

Places to Play In Providence

A guide to the city by our youngest citizens



“Waterplace Park is across the street from the Mall near the Statehouse and train station. The sun shines through the whole city.”

Christian, Age 4

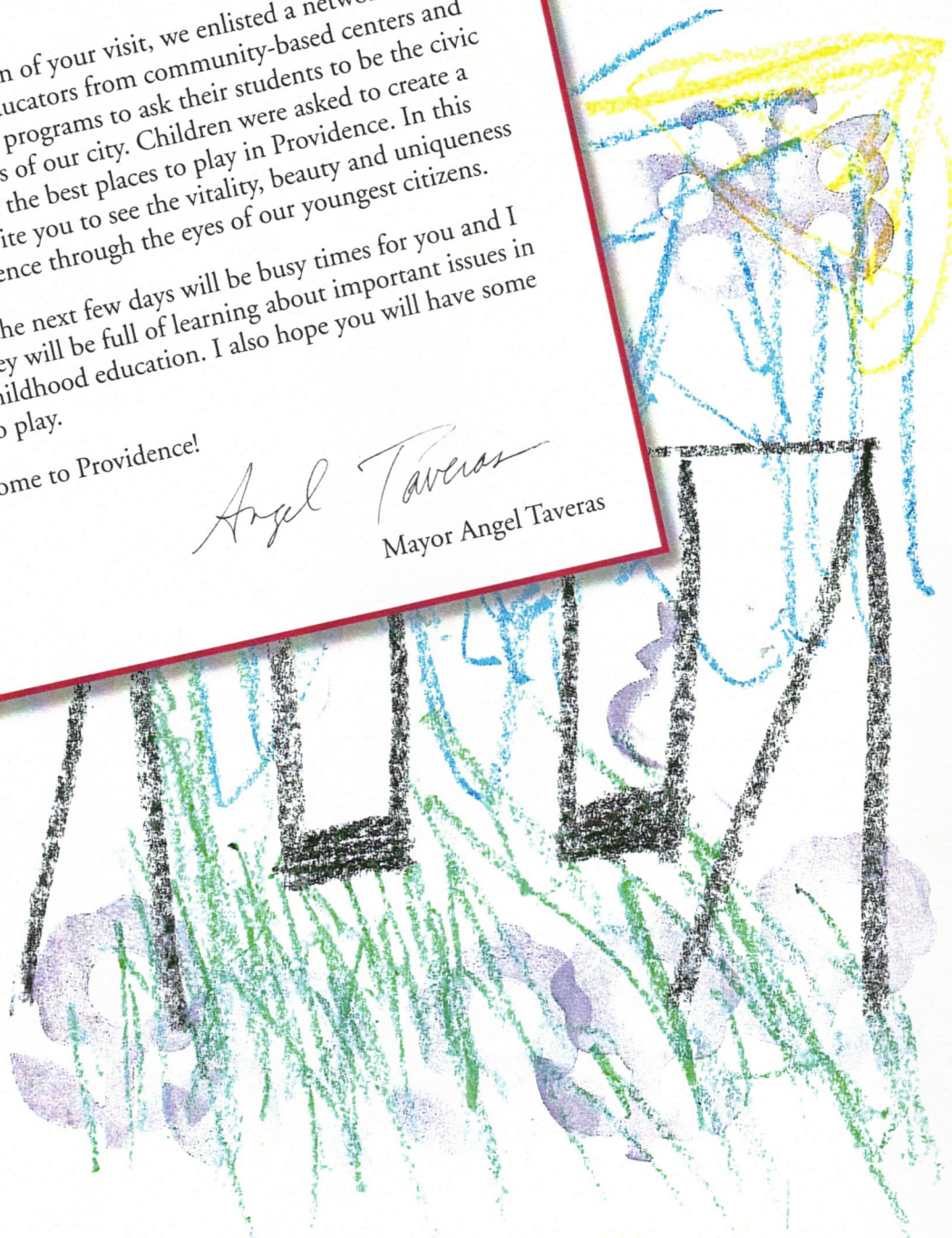
Dear NAEYC Professional Development Institute
Participants,

In anticipation of your visit, we enlisted a network of early
childhood educators from community-based centers and
home-based programs to ask their students to be the civic
ambassadors of our city. Children were asked to create a
page about the best places to play in Providence. In this
book I invite you to see the vitality, beauty and uniqueness
of Providence through the eyes of our youngest citizens.

