Understanding Community Needs: Conducting Needs Assessments for your Museum

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Overview

1. Public health needs assessment
2. Overview of Projects
3. Lessons Learned + Tools Used
4. Group Activity + Discussion
5. Questions

Background of Public Health Needs Assessments

Through the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant, each state and jurisdiction conducts a comprehensive Needs Assessment every five years. This assessment helps each state to:

- Determine priorities
- Target funds to address priorities
- Report annually on progress

Data collected in the Needs Assessment is used to develop their State 5-year action plan.

Process
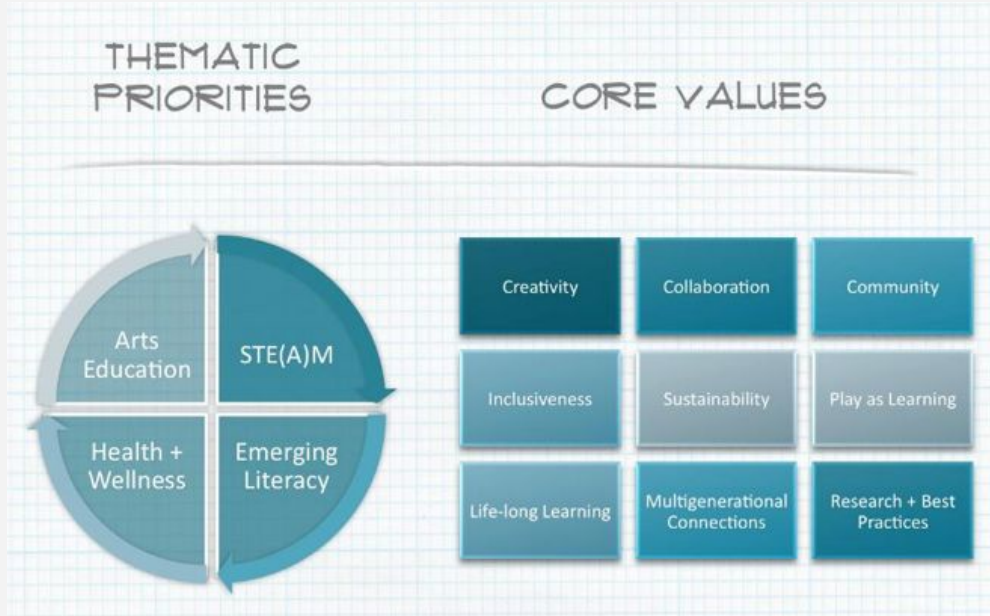

MCH Needs Assessment Toolkit
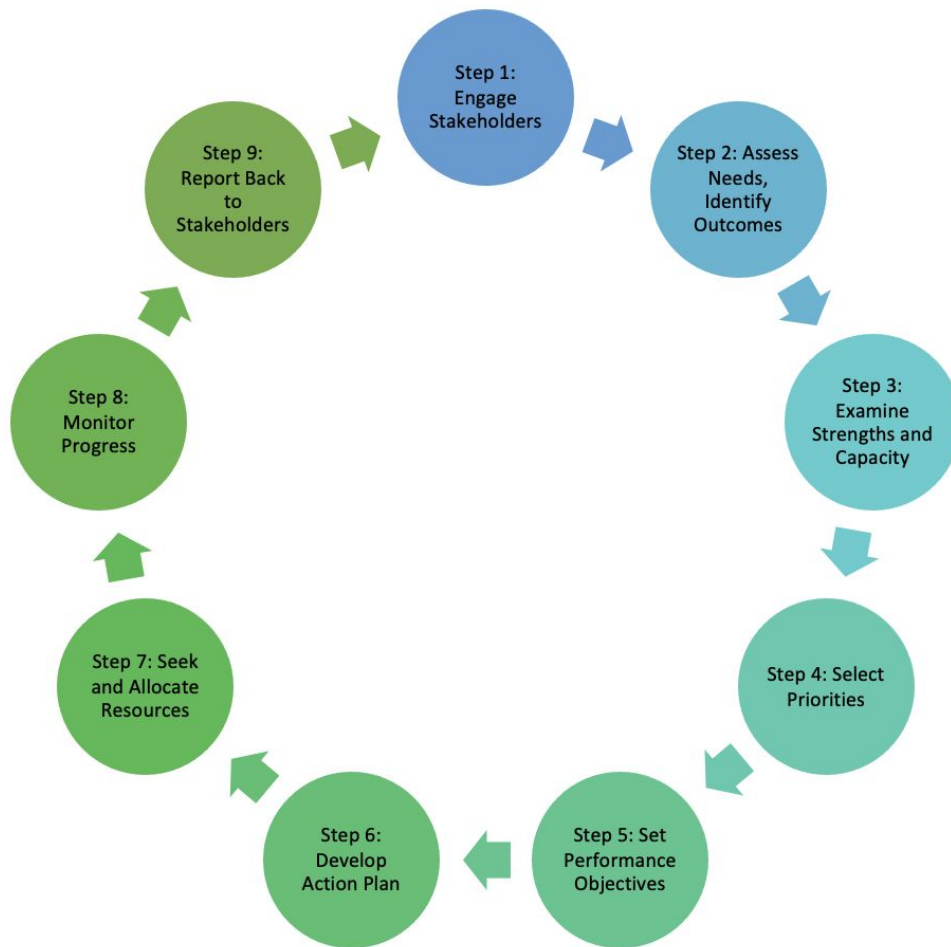
Kidzu Children's Museum - Case Study

KIDZU'S MISSION is to inspire children and the adults in their lives to learn through creative and purposeful play.

THEMATIC PRIORITIES

Arts Education
STE(A)M
Health + Wellness
Emerging Literacy

CORE VALUES

Creativity
Collaboration
Community
Inclusiveness
Sustainability
Play as Learning
Life-long Learning
Multigenerational Connections
Research + Best Practices

Kidzu's vision is to become an innovator in interactive, museum-based learning for children and families, **to excel at serving, celebrating and reflecting *our* community** and to offer a model for other museums that share our commitment to creative, playful, evidence-based learning and deep community partnerships.

