

# hellobaby

## 2020 Annual Report

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Debbie Frisch

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**“We believe that if you can make a difference, you should.”**

*Message from Founder and Executive Director*

**Why HelloBaby matters more now than ever.**

**A good neighbor.** Traumas resulting from the violence and economic insecurity that plague many Chicago neighborhoods are overwhelming and lifelong. Our goal is to nurture happy and healthy children and families. In doing so, we are generating hope and opportunity - one heartbeat at a time.

**No shame zone.** We don't dictate, we listen. Sometimes we organically model. We share resources when asked. Our guests have become our partners and have made HelloBaby a living, breathing, beautiful reality. The whole idea was that our neighbors would absorb HelloBaby and make it their own, and they have.

**Our model works.** In this climate, many for-profit play spaces are struggling (and some are closing) yet our model is thriving. We are flourishing because of the generous investments of time, talent and treasure from within and outside of our neighborhood. We distinguish ourselves with our intimate footprint, lean budget, free of charge (always) services, robust programming, and meaningful partnerships.

**Location. Location. Location.** Too many not for profit organizations have clients traveling far out of their neighborhoods for services. We put HelloBaby in the middle of a community that needs us and going forward we are committed to serving other under-resourced areas the same way.

**Contact Hypothesis.** "People fail to get along because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they have not communicated with each other." Martin Luther King. Our space connects different socio-economic groups and fosters the sharing of stories, joys, challenges and heartbreaks.

**Second Responders.** Public aid doesn't fully cover a family's needs nor does income from a low wage job. (Though now we've learned the hard way that many of these jobs are essential.) HelloBaby has always addressed this resource gap. The current crisis has accelerated the need and we have responded.

**Unprecedented times.** These unprecedented times have been referenced an unprecedented number of times. My prayer is that the new normal is one that is equitable for everyone. And I hope that soon we can get back to doing what we do best - including and especially giving and receiving warm, squishy, wonderful hugs.

On behalf of our boards, staff and volunteers, thank you. It is your participation in our HelloBaby village that makes all the difference.

**Debbie Frisch**

## *Message from Board President*

As we entered 2020, HelloBaby was on a roll. Quality daily programming. Giveaways buffering social service gaps. Joyful children. Connected caregivers. Activation of a dormant business corridor. We were close to welcoming our 15,000th play visit when overnight the world changed. We, along with many others, were forced to temporarily close our doors in mid-March.

One of our initial goals had been to redirect families from screen time dependency - and we have deep concerns about this accelerated virtual way of being. We are anxious to reopen, yet will only do so when it is deemed healthy and safe. In the meantime we are responding to this crisis to the best of our abilities:

**Wednesday Give Away Days – serving over 100 families weekly with essentials and something fun.**  
**Fairy garden, fairy display windows and neighborhood fairy scavenger hunt**  
**Sharing resources, services, craft activities**  
**Small group outdoor programming**  
**Paying staff salaries**  
**Virtual programming and one on one connection and support**

When we do reopen, you can be assured that we will be following best practices and CDC guidelines.

I was invited to be a part of HelloBaby at its inception. I was an original board member and am proud to now serve as Board President. Thank you for allowing us to walk with you during these tough times. We can't wait to welcome you back.

## **Kathy Campbell Wolf**





Zoe during Broadway Story Time

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**“HelloBaby is fun every day,  
but today is extra fun!”**



Naomi's grandma, who was accompanying Naomi for the first time

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**“She cheered when I pulled up so I knew I was in the right place.”**



Jennifer, whose son receives early intervention services at HelloBaby.

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**“All the therapists talk about it. Everyone talks about HelloBaby. I got her speech therapist because of HelloBaby. I love this place.”**

*Message from President of Young Professionals Board*

The HelloBaby Young Professionals Board has twelve active board members and is in their second year with HelloBaby. The board had a successful first year, exceeding our annual fundraising goal and continuing to bring awareness to the organization.

