



Cradles to Crayons Prospectus



Description:

Cradles to Crayons (C2C) provides children ages 0-12 living in poverty with the basic essentials they need to be safe, ready to learn, and feel valued. The C2C model serves as a bridge connecting those who have more with those who have less, breaking down some of the barriers within and between communities. C2C collects new and gently-used children's items through community drives; processes and packages donations at its Giving Factory with the help of thousands of volunteers; and, through partnerships with social service agencies that identify specific children and their individual needs, distributes donated toys, books, clothes, and other items to children throughout Massachusetts at no charge. Through grass-roots civic engagement and meaningful volunteer opportunities, C2C reaches tens of thousands of needy children annually, enables social service agencies to work more effectively, and mobilizes thousands of youth and adults to learn about the problem of poverty and become part of the solution.

Location: Quincy, MA (HQ)

Website: www.cradlestocrayons.org

Founded: 2002

Current Budget: \$2.0 million¹

Geography & People Served:

Low-income and homeless children up to age 12 living in Massachusetts.

Social Problem:

- One in four children in Massachusetts lives in a low-income household.
- By age 4, children who live below the poverty line are 18 months behind developmental milestones for their age group; by age 10 that gap is still present. For children living in the poorest families, the gap is even larger.
- Over the past two decades, incomes for the most affluent families in Massachusetts have grown almost five times as fast as those for low-income families. Opportunities to bridge the gap between communities, especially ones that engage children and families, are few and far between.

Key Accomplishments & Social Impact:

Since its founding, C2C has served over 90,000 children and provided meaningful volunteer opportunities for over 20,000 children, youth, and adults. In 2007 alone, Cradles to Crayons:

- Reached more than 35,000 children with a donation of clothing, school supplies, books, or toys
- Hosted 7,500+ volunteers in its warehouse, 1/3 of whom were ages 5-18
- Mobilized more than 80 Massachusetts communities to sponsor product drives
- Grew its distribution network to include 362 social service partners
- Launched C2C Philadelphia, beginning C2C's national expansion

Two-Year Goals:

- Serve 50,000 children annually
- Engage 9,000 volunteers (3,000 youth)
- Partner with 125 communities
- Build capacity for growth beyond 2010 by establishing systems and business processes to enhance productivity, quality, and portability of business model

Total Investment – Two Years: \$2 million

Contact Information:

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Ways to Invest

In-Kind Support

- Warehouse space
- Bulk donations of children's products
- Truck/van use
- PR/marketing services (graphic design, website design, advertising space, print services)
- Members for Family Leadership Council & Corporate Advisory Board

Financial Support

- \$50,000** Improvements to online ordering system and database architecture
- \$25,000** Individualized packages for 1,000 children
- \$15,000** Web-based volunteer scheduling system
- \$10,000** Backpacks for 1,000 children
- \$5,000** Customer service and leadership training for staff
- \$1,000** Support for a member of C2C teen leadership council

¹ For Massachusetts only. Includes \$1.3 million operating budget for 2008 in addition to financial reserve of \$0.7 million. Does not include recently launched Philadelphia operations.



Need & Opportunity

Social Problem

Some 282,000 children under age 13 live in low-income households in Massachusetts.² These children face a constellation of problems related to poverty. Their parents are often forced to make tough decisions when allocating their time and financial resources. Working long hours to provide food and shelter often prevents parents from being able to spend time at home with their children. Additionally, available housing options do not always provide a safe environment for learning and growth, and offer children fewer opportunities for healthy interaction and stimulation. These problems are exacerbated by a lack of some of the essential items that their wealthier peers take for granted, including warm clothes, safety items, educational toys, and books.

For example, among parents of preschoolers who receive public aid, almost half (47 percent) reported no alphabet books in the home, compared to only 3 percent of their wealthier counterparts.³ The availability of books and other educational play materials in the home is an important factor in school readiness and later academic and social success.⁴ A typical middle-class child enters first grade with between 1,000 and 1,700 hours of one-on-one picture book reading; that child's low-income peer enters first grade with only about 25 such hours.⁵ Without books and other stimulating toys in the home to create interactions that focus children's attention on letters and sounds in words, their literacy development and later school success are severely impaired.

