



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Children's Community Mural to be a Focal Point of Stepping Stones Museum for Children Groundbreaking Celebration, March 14 HIGHLY VISUAL PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

**Note to Editors:** Rendering of the mural and other visuals available at  
<http://steppingstonesmuseum.org/press-photos/expansion/expansion-mural.jpg>

Norwalk, CT, March 5, 2009 – **What does “growing” look like to you?** That’s the question that more than 190 Fairfield County elementary school students were asked last month as part of their engagement in the design of a new outdoor mural for Stepping Stones Museum for Children, a private non-profit organization.

The vinyl mural, which is 190 feet long and 7 feet high, includes colorful imagery from all of the children who participated and will be unveiled at the Stepping Stones Museum for Children Groundbreaking Celebration event on March 14, starting at 9:30 am. For the next 18 months, the mural will appear on a curved wooden wall along the museum’s bus circle and surround the ongoing construction of the museum’s new building.

“This highly creative project, which prominently includes children’s artwork and their perspectives of growth, illustrates that the museum and our community are growing together,” said Rhonda Kiest, executive director, Stepping Stones Museum for Children. “It is a powerful statement that our growth and success as an organization is in step with the growth, success and the community partners we serve.”

Students from the following after-school programs contributed to this project:

A.C.H.I.E.V.E. Enrichment Programs:

Brookside Elementary School, Marvin Elementary School, Jefferson Science Magnet School and Wolfpit Elementary School

Norwalk YMCA:

Columbus Magnet School, Cranbury Elementary School, Fox Run Elementary School, Silvermine Elementary School and Tracey Elementary School

Students from Byram Archibald Neighborhood Center of Greenwich also participated.

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The March 14 groundbreaking ceremony will include some of the students who helped design the mural and their families, board members, community partners, business leaders and members of the expansion design and construction team led by Beinfield Architecture PC. In addition to the mural unveiling, the event will feature "touch-a-truck" educational opportunities for children; a preview of the expansion model; a musical performance by Patrick Sweeney of the Sweeney Tots; and a giant birthday cake in celebration of the museum's 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Following the groundbreaking, construction will get under way and is scheduled for completion by the end of December 2010.

**Stepping Stones Museum for Children**, a 501(c)(3) private non-profit, is an award-winning children's museum committed to broadening and enriching the lives of children. Museum exhibits, educational programs and special events complement efforts in schools, childcare centers and homes. With four main galleries, a toddlers-only gallery and more than 100 hands-on activities, Stepping Stones offers children ten and under plenty to explore and discover. To learn more, visit [steppingstonesmuseum.org](http://steppingstonesmuseum.org).

**Beinfield Architecture PC** is an award-winning, full-service architecture firm founded in 1983 with offices located in the heart of historic South Norwalk, Connecticut. Over the last 20 years, they have received over 50 design awards, a testament to the creativity, care, and professionalism that go into all of their projects. Beinfield Architecture is dedicated to solving architectural problems innovatively with environmentally sustainable solutions that are simple and direct, expressive of structure and program, and supportive of the varied patterns of human life. Their work spans a wide variety of project types, some of which you can view at: [www.beinfieldarchitecture.com](http://www.beinfieldarchitecture.com).

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**\*About Stepping Stones Museum for Children's Expansion:**

*Stepping Stones Museum for Children's \$15 million expansion will include the addition of 22,000 square feet to the east side of the building in Mathews Park, the addition of new exhibits and program space with a focus on energy-themed education. Outdoor features will include an enhanced courtyard with a tensile structure for year-round programming, a lush community garden for visitors to explore the natural world and kinetic sculptures that introduce renewable energy sources and energy generation principles. The expanded facility will be Gold LEED Certified\*\* and include solar panels, a wind turbine and a green-planted roof.*

**\*\*About LEED Certification:**

*Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), LEED provides a comprehensive system of standards for environmentally sound practices across all aspects of development and construction. LEED status is given in four categories—Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum—which address six major areas: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation and design process. When a building is submitted for certification, points are awarded for compliance in these areas.*