



Together, we can create moments of joy and belonging for families like the ones below and make a difference that lasts a lifetime. Read more of this year's inspiring stories about **"power of play"** at LICM!

DISCOVERY AND DELIGHT!

How LICM's *Together to Kindergarten* program sparked learning, laughter, and lasting memories for one local family

For Rita, a mother of two boys, the key word in LICM's *Together to Kindergarten* (TTK) program is "together." Designed to help newcomer families navigate the U.S. education system, TTK supports both children and parents.

"It's a great opportunity for the parents to help their kids to become better—not just now, but to help prepare them for adulthood."

Rita emigrated from Ecuador and later moved to Long Island to raise her family. Wanting to give her sons, Jayden and Matthew, a strong start, she enrolled them in TTK. "They already knew some reading skills, but the program accelerated them," she says. "Working with other kids in groups helped them to develop social skills." TTK families receive a free year-long Museum membership, and Jayden and Matthew, now 8 and 6, still visit often.

"The Museum means a lot to us. It's been part of so many memories they have of us together as a family."

Your support helps create memories like these for families across Long Island.



WHEN TEENS TAKE THE LEAD



Volunteering came naturally to Devaanshi Kawatra. In high school, she founded *Kits That Care*, delivering care kits to communities in need. That drive led her to LICM's year-long *Green Teens* program, where teens create interactive STEM workshops for visitors. "With *Green Teens*, all volunteers have an active role," she says. The program quickly became a learning experience. **"We had to collaborate as a team to develop lesson plans—coming together around an idea, sharing funding, and working on logistics,"** she says. "One day, when I was assigned to lead a group, it showed me how to be a leader in that moment."

Now a first-year student in Stony Brook University's accelerated medical doctorate program, Devaanshi still uses those skills. **"Learning to communicate with a diverse audience...has helped me a lot,"** she says. *Green Teens* is one way through which LICM fosters learning and growth. "It's hard to put into words," Devaanshi says, "but you can see it through the number of volunteers, mentors, and kids."



Please give today to help inspire the next generation.



Scan the QR code, visit <http://www.licm.org/support-us/yea>, or contact us at Development@licm.org.

You may also mail your gift to: **Long Island Children's Museum, Attn: Development Dept., 11 Davis Avenue, Garden City, NY 11590.**

PLAY WITH A PURPOSE



For 6-year-old Feiandi, LICM's *Together to Kindergarten* (TTK), a school success program, helps children gain academic and social skills while supporting parents. In 6-year-old Feiandi's home, the family speaks Mandarin, and Feiandi was struggling with expressive communication. "Sometimes he would have trouble putting words together and with correct pronunciation," Kewa says.

After enrolling him in TTK, **"He's made tremendous progress," she says. "I definitely see the impact from hanging out with kids around his age."** He even used his Mandarin to help a classmate. "I think it's great that he had the opportunity to use his Chinese language skills. Plus, he thinks it's cool that he has a friend who also speaks Chinese." TTK also builds **community**. **"You have the opportunity to meet with so many other parents at TTK—different races, backgrounds, and ages,"** Kewa says. "I learned a lot, and it really helped my big picture. Imagine where kids would go without this

program... Maybe they'd just be staying home or doing some program that's basically babysitting. TTK helps a lot of families, and it can be a pivot point for kids."

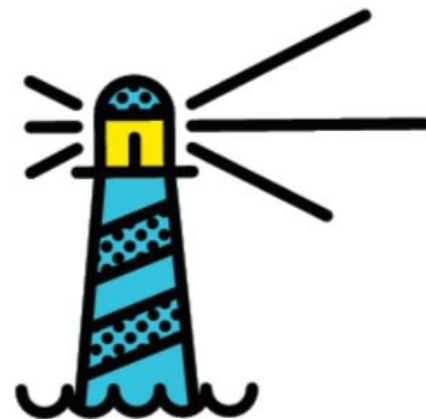
Your support ensures children like Feiandi can keep building skills and friendships that last a lifetime.

INSIDE THE EMOTIONAL JOURNEY OF A FAMILY WHO FOUND CONNECTION THROUGH *LICM4all*

Imagine how it must feel when a simple family outing isn't simple at all. "Going to places with a high-needs child with autism was very difficult," says Lara. "We always stuck out. That changed when Lara discovered LICM. **"It was a place where we felt safe—all of us," she says. "There were people around us who looked like us, who sounded like us, and who acted like us."** Carol, Laura's daughter, who has autism, could participate in activities alongside other children and siblings without feeling different.

"LICM helped us be able to do things we normally couldn't do," Lara says. **"You're starting to see more groups catering to families with special needs, but LICM was one of the first—it was pioneering."** "Now that the kids are older, there are fewer things we can do together," Lara says. "But the Museum is still something we can all enjoy. It really grows with the child."

"LICM4all has made us feel like we are seen and heard," Lara says. "How do you put words to what that means? When you think of organizations that make things possible for people they don't even know... It makes me remember that there's goodness in the world." Be part of that greater good. Your support for *LICM4all* ensures that every family, no matter their needs, can find a place where they feel celebrated.



Become a Partner in Play - give the "power of play" today.

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