TCMU Museum Guide

An educational guide for exploring TCMU’s three floors of hands-on exhibits

Serves Ages Toddler to 12
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EXHIBIT TYPE KEY

- SENSORY
- CREATE
- LOUD
- VISUAL
- ACTIVE
- STEAM
- LIKE SKILLS
- COMPETITIVE

MISSION:
To ignite a community of compassionate problem solvers through intentional & inclusive

VISION:
To create a world where no barrier is bigger than a
The Toddler Lily Pond is a great place for some froggy fun! Here, younger children have their own space to splash around and play with boats in the water tables.

This exhibit facilitates learning through sensorimotor, manipulative play, and social interaction. This unique play environment simulates a water mill and treatment plant.

Challenge your learner to move their boat from one side of the Lily Pond to the other without sinking! How many obstacles will they face and how will they overcome them? Watch out for the waterfall!

While your learner is splashing at the Lily Pond, ask them to label everything they can—from animals, to objects, to textures...the more, the 'wetter'! (Label: wet, dry, boat, fast, slow, float, sink, water, fish, frog.)

Do you see the sunken boats? Teach your learner how to pour by having them save a boat from the bottom of the pond! Can they pour slowly or onto another surface?

Reedy River Bend

This is TCMU’s biggest splash zone! This unique play environment simulates a water mill and treatment plant, providing the opportunity to learn about water treatment in a fun, interactive way.

This exhibit facilitates learning through physical, sensorimotor, and manipulative play. Your learner is surrounded by opportunities to practice their social skills and increase their cognitive development!

How many parts of the Reedy River can you interact with? What can you pull? Twist? Push? Dump? Challenge your learner to experience all the workings of the Camperdown Mill.

Encourage your learner to race their favorite boat down the Reedy River with a friend! Who will reach the bottom of the river first? Which obstacles were difficult to get past? Are the smaller boats faster? Try racing with different boats and down different paths!

Teach your learner cause and effect by encouraging them to identify what happens when things change throughout the river. Did the sprinklers cause the boat to sink? What happens when the boat gets stuck in the dam?
Let's animate! Children will follow directions to create drawings that they can then turn into animations using a special spinning device called a zoetrope.

This exhibit facilitates learning through creativity, visual analysis, and language development. This exhibit can be as self-directed or challenging as your learner would like to make it!

Let's tell a story! Motivate your learner to make up a story about the bee. What is the bee’s mission? Where is it going? What conflicts may arise? Next, tell a story about the dancer. What is the dancer’s name? What emotion are they feeling? Why are they dancing?

While your learner may enjoy free drawing, challenge them to understand concepts of distance, size comparison and texture. Prompt them to draw objects in relation to one another (close to, far away from, on top of, inside), as well as examples of big, little, rough, smooth, straight.

Garage Rock

Rock out at Garage Rock! Here, children have access to a variety of instruments and other sound making machines with which they can drum, tap, and strum loudly.

This exhibit facilitates learning through symbolic and sensory play! Your future rock stars can practice their memory skills, enhance their creativity, and engage in a wide range of fine and gross motor skills.

Inspire your musician to try out ALL of the instruments! Grab the drum sticks and have them practice a beat. Then, have them incorporate a beat with two drums! Make this more challenging by having them use both sticks.

Motivate your learner to master a song on the steel drum! Encourage them to start slow, while paying attention to the colors, letters and directions. Then, inspire them to practice without looking at the music sheet! This is a great brain exercise that can boost confidence.

Head over to the sound box and see if your learner can label the different sounds it makes! Is that someone breathing? Is that the sound of a zipper? See how many sounds your learner can identify!

Sensory Square

Stimulate your senses at Sensory Square! Learn more about the five senses and play with a variety of stimulating interactive objects.

This exhibit facilitates learning through human superpowers... your senses! Through looking, listening and pushing—this exhibit encourages learners to understand the world differently.