I know the next few days will be busy times for you and I
trust they will be full of learning about important issues in
early childhood education. I also hope you will have some
time to play.

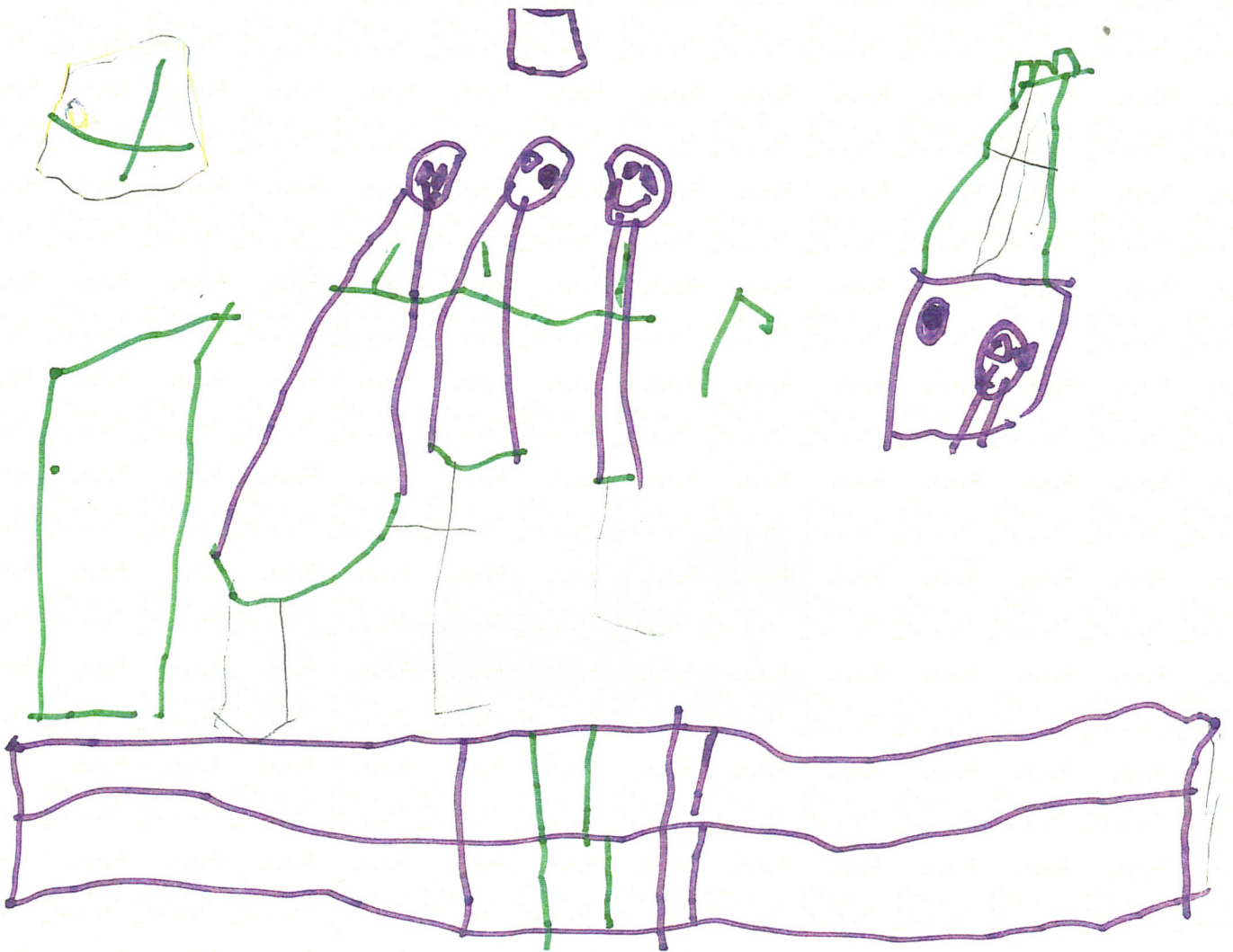
Welcome to Providence!