By age 4, children who live below the poverty line are 18 months behind what is expected for their age group; by age 10 that gap is still present. For children living in the poorest families, the gap is even larger.⁶ When children receive inadequate stimulation or face barriers to opportunities for productive learning, they can suffer from persistent disparities in capabilities. In fact, children living in poverty begin to score lower on standardized developmental tests as young as 18 months, and these differences not only persist but increase as the child ages.⁷ Extensive research shows that children who grow up under conditions of poverty are not only more likely (relative to non-poor children) to be less successful in school, but also less productive as adults in the labor market, have lifelong health problems, and commit crimes and engage in other forms of problematic behavior.⁸

Root Cause Factors

Across the country, the rising tide is not lifting all boats. The gap between the haves and have-nots is growing—a trend that is especially evident in the Boston area, where between 1990 and 2000 the richest and poorest represented the two fastest-growing categories of households.⁹

Research shows that economic inequality has widespread consequences for society as a whole, not only for individuals and families at the bottom of the income distribution. When societies are segregated economically, rates of civic participation drop.¹⁰ This is partly due to the distance from social problems. Lack of awareness of social problems decreases incentives to engage in civic activities.¹¹ While studies show that most people (89 percent) are concerned about poverty, the general public grossly underestimates the extent of poverty in the

²KidsCount Massachusetts (Low income is defined as 200 percent of the federal poverty level.) 282,000 figure extrapolated by Bain & Co. http://www.kidscount.org/datacenter/profile_results.jsp?r=23&d=1&c=1&p=5&x=123&y=4; 400,000 low-income children in Massachusetts.

³Susan H. Landry, *Effective Early Childhood Programs: Turning Knowledge into Action* (Houston: University of Texas System, 2005); available online as PDF at www.uth.tmc.edu/circle/pdfs/LandryBook.pdf.

⁴Ibid.

⁵M. J. Adams, *Learning To Read: Thinking and Learning About Print* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1990).

⁶Lisa G. Klein and Jane Knitzer, "Promoting effective early learning: What every policymaker and educator should know," National Center for Children in Poverty, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health (2007), http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_695.pdf

⁷Selcuk R. Sirin, "Socioeconomic Status and Achievement: A Meta-Analytic Review of Research," *Review of Educational Research* (2005), 75, 413-453.

⁸Harry Holzer et al., *The Economic Costs of Poverty in the United States: Subsequent Effects of Children Growing Up Poor*, (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2005).

⁹Douglas Belkin, "2050 Future Shock: Jobs, class and a growing divide" *Boston Globe Magazine*, Jan. 2, 2005.

¹⁰J. Eric Oliver, "The Effects of Metropolitan Economic Segregation on Local Civic Participation," *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (January 1999), 186-212.

¹¹Ibid.



United States.¹² Without an accurate understanding of the size, scope, and consequences of poverty, people are unlikely to seek ways to get involved in the solutions to that problem.

The disparity between rich and poor, however, presents opportunities as well as challenges. A recent study released by the Boston Foundation estimates that the largest intergenerational transfer of wealth in American history will occur between 2001 and 2055, creating the potential for tremendous growth in the area's philanthropic and nonprofit sectors.¹³ This shift will be bolstered by a new emerging brand of philanthropy, in which donors want to do more than write a check: They want to be involved with the organizations to which they donate, and they want to get their children involved as well.¹⁴ This new "tangible philanthropy" will create opportunities for social change.

