

 **KIDS' CORNER**

2023 - 2024



Annual Report



Our Mission Statement: to nurture compassionate and confident youth through exceptional and engaging out-of-school programs.

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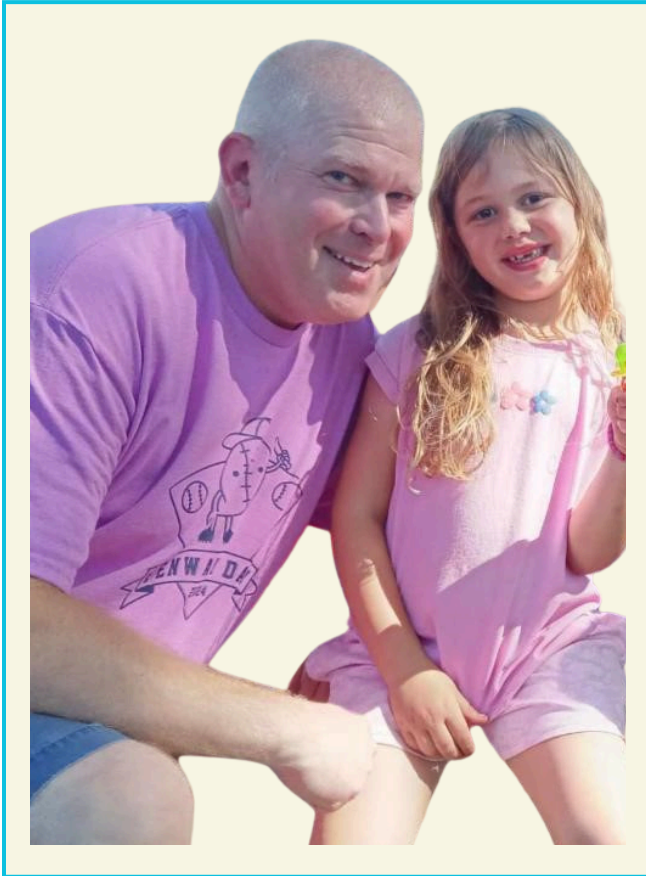
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A Message from the Executive Director, Andrew Gentzow



This past year has been one of reflection and appreciation for all the teachers and administrators, both past and present. Many of the traditions at Kids' Corner were already in place long before I started working for the organization in 2004. Events such as the Italian Feast before Thanksgiving, Halloween Shorts, and the WOW Awards were traditions that I got to enjoy my first year working as a part-timer in the K-1 Room. They showed me early on that the teachers at Kids' Corner were dedicated and engaged like no other program I had been a part of before.

Over the years, teachers have come and gone or changed roles within the organization but that dedication to our mission statement has always persisted. Everyone who has moved on has left their mark on those here today. Those who participated in the first ever Fenway Day, who gave out the first prizes on Carnival Day, who created the first 456 Room yearbooks, etc. are the ones who laid the groundwork for what we do. Year after year the teachers keep these traditions going, make improvements, and create new ones.

No event demonstrates the dedication of past and present staff more than the Haunted House. The Haunted House started as a cardboard maze just for the kids when I first arrived at Kids' Corner and has since been transformed into a much bigger wood structure that the community comes to enjoy. The walls and black fabric were painted by teachers over the years. When I see all the different designs, I remember each and every staff member who painted them. It becomes a physical representation of our history with all the love and care that is shown each and every day by the staff.

I am eternally grateful for all the teachers and administrators who have worked at Kids' Corner and the group of parents who came together in the early 1980s to establish the organization. The culture that was created years ago is still alive and well. The faces change but our commitment to the mission of Kids' Corner persists.



What We Achieved

\$1.5k+
Raised for Charity

The total amount of money raised through Kids' Corner's community service efforts came out to \$1,506 this year! Charities include the Haunted House Pantry Drive, Coin Wars, & the 4-5-6 Room's Bake Sale. This money went towards Council for Social Concern, Rock n' Rescue, & The Home for Little Wanderers.

Total enrollment amount of children served by program type:

After School: 141

Summer: 237

KC Xtreme: 77

Full Day Programs: 194

650+
Children Served

95%
Staff Retention

A majority of our staff members are returning for the 2024 - 2025 school year!

After school families donated monetarily or through in-kind donations during our fundraisers and community events.