Angel Taveras
Mayor Angel Taveras



The Swings by Maya W., Age 4

ABOUT THIS BOOK: This book was created and printed in June 2011 to welcome the participants of the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Professional Development Institute to Providence. A project of Ready to Learn Providence, Making Learning Visible, and the R2LP/MLV Peer Network, it was funded in part by a RIAEYC BrightStars Peer Network grant. Information about these groups and the process behind the creation of this book can be found on pages 18 and 19.



My House by Jonathan, Age 4

“Me gusta jugar futbol en mi casa con mis hermanos.”

“I like to play soccer at my house with my brothers.”

Jonathan



My School by Stanley, Age 4

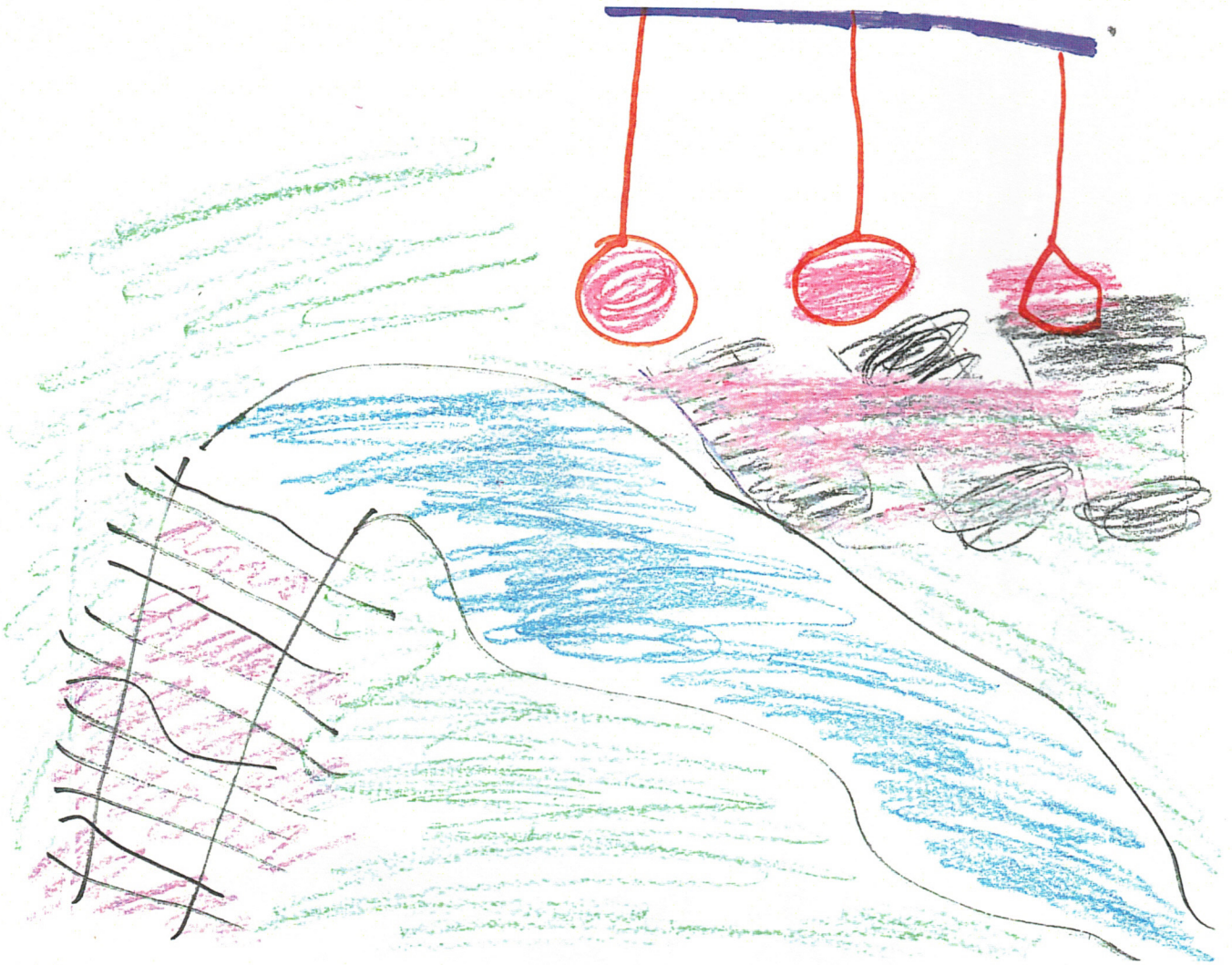
“My mom takes me to school to play.”