FRANKLIN STREET

Kidzu's first two locations served more than 220,000 visitors from 2006 to 2013

UNIVERSITY PLACE

–Annual Attendance (pre-pandemic): 65,000 onsite + 5,000+ offsite outreach

–Average # of Active Memberships: 870+
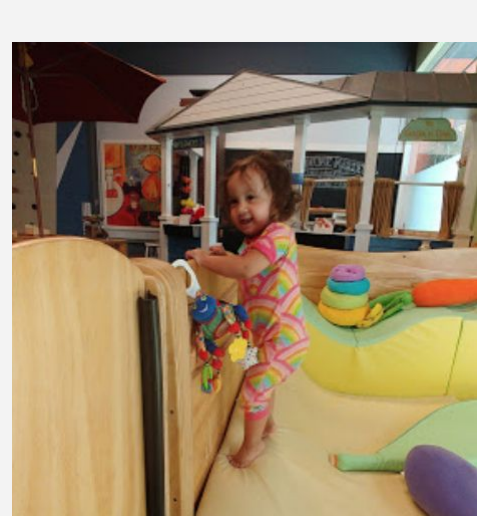

Launch Pad I – 2014

Launch Pad II – 2015

Kidzu
CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

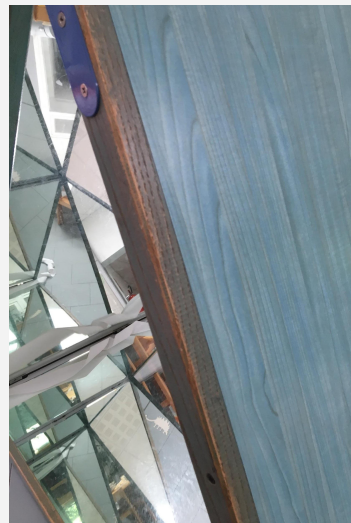BUILDING
ON
SUCCESS

REGGIO CHILDREN

The Reggio Emilia Approach and the Culture of the Atelier

The Reggio Emilia Approach is an educational philosophy based on the image of the child, and of human beings, as possessing potentials for development and as a subject of rights who learns and grows in the relationships with others.

This educational project, which has inspired schools throughout the world, is developed in the municipal infant-toddler centres and preschools of Reggio Emilia, educational services that are based on the value of interaction and learning constructed in relationship with others, and promote autonomy and creativity.

ORARIO DI APERTURA

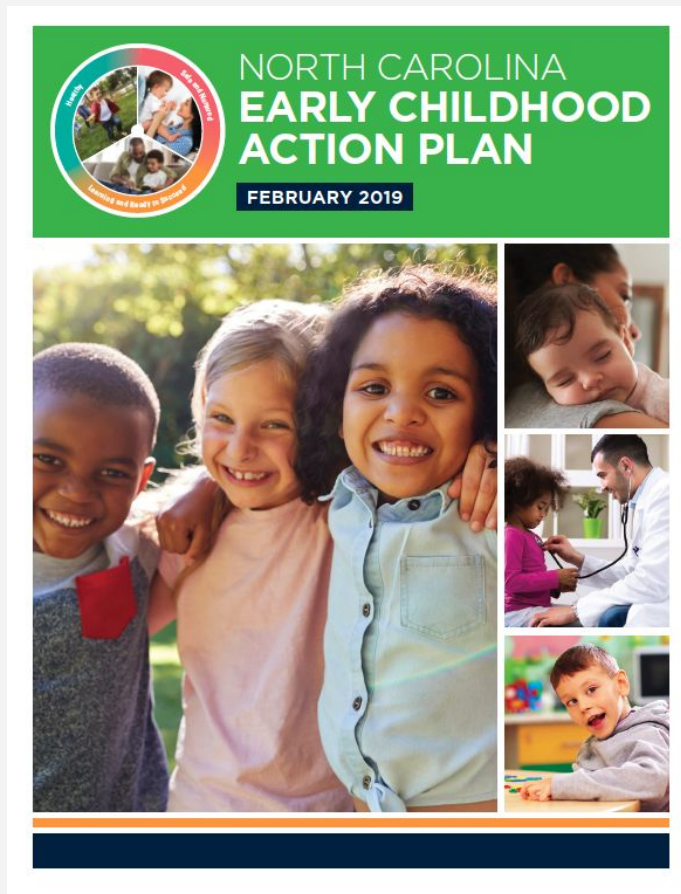LUN-VEN 9.30/12.45 16.00/20.00
SABATO 9.30/13.00 16.00/20.00
DOMENICA E
GIOVEDI POMERIGGIO
CHIUSI

Kidzu
CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

COMMUNITY

POP-UP 1.0

Orange County Spring Break 2019
@ Hillsborough Elementary School

Lead Sponsors

ORANGE COUNTY SCHOOLS
FIRST CHOICE FOR FAMILIES

William R. Kenan, Jr.
Charitable Trust

GREATER GOOD

YOUTH

Piedmont Electric
Membership Corporation

TRIANGLE
LEARNING
NETWORK

Welcome! We'd like to get to know you...

I live...
Yo vivo en...

I came
here with...

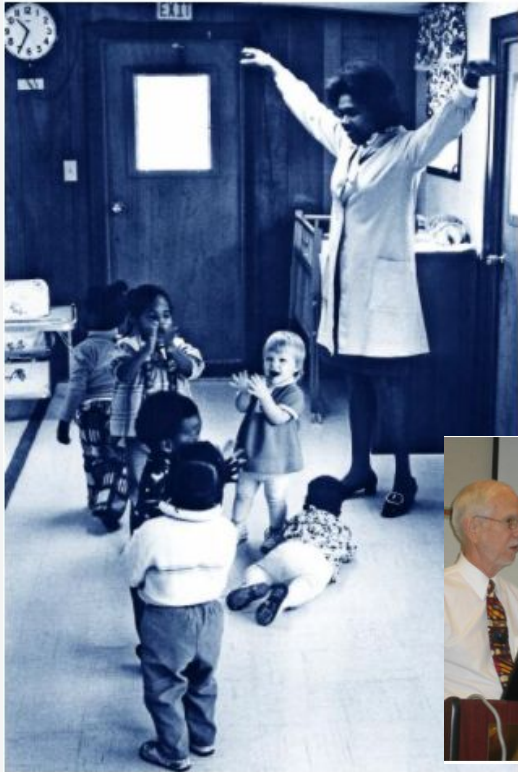I came
here
by...