72%
Families Donated

\$1,042
**Average Cost per
Special Event**

The average cost for performers this school year came out to about \$1,041, while the average cost for field trips was about \$1,043. This cost can include admission & bussing. We had an impressive line-up of special events, some including Tanglewood Marionettes, Bubble Mania, Roller Kingdom, & Waterpark of New England!

Tuition is the primary revenue source while staff salaries are the largest program expense. This school year, budgeted salaries rose by 23% thanks to an increase in revenue outside of tuition. This means that parents were able to continue paying low, stable tuition rates for our high quality afterschool program.

23:3
**Budgeted Salary/Tuition
Rate Increase**

School Year Recap

Fall

September 2023 - Friendship

After the students got acclimated at Kids' Corner, we introduced the core of our curriculum including projects and Big Group Game. We were also excited to start enrichments such as Karate, Gymnastics, 3-D Design, Singapore Math & Hip Hop!

We had an early release day and organized a party based around our monthly curriculum theme of friendship. The classrooms rotated through three different activities: friendship bracelets, puzzle-creating, and team-building active games.



October 2023 - Fall-o-ween



October featured fun activities like three early release days in a row, Halloween Movie Night, Haunted House, & Halloween Shorts!

During the early release days, the kids were able to go on fun field trips within their classrooms (Smolak Farm for K-1, Omni Theater at the Museum of Science for 2-3, & Boda Borg for 4-5-6), watch a performance by Bash the Trash, & participate in Fall-o-Ween Games respectively.

We also hosted our 4th annual Halloween Movie Night community event and raised over \$1,348 for our programs! Towards the end of the month, we ran our annual Haunted House community service project, and raised \$491 for the Woburn Council of Social Concern's Thanksgiving baskets!

Finally, each room filmed & edited their own films for Halloween Shorts throughout the month. By the end of October, we were able to watch them all together.

November 2023 - Community

We started off the month with two Full Day Programs during Election Day & Veterans Day. On the former, The K-1ers had fun exploring endless tunnels, slides, ball pits, and mazes at One Stop Fun. The 2nd-6th graders played arcade games and enjoyed the rock walls and ropes courses at In The Game. For Veterans' Day, the entire program went to Sky Zone. The kids got to bounce their hearts out. They enjoyed the foam pit, the trampolines and playing dodgeball with their friends!

We also hosted another community service project called Coin Wars. Each class places their money jug out for parents and caregivers to donate money for two weeks. There is a point system and friendly competition involved. Afterwards, we count up the money and points. The classrooms decided this year to donate all the proceeds to Rock n' Rescue. We raised \$585!



At the end of the month, we all enjoyed our annual Italian Feast. The whole program gathered together in the gym and we feasted upon baked ziti, salad, rolls, and of course, brownie sundaes! Yum!

We ended the month with our Giving Tuesday Fundraiser which was super successful. We raised \$12,015 and each classroom earned a pizza party for meeting their participation goal of 65%! Across the program, we had 71% of families participate. Incredible!



