



Supporting Children's Play at DuPage Children's Museum

Observe – Watch what children are doing before joining their play with words or actions. When we observe and listen to children during play, we are often privy to their views of their world and their thoughts and feelings.

Allow Children Time to Lead in Play – Respect children's ability to choose what and how they play. When children are allowed to choose, knowing you accept that choice, they learn to develop and trust their own judgments.

Allow Ample Time for Play – A lot can be discovered when given enough time to explore. Playing with the DuPage Children's Museum's *Bead Loom* may begin by exploring the sound the bead makes when placed on the post. Allowing ample time for exploration, children may notice the colors, begin to create patterns and eventually configure elaborate games with the exhibit.

Use Language - Enlarge your child's vocabulary and show you notice his play by stating what you see. *That's a really tall tower you've made with the Magnatiles. You made a cube out of those square shapes.* Your words do more than expand vocabulary and show you noticed; they also serve as encouragement for continuing play.

Expand Play – Children's play is expanded by what Cohen (2001) describes as offering a *gentle push*. A *gentle push* implies many ways to join in a child's play: imitating, introducing an idea, offering a suggestion or asking a question. Join in a child's play, do what she is doing and then change it a little bit. If the child is placing glow rods in a random pattern, you do the same, eventually creating a prescribed color pattern. Offer a suggestion, *I wonder how long it takes to fill up the entire screen with glow rods.*

Adopt a Playful Attitude – A playful attitude sets the stage for children to do the same. When you encourage and support children during play, you provide memories that will last a lifetime.



Over

Welcome to the Neighborhoods of DCM!

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 central idea forms the nucleus, or main exhibit, of a neighborhood.

The surrounding exhibits offer additional ways to experience the core concept. For example, the *Moser Construction House* is the central exhibit of the *Build It* Neighborhood. All of the exhibits surrounding the main structure, such as *Toddler Tool Area*, *Pipes*, *Build it Big* and *Block Play Area* provide complimentary building experiences.

It's fun to move through the neighborhoods and notice the parallels. You learn you can displace air and water in similar ways, create patterns with color as well as with wood, move an object with air or your own manual force.

The neighborhoods are:

- *AirWorks*
- *Build It*
- *Creativity Connections*
- *Interact with Art Gallery*
- *Make it Move*
- *Math Connections*
- *WaterWays*
- *Young Explorers*

Still want to know more?

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