SPROUT

Early Childhood Education in North Carolina

"Available and accessible child care is a critical component of a sound basic education for our children."
- Governor Roy Cooper

The Carolina Abecedarian Project

*"It is of particular significance that an early educational intervention produced long-term health effects," said FPG senior scientist emeritus **Joseph Sparling**, when FPG released **last year's groundbreaking findings**. Sparling, co-creator of the Abecedarian Approach, and colleagues have applied updated versions of it in several countries.*

m0re3efore

Kidzu's Early Learning Initiative

Like the former NC statewide *More at Four* pre-Kindergarten initiative (now NC Pre-K) designed to provide high quality education programs for at-risk 4 year olds, **Kidzu's *More Before* initiative aims to raise awareness, and address opportunity gaps by prioritizing focus on the foundational brain development that takes place from birth to 3 years through accessible programming at The Nest and extensive community outreach and advocacy.**
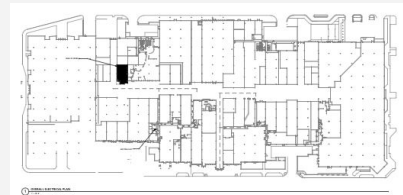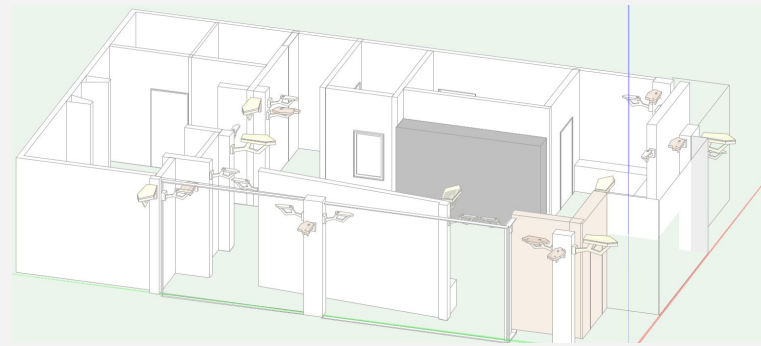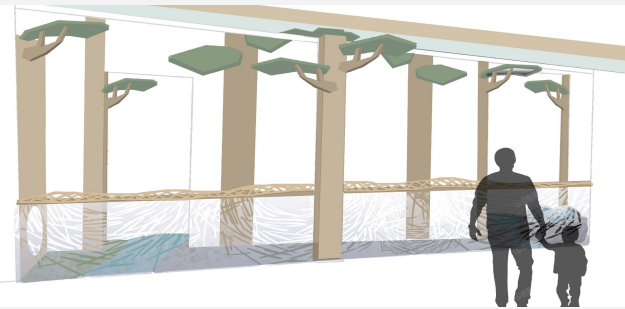
# Building The Nest: Kidzu's Early Learning Environment

Kidzu Children's Museum has enabled thousands of children across North Carolina to access critical early childhood educational experiences within the museum and through community outreach. Now we seek to harness our experiences and collaborate with our academic and early learning colleagues to create **The Nest**, **an early learning lab designed specifically for infants and toddlers ages 0-3.** *The Nest* will galvanize the excellence in informal learning that Kidzu provides with the rigorous research and academic excellence of our university partners and the expertise of educators rooted in the Reggio-Emilia developmental philosophy of learning, to create an environment and accompanying programs, activities and resources that nurture critical healthy brain development, and encourage curiosity, discovery, and confidence in Kidzu's very youngest learners.

Soft seating/ shelving

Reggio Mirror

Light lab

Storage

Bathroom

Swing

Bench

Tunnel

Busy Board, wall shelving, storage

Main exhibition space

Rest Nest

Office

Front Desk

Coffee Bar/Storage

Merch Display

Goals of Our Needs Assessment:

- Understand how this new early learning space could be accessible and create meaningful impact in our community
- Identify some action items that we could implement that would help us better serve our community and meet their needs
- Strengthen our partnerships
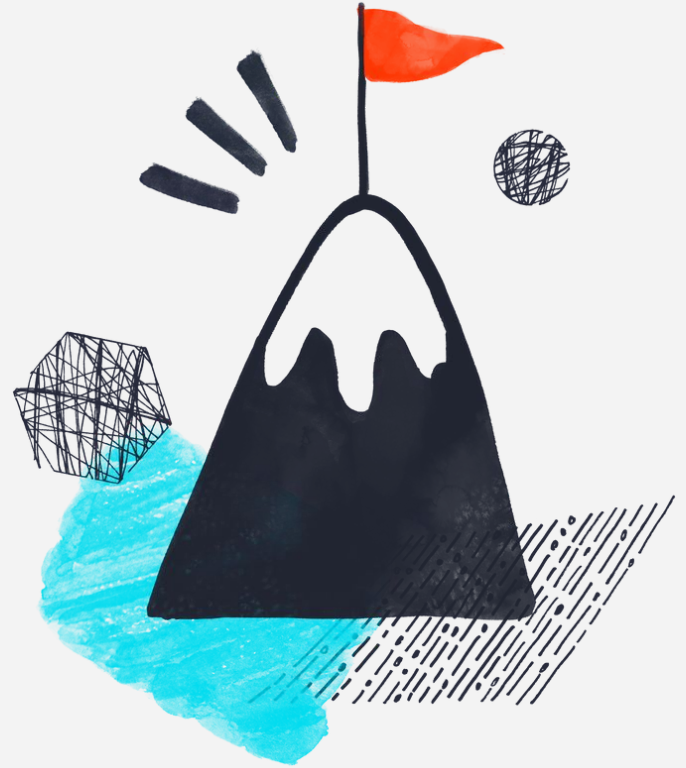
Methodology

Identify stakeholders	Conduct outreach	Collect data	Analyze data	Create report
Focused on early childhood experts - including researchers, direct service providers, etc.	Through email and direct calling.	First attempt: schedule an interview. No response: send a survey.	Coding qualitative data using thematic coding.	Highlighted all findings in data and generated action items that we could use to inform our practices.

