

**Bibliothèque des jeunes de Montréal**  
**Montreal Children's Library**

Depuis 1929 ~ Since 1929



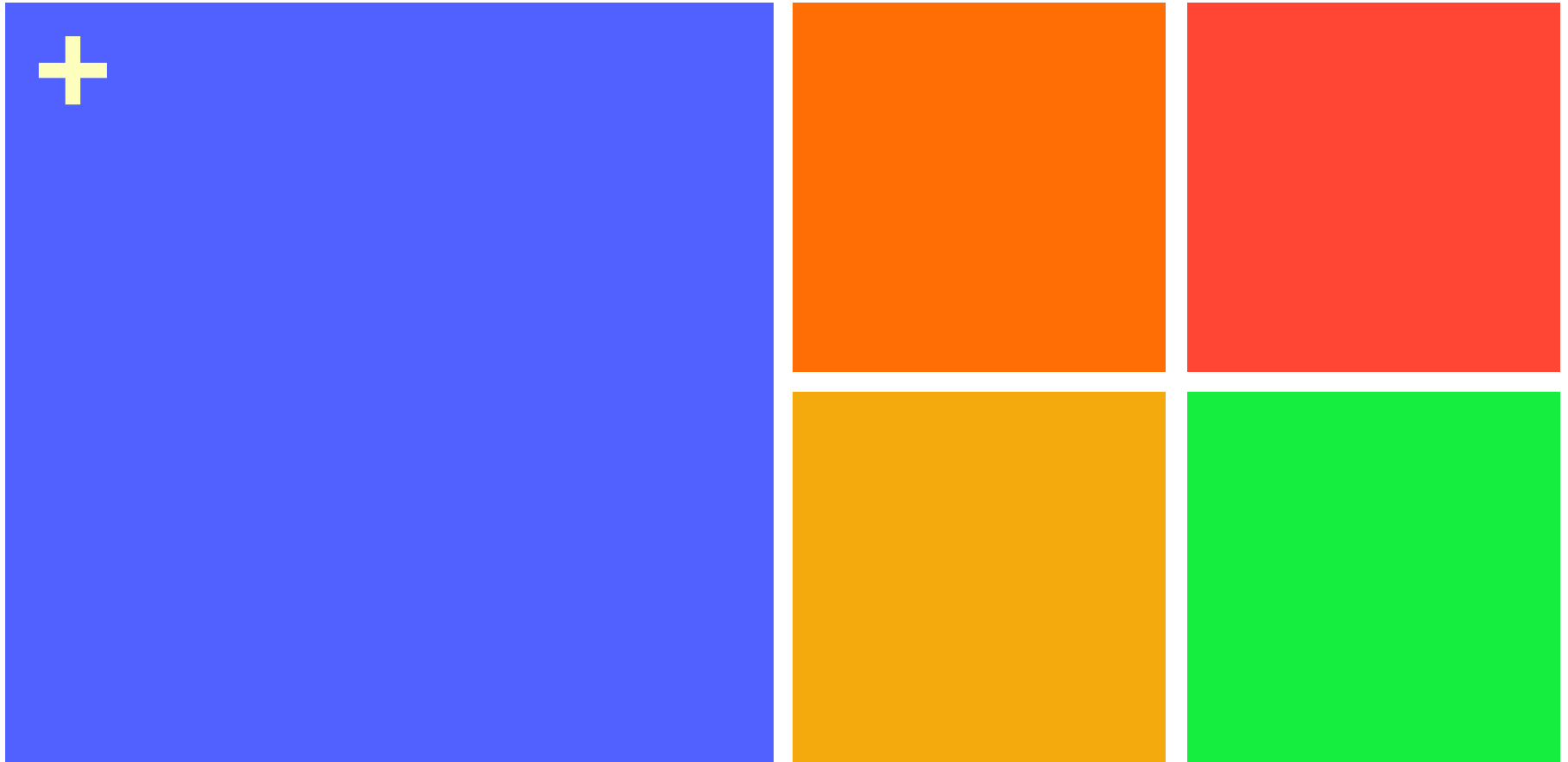
*« J'ai accompli de délicieux voyages, embarqué sur un mot. »*  
*Honoré de Balzac*



# **Proposal for the Revitalization of Downtown West – Ville Marie Borough**

**The kids' dream of  
« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »**

Presented by  
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President, Montreal Children's Library  
26 April 2011



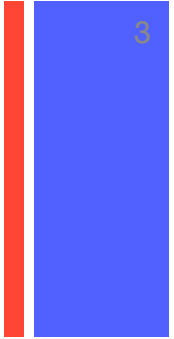
Unless the investment in children is made, all of humanity's most fundamental long-term problems will remain fundamental long-term problems.

