



# Kids' Place

A Program of the Chebeague Recreation Center

As winter begins, we are moving ahead toward our goal to establish a permanent child care facility for Chebeague's working families. As part of Kids' Place's commitment to ongoing open communications with the entire community, the following are questions that have arisen, along with our answers.

## Top Twenty-Two Frequently Asked Questions (Nov '09)

1. How many children are using Kids' Place?

*We continue to operate at or near capacity. The average daily attendance based on October '09 records is 11-12 children. Often this summer we had to turn kids away as our state permit limit is 12. This problem has continued this fall, demonstrating the year round need for reliable, state-of-the-art, affordable and nurturing child care for our island.*

2. What ages are the children?

*Six weeks to 12 years of age.*

3. Where will the new building be located?

*The first choice at this point is on Town land directly behind the school and the Rec. It is located so as to accommodate easy access to and from the school and the Rec and will also save on building and maintenance costs. Locating the building here will enable us to connect to already existing electrical, septic, and water systems. It will also allow us to look into a covered walkway connecting to the school and the Rec (subject to funding and coordination with the school).*

4. Why do we need a new building now?

*The agreement between Kids' Place and the Rec last year was that our use of the Teen Center would be temporary. This allowed us to test the concept and verify that there was enough demand for a permanent daycare facility on Chebeague. We now know there is ample need, since we have run at or close to capacity much of the year. In fact, a total of 35 children have used Kids' Place so far. The Teen Center space does not allow for a separate napping area or segregation of different age groups for developmentally appropriate activities. Another consideration is that the Teen Center is too small to meet code requirements for an increase in our state permit level, currently twelve.*

*In addition, the teens and the Teen Center staff have patiently shared the space, requiring regular reconstruction to create an appropriate environment for teens vs. the daily set-up designed for child care.*

5. What about other spaces on the island?

*We considered the Island Hall, the Niblic meeting room, the Commons, the Parish House, and a few island residences. The negatives included location, lack of code compliance, and scheduling issues due to competing uses. The many advantages to parents and children of having Kids' Place an integral part of a unified educa-*

*tional/recreational campus make the proposed location clearly the most desirable, all considered.*

6. Isn't lack of capacity a seasonal problem?

*Not at all. We have often operated at capacity both this summer and since then. In fact, we have been at capacity thirty-five times since August 4<sup>th</sup>. Several year round kids do not require full time daycare in the summer because their caregivers are teachers and can be home with them when school is not in session. In addition, Kids' Place affords a wonderful opportunity for seasonal and year round children to meet and socialize, which we consider important. Another benefit of having sufficient capacity for use by seasonal families is that these additional revenues help us keep our rates low for the benefit of all.*

7. Since the school population is expected to decline why is there a need to build a daycare center for the younger population?

*The forecast of declining school population is based conservatively on an assumption of no in-migration by young families although this is not a sure thing. Historically, in fact, in-migration has been a significant factor for sustaining our school population. Curtailment of in-migration could happen though if our community does not muster its resources and organize to create the infrastructure needed to support in-migration. We need more job creation, improved transportation, affordable housing, a great island school, quality daycare, and improved internet broadband and cell phone service to insure that Chebeague is an attractive place for young families to live and raise children. Progress is being made on a number of these fronts, and we are proud that Kids' Place is playing a leading role. A good daycare facility will surely help attract young families to our island as well as keep today's island families here.*

8. How many year round children are in the age groups Kids' Place serves?

*Thirty-five.*

9. Why doesn't Kids' Place get a mortgage?

*As a non-profit organization with a short operating history we do not come close to qualifying for a mortgage. But even if we could get one, the payments would necessitate a significant rate increase, estimated at 20%, which island families simply could not afford.*

10. Isn't Kids' Place largely used as a baby sitting service?

*The daycare industry has evolved over the years since its inception as primarily a baby sitting service to its present status as a preferred child care solution for working parents. Good daycare facilities have been shown to aid in children's social, physical, and educational development so that when the time comes for them to enter kindergarten they are well prepared. Some Chebeague families turn to Kids' Place for their babysitting needs when family and friends are unavailable, and these parents tell us that our group setting and professional staff afford socialization and educational opportunities that traditional babysitting arrangements cannot provide.*

11. Why doesn't someone or a few people just handle the island's daycare needs in their homes?

*There are many reasons why this is not a preferred solution: it can devolve into a baby sitting service as opposed to a licensed, professional daycare facility; there can be problems meeting state licensing; the inability to provide a trained, stable, supervised staff day in and day out; and inadequacy of insurance coverage. Many parents prefer a state licensed facility with trained, professional staff, reliably open every day at the same location. Importantly, our proximity to and close relationship with the school and the Rec provides numerous educational, recreational and*