Interview/Survey Questions

1. Does your organization work with/serve children ages 0-3 and/or their caregivers? If so, in what capacity?

2. What do you see as the greatest need of children ages 0-3 and their caregivers?

3. How do you see Kidzu's Nest fitting into these needs?
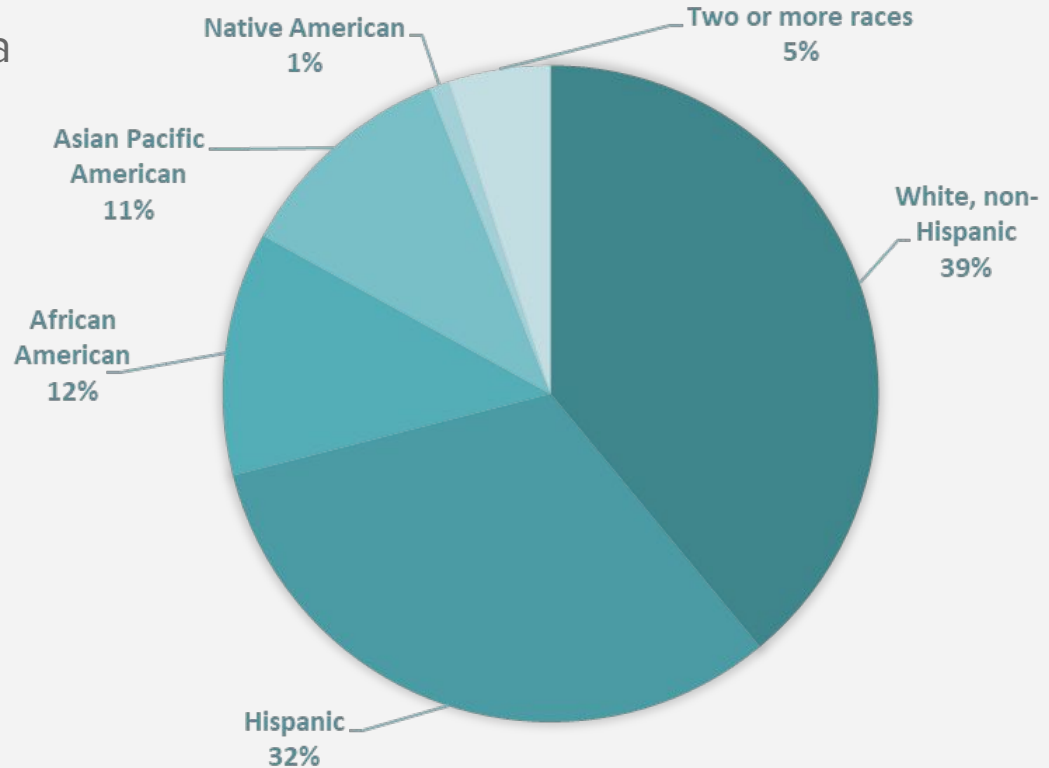
DISCOVERY Children's Museum

DISCOVERY Children's Museum

- Located in Las Vegas, Nevada

- 250,000 annual visitors

- Approximately 20% of visitors utilize Museums for All admission

- 20% of visitors are tourists

Diversity Defines our Community

- 2.2 million in the Las Vegas area
- Majority-minority demographics
- 5th largest school district with 320,000 students in urban and Rural settings
- Nearly 20% at or below the Poverty line

Native American 1%

Two or more races 5%

Asian Pacific American 11%

White, non-Hispanic 39%

African American 12%

Hispanic 32%

In 2020, DISCOVERY was . . .

- Celebrating its 30th anniversary

- Nearing a decade in our new location

- A year past the redevelopment of an exhibit to open a makerspace

- Closed to the public mid-March through June, but retained all staff

- Moving forward on a master planning
  process begun in late 2019

Master Planning Process

Key measures of success aligned with DISCOVERY's mission:

- Ensure everyone feels a sense of belonging and welcome at the museum

- Focus on toddlers, middle school and homeschool students as pipeline audiences

- Increase the capacity of the museum's exhibits through improved quality of experience

Mission

We spark a love of learning so all children can discover their wildest dreams!

Values

We believe in learning through hands-on play.

We believe in nurturing kind hearts and curious minds.

We believe in educational opportunities that are inclusive and open to all.

Vision

We will be the leaders in inventive early childhood learning.

Community Circle: A Case Study

SDCDM's first foray into assessing community needs

Community Circle: Committee

- ➔ Visitor Experience: Director + VSA
- ➔ Education: onsite/virtual programming educator
- ➔ Philanthropy: Director + Grants/Community Engagement manager
- ➔ Marketing: Manager
- ➔ CEO: offered guidance and support

Methodology

➔ Tools: online survey questionnaires, focus groups, onsite visitor surveys

➔ Populations: active members, onsite daily visitors, targeted members for further analysis

➔ Goals: determine areas of improvement from visitors' perspective

Initial Data Collection

➔ of 3,851 active members, 23 respondents

➔ "Age" of membership: 1-2 years

➔ Frequency of visits: once a month

➔ Wide array of favorites

Hopeful Next Steps

➔ Where did we think we were going with this initial set of data

➔ Would focus group be called together for more in-depth study?

➔ Would we do single interviews, or have the group "meet" to talk

➔ Who would "own" this project

The Obvious **FAIL** -ure

➔ Survey was English-language only

➔ Very low response rate: email was the only form of communication

➔ Messaging: ineffective "ask" for participation?