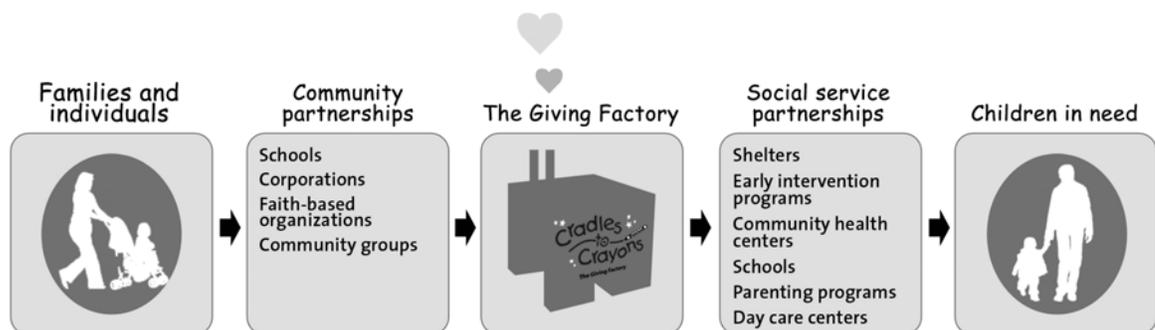
Current Landscape

Lifting children out of the grasp of poverty is a multifaceted problem that demands a variety of strategies working simultaneously to create change. Numerous social service organizations provide the services that children need to prepare them to succeed in life. While many of these organizations are quite effective at what they do, it is difficult if not impossible for them to provide services to children who lack even the most basic items. Some social service agencies try to provide coats, books, toys, or other essential items, but their expertise and resources are in service delivery. Limitations of space, staff, and bandwidth prevent them from being able to provide for children's basic needs in a comprehensive way.

The tireless work of social service organizations and government agencies alone is not sufficient to make lasting changes in the problems related to inequality; they must be joined by individuals, families, community groups, and corporations. It is often difficult, however, for families to find meaningful ways to contribute their time; organizations that are able to accept and accommodate young children as volunteers are rare. Meaningful volunteer opportunities for youth can be central to developing the sense of empathy and awareness that provides a foundation for future leadership in fostering social justice. In the absence of volunteer opportunities suited to children, many children and families remain unaware of and isolated from the problems facing the poor, and do not know how to become part of the solution.

Social Innovation in Action: The Cradles to Crayons Model

Cradles to Crayons (C2C) has created an innovative model (illustrated below) to provide children with the basic items they need, while offering individuals, families, community organizations, and corporations meaningful volunteer opportunities that create the awareness necessary to build a foundation for lasting social change.



¹² Catholic Campaign for Human Development Poverty Pulse Wave IV, (Washington, D.C.: Market Research Bureau, January 2004), <http://www.usccb.org/cchd/PP4FINAL.PDF>

¹³ John J. Havens and Paul S. Schervish, *A Golden Age of Philanthropy? The Impact of the Great Wealth Transfer on Greater Boston*, (Boston: The Boston Foundation, 2006), http://www.tbf.org/uploadedFiles/GoldenAgePhilanthropy_2.pdf.

¹⁴ The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, Bank of America Study of High Net-Worth Philanthropy, October 2006, http://newsroom.bankofamerica.com/file.php/mr_bankofamerica/spinsite_docfiles/295/BAC%20Study%20of%20HNW%20Philanthropy%2010-26-06.FINAL.pdf



C2C leverages the resources, relationships, and competencies of two crucial stakeholder groups—social service partners and donors—and acts as the bridge between them and the children ultimately served.

Social Service Partners

C2C collaborates with 362 social service partners across Massachusetts to identify individual children living in low-income households and meet their specific needs. Through C2C's user-friendly online ordering system, social workers, therapists, nurses, teachers, and caregivers place a customized request for items based on a child's clothing size, age, interests, and situation. Volunteers working in the C2C warehouse fulfill these orders, which are then picked up by the requesting organizations and delivered to the child and his or her family.

This collaborative model has several benefits:

- 1) It allows C2C to ensure that the children being served are those most in need, as C2C's partners pre-qualify children based on income;
- 2) It keeps C2C's transaction costs low, as orders are often filled for multiple children served by one program;
- 3) It helps C2C's social service partners build stronger relationships and trust with the families they serve;
- 4) It allows C2C's social service partners to spend less time seeking items for the children they serve, and more time focusing on their own mission-related service delivery.

Donors – Families, Communities, and Corporations

Children grow quickly and outgrow their toys, books, and clothes at an often surprising pace. Aware of the needs of children living in poverty and not wanting to see the items their children have outgrown end up in landfills, many families donate these gently-used items to C2C.