At the beginning of 2020, we had our second annual Flywheel event - Hello2020 - and it was a great turnout! While the uncertain times have postponed some of our in-person events, the board is still engaging and finding ways to connect with our community. We hosted a virtual workout event at the end of June and have many other exciting fundraising ideas. We are still hoping to host our second annual Bottoms Up event in September, but are considering back up options if it must be held virtually. Our board members continue to be dedicated and we love being involved with HelloBaby and supporting the mission!

**Kassie Cicchinelli**



## HelloBaby 2020 Annual Budget

### Revenue

Individuals	150,000
Foundations	70,000
Special events	12,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$232,000</b>

### Expenses

Buildout/Sidewalk/Play Space	1,500
Commissions/Fees	1,756
Dues/Subscriptions	1,750
Insurance	7,934
Legal/Professional	2,884
Meals/Entertainment	898
Office Expense	710
Payroll	80,983
Promotional	10,905
Rent	15,504
Repair/Maintenance	1,972
Stationary/Printing	2,956
Supplies	4,466
Taxes and Licenses	575
Travel	234
Utilities	4,407
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>139,434</b>
Net	\$92,566



## Program Overview

# 43

### Community Partners

Contributing to the well-being of our children

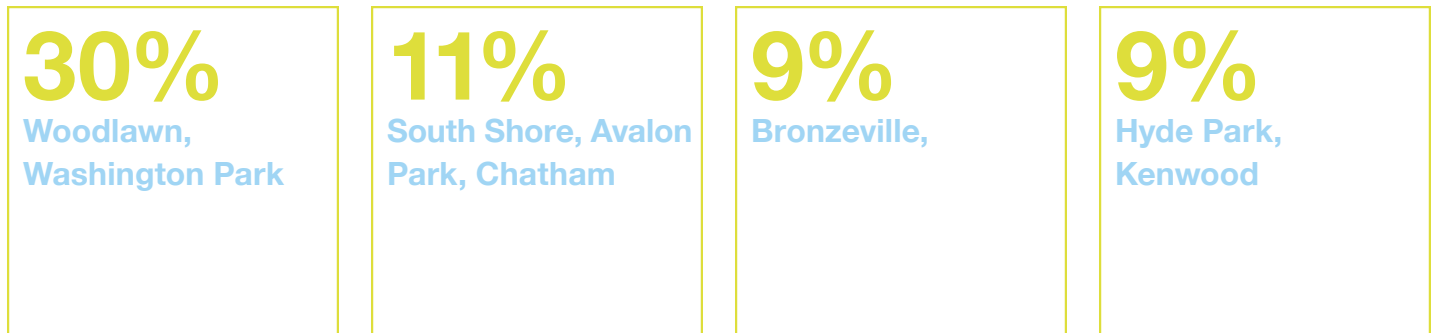
# \$27,310-\$44,111

### income range

compared to Cook County's \$62,088 median income

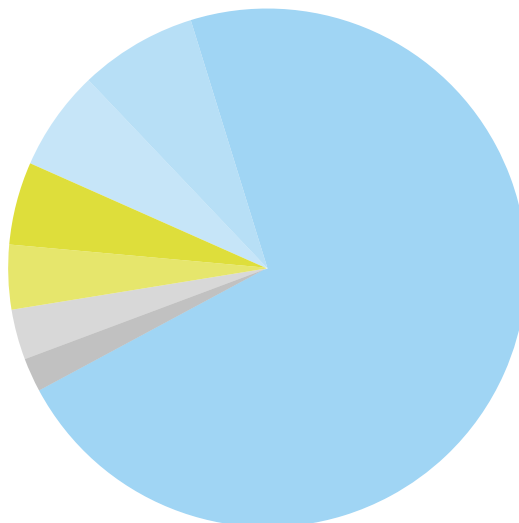
Total play visits from opening 7/10/17 to temporary Covid closure 3/13/20 - 14,729

Where do HelloBaby guests come from - **all over the South Side of Chicago!**



## Adult Guest Profile

- 70% Parent
- 7% Professional
- 6% Friend
- 5% Daycare
- 4% Aunt/Uncle
- 3% Grandparent
- 2% Legal Guardian



## Program Outcomes

HelloBaby facilitates effective parenting of play to achieve the following results:

1

Strengthened language skills and relationships between parents and their young children through play.