Encourage your learner to move one bead at a time from one end of the yellow path to the other—going through loops, curves, and more! Motivate them to not let go of the bead. This will encourage concentration and determination.

There are so many things to see, feel, and hear in Sensory Square! What colors do you see? Are the bubbles going fast or slow? How does your reflection look in the mirror? Do the string curtains feel soft or hard? If you press hard enough on the circle boards, what colors emerge?

Explore cause and effect by giving your learner an action to complete. What happens if they step on the green circle? What happens if they dance on the water squares? What happens if you tap a hexagon light?
Welcome to Bib’s World, TCMU’s outdoor play space! Bib’s World features wheelchair accessible spaces, a tire fort and more.

This exhibit facilitates learning through outdoor and physical play! Your learner can explore physical activities, and practice their social skills by initiating play, taking turns, and listening to new friends.

Sharing playground equipment and exploring the playground will increase your learner’s awareness of the space their body takes up. Challenge your learner to climb through the big tire or make their way up the triangle steps!

Teach your learner how to take turns by encouraging them to wait for their friends to go first. Can they ask their friend for a turn using the paddles on the musical tubes?

Make listening FUN at Bib’s World! Give your learner simple directions to follow in a sequence around the playground! See if they can skip to the red stairs, climb up the jungle gym, slide down the yellow slide, and give you a high five. Take it up a notch and see how fast they can do it!

Invert your world by stepping into this upside-down room. As you point to things in the room, encourage your learner to label them! (Label: rug, chair, green table, red plate, donut, sprinkles, cat, plant, books, lamp.)

Ask your learner how they would feel living in this upside-down world! What would happen if they took a drink of water? How does the cat feel sleeping on the ceiling? What would be a creative way to make life easier?

Challenge your learner to complete the house puzzles! How many tiles can fit in the right-side-up house? Try a different pattern for the upside-down house. Make sure to fill all of the gaps... but keep the tiles in the lines!
Prisma Health Children’s Hospital - Your Healthy Body  
Serves All Ages

You’re the doctor! From driving an ambulance, to inspecting giant organs, children will get to explore the inner workings of hospitals, as well as their own healthy bodies.

This exhibit facilitates learning through understanding how the human body functions. Encourage your learner to read about their body and ask questions about what they’ve learned.

**ACADEMIC**

Read about the role a heart plays in the human body. **Challenge** their listening comprehension. What do doctors use to listen to your heartbeat? What is vital for your brain? How many times a day does your brain tell your lungs to breathe?

Too easy? Challenge them to find out their heart rate! How many times does the drum beat in 10 seconds? Then multiply that by 6!

**COGNITION**

Have your learner enjoy a **ride** down the stomach slide. Before they do, ask how fruits would **slide down** the stomach? Would they slide faster or slower? How about French fries? Ice cream?

Encourage them to **act like** their favorite foods.

**LANGUAGE**

Encourage your learner to play a game of Teddy Bear Operation. As they attempt to remove organs and bones, have them **label** all the body parts! (Label: arm, leg, heart, lung, bone, eyes, toes, nose, hands, feet.)
Get your grocery shopping done at Publix! At TCMU’s very own Publix grocery store, children can pretend to be the shopper, run the register, or head next door to the Deli.

This exhibit facilitates learning through pretend play while practicing life skills, encouraging social interaction, and increasing language development.

Publix offers fantastic opportunities to practice social skills! Does your learner respond to greetings? Are they making eye contact and are they answering questions? Prompt them through these skills to increase social development!

Money Works

Learn how money works at the bank! Here, children can “cash in” on knowledge about saving and spending money by spending money through a variety of other money-related activities.

This exhibit facilitates learning through socio-dramatic play, language development, and social interaction! Learners can practice adding, subtracting, social greetings, small talk, taking turns, and simple problem solving.

Have your learner be a teller at the drive-through while you jump into the driver’s seat! They can practice giving you the money you request. Can they identify a $5 bill? Can they add up to $8?