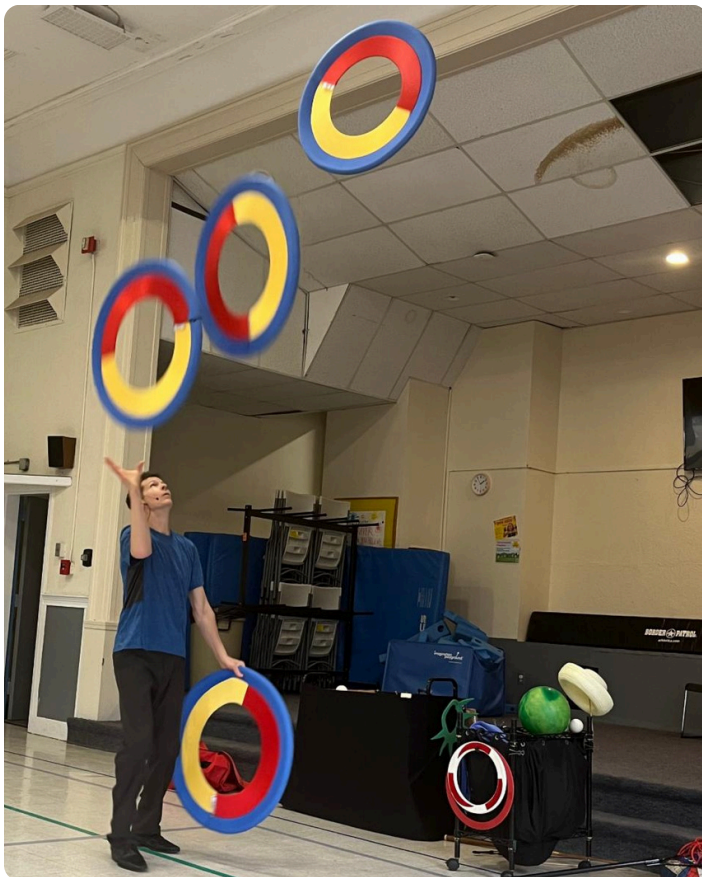
Winter

December 2023 - Celebrations

This month was full of traditions at Kids' Corner! We enjoyed our Dreidel Tournament, cooking-decorating and gingerbread house-making! All the classrooms enjoyed Reindeer Games as well! For the first time since 2018, the K-1ers sang holiday songs in person for the residents at The Gables. The 4-5-6 Room had an epic holiday party with a ton of awesome food. We also had a Celebrations Around the World Day where the students rotated through three different activities and heard stories, learned some history, created crafts and played games. They learned about Diwali and the festival of lights, the history and importance of pinatas in Mexico, and the Winter Solstice legend of the Oak King versus the Holly Queen.



January 2024 - The Arts



January was incredible and full of fun activities. The 2nd-6th graders started their Mini Courses; we had a great selection this year from sports and sewing, to sculpting, coding and more! Additionally, the K-1 group enjoyed their Micro Courses which included puppet-making, melty beads and tape art.

Towards the end of the month, we also hosted our fourth annual PJ Bingo Night community engagement event. We had our biggest turn out yet with about 150 people and raised \$2,376 toward staff development.

We had two early release days with special performers. We were delighted to have comedic juggler Bryson Lang join us for our first performance. Tanglewood Marionettes joined us for the last performance of the month and they wowed us with a tale called An Arabian Adventure. This performance is supported in part by a grant from the Winchester Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

February 2024 - Space

We wrapped up our Mini Courses in February and had a few good days of outdoor play in the snow. The 2-3 Room spent a lot of time organizing, planning and executing their biannual Kids Town engineering project.

For February Vacation, we adventured all over! The K-1 Room enjoyed bouncing and playing arcade games at Xtreme Craze, as well as exploring and learning at the Boston Children's Museum! The 2nd-6th graders sought some thrills snow tubing at McIntyre Ski Area and playing arcade games and winning prizes at Funworld. The entire program enjoyed watching Disney on Ice at TD Garden and on Friday, we all enjoyed watching the movie Migration and eating some tasty pizza.



March 2024 - Animals & Creatures



In March, we offered a Full Day Program on the 6th and had a great turn out. The whole program went to Town Line Luxury Lanes in Malden and bowled to our hearts content! The kids had fun making their own teams, eating delicious pizza, & bowling either the classic way or with exciting mini-games!

We had three early release days. On our first day, we enjoyed a performance from Bubble Mania where we learned the science of bubbles and a few tips and tricks for bubble-making. On our second day, we had a blast at Roller Kingdom where we enjoyed skating with our friends and singing along to karaoke. Our final day was spent on-site at Kids' Corner and we had a special visit from Professor Bugman who taught us all about arthropods. We got to meet and touch beetles, millipedes and more!

The 4-5-6 Room had a special visit from our friends at Studio on the Common and they got the chance to create their own pinch pots. They formed and painted them, then returned home with a fired, colorful and glazed piece.

April 2024 - Camping & Survival

We hosted our 5th Annual Epic Night Out fundraising event on the 6th. We had a glow theme this year with super fun games, raffles, auctions & more! We raised \$9,500 that will be used toward curriculum enhancements, STEAM initiatives and staff professional development.

We were also treated to a special nature event this month - the solar eclipse! Students and staff went outside in shifts with special glasses to witness the event. Teachers did special craft activities and documented the progression of the eclipse.

During April Vacation, the K-1ers enjoyed field trips to The Ecotarium & Amazement. The 2nd-6th grade group had a blast on their trips to Battleship Cove & Beaver Brook. We had a couple of joint field trips to Shriner's Circus & Simonds Park.



May 2024 - Challenges



We started the month with classroom field trips! The K-1ers enjoyed a perfect day seeing animals and playing on the playground at Franklin Park Zoo. The 2-3 Room combined their field trip with a community service project by going to the Fells to pick up trash along the trails. They hiked all the way up to Wright's Tower to take in the view! The 4-5-6ers had the best time at Rockport shopping and enjoying some independence.

