



Room to Grow *Milestones*



Room to Grow enriches the lives of babies born into poverty throughout their critical first three years of development.

During a prenatal visit in her eighth month of pregnancy, Patricia revealed that she, her boyfriend, and two-year-old daughter had been evicted from their previous apartment and were now homeless. With Duncan earning low wages at a supermarket, and Patricia struggling to find work while pregnant, the couple moved into the living room of an aunt who offered the space for the duration of Patricia's pregnancy. Recognizing Patricia and Duncan's need for significant support, information, and guidance, their clinic's social worker referred the couple to Room to Grow. At Patricia and Duncan's initial visit with a Room to Grow social worker, they admitted they had few baby supplies and could not provide a safe place for the approaching infant to sleep. Room to Grow provided the family with a bassinet and other essentials that the couple could not otherwise afford, including clothing, feeding supplies, toys, and books. The parents-to-be were thrilled and relieved to receive infant-care guidance and material support. After the birth of their daughter, they returned to Room to Grow every three months to discuss their children's progress and obtain material resources for their growing baby. At Room to Grow, Patricia and Duncan actively discussed their children's growth and accomplishments, received feedback about their parenting choices, and discovered community resources that could help them improve their living situation. They learned valuable skills such as the development of healthy routines under the constraints of challenging living arrangements. The girls flourished with their parents' use of newly acquired techniques. With Room to Grow's assistance, Patricia and Duncan were soon able to find and move into a family shelter, a program that allowed their family to remain together while taking necessary steps toward permanent housing. Room to Grow is proud to help hundreds of families like Patricia and Duncan's provide their children with a strong foundation during the critical first three years of development.

"I'm being provided the support and resources needed in order to better my daughter and my life." – Patricia

“During my time here at Room to Grow, I have learned other types of parenting that do not come instinctively. I have confronted all of my fears.” – Laura

EARLY CHILDHOOD

As we face the nation’s highest rate of childhood poverty since 1959, one in five children have limited opportunities and compromised chances for future success. Children in poverty are more likely to develop learning difficulties, and without targeted intervention, these detrimental emotional, physical, and academic effects increase in severity and can last well into adulthood. Today, as learning disparities between affluent and middle-class students are on the rise, low-income children trail even further behind. The Obama administration’s recent introduction of an early learning agenda has spurred increased awareness of the lifelong effects of early childhood education.

Economist and Nobel Laureate James Heckman has written on the high rate of return and high cost-benefit ratio of quality intervention made in children’s earliest years. Heckman’s research shows that early childhood investments result in long-term societal cost savings and greater economic opportunity. Effective intervention and support during the earliest years of life, such as that provided by Room to Grow, promotes school-readiness, reduces instances of incarceration, and fosters productive workplace participation. A 2013 Mission Readiness report describes the essential foundations built in early childhood as matters of national security. As public discourse turns to action, we expect that an expanded array of high-quality early childhood services will alter the academic paths of low-income children with positive outcomes for our nation as a whole. Room to Grow shares the mission of creating lifelong positive effects through early development programs.



\$4 - \$9
in societal returns for every dollar invested in early childhood programs

ONGOING IMPACT

In 2012, your support enabled us to:

- Serve 350 babies in New York, providing them with 2,800 hours of one-on-one parenting support
- Distribute more than 50,000 essential baby items to low-income families including books, developmental toys, safety gear and clothing;
- Facilitate more than 700 referrals to vital community services for families in need of housing, education, mental health, and other services;
- Engage nearly 1,300 volunteers in 4,510 hours of service to clean, sort, and display baby items for Room to Grow families - the financial equivalent of \$129,591 in service;
- Pilot our parenting workshop series in two New York boroughs with 25 families; and
- Hire Saskia Epstein as the full-time Chief Executive Officer to lead our national organization.

Room to Grow’s clinical program provides parents with support, information, and guidance to enrich their babies’ physical, social, and cognitive health; and assesses babies every three months to ensure they are meeting developmental benchmarks. Room to Grow pairs long-term, individualized parental support with a tremendous material benefit that includes all essential baby items needed during the first three years of life. This results in a lessening of financial strain that helps parents become their children’s first and lifelong teachers, leveling the playing field as children enter Kindergarten. The importance of these program components cannot be understated. Parenting support and material items are helpful on their own, but when combined with the education and the social-emotional support provided by staff social workers, their impact is heightened, decreasing the likelihood of babies remaining in poverty as adults. **Room to Grow provides each family with \$10,000 worth of material resources along with parenting education and support during the first three years of their child’s life.**

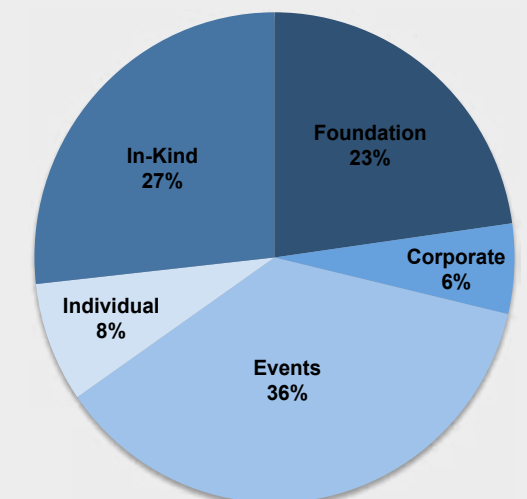
By age 3, children living in poverty know **55% fewer words** than their more affluent peers.



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Room to Grow New York’s operating budget is approximately \$1.2 million, which includes over \$200,000 of in-kind revenue and expenses. The fundraising strategy includes a plan to raise a modest surplus for targeted growth investments to be made in 2014, ensuring conservative financial management, while achieving expansion goals. Room to Grow New York ended its fiscal year 2012 having met ambitious goals to increase revenue by more than 25%. In 2013, we aim to continue this growth trajectory and realize some efficiencies of scale through the launch of our second series of high-quality, cost-efficient, parenting workshops..

2012 REVENUE BY SOURCE





Thank you
to all of our donors, financial and in-kind, for helping us make a difference in the lives of families living in poverty. Together we have enriched the lives of babies born into poverty during their critical first three years of development.

VISION

Since Room to Grow's inception, we have remained steadfast in our vision to ensure that every baby is afforded a great start in life. Today, while we celebrate many successes, approximately 185,000 children in New York are growing up in poverty and at risk for a lifetime of gaps in achievement.

By the end of 2013, with your continued support, we will change the trajectory of nearly 1,000 lives (400 babies and their family members) by implementing a second series of cost-efficient neighborhood-based workshops and expanding our existing center-based program. Room to Grow will be changing the lives of more than 1,400 individuals per year by 2016.

To achieve this goal, we are investing in:

- Greater program evaluation capabilities to produce data demonstrating the program's impact and contribute to the field of early childhood;
- Developing staff and training capabilities to ensure strong program leadership;
- Increasing our national impact to reach 2,000 children, a 50% increase in the number of children and families served in New York, and an expanded presence in five urban communities;
- Expanding our national executive leadership team, New York Advisory Board, and Board of Directors.

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