Schools, faith-based organizations, youth groups, corporations, and other community organizations facilitate product donations through community drives, which serve not only to collect donations but also to raise awareness about the needs of children living in poverty. Additionally, many families, communities, and corporations choose to augment their product donations with both financial donations to help C2C to fund its operations and volunteer time, which is critical to the success of the C2C model.

The work performed by volunteers at the Giving Factory, C2C's 12,000-square-foot warehouse, is crucial to sustaining the link between donors, social service partners, and the children ultimately being served. In the Giving Factory, volunteers as young as 5 years old clean, sort, organize, and package donations for pick-up by C2C's social service partners, ensuring that every item processed for donation meets high quality standards. Volunteerism, whether within the Giving Factory or out in the community, is an especially important component of the C2C model in that it provides volunteers, especially children, with hands-on experience, teaching them about leadership, social justice, and service, and reinforcing the power of giving.

This part of the model has many benefits:

- 1) It creates the foundation for long-term social change by engaging and educating youth.
- 2) It offers opportunities for members community organizations or employees of local corporations to work together to strengthen their communities.
- 3) It offers opportunities for donors to get involved beyond check-writing.
- 4) It allows for gently-used children's items to be reused and recycled rather than discarded.

Through this groundbreaking model, C2C serves as a bridge connecting those who have more with those who have less, breaking down some of the barriers within and between communities.



Social Impact

Cradles to Crayons impacts three major stakeholder groups: the children ultimately served, social service partners, and volunteers.

Children

Because C2C works through social service agencies and not directly with the children and families who receive their items, it relies on survey data from social service partners to learn about its impact on the children ultimately served. In March 2008, with the help of Bain & Company, C2C surveyed its partners, asking them about C2C's impact on children's self-esteem, literacy and home safety. Eighty-one percent reported that the goods received through C2C had a positive effect on a child's self-esteem, 78 percent reported that they were important to literacy, and 67 percent said they improved home safety. Social workers had the following to say:

[C2C] offers things that make people smile. Being able to hand someone something tangible, like a Halloween costume or a new outfit ... makes both the giver and receiver feel like something positive has come out of the day.
– REACH Beyond Domestic Violence

Toys are how kids learn C2C donations are essential to how we work with families.
– Bay Cove Early Intervention

Our play group coordinators are able to order items according to the interests and talents they notice in a child during play group sessions.
– Family Nurturing Center

Cradles to Crayons' donations enable social workers to help families cover their most basic needs. A social worker from the state's program to coordinate services for homeless families (F.O.R. Families)¹⁵ told Bain & Co., "We had a child who stayed home from school because she didn't have a winter coat and her mother didn't want her to wait outside for the bus in the cold."

Additionally, the survey revealed additional benefits to the child's family. Social workers saw that the donation of books, toys, clothes, school supplies, and other safety items reduced parental stress and increased positive interactions between parent and child. A social worker at Lynn Economic Opportunity OECD Head Start summarized, "Donated items help with a family's immediate needs so that they're freed up to address other, next-level issues, like mental health, finding healthcare, or getting a job." A social worker from Quincy WIC Nutrition noted, "Donations also help nurture the parent—they allow the parent to provide for their family and feel successful, which can be as important as providing a coat to the child." The social worker went on to say, "Parents are thrilled when they are able to provide their children exactly what they need. It is a source of pride for them."

Social Service Partners

The survey also illuminated the extent to which C2C is valuable to social service agencies and their ability to serve their clients. For example, a therapist in an early intervention program noted that she has seen improvements in the effectiveness of play therapy because she now has age-appropriate toys to leave behind for children and their parents to work with in her absence. Prior to collaboration with C2C, the therapist had a single bag of toys that was shared across clients; after each session with a child, she previously had to pack up the toys, leaving the child with none to play with—and often confused and angry. Now, parents and children are able to continue the learning initiated in the play session with toys donated through C2C.

Social workers are very clear about how important donations from C2C are to their work:

I have not found another resource in our community that offers what C2C does. ... Without you, our clients would be forced to either go without these things or spend money needed for other items.
– Traveler's Aid Family Services

¹⁵ F.O.R. Families (Follow-up Outreach Referral) is a joint program of the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) and the Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition in the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.