The Park by God'iss, Age 4

“First you make the swing. This is me on the swing. I’m going to make a bench for my mom and daddy to watch me play. Now I’m going to make another swing in case my brothers want to go on it.”

God'iss



The Yard in Ms. Rosemary's Family Day Care

by Jada, Age 4

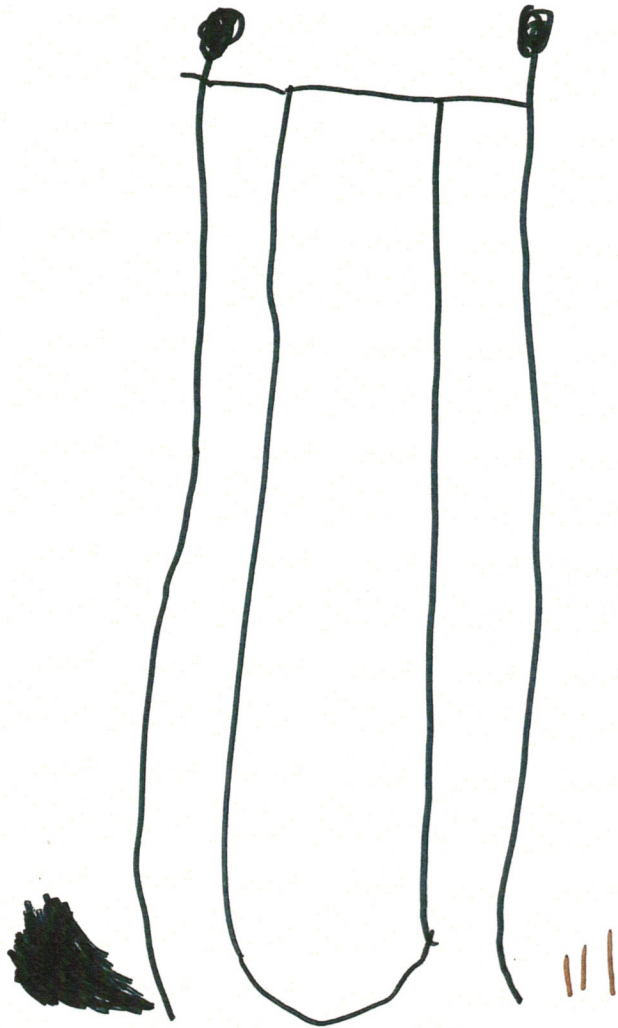
"I like playing in the yard. You have to go up the ladder and step on the colored part. You don't want to fall. You go down the slide and run to the swing. You need a black thing under the swing. I like big slides."



India Point Park by Eddie, Age 4

“We always go there together. I like to go on the swings and climbing ropes. There is a soccer field.”