➔ Staff stretched thin, making commitment difficult

Assessing the FAIL -ure

➔ Revisiting our overall goals with this project

➔ Identifying new data collection tools + groups to identify

➔ Are we asking the wrong questions? Too many questions?

➔ Involving other stakeholders in community circle - active members, Board members, community liaisons

What are some programs/projects that your museum is working on that could benefit from this process?
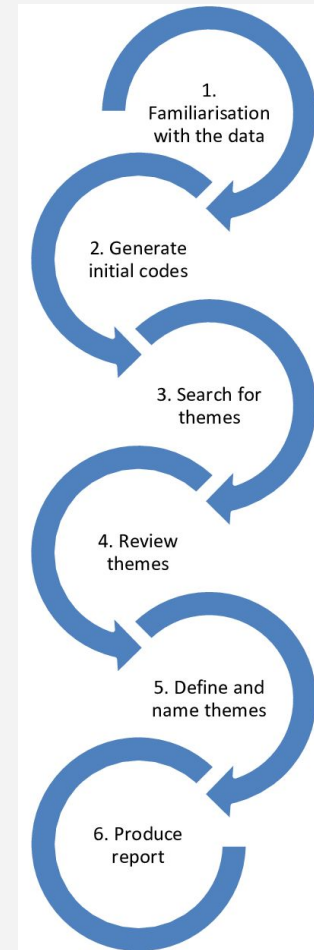
Kidzu Children's Museum - Case Study

Thematic Analysis

The goal was to identify patterns in the data that would help us identify the greatest needs of young children and how we can best serve them.

Framework utilized was *Braun & Clarke's (2006) Six-Phase Framework for Doing a Thematic Analysis*

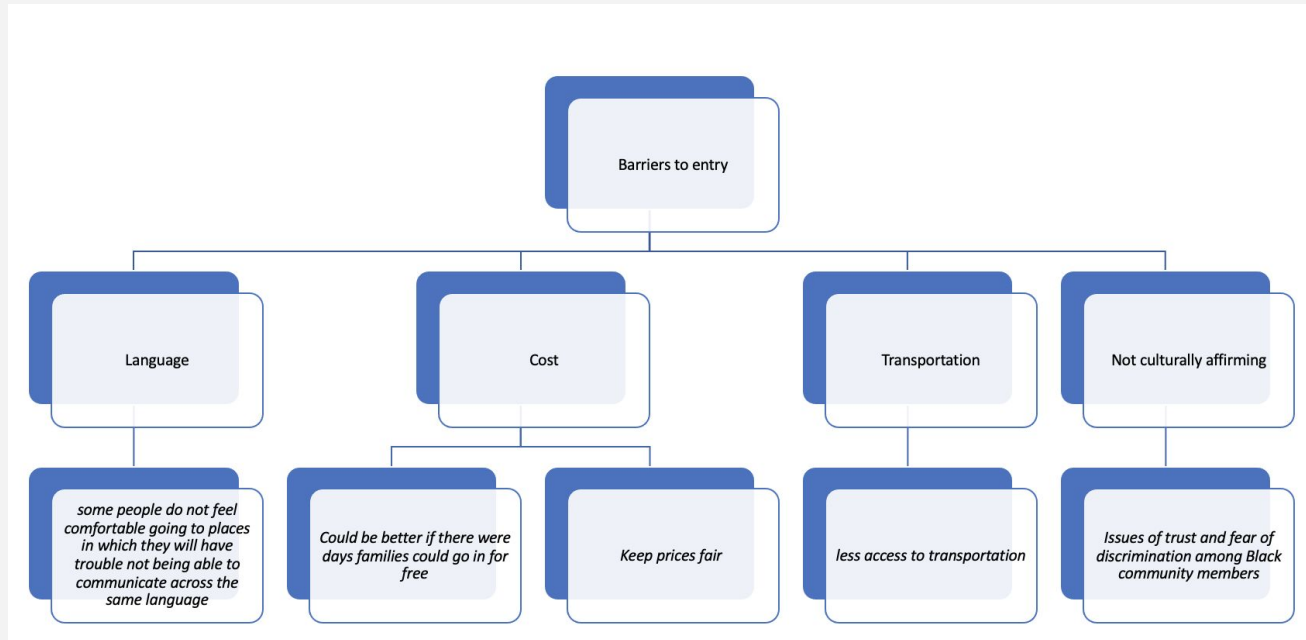# Thematic Analysis

Step 1 - Familiarizing yourself with the data

Step 2 - Identify preliminary key words/topics as codes

Thematic Analysis

Step 3 - Group together some keywords/topics to form themes

Step 4 - Review Themes

Thematic Analysis

Step 5 - Define and name themes

Step 6 - Generate your final report

BARRIERS TO ENTRY
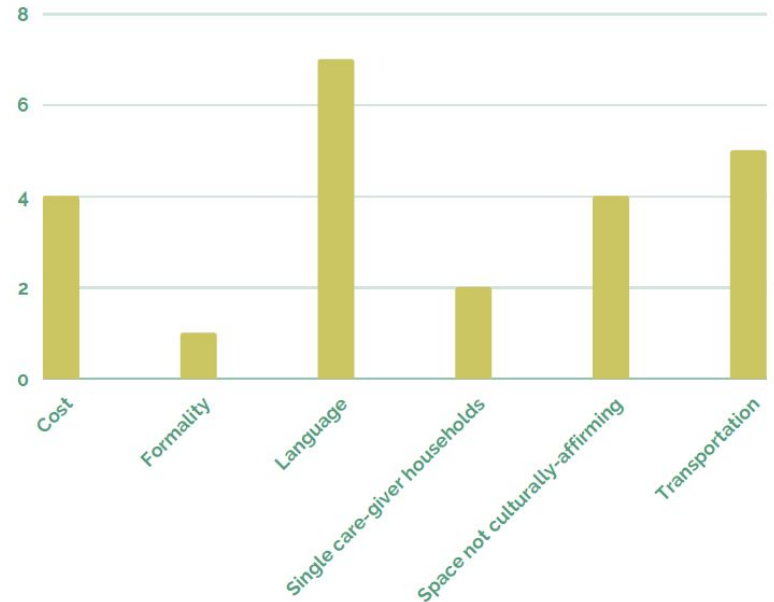
WHO?