- social benefits to children and parents that are not available in home settings.*
12. What is the life expectancy of the new building?
- The life expectancy is at least that of a conventional site-build structure. We have visited similar buildings elsewhere in the state to see for ourselves how the building would stand the test of time and climate, and we were favorably impressed, as are the current users. Because it is factory-built it more than meets state and local building and daycare codes, and should serve our needs for a very long time, not to mention that it is a great deal less expensive. Capacity is 30-35 children as compared to 12 in the Teen Center so it will accommodate substantial growth should there be an influx of young families.*
13. What about creating a space for Kids' Place by adding onto the Rec?
- We have looked into this appealing idea and in fact have asked for estimates from four contractors. Two have responded at approximately the same level. Unfortunately it turned out that this approach would cost approximately three times what we will be spending on the building we have selected, so we ruled this approach out.*
14. What is the financial stability of your parent organization, CRC?
- Very stable. CRC has always budgeted conservatively and controlled expenses carefully, and typically has been cash flow positive over the years. Currently, CRC has liquid assets of approximately \$225,000 and no debt.*
15. What is the financial stability of CPA?
- Stable. CPA revenues and disbursements over the last three years have averaged \$14,600 and \$12,900, respectively. Cash on hand at year end 2008 was \$17,100.*
16. What is the financial condition of Kids' Place?
- Stable. Our revenues and disbursements in our first 12 months in operation, 9/08 – 8/09, were \$38,000 and \$35,300, respectively. Cash on hand at year end 2008 was \$2,700, and has grown since. Our revenues have been increasing consistently on a year-over-year basis.*
17. What is the CRC policy re Kids' Place?
- Our intention is that Kids' Place be self-sustaining without financial support from CPA or CRC. Kids' Place originally was established as an independent entity. Since it is now a part of the Rec, in the future it will operate as a full-fledged program of the Rec, just like the pool and the fitness center. The Rec will be the ultimate overseer of Kids' Place and will have final responsibility for it.*
18. What is the plan if Kids' Place fails?
- In that event there are many ways this building can be recycled. It could be used as a classroom, a governmental or commercial facility, or a home. It is difficult to estimate the sale price as it would probably be many years from now and we are unable to know what economic conditions will be. If it is located on Town land we will work to create an agreement that will protect the Town, the school, and the Rec. If located on Rec land, the use or disposition of the building will be determined by the Rec Board, consistent with its by-laws.*
19. What is the plan if use of Town land is not approved?
- Kids' Place would be located at Newcomb Park (which is Rec land). We consider this site aesthetically more attractive but less desirable due to its greater costs, the need to cut down many mature trees, and the greater distance to the school and the Rec. Four parking spaces will be located on site.*

20. Timetable?

*In order to proceed we need approval to use Town land (or we will use Newcomb Park), approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board, authorization from the Code Enforcement Officer, and cash on hand of at least \$100,000. To date we have received cash contributions of over \$38,000.*

*It is difficult to estimate how long all of these steps will take. An admittedly optimistic best-case scenario is to be in operation in our new building in March, 2010.*

21. What happens if we fall short of our fundraising goal?

*We will not proceed with this project until we have funded it. We are applying to the USDA, several private foundations, and*

*the Town of Chebeague for grant support. Our fundraising campaign to reach out to all year round and seasonal residents has considerably further to go. Low cost construction financing from the USDA is an option to bridge the gap between construction payments and pledge collections.*

22. What if we exceed our fundraising goal?

*The \$150,000 goal provides for \$20,000 of working capital. We have actually hoped that our goal would be exceeded as we would prefer to have a larger amount of working capital. We also have said all along that if we should exceed our goal, the balance would be placed in endowment to help assure Kids' Place's future.*

**PLEASE VOTE AT TOWN MEETING  
FOR KID'S PLACE TO BE SUPPORTED BY THE TOWN.**

**THE VOTE COULD BE CLOSE, AND  
YOUR VOTE COULD MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE!**

*The Kids' Place Steering Committee*

*Vicki Todd*

*Bob Earnest*

*Kelley Rich*

*Dave Hinchman*

*Leila Bisharat*

*Eldon Mayer*

*Paige Boisvert*

The mission of Kids' Place is to play a vital role in sustaining the Chebeague Island year round community by providing working families with state-of the-art child care services in a reliable, stimulating and nurturing environment staffed by highly qualified island professionals.