Challenge your learner to a game of money memory! Flip all the squares to the money signs and take turns finding your matches! This game helps with concentration, working memory, focus, and determination.

Encourage your future banker to make calls using the telephone! Pretend you are on your cell phone talking to them. Do they say hello? Are they answering questions? Are they asking questions? Can they end a conversation on the phone appropriately? Now is the time to practice!
Reach for the sky! This exhibit is a place for children to reach new heights by crawling and climbing their way through two stories of fun-colored platforms and netting.

This exhibit facilitates learning through full body motor movement, cooperative play, and self-awareness! As your climber makes their way to the top, help them practice their social skills by greeting others and waiting with manners.

**The Climber**

Climbing up The Climber is no joke! See how high your learner can climb through the colored waves and over the bridge. Take it up a notch by seeing if they can go in through the GREEN entry and come out the PURPLE exit!

The tight space of The Climber can challenge social skills. Pre-teach your learner before they go in how to ask their friend to slow down, move to the side, or even to ask if their friends need help at the top.

There are only two rules in The Climber: no shoes and have FUN. Using their excitement to climb, motivate them to independently remove their shoes. Untying, unsnapping and removing will help their fine motor and rule following skills! Encourage them to find their shoes and re-lace before leaving.

**Up in the Air**

Get ready for takeoff! Up in the Air is a great place to learn about aircrafts and the science that make them work. Here, children can play in a wind tunnel, design their own paper airplane, or even play tic-tac-toe with a robot.

This exhibit facilitates learning through exploration of science and technology, while providing your learner opportunities to engage in competitive play!

Challenge your learner to pick their favorite airplane model and fold the paper using the directions. Pick your favorite airplane model and make one with them! Ask them which airplane will go the farthest? The fastest? The most accurate? Now…. fly those planes!

Teach your learner the fun game of tic-tac-toe with our juice robot! How do you play? How do you win? How do you take turns? What should you do if you lose? How do you act when you win? These skills are crucial for social development and our robot is here to help. If there are new friends, see if they can play with each other.

Encourage your learner to grab a rainbow streamer and hold it in various positions. Ask them which direction the streamers will blow in the tunnel! Check out Floating on Air and ask your learner what happens if they put more than one ball over the air vent! How many balls can one air vent keep up?

**Wheels on the Ground**

Fuel your imagination! At this exhibit, children can express their need for speed by working together to be the fastest pit crew, building a car, or testing whether electric or fuel cars are faster!

This exhibit facilitates learning through competitive play, social engagement, and perseverance.

Time to role play! Have your learner pretend to be the Duke Energy bus driver. Encourage social communication such as greetings, asking questions, and of course, ensuring seatbelt safety!

Try something new by teaching your learner to encourage their competitors! Instead of focusing on winning, teach them to encourage others not to give up or to encourage themselves to keep trying if they lose! Make it funny and see if they can have a turtle race... the slowest competitor, wins!

Encourage your learner to follow the instructions to build a car. This helps develop fine motor and problem-solving skills. Make it easier by building a car along with them and prompt them to imitate your actions! Learning through observation is crucial in your learner's development.
Grandma Betty’s Farm

Designed for younger children, your learner can harvest vegetables, step inside a realistic doll house, and let their imagination run wild in Grandma Betty’s Farm.

This exhibit facilitates learning through a variety of life skills and aims to nurture developing minds through fun, colorful, and intentional play.

Light Waves Ahead

Light up your day at Light Waves Ahead! Here, children can make something bright and beautiful. Grab some colorful pegs and start creating.

This exhibit facilitates learning through color recognition, creativity, and pattern building.

Practice turn taking, introductions, and asking what others like in Grandma Betty’s home and farm. Invite others to play along—making friends is what makes Grandma Betty happy!