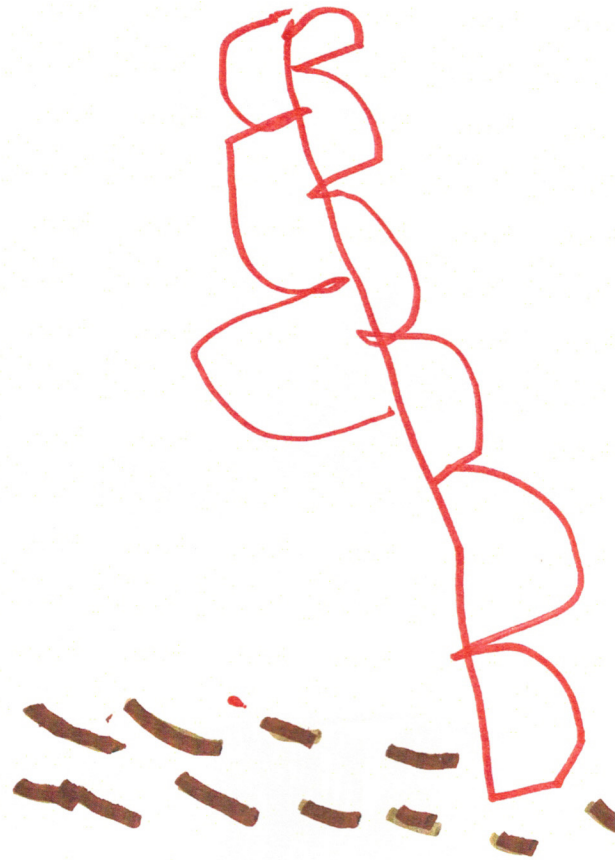
EODPE



The Swing at Brown Street Park by Rose, Age 4

“This is my favorite swing.”

ROSE



The Squiggly Climber at 9th Street Park

by Harper, Age 4

“It has nine squiggles. Three plus six equals nine.”

HARPER



Waterplace Park by Pepper, Age 4

"I'm standing at the bottom of the hill and this is the hill and this is the thing you jump off of."

Having fun



"[The Providence Place Mall] is fun. There are a lot of people. There are toys. It is as much fun as the playground."

Victoria

"We play games [at Picnic Park]. I play pretend school and I run."

Namrita

"You can yell outside."
Bridget



"It is my favorite restaurant. I usually sit in the same place near the windows. My favorite noodle is udon. I like the miso soup and scallion pancakes they give us while we are waiting for our other foods."

Leila



"Mamma is riding the big bike with Connor on the back and I have my own bike. We are riding to the playground."

Payton

"I love playing at the park with my family."

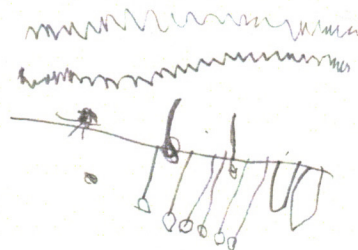
Jarius

in Providence

"I play rainbow and work out too. And I walk in the grass and I see the rocks and I play."

George

"We play games [in Waterplace Park]. We get to jump off the wall. And we get to lie down on the grass. It feels good. And there are big stairs you can jump on and run and jump off. And you can walk on. And you can walk off and run off."



Moises



"This is a dream. I'm drawing a dream. That's me at the top of the hill [at Waterplace Park] and those are the steps to climb up to the sky."

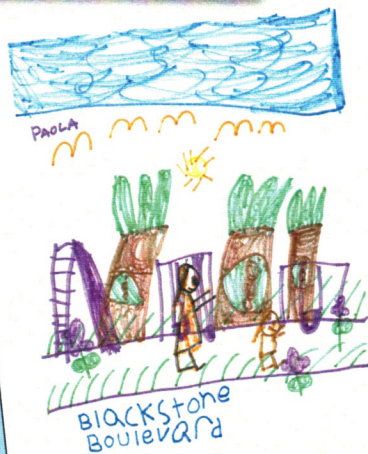
Pascal

"I like to play at my house."