The K-1 Room and 4-5-6 Room wrapped up the year with community service projects as well. The former ran a book swap and any remaining books were donated to the Enka Fair Book Tent. The latter also hosted an amazing bake sale, baking an array of sweet goodies and selling them for several days, donating their \$430 profits toward the Home for Little Wanderers.

Towards the end of the month, our whole program visited Water Park of New England where we enjoyed the water slides, the sprinklers, the pools and the fun obstacles.

June 2024 - Deja Review

We ended the year with all of our incredible traditions. As a program, we enjoyed an Ice Cream Sundae Party, Carnival Day, Move Up Day, End of the Year Video and Fenway Day! The 456ers won this year 13-12!

Each classroom had their traditional celebration. The K-1ers enjoyed WOW Awards, the 2-3ers had a blast at Graduation Day & the 4-5-6ers reminisced during their Yearbook Party.



Summer Recap

We welcome Jeremy Rae as our new Summer Director! Jeremy is an alumni of Kids' Corner and has been working at Kids' Corner since 2003! During the school year, he is a Co-Lead Teacher in the K-1 Room.

Jeremy Rae, Summer Director



The Summer Program enjoyed another successful summer!

We had a lot of returning staff from last year and three new staff members this summer. These were a mix of high schoolers, college students, alumni, and Kids' Corner teachers.

For summer enrichments, we brought in karate from Bay State Martial Arts, gymnastics, Top Secret Science, Lego Challenges, On the Mark Archery, Kidstock!, as well as traveling to It at Portland Adventure Ropes Course at Jordan's Furniture. Some staff also brought amazing activities like baking, art/crafts, music, theater, and sport enrichments to the program.

Field trips are contingent on weather, and the Wednesday weather was not in our favor this year. On rainy days, we had some fun alternative activities like indoor hide and go seek and a movie day watching the movie "Wish". On one particular hot day, we had a massive water play day.

We did have some perfect weather days sprinkled in there and we enjoyed trips to Stage Fort Park, Launch Trampoline Park, Nelson Beach State Park & Hampton Beach State Park.



We also had three fun theme parties this summer with different crafts and games. We had themes such as Olympics, Under the Sea and Space! The teachers did an awesome job at creating some fun activities for the kids. For special events, we had a lot of great acts stop by. We enjoyed science and story-telling with Science Heroes, formerly known as Talewise. That particular program was graciously funded through a grant from the En Ka Society. Matt Roberts the Magician stopped by to wow us with his tricks. We played around in a massive amount of bubbles during our Dragon Foam day. Alex the Jester returned with tons of funny skits and props. We ended the summer meeting and learning about a ton of different animals with Animal Adventures and we also had a ginormous inflatable day!

We capped off every week with a visit from the ice cream truck and water play. It was another fantastic summer!



Lauren Bagley, KC Xtreme Director

KC Xtreme had another successful summer in 2024, full of travel and new experiences. We successfully navigated around hiccups in the schedule and rainy days.

With long hours and very active trips, our staff did a great job stepping up, and keeping our kids engaged. We often have three to four staff members on schedule for each trip; a combination of seasoned KC staff and college students.

We like to keep our group sizes small so that the wait time and quality of trips goes a lot smoother. The experiences we share become more intimate and meaningful to the kids when they aren't waiting in long lines, giving them more time to take part in the trip. I also found that the kids bond more quickly and have a sense of camaraderie faster. It also gives the staff more time to get to know each child individually. Our group sizes this year ranged from 21-34 kids. Of those who participated each week, around 50% of the students are alumni from our After School Program.

The trips were fantastic this year. Some of the highlights were our Boston trips (Codzilla and Whale Watching with a Faneuil Hall hang out), kayaking, surfing, Mt. Cardigan hike, white water rafting, theme parks, indoor skydiving, and Rockport, to name a few. We made the best of rainy days by heading to arcades and bowling. Overall, it was a wonderful summer and the students had a blast!



Giving Gratitude

Here we share our gratitude for the support of our community over the program year.



Fundraising Events

5th Annual Epic Night Out!

