

# How West Chicago Park District partnered with Wacky World Studios on a critical renovation to improve multi-generational engagement, functionality, and revenue.



CASE STUDY



## Introduction

West Chicago Park District caters to a community that **recreates as a family**. Historically, indoor programming in the district was scattered piecemeal across the city in borrowed spaces. In 2014, West Chicago Park District brought all recreational services under one roof prioritizing the inclusion of offerings for all ages including a **3,500 square-foot indoor playground** for children from birth to 8 years of age. The immediate success of the indoor playground was confirmation of the critical role it plays in serving and sustaining a family-focused community. It became the **beloved anchor** of the facility, but manufacturer challenges became overwhelming.



## Challenge

**Renovate** a beloved iconic 3,500 square-foot indoor playground to improve safety, reduce operating costs, and bolster revenue streams that had been hindered by **many challenges**:

- **Overseas manufacturer** offered no replacement part or maintenance options.
- Manufacturer failed to meet **ASTM standards**.
- Manufacturer **ceased operations** .
- **Legacy component sourcing** was unavailable.

## Solution

Engage **Wacky World Studios, a PlayCore company**, specializing in high-quality indoor themed playgrounds. With their 25 years of expertise, Wacky World Studios transformed the voluminous 3,500 square-foot indoor playground area into a **fully immersive family experience** featuring:

- Alignment to applicable **ASTM standards**
- 360-degrees immersive **wall coverings**
- **Animated** one-story waterfall
- Animated **interactive** flooring
- **26-foot-tall** three-dimensional tree
- **Multistory** treehouse
- Multistory **slides**
- Integrated visitor **storage lockers**
- Integrated caregiver **sitting area**
- Integrated themed **check-in desk**



“ We were nervous to renovate a space so beloved. The new experience Wacky World created was beyond our imagination. In addition to the state-of-the-art play structure, the 360° wall-coverings, three-dimensional theming, and projection animations transformed the space into more than just a playground; it is an experience ALL our visitors enjoy and utilize. ”

Gina Radun, Executive Director

## Renovation Outcomes

- Increased **inclusivity**
- Enhanced **engagement**
- Broader **intergenerational** appeal
- Positive **social-emotional** engagement
- Improved facility **visibility**
- Improved facility **traffic flow**
- Improved flexible facility **usage**
- Stronger **revenue** streams

## Indoor Playground Benefits

- Increased **revenue streams** with birthday rentals, family rentals, drop-and-play
- Increased **programming opportunities** with before- and after-school care, summer camps, drop-in childcare



**\$1 dollar invested** in programming and resources for children equals **\$7 in long-term benefits.**<sup>1</sup>



Children who get physical activity **25 minutes 3 days** a week produce **\$4,000 annual savings** in medical and loss of productivity expenses.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>García, J; Heckman, J.; Leaf, D; and Prados, M. (2016). The Lifecycle Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program. Heckman Equation. [https://heckmanequation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/F\\_Heckman\\_CBAOnePager\\_120516.pdf](https://heckmanequation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/F_Heckman_CBAOnePager_120516.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Adam, A; Bartsch, S; Brown, S.; Cheskin, L; Falah-Fini, S; Ferguson, M; Gittelsohn, J; Hertenstein, D; Lee, B; Nyathi, S; Wang, P; Wedlock, P; Wong, M; and Zenkov, E. (2017, May). Modeling The Economic And Health Impact Of Increasing Children's Physical Activity In The United States. Health Affairs. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2016.1315>

# Conclusion

① Indoor playgrounds drive revenue. ② Indoor playgrounds drive family attendance. ③ Made in the USA provides sustainability. ④ Company reputation is critical to best practices. ⑤ Immersive environments create more inclusive experiences. ⑥ Return on investment in childhood physical recreation is substantial.



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