Sam

"To get to the park you go with your mommy and get on your bike. Ride on the sidewalk."

Synai



"Kids like to play in parks and [Lippitt Park on Blackstone Boulevard] is a park. You could bring chalk and play with it. You could bring your toys from home and play with them. You can make new friends."

Paola

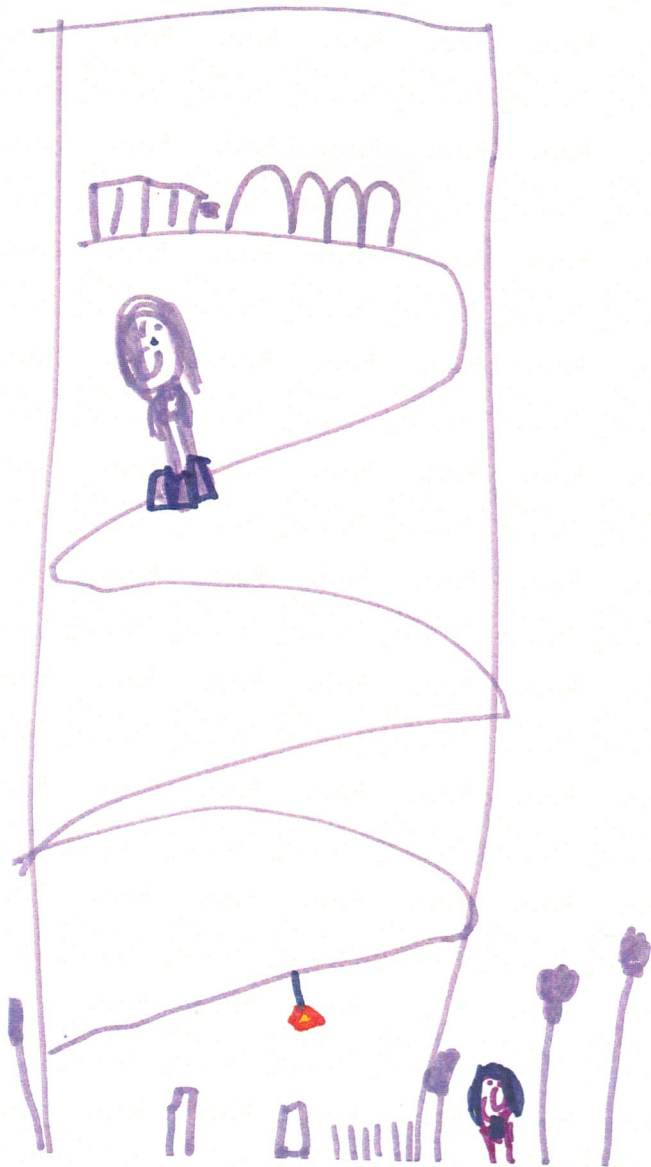
RODGER Williams PARK!!



Roger Williams Park by Alma, Age 5

"I like to go on the swan boats but I am a little nervous to fall in the water. I also like to go on to the carousel and ride on the horse. Yee haw!"

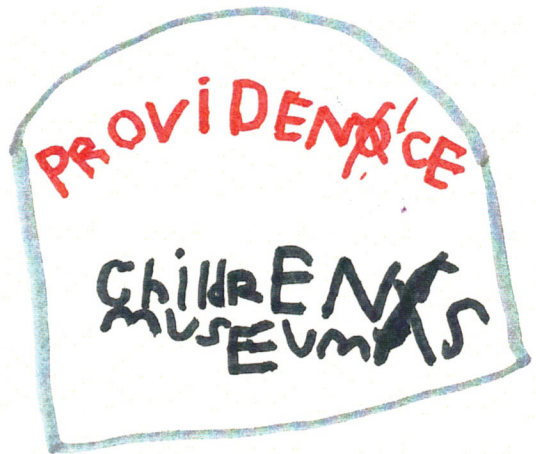
Alma



*The Ramps in the Children's Museum that
Lead up to the Caves by Adelaide, Age 4*

"There is a little secret house and a
bunny we can play on."