2

Enhanced caregiver knowledge of early childhood development and supporting positive parenting beliefs and skills.

3

Increased child and family protective factors that contribute to resilience.

4

Created a culture of attendance. 70% of HelloBaby's guests return.

5

Connected families to larger systems of network care.

6

Filled gaps left by public aid programs with donated clothing, equipment, new books, diapers and wipes, formula, grocery store gift cards, female sanitary protection products, toys, and cleaning supplies.

7

Provided a space for DCFS supervised visitations and pediatric therapeutic visits.

8

Referred a wide range of social services including medical, counseling, housing, hunger, nutrition, trauma, and legal.

9

Happy children, happy parents.

## What happens when you grow up in a play desert?

Kids without appropriate play opportunities are not school ready. When children start behind, they tend to stay behind. In low-income neighborhoods, children start kindergarten 60% behind their peers from more affluent communities.

## HelloBaby is leveling the playing field in Chicago.

Here's how:

**Open play. Every day.** For children, play is the work they do naturally as a means of learning about the world in which they live. Play is vitally important to a child's social and emotional development and allows them to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength. Play is essential to healthy brain development. It is through play that children at a very early age engage and interact in the world around them. "Children build school readiness through play." Dr. David Soglin, Chief Medical Officer, La Rabida Children's Hospital.

**Enrichment programming.** Offered every day. No sign up necessary. Always free of charge.

### Music

**Music With Miss Amelia.** Music helps the body and the mind work together. Exposing children to music during their early years helps them learn the sounds and meanings of words. Dancing to music helps children build motor skills while allowing them to practice self-expression. For children and adults, music helps strengthen memory skills. "Whole Child Arts is committed to the power of high quality early childhood education, focusing on the arts, play, and loving, responsive care. Giving children the chance to grow, learn and express themselves through music can open up a world of opportunities and we love having the chance to connect with families in this way, especially in HelloBaby's welcoming space!" Natalie Monterastelli Co-Owner, Director bubblesacademy.com, wholechildarts.org.

### Language

**Play Smart Literacy.** Studies show that by the time they reach kindergarten, children living in low income communities hear 30 million less words than their more affluent peers. "By modeling and teaching caregivers about the importance of interactive talk and equipping them with practical strategies to increase conversations every day we are literally building young children's brains." Michelle Dinneen-White, Founder, Director playsmartliteracy.org.

## Theatre

**Broadway Story Time.** “I love the unique way quality musical theater experiences can make children feel seen and a part of something magical. Early arts experiences in particular have the ability to transform lives and one of my goals when starting Stages was to make sure our classes were accessible to all children and families. By partnering with HelloBaby to offer free weekly classes, we are able to reach families and communities we may not have been able to reach otherwise.” Emily Pinas, Founder & President Stages Performing Arts [stageschicago.com](http://stageschicago.com)

## Movement

**Skip and Scoot, fitness trainers, yoga instructors and students from Chicago State University.** Physical movement plays a vital role in the creation of the nerve cell networks that are at the core of brain development. The obesity epidemic is caused by several factors, chief among them poor food choices and lack of physical activity. Ideally, exposure to healthy habits occurs at the beginning of life. “All children deserve to have the space and freedom to move their bodies. We know that play of all kinds- imaginative, artistic, sensory, movement, etc.- is necessary for a child to thrive, develop, and eventually succeed in realizing their individual dreams.” Luci Grause, Owner, Skip & Scoot, LLC [skipandscoot.com](http://skipandscoot.com)

## Art

“Every child is an artist.” Pablo Picasso. **Signature crafts** are provided every day by the HelloBaby team and outside artists. “Art helps kids think outside the box, teaches them to manipulate materials, and ignites creativity and imagination.” Jessie Williams, Founder/Event Director, (and frequent craft contributor), [weeventschicago.com](http://weeventschicago.com)

## Books

**Laura’s Library.** We know that just hearing a story is not quite enough stimulation. Watching a video is too much. Reading a book together is just right. Kind of like the three bears. Children grow their libraries by selecting a new, free book to take home each week. Inspired by our friend, Laura Barrows who loved to read.