UNICEF, "The State of the World's Children"  
(1995)



# The Montreal Children's Library

## Who are we? What are we about?

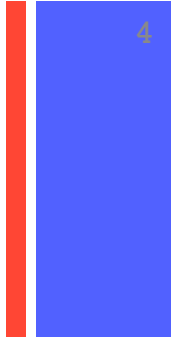


- A unique not-for-profit community library where « ***any child can discover the magic of literacy, where imaginations flourish, and where learning is fun*** ».
- Since 1929, we have been continuously serving the Montreal community.
- We inspire kids! We are « *the little library that does big things for little kids* ».





# The Montreal Children's Library



- We **encourage literacy** by providing all children with free library services, diverse and innovative programs, within a safe and welcoming environment
- Our **outreach programs** are dedicated to filling specific needs within the various communities.





# The Montreal Children's Library

- The **Atwater Branch** serves many young immigrant families with good parent involvement.
- It is also the location of the MCL's **Administrative Offices.**
- We have 3956 members at the branch!



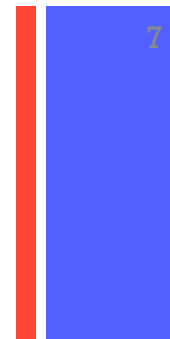
# + MCL: Atwater Branch

## Activities include:

- 39 weeks of **storytimes** for pre-schoolers (twice a week)
- 39 weeks of **after school** activities for children ages 6-12 (including help with homework, reference resource, science club, chess club with mentor, and arts and crafts).
- **Special events** including puppet workshops, children's theatre, music and song, author visits and illustrator visits, etc.
- **Storytime visits** for the local Daycares (including 12 from the Ville-Marie Borough)
- **Outreach programs** to the Montreal Children's Hospital, Montreal Diet Dispensary, Oral School For The Deaf, etc



# + MCL: Atwater Branch



## Summer Activities in Cabot Park:

- 2008: 10 weeks = **1667 children** attended
  - (4 days/wk)
- 2009: 6 weeks = **3013 children** attended
  - (4 days/wk)
- 2010: 5 weeks = **1305 attended**
  - (3 days for 3 wks + 2 days for 2 wks)



# + MCL: Atwater Branch

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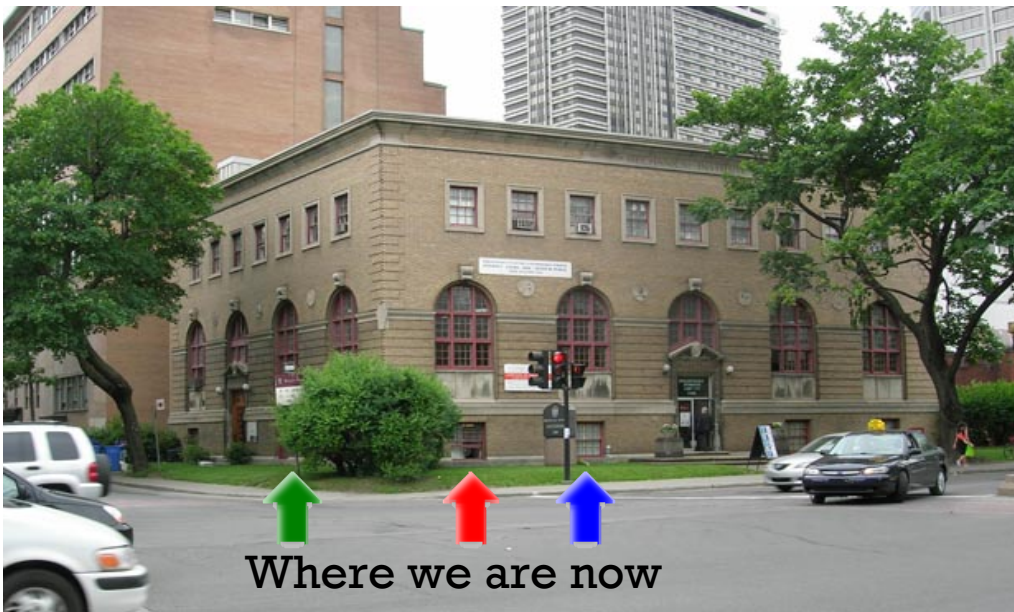
**We count on the Ville Marie Borough for funding the summer park activities.**

- Full funding allows longer sessions with more programs for older kids
- We want to provide additional activities for school age kids
- Partial funding reduces the summer park activities we can afford
- We have to plan summer activities well in advance
- The Pepsi Forum is our only 'rainy day' space – they have been very generous
- Imagine what we could do with our own real space in the park!