ADLAIDE



*The Sign at the Providence Children's Museum
by Griffin, Age 5*

"I like going [to the Children's
Museum] and I like playing there.
I like to play in the water tables
there."

GRIFFIN



The Sandbox at the Children's Museum by Brianna, Age 5

“Los niños están jugando en la caja de arena. Los profesores observan los niños jugar en el museo de niños. Ellos se están divirtiendo.”

“The kids are playing in the sandbox. The teachers are watching the kids play at the Children's Museum. They are having fun.”



MAYA

The Beach by Maya R., Age 5

“I’m at the beach and Mamma’s hair is blowing everywhere. Fish are under water, and me and Mamma are going diving. Mamma and me are afraid because these are snapping fish, so me and Mamma have to go to the other beach.”



The Providence Performing Arts Center by Alfie, Age 5

“You can hear The Lion King. You can see The Lion King. It’s a good show and it’s in the nighttime. Kids can sleep there because it’s a long show.”



MARCO

Tazza Park by Marco, Age 5

“Run. Run. Run. Run and jump to the grass. The little kids jump here because they’re little. You sit on the benches.”

Marco first explained his drawing in English (see above). His explanation in Spanish can be found on the back cover.



READY TO LEARN PROVIDENCE, a program of The Providence Plan, is a community-based school readiness initiative that was founded in 2003 with the vision that all children in Providence will enter school healthy and ready to learn. With its growing expertise and capacity in the urban core, R2LP now brings many of its services statewide. Since its inception, nearly 2,000 early-care educators have participated in R2LP professional development programs, many of them for college credit. An active research and data department analyzes the impact of R2LP programs and also produces reports on issues related to early childhood and the early-care field. R2LP is a participant in the state's Pre-kindergarten Demonstration Project and administers a 35-member AmeriCorps program. In 2010, R2LP became the Rhode Island home of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®, which awards college scholarships to early-care educators. For more information on R2LP's many initiatives, please go to www.r2lp.org.

Since 1997, the **MAKING LEARNING VISIBLE PROJECT** has investigated the dynamics of individual and group learning and the role of documentation in supporting the development of powerful learning groups in classrooms and schools. The project started as a collaboration between the Preschools and Infant-Toddler Centers in Reggio Emilia, Italy, and Project Zero, a research group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (1997-2000). From 2001-2011, Project Zero researchers worked with preschool through high school teachers and teacher educators to translate these ideas into the U.S. context. For more information about the project, please visit the MLV Websites: <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/mlv/> and <http://www.makinglearningvisibleresources.org/>.

MEMBERS OF THE R2LP/MAKING LEARNING VISIBLE PEER NETWORK

Amy Neveu *Beautiful Beginnings Child Care Center*
Deepani Ambalangodage *Beautiful Beginnings Child Care Center*
Paula Cray *Bright Futures Early Learning Center at Meeting Street*
Martha Donovan *Brown/Fox Point Early Childhood Education Center*
Becky Dirrane *Brown/Fox Point Early Childhood Education Center*
Nuris Ynoa *Nuris's Day Care*
Rosemary Raygada-Sosa *J and L Home Day Care*
Michelle Case *Genesis Child Development and Learning Center*

Ja'net Hall *East Side/Mt. Hope YMCA Child Care Center*
Ted Weber *East Side/Mt. Hope YMCA Child Care Center*
Victoria Botelho *Ready to Learn Providence at CCRI Pre-Kindergarten Program*
Joseph Mirsky *Ready to Learn Providence*
Mayra Llanos *Smith Hill Early Childhood Learning Center*
Andrée Howard *Dr. Pat Feinstein Child Development Center*
Delia Hall *Dr. Pat Feinstein Child Development Center*
Facilitators: Bethany Carpenter and Ben Mardell