Cradles to Crayons is the only organization I know of that provides high-quality, concrete assistance free of charge for families in need without requiring extensive hoops to jump through.

– Visiting Nurse Association of Boston

C2C has been a BLESSING! They have helped me provide my families with a great range of items, which makes my job easier. When the children have basic necessities ... that opens up an environment where education can be received. That's my goal.

– Jesus Loves Children, daycare

Donations help us build a bond with parents; it allows us to then move on to their second-level needs, since we've taken some of the immediate stress off the table.

– Lynn Head Start

C2C strengthens the relationship between our agency and the families that we serve because the families can see that we are really trying to help them.

– Chelsea Family Child Care

Volunteers and Communities

Cradles to Crayons plans to begin surveying volunteers in fall of 2008 to gauge C2C's impact on poverty awareness among volunteers. While this data is forthcoming, several anecdotes show how C2C has influenced its volunteers. A young volunteer wrote about her experience with C2C in her application to Thayer Academy, a college preparatory day school for boys and girls in grades 6 through 12:

I think the event in my life that's had the most important effect on me is the charity where I volunteer.... I have learned about less fortunate people. I have learned about what a typical day would be like if I were homeless. I learned about what they have to go through. I have also learned that I can help people near or far just by caring about them.... My experience volunteering has taught me so many things. One thing is that you can achieve a big goal, like helping those in poverty. It's not very hard to help if you are committed to doing your part.

Another young volunteer spoke about C2C in his bar mitzvah speech:

This [C2C] helps me and my friends to understand that some people are less fortunate and are in need of help. It also helps us understand that giving just a little can help a lot. Additionally, groups like Cradles to Crayons have many volunteers and many people are connected with them. By having so many people involved in an organization, everyone helps, creating more connections and more understanding. And the people we help, once they have better lives, can also help others and we can all move forward. This is how we move forward, through action that leads to understanding.

Michelle Goldthwaite, a Braintree, Mass., mother of two, is also a C2C volunteer. Wanting to introduce her children early on to the need to give back, she started searching for volunteer opportunities appropriate for families. "There wasn't anything appropriate for 8-year-olds," she said. She now volunteers with her children in the Giving Factory, while her husband, Don Goldthwaite, helps organize drives at the girls' school. Michelle has found the volunteer opportunity for the family to be a valuable teaching tool: "We could get them to understand not everyone has what they have," she said, "and that you have to give back."¹⁶

These young volunteers' experiences at C2C are instrumental to their learning about poverty and laying the foundation to continue devoting time and resources to social service and to advocate for social justice.

¹⁶ Naomi Kooker, "Volunteers have 'hands-on' approach to philanthropy." *Boston Business Journal* April 27, 2007; available online at: <http://boston.bizjournals.com/boston/stories/2007/04/30/newscolumn3.html>



Program Performance

Cradles to Crayons' current capacity and growth are especially remarkable given that the organization was founded only six years ago. C2C will continue to respond to increasing demand for its services in greater Boston and beyond. In order to serve more children, C2C will engage more volunteers and enlist growing numbers of communities. Shown in the table below are historic and projected growth numbers for its Massachusetts operations:

	2006A	2007A	2008E	2009E	2010E
Number of children served	30,000	35,000	40,000	45,000	50,000
Number of youth volunteers ages 5-18	2,300	2,600	3,000	3,500	4,000
Total number of volunteers (youth and adult)	7,000	7,500	8,000	8,500	9,000

