

**MISSION:** Engage young children's potential by inviting families of all backgrounds to explore environments and experiences that spark imagination and stimulate curiosity through the power of PLAY.

**VISION:** The Children's Museum of the Lowcountry and its stakeholders believe that in the next generation, the Charleston area can become a community where all children enjoy an increasing level of well-being, because:

- It shines a bright light on its youngest citizens as capable, creative and full of promise.
- Its families actively connect around common interests and priorities for their children.
- It values and invests in life-long, life-wide and life-deep learning.
- Its families of all backgrounds appreciate its shared civic, cultural, historic and natural assets.
- It prepares its children to participate in the region's expanding economic opportunities and career prospects.

### PLAY FRAMEWORK

### EARLY CONNECTIONS (BIRTH-THREE YEARS)

### FAMILIES TOGETHER

#### goals

Explore, consolidate and advance CML's understanding of and distinct approach to PLAY for its audiences; how it will translate its expertise into play and learning experiences and environments and customer service; and how it will communicate its value and benefits to stakeholders and partners.

A set of services, experiences and supporting practices that enables CML to serve its youngest audience and their grown-ups, contributes to the area's early childhood resources and distinguishes CML through developmentally, "just right" PLAY-based experiences and environments that make young children's potential visible.

A broad, flexible approach to engaging families of all backgrounds with varied interests and children of different ages that is capable of serving the family as a cohesive, on-going group as well as supporting relationships and interactions among family members.

#### actions

- Develop a Platform for PLAY
- Invest in internal capacity
- Infuse PLAY approach into experiences and environments
- Develop CML's public voice on PLAY

- Expand & enhance CML's services and experiences for Birth - Three Years
- Distinguish CML's contribution and increase its visibility in early childhood
- Develop a comprehensive, researched based Early Connections program

- Articulate a shared vision of family engagement
- Build internal capacity to engage with families of all backgrounds
- Reflect family-friendly approaches in policies and services
- Integrate engagement strategies for families of all backgrounds into exhibits and programs

#### outcomes

- Establish a common frame of reference for PLAY across CML
- Host training workshops on PLAY, CML's PLAY Approach and the State of PLAY in Charleston
- Update exhibits and outdoor areas with added PLAY value, including PLAY messages
- Increase PLAY-based programs with different types of PLAY
- CML's Platform for PLAY shared with the community

- Rethink and refresh early childhood space
- Create "Tod Pods" in each exhibit area
- Establish an array of program options for new parents
- Serve as a community resource for Early Connections
- Offer in-depth program option
- Increase impacts for children and parents

- Training workshops to prepare staff to interact with families from diverse backgrounds and varied interests
- An active membership option for low-income families and offer convenient free times
- Exhibits refreshed to support family engagement, including messages about families and family learning
- Host conversations with families across Charleston to update and inform CML's plans, including regular visits to CML's neighborhood with PLAYWork supplies