Halloween Movie Night

Pajama Bingo Night

Giving Tuesday

Sponsors

The Winchester Rotary Club (Presenting Sponsor)

Winchester Community Music School

Winchester Cooperative Bank

PDA Dental Group

Allen Plumbing Incorporated

Trentanove Skin Studio

The Stanton Family

Harrison Mulhern Architects

Professional Physical Therapy



Local Business Support

Catch A Falling Star	Frozen Hoagies	Mahoney's Garden Center	Polcari's	Playa Bowls
Sweet Surprise	Charles River Boat Company	Kidstock Creative Theater	Xtreme Craze	Little Flippers Swim School
A Tavola	D'Agostino's Deli	Shear Perfection	StretchMed	Boston By Foot
Cowlero Corporation	Title Boxing Club	Kidcasso	The Sports Museum	Cookie Monstah
Sylvan Learning Center	Greater Boston Stage Company	Mass Audobon	The Coronella Family	Ruth Rinard
Discovery Museum	Studio on the Common	Total Wine & More	Bagel Bar	Common Craft
Catalado Ambulance	Simply Skin & Makeup	Zoo New England	House of Hot Sauce	Launch Trampoline Park
Bliss Confections	Boda Borg	Boston Crawling	Nourish Your Soul	Ducks in a Row Organizers
Tonsor Lounge	The Ganz Family	The Schiller Family	The Lee Family	The Parker Family
Fells Hardware	Jamie Vining Photography	Rancatores Ice Cream	PDA Dental Group	LPY Yoga
Scrubadub Car Wash	Gingerbread Construction Company	Elite Freestyle Karate	Burton's Bar & Grill	Trentanove Skin Studio
Bisou Nail Bar	Papa Gino's	Salone Estetica	Lucia Ristorante	Dear Botanicals
	Barrett Sotheby's International Realty		Mary Connell Skincare & Beauty	

Individuals Giving \$500+

Amy & Mike Lovasco
Bridget & Dan Parker
Michael & Lauren Lee
Shavawn & Christopher Waelsch
Kibibi & Matt Ganz
Jessica & Tom Stanton
Kate Rinard & John Coronella
Derek & Dorothy Chiang
Alison & Andrew Harrall

Individuals Giving \$250+

Steve & Casandra Calawa
Mike Gerstenblatt & Sara Mayer
Alice & Hans Bhukhmohan
Sonya Rao & Samir Parikh
Nadine Thorndycraft
Dr. Donna Kelly
Kathleen & Jeff Duncan
Jeff & Meryl Forman
Stephen & Carly Carney
Bob Walters & Sarah Slauson
Taylor & Leigh Tinmouth
Ema & Elliot Reid

All Giving

Pankaj Jashnani & Poonam Tindwani	Leipawan Wongwajarachote & Edward Dalton	Hellas Karayannacos & Alexandros Boufounos	Elizabeth & Christopher DiPierro	Konstantinos Xynos & Theodora Pappa
Parika Petaipimol & Christopher Aronis	Walter & Adonia Kim	Brianna Cummings & Josh Forman	Danielle Bottari & Douglas Moore	Elizabeth Gagliardi & Daniel Hassett
Susan Nolan & Eric Simas	Jing Fang & Dongdong Wang	Nina & Ken Thayer	Nicole & Toby Harris	Emily & Manu Gosain
Patrick & Barbara Matteson	Susan Hsiong & Kevin Hsu	Erin Rodliff & Tony Crooks	Min Tan & Rongrong Jiang	Matthew & Elly Preotle
Meghan & William Blackwell	Elizabeth & Shaun Merrill	Simran & Dennis Su	John & Divya Curtin	Katie & Steven Meinelt
Gared & Melissa Schneberger	Keith Nelson & Alison Pauly	Steve & Victoria Vargas	Matthew & Kristi Conroy	Rohan Grover & Rachna Jha
Nazira & Tyler Carlage	Michael & Denise Vosseller	Griffin & Katie Sullivan	Laura & John Homich	Susannah King & Johnson Ip
Kerin & Darrell Holigan	Maureen Toner & Michael Ryan	Kevin & Marcia Haigis	Christina & Georg Becker-Birck	Katie & Peter Czerepak
Chirag Modi & Nishima Maini	Eugene Svirkin & Marcy Gabrilowitz	Guli & John Kenney	Amy Nguyen & Barry Pearson	Martha & James Hoyt
Alanna & Michael Finnegan	Amy & Brian Carlisle	Erica & Nick LoRe	Mike & Lindsay Donikian	Yan Li & Ying Huang
Shannon Stott	Megan Boroyan		Chia Lin Huang	Yulissa Calderon

Company Matching Gifts

Kids' Corner is grateful that many of our families took advantage of corporate matching and other employee giving programs, and directed over \$2,250 in additional funds to us over this past year.