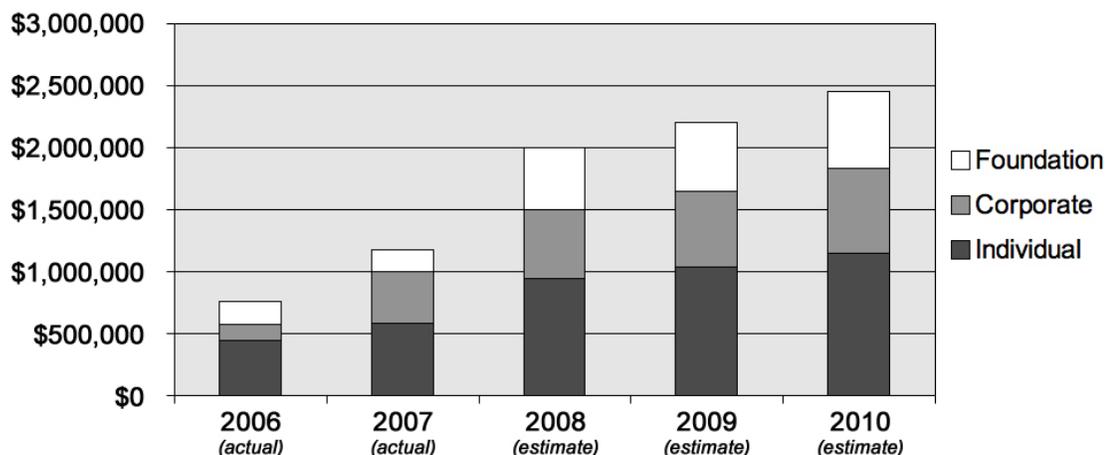
In addition, C2C is in the early stages of developing its strategy to expand to other metropolitan areas. In summer 2007, C2C successfully launched a Giving Factory in Philadelphia, reaching 2,000 children and engaging 2,200 volunteers to date. Over the next two years, C2C plans to fine-tune its replication strategy and put systems in place to scale up its operations, building capacity for future growth and making it easier to replicate efficiently and effectively.

Financial Sustainability

In only six years, Cradles to Crayons has grown from a \$75,000 startup to a \$1.3 million organization.¹⁷ Such rapid success and growth have brought new challenges for the organization and offer exciting opportunities for refinement and replication.

Over the last two years, C2C has worked hard to achieve a sustainable revenue mix of individual/family donors, corporate donors, and foundation dollars. With this diversified revenue strategy in place, C2C is poised for its next phase of growth. Over the next two years, C2C is planning to update its systems to keep pace with its scope of operations and build a foundation for future growth, while continuing to increase the number of children it reaches on an annual basis from 35,000 to 50,000. To achieve its goals C2C is seeking a total investment of \$2 million over two years, which includes adequate working capital to manage cash flow.

Cradles to Crayons Revenue Mix



¹⁷ Massachusetts operating budget for 2008 is \$1.3 million, plus \$0.7 million in financial reserve funds.



Funds will be used to increase paid staff to 18 and to undertake a number of capacity-building projects linked to the achievement of specific two-year targets, including:

REACH 50,000 CHILDREN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> refine distribution partner strategy to realize maximum impact with partners as well as children and families served create inventory forecasting and resource planning systems invest in IT solutions for more effective volunteer and drive coordinator recruiting, scheduling, and retention secure bulk corporate donations to increase percentage of orders complete with clothes, shoes, books, and toys (core inventory items) develop corporate advisory board to advise on corporate volunteerism and CSR opportunities
ENGAGE 9,000 VOLUNTEERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create training programs for “super volunteers” to develop cadre of volunteer leaders improve communication with volunteers offer customer service, volunteer management, and leadership training to staff
MOBILIZE 125 COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create enhanced education and awareness programs around poverty cultivate grassroots base of community leaders develop handbook for community partnership, develop family leadership council to focus on family philanthropy programming, community outreach, and fundraising

As shown in the table below, C2C projects that its annual budget will grow to \$2.45 million by 2010 as it implements the above capacity-building projects and expands its operations:

	2006A	2007A	2008E	2009E	2010E
Total Budget ¹⁸	\$900,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000 ¹⁹	\$2,200,000	\$2,450,000
FTEs	8	10	14	16	18

C2C anticipates meeting its revenue projections by broadening and deepening its relationships with individuals, corporations, and foundations. Because of its strong volunteer and community components, the C2C model is well-suited for engaging donors, volunteers, and communities as problem-solvers dedicated to a common mission. Individual and family donors are not limited to simply writing a check or donating their children’s gently-used items to C2C; donors can also volunteer in the Giving Factory and become part of the engine that makes C2C run. Parents especially appreciate the opportunity to volunteer with their children, as volunteer opportunities for children are few and far between and volunteering helps reinforce positive values. Similarly, there are many ways for corporate donors to get involved beyond check-writing. C2C offers the opportunity for employee groups to engage in team-building by volunteering together in the Giving Factory, and welcomes pro bono operational support as well as bulk corporate donations. By providing multiple “touch points,” C2C plans to continue to expand its level of engagement with donors and increase revenue from all streams, all with the goal of reaching more children in need.