Among our 16 participants, here is how they identified:

Early childhood educator (Pre-K/Kindergarten), current or past

6

Higher education educator (university professors+), current or past

4

Government Agency

3

Non-profit agency, independent organization

3

Early childhood researcher, current or past

2

Later childhood educator (1st grade+), current or past

1

Childhood mental health professional

1

BARRIERS TO ENTRY
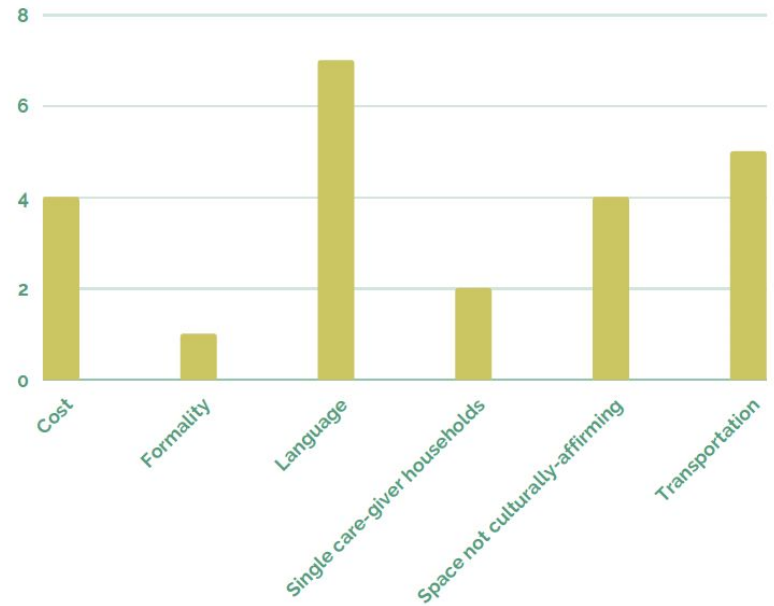
GREATEST NEEDS

Our participants identified what they believed to be the greatest needs of infants and their caregivers in Orange County. Here are those needs ranked:

#1

- Age-specific educational resources and school preparation

#2

- Affordable learning opportunities

#3

- Opportunities for social connection and community among caregivers
- Opportunities to build parent-child connection
- Opportunities to build social connection among infants

#4

- Access to non-English/bilingual educational opportunities/services
- Safe and creative physical environment
- Online resources

#5

- Structured and unstructured play

ACTION ITEMS

Action items describes, as suggested by our participants, how The Nest can better meet the needs of infants and their caregivers as we transition into our physical museum space.

- Provide caregiver-specific training, resources, and support
- Create a safe, welcoming, and accessible environment for all communities
- Encourage caregiver involvement and self-efficacy
- Provide opportunities for social interaction and support among caregivers
- Reach out to underrepresented families (getting a van, advertise in affordable housing communities, etc.)
- Offer bilingual services/opportunities
- Maintain online resources post-pandemic
- Include caregiver involvement and input
- Offer multiple, routine events
- Create more free/affordable opportunities
- Trained ECE staff
- Guided play
- Healthy attachment activities
- Integrate outdoor space/play

1 2 3 4 5 6

Lessons Learned

- Thematic analysis was a flexible and iterative process
- Strengthened existing partnerships and built some new ones
- Challenged our own assumptions
- Increased community buy-in on our project

- Time and effort consuming
- Continuous process

CASE STUDY

DISCOVERY
Children's Museum

Exhibit Analysis

JREM.co conducted an exhibit analysis with DCM Exhibits, Learning Experiences and floor staff.

Evaluation Categories:

- Visitor appeal (dwell time)
- Supportive of learning goals
- Potential visitor capacity
- High quality, innovative and unique
- Maintenance/operational load

CATEGORY	GALLERY	EXHIBIT NAME	VALUE (Out of 60)	CAPACITY (Out of 20)	MAINTENANCE LOAD (A Low, C High)	OPERATION LOAD (A Low, C High)
		TOP THIRD				
	PATENT PENDING	Plasma ball exhibit	59	2	A	B
	YOUNG AT ART	Art and Craft tables (4)	58	10	A	C
1	TECH LAB	14 3D printers	57	12	A	A
	WATER WORLD - LARGE	_Laminar ball lauch	56	5	C	C
1	TECH LAB	2 work tables	55	13	A	A
	TODDLER TOWN: CRAWL	_activity coral	55	7	B	B
	ECOCITY; HOSPITAL	_Babies/bedding	55	5	A	A
	SOLVE IT!	OUTSIDE: Turntable	55	3	A	A
2	YOUNG AT ART	Smart board	54	20	C	C
1	ECOCITY; HOSPITAL	_Doctors office	54	15	A	A
	ECO CITY: Subaru	_Info kiosks	54	4	B	A
	TECH LAB	1 laser printer	53	10	A	A
1	FANTASY FESTIVAL ; CASTLE	Wardrobe change	52	20	A	A
1	TECH LAB	8 computers and monitors	52	12	A	A
1	PATENT PENDING	Car tester exhibit	52	12	A	A
	SOLVE IT!	OUTSIDE: Ball Machine	52	6	B	C
	FANTASY FESTIVAL ; STAGE	Stage (in place of puppet room)	52	5	C	C
	TODDLER TOWN: ANIMAL	_Sensory table	51	10	A	A
	PATENT PENDING	Track Maker	51	8	B	C
	SUMMIT	Flucrum Exhibit	51	6	A	A
	ECO CITY: Subaru	_Paycheck station	51	4	A	A
	ECO CITY:SMITHS	_Paycheck station	51	4	A	A
	RAIDERS STADIUM	_Paycheck station	51	4	A	A
	ECOCITY; HOSPITAL	_Paycheck station	51	4	A	A
	TODDLER TOWN: ANIMAL	_Parent resource center	51	2	A	A
1	TODDLER TOWN: Mining	_Wheelbarrows (4)	50	11	A	A

