

The Museum is divided into neighborhoods — each one unique and special in its own way. Every neighborhood is packed with exciting ways to explore art, math, science and ways to explore how they work together in the world. A few suggestions listed below will get you started on your **Play to Learn** journey. Play facilitators can assist you in locating these exhibits

AirWorks Neighborhood. Spark your child's construction of basic theoretical principles about air and promote rewarding experiences in the scientific process with over 15 interactive exhibits.

Experiment with air by placing your **younger child's** hand over the pathways on the **AirMazement Table**. Through his experimentations he can feel the movement and the pressure of air. He may even hear the sounds moving air can make.

At the **Wind Garden**, children learn that size, shape and surface impact how objects react to moving air. Once your **older child** has built a whirligig, challenge him to make more. How many whirligigs can move at one time?

Build It Neighborhood. Your child can strengthen both large and small muscle skills, and at the same time, use imagination and creativity and practice eye-hand coordination and tactile discrimination. As your child's construction experiences become more complex, problem solving, setting goals, making plans and creating sequences of necessary steps will become part of play in *Build It*.

Play with real wood and real tools in the **Moser Construction House**. At first, your **younger child** may only wish to explore the wood, the tools or the benches. Next, he or she may experiment using the hammer, screwdriver or saw, with no end-product in mind. Finally, given time and experience, real building begins!

Create a pipe structure in the **Build It Big** area and discover math concepts such as rotation, size, diameter, matching intersection and change of direction with your **older child**. Suggest a challenge by asking, *I wonder how you can connect these two pipes together.*

Creativity Connections Neighborhood. Sensory input from sight, sound and touch is continuously organized and integrated by our central nervous systems. More than 38 exhibits based on light, shadow, rhythm and texture provide opportunities for creative exploration and the growth of sensory integration.

Imitating actions and/or saying out loud what you see adds to your child's sensory input experiences. In the **Multisensory Room**, do and say out loud what you see your **younger child** experiencing. If he is rubbing his hands on the **Texture Mosaic**, rub your hands and say, *That feels bumpy (smooth)*. In the **Shadow Theater**, model making a shadow and comment on what you are doing. Say, *I can make my shadow move fast (slow)*.

Older preschool and early school-aged children are interested in predicting patterns and naming colors. Encourage investigation at the **Dots of Color** exhibit by starting patterns with the colored dots and ask, *What color comes next?*

Make It Move Neighborhood. Basic physics concepts have never been so irresistible! Roll, bounce, slide and spin objects to discover the energy of motion using over eight exhibits in this neighborhood.

With **younger children**, roll a ball down a ramp to explore gravity, movement, cause and effect with **Mini Rollways**. With **older children**, use trial and error problem solving skills to create your own tube system for the balls to roll through at the **Roller Coaster** exhibit.

Math Connections Neighborhood. Almost everything we do is connected to mathematical notions – sorting, measuring, estimating, and spatial awareness, to name a few! Investigate and reflect on these concepts at your own pace with over 14 exhibits.

Discover shapes and patterns with the elastic bands at the **Giant Geo Board**. With **younger children**, stretch rubber bands between many pegs; then pull in and hook the band onto other pegs to reshape it. This demonstrates how the perimeter shape can be altered.

Discover 3-dimensional space, balance and design with the **Magnatiles** or **Building Blocks**. **Older children** may enjoy the challenge if you create a pattern first and invite them to repeat, change or improve it.

WaterWays Neighborhood. Capture, redirect, understand and control water while you play in **WaterWays**. Explore surface tension, diffraction and color with the **Bubble** exhibits. Investigate and reflect on these concepts at your own pace.

Investigate buoyancy, displacement, volume and space at the **Water Flows** exhibit. You might observe your **younger child** pouring water back and forth using two same or different size containers. Your **older child** may be challenged by connecting pipes together to send water to sections of the water table.

Observe, control or change the directional flow of water at the **Water Falls** exhibit. Look through the waterfall. Pump the water to fill the tank. Build a dam with the sandbags. Ask your **older child**, *How can you make the water flow in a different direction?*



Want to know more?

Visit the DCM Family Resource Center, on the upper level, for these other resources:

- **The Colors of Learning** by R. Althouse, M. Johnson & S. Mitchell
- **Spotlight on Young Children and Play**, A NAEYC Publication

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