Our thanks to BrightStars and the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children for their support of our peer network. Providing funding for peer networks is indeed forward thinking. Kudos to Cynthia Ferguson and Melissa Rivard for a wonderful job on designing this book, giving the children's work the care and respect it deserves. And thanks to the Wheelock College Documentation Studio for donating Melissa's time to this effort. Using ideas inspired by educators from Reggio Emilia, Italy, The Documentation Studio features exhibitions created by teachers that make children's learning visible in ways that standardized tests do not. The Studio is free and open to the public and provides wonderful learning opportunities for individuals and groups wanting to learn more about how documentation can support innovative educational experiences for all children. For more information, including opportunities to visit, contact the studio's director Stephanie Cox Suarez (ssuarez@wheelock.edu). Finally, we want to thank our Ready to Learn Providence (R2LP) and Making Learning Visible (MLV) colleagues for their support in this effort: Leslie Gell, Christine Chiacu-Forsythe and Bobbi Rosenquest at R2LP, and Mara Krechevsky and Melissa Rivard at MLV.

Dear NAEYC Professional Development Institute Participants,

The selection of Providence as the host city for NAEYC's Professional Development Institute provided a unique opportunity for Ready to Learn Providence (R2LP), Making Learning Visible (MLV), and local early childhood educators to collaborate on the creation of this book. We hope that it serves as an authentic "guidebook" to our city and a reminder that even our youngest citizens can serve as ambassadors for their communities.

Places to Play in Providence is one product of a professional development "peer network" co-facilitated by R2LP and MLV. To create this guide, we helped 16 preschool educators explore a variety of best practices to support their children's learning. Teachers talked with children about what play is and where it happens. They introduced the ideas of drafts and feedback. They involved families who shared photographs of their children's favorite places to play. They visited interesting places to play. They helped children to share ideas and expertise with their classmates as well as children from other centers. They supported children's drawing, talking, exploring and collaboration.



The result was a great deal of learning. Marco learned that combining yellow and red creates orange. Harper learned that a climbing structure at her favorite park has six steps on one side and three on the other for a total of nine. God'iss learned that her friend Shashi could teach her how to make a ladder. Pepper learned that making a good drawing can take a long time. Synai learned that, despite the fact that she had thought it impossible, with persistence and practice she could draw a bicycle. Deeply engaged in this project, children learned literacy skills, the value of writing and drawing, and how to learn with and from others.



The adults learned a great deal as well. We learned that children have much to say about where to play in their city. We learned that children with special needs could contribute to this book in authentic ways. We learned that children are capable of giving each other feedback, and that children's support for one another's learning is a habit we want to cultivate. We learned that the miso soup at Asian Palace is excellent. And we learned that parks are places where you can dream you are climbing to the sky and jumping back down to earth again.

We hope you find some time and places to play in Providence!

Bethany Carpenter

Head Teacher, R2LP Pre-Kindergarten Classroom
bcarpenter@provplan.org

Ben Mardell

Researcher, Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
Associate Professor, Lesley University
bmardell@lesley.edu



“Lions, monkeys, gorillas, tigers, giraffes, elephants, hippopotamus.
That’s all the animals [at Roger Williams Park Zoo].” – Earl

“Yo corro, yo juego con carros, y también juego con los muchachos.
Me gusta jugar juegos con ellos. En el retrato estoy jugando con mis
amigos un juego que jugamos cuando yo voy para el parqué: yo corro
y busco hojas y juego con las hojas. Yo en el retrato también estaba
mirando el sol con mi amigo.” – Marco

“We play with trucks [at Tazza Park]. We run on the rocks. The rocks
go all the way to the bottom of the bocce court.” – Oskar

“I jumped over some rocks and went for a little walk in the forest.
And then there were big logs. I went over the big logs and my
grandfather picked up my brother, and then my grandmother said
it’s time to go home.” – Carolina

“I play on the slide at the YMCA.” – Christopher

PLACES TO PLAY IN PROVIDENCE

A GUIDE TO THE CITY BY OUR YOUNGEST CITIZENS