## Give Away Days

When Covid hit, our programming quickly pivoted to online and outside.

We support 100 families weekly with generous giveaways that include essentials not covered by public aid, (diapers/wipes/female sanitary protection/cleaning products/hygiene products) gift cards, books, and fun activities for children (especially and including our signature crafts). Our give aways are especially robust thanks to these generous donors.



## Supply Donors

Susan Alterman	Marc Grapey	Emily Neumeier
Susan Andrews	Lola Grapey	Ann Nolan
Amanda Athon	Luci Grause	Melanie Oh Pierce
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Alex Giordano	Jose Morales	Kathy and Tallie Wolf
Renee Golas	Lesley Moran	Lindsey and Naomi
Robert Golub	Brigid Murphy	Delane
	Mark and Ruth Nelson	Phoebe

## Board of Directors

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Allison Youngblood, *Treasurer*  
Akilah Townsend, *Secretary*  
Sherlanda Brooks  
Dr. Meredith Clayton  
Jennifer Jones  
Heidi Tischer

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## Advisory Board

Ashley Bennett  
Jeff Braddy  
Gerri Cicchinelli  
Sidney Frisch

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## Staff

Debbie Frisch, *Founder and Executive Director*  
Susan Andrews, *Director of Development*  
Amanda Freeman, *Director of Social Media*

## Young Professionals Board

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Taylor Ignoffo  
Danielle McKinney  
Allison Mischel  
Sonal Patel  
Lauren St. Clair  
Lindsay Trewn  
Maggie Witzenburg

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## Volunteers

Adrienne Cherry  
Ken Dickerson  
Mary Griffin  
Lola Grapey  
Marc Grapey  
Brigid Murphy  
Kathleen Platt  
Hope Orsi  
Marla Rubin  
Tallie Wolf  
Rachel More Gigliotti  
Lilliana Gigliotti  
Nevaeh Waller

## Kroeschell Golf Outing

To register for this year's outing on September 15 go to [kroeschellcharityouting.com](http://kroeschellcharityouting.com)



## Community Partners

Amala School of Yoga  
Blacks in Green  
Bubbles Academy  
Campaign for Equitable Early Learning Funding  
Chicago Child Care Society  
Chicago State University  
Comer Children's Hospital  
Elam Davies Social Service Center  
Fourth Presbyterian Church,  
Greater Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church  
In Good Hands Early Learning Center  
Junior League of Chicago  
Kroeschell, Inc.  
La Rabida Children's Hospital  
Let Them Live  
Leva Family Foundation  
Lil' Gourmets  
Little Angels Learning Center  
Lurie Children's Hospital  
Macaroni Kid Chicago  
Mama Fresh  
Maryville Crisis Nursery  
MetroSquash  
New Day Wellness Center  
One on One  
Paving the Way Project  
Play Smart Literacy

Restored Hope  
Roots Family Chiropractic  
Schofield Family Foundation  
Seventh Grade AJLA Merit Club  
Skip and Scoot  
South East Chicago Commission  
Southside Together Organizing for Power  
Stages Performing Arts  
Strides for Peace  
Sunshine Enterprises  
Task Cause  
U of C Lab School Turtle Room  
WE EVENTS  
West Bucktown Moms  
Whole Child Arts  
Woodlawn Chamber of Commerce  
YWCA