¹⁸ Expenses are net of donated goods

¹⁹ The substantial increase in budget from 2007 to 2008 reflects the policy to create a financial reserve for the organization of approximately \$0.7 million. The estimated 2008 operating budget, net of reserves and the value of donated goods, is \$1.3 million for the Massachusetts operation. Figures for 2009 and 2010 also incorporate a reserve.



Leadership

Lynn Margherio is the founder and CEO of Cradles to Crayons. Her inspiration for C2C came from a very personal experience: watching her nephews grow up and outgrow their toys, books, clothing, and equipment. She saw that many of these items were barely used and were just taking up space in closets and drawers, on shelves and in play rooms, benefiting no one. Lynn knew how important those blocks, letters, numbers, board books, and cribs were to their safety and development. She also knew, from having personally interviewed dozens of low-income families over the years and witnessed their struggles to make ends meet, that there were hundreds of thousands of children in Massachusetts alone whose families could barely afford rent, let alone the investment required to provide their young children with the tools middle-income families often take for granted.

Lynn brings more than 15 years of business strategy consulting and public policy experience to C2C. As executive vice president of the William J. Clinton Foundation's HIV/AIDS Initiative, she helped launch and build President Clinton's program to assist developing countries in planning and implementing large-scale HIV/AIDS care and treatment programs. As a business strategist, she has advised Fortune 500 companies on growth strategies, competitive positioning, and new businesses. She also worked as a policy advisor in the Clinton White House on areas spanning health care and e-commerce.

Cradles to Crayons enjoys the support of a dedicated board of directors. The C2C board includes active and committed leaders from the philanthropic, nonprofit, and financial/investment communities:

- Jordan Hitch, Bain Capital, managing director
- Dan Nova, Highland Capital Partners, managing partner
- Alan Solomont, Solomont-Bailis Ventures, chairman and CEO
- Lynn Margherio, Cradles to Crayons, founder and CEO
- Ira Magaziner, SJS, Inc./William J. Clinton Presidential Foundation, CEO/chairman
- Michael Brown, City Year, CEO and co-founder
- Robert Gallery, Bank of America, Massachusetts president

Key Funders

In addition to major gifts from individuals and families, Cradles to Crayons benefits from funding from a variety of sources, evidence of support for the organization's ability to bridge the gap between communities that have more and communities that have less. Impressively, the number of C2C donors of all types increased by 36 percent between 2006 and 2007—from 795 to 1,084 donors. In 2008, C2C projects that its total number of donors will grow to 1,511, representing an increase of 39 percent over 2007.

- Bain Capital
- Bank of America
- Boston Bruins Foundation
- The Boston Foundation
- Citizens Bank
- Grousbeck Family Foundation
- Harold Brooks Foundation
- Highland Capital
- Highland Street Foundation
- Ipswitch, Inc.
- The Paul and Phyllis Fireman Charitable Foundation
- Procter & Gamble
- The Red Sox Foundation
- Smith Family Foundation
- State Street Foundation
- Tudor Investments



Key Measures Report with Targets (April 2008 – March 2009)

Cradles to Crayons will use the following measures to track its progress toward its two-year goals articulated above. These measures will allow C2C to not only gauge its progress for the first 12 months after the Social Innovation Forum, but also to capture lessons learned and make course corrections as needed.