Exhibit Planning Outcomes

Exhibit matrix provided clear measures to identify:

- Areas of focus
- Prioritization
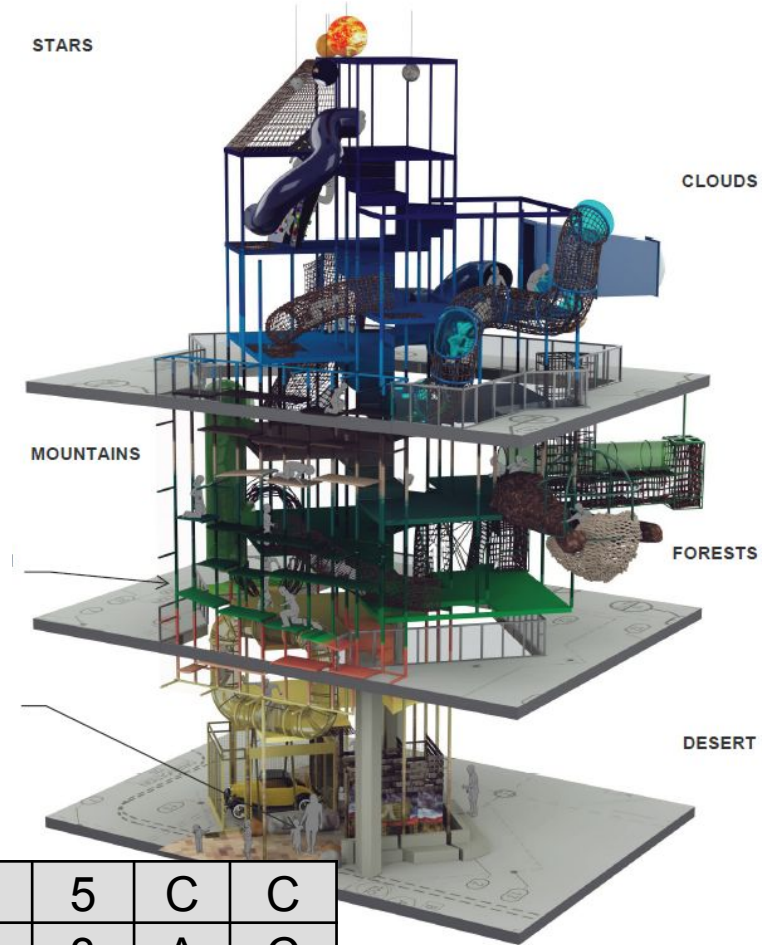
| SUMMIT | Sand Dunes | 29 | 5 | C | C |
| SUMMIT | Bumble Bee tube (down to 2nd floor) | 29 | 3 | A | C |

Identifying Stakeholders

- Parents and Caregivers
  - Members
  - Repeat visitors
  - 1st time visitors
  - Grandparents
  - Tourist families
  - Home school parents
  - Friends, family and neighborhood care providers
  - Parents from underrepresented communities

- Educators
  - Kindergarten - 3rd grade
  - 4th grade - 8th grade

- Underrepresented Communities
  - Spanish-speaking families
  - African American families
  - Asian Pacific Islander families
  - LGBTQ+ families
  - Families of kids with disabilities

Stakeholder Sessions

- Five 45-minute sessions over two days

- 19 participants

- Reached out to underrepresented stakeholders through partners

  - DEI Advisory Council
  - Urban League
  - Library District
  - Minority community consultant
  - Homeschool groups

- Provided childcare and "stay and play" passes

- Offered an offsite location at the library (later cancelled due to COVID)

Stakeholder Sessions

1.	Have you visited the Museum before? • If so, how many times? • If more than once, how often do you visit?
2.	Are you a Museum member? • If so, why? • If not, did you know about membership?
3.	Are there people in your family/friend group/ community that do not come to DCM? Do you know why that is?
4.	Do you have any suggestions of how DCM could serve your family/community better?
Optional:	Do you identify as a member of a specific racial group? If so, describe.
Optional:	Do any members of your family identify as having a disability? If so, describe.
For Educators:	Grade level and number of children in classroom
For Educators:	How often have you visited Discovery Children's Museum with your class?

Teacher Stakeholder Sessions

- Two teacher appreciation events with 16 participants

- Consultant facilitated with introduction from CEO

- Homecoming theme and incentive raffle prizes/ baskets with an educator focus

- Participants were interviewed and completed the questionnaire

Stakeholder Survey

- 764 responses across the museum's diverse audience
  - 192 self-identified as people of color
- Qualtrics survey platform offered targeted analysis
- Jessica Luke of JLuke Consulting helped to hone questions to inquire about a sense of belonging.