# + MCL: Atwater Branch



- Renovations to the Atwater Library are reducing the amount of space we've rented for 30 years.
- Atwater has offered other, smaller basement space for the same rent we currently pay.
- A larger basement space is available but we can't pay the higher rent.

## ***Basement? Kids??***



« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »

# + Montreal Children's Library

## Short Term Goal

- **We request a subsidy from the Ville Marie Borough to cover the amount of the rent increase for the bigger basement space at Atwater Library.**
- This will help the MCL to function better, by providing some storage space for program supplies, and for books that are being catalogued.



# + MCL Long Term Goal: Our own library in the park



« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »

# + MCL Long Term Goal: Our own library in the park

- We have a dream, a VISION, for a free-standing **Montreal Children's Library In The Park**, specifically in Cabot Square
- The MCL would animate and energize Cabot Square, helping to heal it during its transition to a family park full of children, laughter, and activities for all
- We envision a sustainably-designed showcase eco-library in colours that inspire kids and with a healthy and exciting connection to nature for all children





« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »

# + MCL Long Term Goal: Our own library in the park

Proposal:

**1. We ask that the Ville Marie Borough consider making available to the Montreal Children's Library, on a permanent basis, a piece of land either in Cabot Park proper, or on the land used as an outdated and relatively unused bus collector lane at the east end of Cabot Park, so that an independent children's library can be built and enjoyed by the children of the Borough and their families and friends.**



# + MCL Long Term Goal: Our own library in the park

Proposal:

**2. We also ask that Ville Marie supply us with some seed money to grow a proper campaign to raise the funds necessary to build a wonderful children's library « **IN THE PARK** », one that will benefit the entire community, and will help keep young families in the area and young teens from dropping out of school.**





« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »





# Eco-friendly modules



« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »

# + Montreal Children's Library In The Park

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## **Connecting kids with Nature is critically important to learning**

- Today many kids suffer from « Nature Deficit Disorder » due to overworked parents, fear of nature, and limitations on outdoor play
- Tapping into the restorative powers of nature
  - boosts mental acuity and creativity
  - promotes health and wellness
  - builds smarter and more sustainable businesses, communities, and economies
  - ultimately strengthens human bonds





« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »



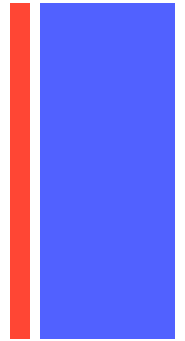
« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »

# + Importance of Nature

“...thoughtful exposure of youngsters to nature can even be a powerful form of therapy for attention-deficit disorders and other maladies.

As one scientist puts it, we can now assume that just as children need good nutrition and adequate sleep, they may very well need contact with nature.”

Richard Louv





« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »

# + MCL Long Term Goal: Our own library in the park

The **Montreal Children's Library In The Park** could help solve a problem for the Borough.

- We could turn Cabot Square into a learning and leisure park for children and their families and friends.
- Imagine if we had a greenhouse in the park where the children could learn to grow vegetables - and could take them home and eat their own produce!
- Imagine the pride they would feel and the skills they would learn.



# + People attract people



« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »



# + The wonder of nature



« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »

# + MCL Long Term Goal: Our own library in the park

The **Montreal Children's Library In The Park** could help solve a problem for the Borough (cont.)

- Re-animating Cabot Square would help **retain young families** in the West Downtown area.
- Helping young children to discover the wonders of life and the world **reduces the youth drop-out rate** in local schools.
- We would be pleased to share our suggestions with you based on our experiences with kids.





Youth retention in School



Night-time in the park



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+ MCL Long Term Goal:  
Our own library in the park

**We inspire kids!**

**We are the little library  
that does big things for  
little kids !**





Dream exteriors...



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« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »



photos: Koenig & Koenig  
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*Santzen 3*



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Some **DREAM** ideas for  
**Interior spaces** of the  
Montreal Children's  
Library...



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« The Montreal Children's Library In The Park »

## + Closing Thoughts

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**“A goal without a plan is just a wish.”**

Antoine de Saint-Exupery

**“Children are like wet cement. Whatever falls on them makes an impression”**

Haim Ginott





**REMEMBER...**



**Unless the investment in children is made, all of humanity's most fundamental long-term problems will remain fundamental long-term problems.**

UNICEF, "The State of the World's Children"  
(1995)

# + Re-animating Cabot Square with the help of The Urban Station...



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