Volunteer & Staff Spotlights

Please join us in recognizing the dedication and great work of our Board and Task Force members.



2023 - 2024 Board Members

Amy Walsh - Board President
Michael Lee - VP of Fundraising & Development
Casandra Calawa - VP of Internal Affairs
Shavawn Waelsch - Treasurer
Sonya Rao - Secretary

Eric Sullivan
Alice Bhukhmohan
Alison Harrall
Mike Gerstenblatt
Tom Stanton
Leigh Tinmouth
Jeff Schiller

2023 Halloween Movie Night Volunteers

Toni Frain

4th Annual Pajama Bingo Night 2024 Task Force

Amy Lovasco
Ina Shollo
Jessica Stanton

Pajama Bingo Night 2024 Volunteers

Amy Lovasco
Ina Shollo
Meryl Forman
Helen Mui

5th Annual Epic Night Out Task Force

Jeff Schiller
Alice Bhukhmohan
Michael Lee
Mike Gerstenblatt

Epic Night Out Volunteers

Michael Lee
Casandra Calawa
Alice Bhukhmohan
Mike Gerstenblatt
Mike & Amy Lovasco



Daniel Bartholomew

I first went to Kids' Corner in the summer before Kindergarten, and I attended until 6th grade, but continued to go to summer camp with KC Xtreme until 8th grade.

There are so many incredible memories from my time at Kids' Corner. I would say that my favorites were definitely the field trips, especially some annual ones like Rockport, any zoo, any of the arcades (such as Fun World) and many more! I also loved all of the annual events, such as Fenway Day, Rock Videos, the Halloween Shorts, and especially the Italian Feast and 4-5-6 room Holiday Party. In addition though, I have just so many great memories of fun events with my friends, teachers, and everyone else at Kids' Corner!

I chose to come back to Kids' Corner to work as a teacher because I've always loved working with those younger than myself, and I take so much joy from having the ability to help others. I also believe that my time as a kid at Kids' Corner had really shaped me into the person I am today, helping me learn to become a better person, and allowed me to develop my own personality, and by working here as a teacher, I hope that I'm able to help other kids become themselves, in the same way that Kids' Corner helped me.

As a senior at Winchester High School, I will be graduating this year, and will be attending UMass Amherst next year to study biology, in hopes of becoming a pediatric nurse in the future. However, I hope that even after I graduate, I'll still be able to come back and help at Kids' Corner during summers and vacations, as I've really loved my time here, and it's been one of the highlights of my life.



David "Mützi" Worthen

I realized my vocation as an educator at a tender age. Engaging in imaginative play sessions as a child, I recall orchestrating educational scenarios with my plush companions, imparting lessons in literacy and numeracy. During my formative years in high school, I enrolled in a semester at the Child Study Lab, an experience that ignited my passion for nurturing young minds. I found fulfillment in activities such as storytelling and guiding creative endeavors. The foundation of my professional journey was laid at Mass Bay Community College in Wellesley, Massachusetts. After that, I honed my craft of teaching at Salem State University & Lesley University. I began working at Kids' Corner in the fall of 1985 after being approached by Mrs. Betty Wolsky, one of the first directors, during my student teaching at Ambrose School. She offered me a position on the staff of the after-school program.

The key aspects that drew me to working at Kids' Corner were our community impact, creative teaching, and collaborative teamwork. Kids' Corner has a long history of providing engaging and diverse experiences for children.

Many events showcase the program's creativity and commitment to providing a stimulating environment for children to learn and grow. I'm sure the children who have participated in these activities have fond memories of their time at Kids' Corner, and it's wonderful that the program has been able to make such a positive impact on their lives.

For years, it has been a wonderful tradition of sharing stories with children! My stories and folktales have been a great way to spark imagination and curiosity. It's clear that the children enjoy listening to my tales when they advise their parents to pick them up after 4:30 on Fridays.



Contact Us

For further information, please reach out to Andrew Gentzow at andrew@kidscornerwinchester.org.



Providing exceptional, nurturing and engaging out-of-school programming for Winchester's working families. The Winchester After School Program, Inc. d.b.a. Kids' Corner, is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization that has proudly served Winchester since 1982.

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