Filter Questions

Qualtrics tools allowed the survey to present underrepresented participants with questions about belonging and feeling welcome at DISCOVERY.
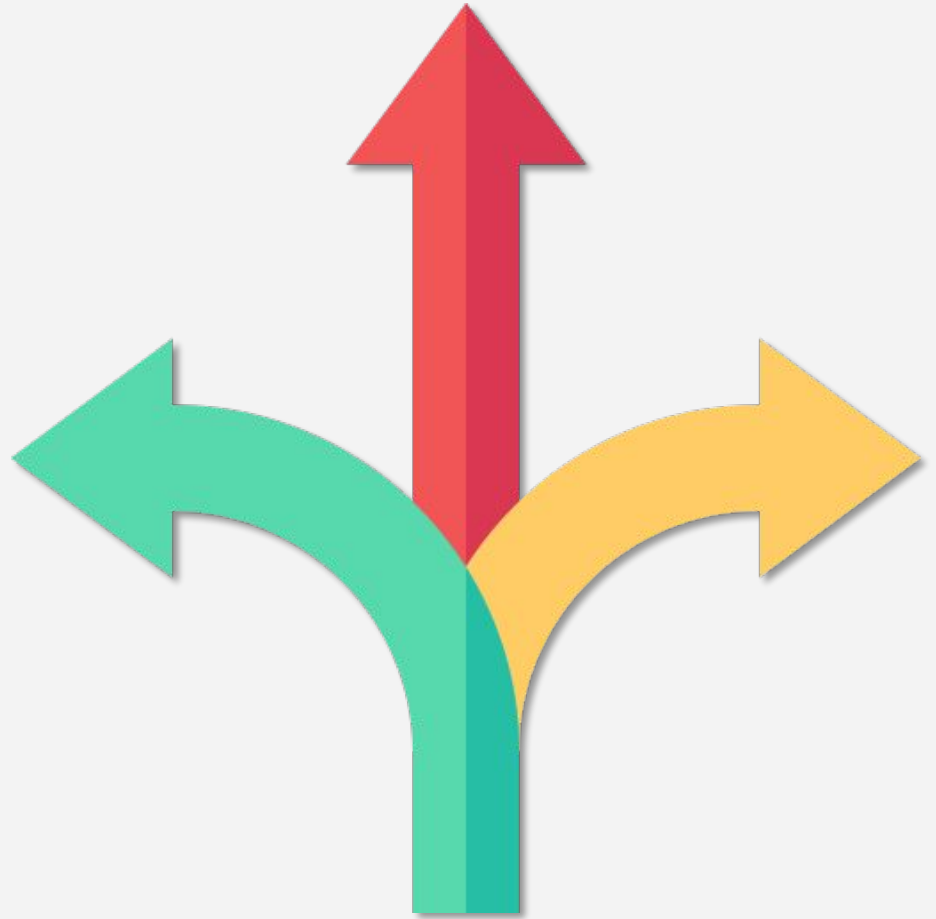
Analysis & Outcomes

Sense of Belonging Report

- Visitors of color reported feeling "welcome" (78%) and "comfortable" (84%) however, 42% found it hard to think of the museum as "theirs."

- 22% expressed that staff did not engage with them (visitors of color)

- 22% said overcrowding impacted their sense of feeling welcome
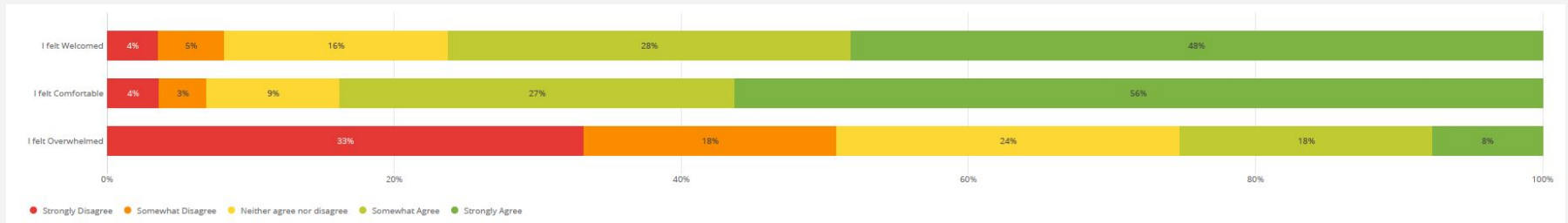
Analysis & Outcomes

Stakeholder Focus Group Findings

- 32% of participants said cost was a issue

- 37% of participants said visitor hours were a barrier to visiting with interest in early and evening hours

- 42% let their memberships lapse during COVID

- 47% expressed desire for more seating

- Educators want field trip guides aligned with Academic Standards

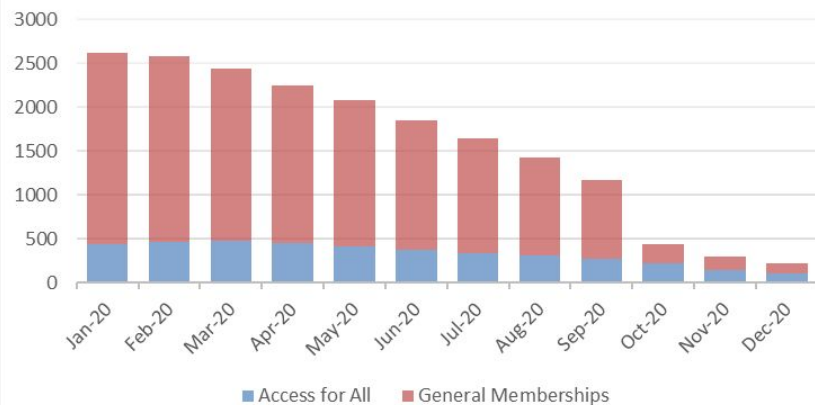- Internal exhibits assessment aligned with stakeholder feedback

Learning from our Community

Who is our community?

2020 MEMBERSHIP TRENDS

■ Access for All ■ General Memberships

2021 MEMBERSHIP TRENDS

■ Access for All ■ General Memberships

Online Survey to Active Members

We are so thrilled to welcome you back to the Museum. It's all about happy squeals, lots of "oohs" and "aahs," and that joyful feeling for both visitors and staff alike. As we continue to improve our Museum, we would love your help!

Beginning this month, SDCDM is bringing together a public circle to better assess the needs of our community. We want to develop more opportunities and programs and ensure that our Museum continues to serve your needs as a leader in childhood education and development.

Online Survey to Active Members

Our members are an integral part of this discussion, so how can we better serve you?

If you are interested in working with us as part of this endeavor, please click the link below to participate in the first survey. Survey responses can be anonymous, or you can enter your contact information and be included in similar opportunities. We anticipate virtual discussion groups, subsequent questionnaires, and possible follow-up conversations with any interested members.

Online Survey to Active Members

1. How long have you been a member of SDCDM?
2. How often do you visit the museum?
3. Favorite areas/exhibits
4. How would you rate the value of your membership?
5. Opportunity for play or opportunity for learning?
6. Demographic questions

Spend some time exploring the handouts/tools.
What would work best for your organization? & Why?
Any ideas sparked?

Questions?

Thank you!