## Special Contributions

Karen Porter Anderson  
Bartoszewicz Family Dental  
Jeanne Bishop  
Meredith Clayton  
The Fansler Family  
Renee Golas  
Marc Grapey  
Anne Holmes Kinser  
Dr. Koufos and Orthodontic Specialists  
The Kreiling Family  
Kate Leto  
Leva Family Foundation  
Neb Medical Services  
Nike  
Emily Pinas  
Play Every Day  
The Platt Family  
Judith LaSage Watt  
Emily Sachs Wong  
Mark Schimmelpfennig  
Bob Stephen  
Chad and Heidi Tischer  
Trader Joes  
U of C Harris School of Public Policy  
Lisa Weskamp  
The Tenants of 3636 S. Iron Street

## In Kind Donations

Susan Andrews and Jeff Braddy,  
Andrews Braddy Photography  
Micky Cicchinelli  
Molly Connelly and Steve Gleason,  
Thorsen Consulting  
Amanda Freeman,  
Amanda Freeman Photography  
Michele Halverson Stephen  
Ann Kisting  
Dave Watt, CPA  
Jessie Williams, WE EVENTS

## Fairy Garden

Last year, our West Woodlawn Fairy Garden was a magical oasis for children in the community. And because of all that is happening in the world, our 2020 fairy garden is even more life affirming.

The fairy garden is located 61st and St. Lawrence in the beautiful Orchard of the Ancestors. This orchard, owned and cultivated by our friends at Blacks in Green, is a place of inspiration, fascination and recreation in a neighborhood that faces the challenges of poverty and disinvestment, and which historically experiences a spike in violent crime during the summer months.

The fairy houses are produced, created and fundraised by WE EVENTS and Amanda Freeman. Our 2020 theme “Fairies Around The World” honors fairy traditions from Africa, Asia, Europe and Central America. With the fairies in occupancy, children have access to a beautiful open air expanse to play, discover, explore and experience nature.



**HelloBaby is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to support, empower and inspire families raising young children in underserved neighborhoods in Chicago.**

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#### **Special Recognitions and Awards**

Debbie Frisch will be presented with the Champion for Children Award from the Bright Promises Foundation on September 15, 2020. This award recognizes a community leader who has shown exceptional dedication to helping Chicago children by supporting programs and practices that are ahead of the curve.

HelloBaby received first place in the Woodlawn Chamber of Commerce Business Competition in November, 2019.

## Donors

**In 2020 donations were made in loving memory of Mr. W. Kurt Kuker  
and in loving memory of Mrs. Elaine Cunha**

Lindsay Adams	Joni Croll	Cynthia Joho
Susan Alterman and Eric Wilson	Carol Danhof	Gem Realty Capital, Inc.
Luís Amorim	Gameli Dekayie	Jennifer Jones
Susan Andrews and Jeff Braddy	Carol and Tom DeMaio	Elizabeth Kent
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Andrea and Cris Areskog	Sejal Emerson	Ann Kisting
Yuri Aronov	Enterprise Holdings Foundation	Elsbeth Klotz
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Lindsay Baker	Collen Everett	Kroeschell, Inc.
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Ashley Bennett	Diana Gard	Charlotte MacKinnon
Tatiana Borjes	Shannon and Rod Gedey	Laura Martin
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Joan Callahan	Stacey Grieff	Patricia J. Nelson
Pamella Capitanini	Stacee & Seth Groff	Michael Neumann
Lowell Carmony	Genevieve Grove	Janet, Joe and Tyler Nolan
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Kassie Cicchinelli	Laynie Held	Northern Trust
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Church of Clarendon Hills	Rachel Jackson	Sonal Parikh
Monica Creighton	Jean Johnson	Juhi Patel

## Donors

Sandra Pellar	Justin Tauber
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Susan Pollett-Schummer	Robert Tithof
Power of Women 2020	Virginia Uhlmann
International Women's	United Way
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Erica Regunberg	Judy and Dave Watt
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Judith Stein	
Maggie Stephen	
Michele Stephen	
Susan Stephen	
Sarah Stratton	
James Swanson	
Jamie Taratoot	
Robert Taratoot	

Martin Luther King, Jr.

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“I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.”

Join Our Community

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hellobaby

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Monday-Friday  
9 am - 4 pm

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www.hellobabychgo.org

