



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Hank Gruner, Interim Museum Director, The Children's Museum, 860.231.2830, ext. 28,
hgruner@TheChildrensMuseumCT.org

The Children's Museum Receives \$32,000 Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

West Hartford, CT (June 17, 2007)... The Children's Museum is the recipient of a highly competitive grant of \$32,300 from the United States Environmental Protection Agency's 2007 Healthy Communities Grant Program. The project, entitled the Park River Assessment Program (PRAP), will partner staff from The Children's Museum, the Farmington River Watershed Association, and the Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative to begin a community watershed enhancement program for the Park River watershed. The project will be located in and directly benefit at-risk communities in three urban areas in Connecticut – Hartford, New Britain, and West Hartford.

All waterways in West Hartford, as well as most in New Britain and Hartford, flow into two branches of the Park River which converge in an underground tunnel and flow beneath Hartford to the Connecticut River. Urban and residential development have damaged the ecological vitality of the watershed. Preliminary State data from the North and South branches of the Park River indicate moderately to severely impaired water quality. The project invites family teams and community youth groups to adopt stream segments, monitor water quality, and conduct stream walks to assess in-stream and riparian conditions. The goals of the project are to: (1) promote community awareness of the river; (2) gather water quality data on all waterways in the project area; (3) identify and photograph areas where improvements or restoration are needed, and (4) engage families in collecting data. Long term plans for the project are to raise additional funds to implement enhancement projects and to expand beyond the initial target area to encompass seven towns also in the watershed.

The program encompasses a two year period beginning October 2007. According to the EPA, the review process was competitive with 91 applicants and only 17 selected for funding. “We are thrilled to receive this grant and hope the efforts of PRAP will make a difference in the quality of our water resources in the three towns to be covered,” commented Hank Gruner, The Children’s Museum’s Interim Director. “As importantly, it will serve as an important educational experience for students, family and community leaders as they learn more about how we can all help control the ecological well-being of our environment.”

The Children’s Museum (formerly Science Center of Connecticut) is committed to igniting the curiosity of young people through science and nature. In addition to the Museum, the organization includes the United Technologies Wildlife Sanctuary, the Gengras Planetarium, Roaring Brook Nature Center in Canton, and The Children’s Museum Preschool, one of the oldest preschools in the country. The Children’s Museum serves close to 200,000 people annually, and is the fifth oldest children’s museum in the country and Connecticut’s largest museum. Located at 950 Trout Brook Drive in West Hartford, the museum is accessible from I-84 Exit 43 and offers free parking. For more information, visit the website at www.TheChildrensMuseumCT.org .

###