campaign is segmented into four categories: Inspiration, Information, Imagination and Innovation. These represent strategic areas in which the Library plans to invest in order to reach the hearts and minds of the millions of Calgarians who turn to us for knowledge, information, programming and community-building.

This \$350 million city-wide campaign will build capacity for each and every community library and will include projects with a strong impact for Library customers. *Add In* will take a great library and make it exemplary to ensure that the citizens of Calgary have the best public library in the world.

The Calgary Public Library is a bold, new philanthropic choice for Calgarians who wish to leave an enduring legacy in our city. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate in developing the kind of library Calgarians need, want and deserve.

## Appendix

### The Economics of Early Childhood Investment

[The Heckman Equation: http://heckmanequation.org/content/resource/heckman-equation](http://heckmanequation.org/content/resource/heckman-equation)

[https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=www.heckmanequation.org/sites/default/files/F\\_Heckman\\_Moffitt\\_113015.pdf](https://docs.google.com/viewerng/viewer?url=www.heckmanequation.org/sites/default/files/F_Heckman_Moffitt_113015.pdf)

TD Economic Special Report, Early Childhood Education Has Widespread and Long Lasting Benefits:

[http://www.td.com/document/PDF/economics/special/di1112\\_EarlyChildhoodEducation.pdf](http://www.td.com/document/PDF/economics/special/di1112_EarlyChildhoodEducation.pdf)

U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Why Business Should Support Early Childhood Education:

[http://education.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/ICW\\_EarlyChildhoodReport\\_2010.pdf](http://education.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/ICW_EarlyChildhoodReport_2010.pdf)

### Policy of Early Human Capital Investment

Canada National Strategy for Early Literacy:

<http://en.copian.ca/library/research/nsel/summary/summary.pdf>

[Alberta Approach to Early Childhood Development, Together We Raise Tomorrow: http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/spf-summing-up-early-childhood-development.pdf](http://www.humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/spf-summing-up-early-childhood-development.pdf)

Early Human Capital Investment in British Columbia:

<http://earlylearning.ubc.ca/media/publications/15by15-full-report.pdf>

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, Statement on Play-Based Learning:

[http://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/documents/default/play-based-learning\\_statement\\_EN.pdf](http://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/documents/default/play-based-learning_statement_EN.pdf)

Australia Early Development Strategy and Outcome Measures:

[https://www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/national\\_ECD\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.coag.gov.au/sites/default/files/national_ECD_strategy.pdf)

## Leadership Opportunities for Public Libraries

NY Comprehensive Center Educational Technology Team – Impact of Public Libraries on Students and Lifelong Learning:

[http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/nyla/nycc\\_public\\_library\\_brief.pdf](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/nyla/nycc_public_library_brief.pdf)

Institute of Museum and Library Services: Growing Young Minds:

<http://www.ims.gov/assets/1/AssetManager/GrowingYoungMinds.pdf>

Chicago Public Library Early Learning Centres:

<https://www.chipublib.org/news/mayor-emanuel-and-chicago-public-library-commissioner-brian-bannon-announce-expansion-of-early-learning-educational-investments/>