Mind in the Making: Engaging Young Children in Interactive Learning and Doing

- **Grant Amount:** $10,000
- **Time Range:** 1 year
- **Eligibility:** Public Libraries
- **Staff Contact:** Shelley Quezada, shelley.quezada@state.ma.us, 1 800-952-7403 ext. 235
- **Summary:** Establish or improve play spaces for young children

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

This grant allows libraries to carry out a program to establish or enhance play spaces for children ages 0-6 in public libraries. These play spaces are aimed at early learning and social interaction among children and their caregivers.

Suggested components include:

- Creating an interactive play and flexible learning space
- Designating a space for tinkering and invention
- Offering activities such as a Countdown to Kindergarten program, family programs on "Brain Building in Progress", or creation of Creativity Kits to be borrowed by parents and caregivers and used in local preschools
- Purchasing materials supporting emergent reading, writing, and fine motor skills
- Developing collections of print, digital materials, and realia

**BACKGROUND**

Ellen Galinsky’s book *Mind in the making* highlights the seven essential life skills children need most: focus and self-control, perspective taking, communicating, making connections, critical thinking, taking on challenges, and self-directed engaged learning. In their report *Growing young minds*, IMLS highlights how libraries can support these types of skills through hands-on experiences. By providing play and inquiry-
based programs, libraries increase the opportunities for young children to participate in activities that will help develop critical skills and result in their becoming more confident and engaged learners.