	Baseline (March 08)	Target (March 09)
Program Performance		
Increase number of children served	35,000	40,000
Increase percentage of requests for shoes, clothes, toys, and books fulfilled (core items)	90%	92%
Decrease average number of days to fulfill orders	14 days	10 days
Increase percentage of communities holding repeat drives	33%	40%
Increase number of strategic corporate partnerships resulting in bulk donations of core items	3	5
Increase number of corporate volunteers (individuals who came to C2C through corporations)	1,400 per year	2,000 per year
Increase total number of volunteers	7,500	8,000
Decrease turn-around time for scheduling new volunteers (time from inquiry to confirmed time for volunteering in warehouse)	5 days	1 day
Increase percentage of volunteers returning for subsequent visit	Not currently measured	30%
Organizational Health/Capacity-Building		
Automate inventory and resource planning system	Manual	Completed
Link volunteer registration database with donor management system	-	Completed
Establish corporate advisory board with 10 members	0	10
Establish family leadership council with 20 members	0	20



Success Stories

Note: Names and other details have been disguised to protect the privacy of the children and families who receive items from C2C. Special thanks to Family Nurturing Center and Bay Cove Human Services for sharing these stories with us.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth is a two-year-old girl with Down syndrome. She is one of seven children living in Mattapan with her family. Both parents work, yet the family still struggles financially. Buying food and paying other bills take priority over clothes and toys. This is where Cradles to Crayons is extremely helpful. We use this service to meet the needs of the children to help them grow and develop appropriately. The children are ecstatic to receive these items.

As an early intervention worker, I can say that I value Cradles to Crayons a great deal. Our job is to help children learn through play, while supporting parents. We are often in homes without any toys at all and are forced to interact using creative methods with available items. One can only be so creative with a paper towel roll and plastic cups when a family has no toys. Toys help children learn about their own abilities, and with encouragement, these play skills will help them learn about the world around them.

Cradles to Crayons makes my job easier and makes my job more rewarding. I recognize the thought and effort it must take to make this service possible. I only wish the volunteers had the opportunity to see the look on these children's faces when they receive these items. It is a wonderful gift to these families and a beautiful message that they are worth the effort it takes to make this all possible.

Jordan

Ten-month-old Jordan and his 17-year-old mother both suffer from sickle cell anemia. Jordan's mother's only income is the SSI check she receives each month. Because she has to struggle just to meet their basic needs for food and shelter, she has no resources left to buy toys and books for Jordan. The highchair and car seat provided by Cradles to Crayons were much-needed items that Jordan's mother would not have been able to afford on her own.

Although he is frequently ill, Jordan should be able to reach critical developmental milestones on time as long as he receives adequate mental and physical stimulation. Thanks to Cradles to Crayons, the toys and books provided can be replaced frequently as Jordan's needs and abilities change and develop each month. When I bring a new supply of toys and books, Jordan's mother watches how I play with him—how I encourage him to explore what he can do with a toy or how he enjoys looking at pictures as a book is read to him. With my encouragement and modeling, she is learning how playing with him and reading to him will encourage his development.

We use this service to meet the needs of the children to help them grow and develop appropriately. The children are ecstatic to receive these items. Cradles to Crayons makes my job easier and makes my job more rewarding.

Liz, early intervention program service coordinator

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Marti, early intervention program caseworker



Marta, Kristina & Mateo

We just brought warm coats, hats and snow pants to an immigrant family living in Jamaica Plain, who have a girl, Marta (age two and a half), a girl, Kristina (age 6), and a boy, Mateo (age 9), who is hearing impaired. The youngest, Marta, is just beginning to talk and is learning two languages at once. Her parents may even speak a third language (Quiché) at home between them. The family's income is low and their housing costs are relatively high. Mom is in our family support program.

When we opened the huge C2C bags, Marta received a doll house with all of the furniture and dolls inside - one of those which fold and you can carry around - great for toddlers! She began instantly to play and tell her big sister, Kristina, about all of the toys inside, naming each little doll and beginning a play story about what they were doing. It's hard to understand all of her words but she did use some clear three word sentences!

Her brother, Mateo, received a put-together wooden dinosaur model that he initially thought would be too hard for him to do. During our next visit, Kristina reported to me that after a while, he figured it out on his own! Mateo also received books. I have never seen him so excited – books with chapters in his C2C bag! I think he is just getting the hang of reading print with no pictures as cues. Last year, he would read preschool books with me with some difficulty during our home visits.

I have never seen him [Mateo] so excited – books with chapters in his C2C bag! I think he is just getting the hang of reading print with no pictures as cues. Last year, he would read preschool books with me with some difficulty during our home visits.

Sandra, family support services program caseworker