Encourage your learner to label and find items around the farm. This helps with sustained attention, focus, and differentiation. (Find: bowl, baked beans, bow, miniature horse, pink flower, yellow bell pepper, black oil can, tractor, tire, carrot, cloud.)

In Grandma Betty’s home, learners can explore her kitchen and living room. Encourage your learner to pretend to be head of the house and follow a morning or evening routine! Are they going to read a book before making breakfast, or will they fix dinner and water the plants?

Try a fun game of “lightionary” and have your learner guess what shape, letter, or object you are making by placing pegs on the light board! Give your learner clues to help increase their motivation to keep guessing. This game builds creative thinking and collaboration, and improves vocabulary.

Prompt your learner to be aware of their surroundings. Do they notice other friends wanting to play with the light board? If so, encourage your learner to invite friends to play along or let them have a turn!

Grab a few pegs and start a pattern for your learner to finish! Patterning helps increase critical thinking and helps develop more advanced math concepts! Try an A-B pattern by alternating two colors. Next, try an A-A-B pattern, with two colors. Then, see if your learner can finish an A-B-C-A pattern!
Gain new perspective! This exhibit teaches children about perspective drawing—a technique they can use to plan buildings that they can then bring to life in Construction Zone.

This exhibit facilitates learning through the application of block and design play! Your learner can practice answering questions, describing their design, and collaborating with others.

Encourage your learner to build a tower that won’t be shaken down! If it doesn’t withstand the shake, what could be built differently? What worked well? Challenge their persistence and attention to detail by checking their work and offering ideas for improvements.

Head over to the bucket of Easy Stick Building Blocks and give your learner a limited amount. Challenge them to make something with fewer pieces! Can they make a bridge? A boat? A farm? Working with less materials helps challenge creativity and increase fun.

Motivate your learner to accomplish a goal at the drawing table! Help them identify a simple goal—whether it’s tracing a line, making a shape, or practicing the illusion of depth. Encourage them to keep trying until they meet their goal!

Have your learner pretend to be a construction worker by getting dressed for work! A construction worker needs their hard hat, vest, and their toolbox. Have your learner accomplish a task in the exhibit before taking their uniform off and putting their tools away!

Does your learner know what an assembly line is? Have them create one by taking turns with friends at the brick mill! Have one friend put a few bricks on the conveyer belt, then as they make their way down, the other friend can put the bricks in and start over!

Head over to the crane and see if your learner can pick up the magnet block. Can they put the magnet block on top of the farthest wooden table? Can they set a magnet block on top of another one?

Geo’s Golf offers many opportunities for your learner to think critically about the way they hit the ball, the force they need to use, and the speed the ball needs to go. Very quickly, they will learn the effects of their actions!

Encourage your learner to follow the instructions on how to identify which club is best fit for them, or how to score points accurately. Ask leading questions: “If you’re in the green section, are you sure you need a red club?” Point out instructions to help them pay more attention to the resources around them!

Challenge your learner to see the course in a different way by having them guess where their ball will go if it hits another part of the course. For example, if your ball hits this barrier, where will it go next? This increases their ability to think analytically, logically, and strategically.
Put your game face on and get ready to play BIG! In this exhibit, children can grab a friend and play against each other in giant board games.

This exhibit facilitates learning through competitive play and social engagement! Your learner can use full body movement to play the game, while practicing sportsmanship, taking turns, and adding scores.

**Fun and Games**

**EXECUTIVE FUNCTION**
Teach and challenge your learner to a game of Checkers or Kerplunk! When they encounter a problem, help them see the different moves they can make so they can learn how to solve a problem in a strategic way.

**LANGUAGE**
Ask your learner how to explain the game of Checkers TO you, as if you do not know how to play. Giving directions helps increase leadership and communication skills. Who goes first? How do you win? What moves can and can’t you make?

**SOCIAL**
In competition games, non-vocal body language is important to recognize! Help your learner identify different emotions, facial expressions, and body languages in their opponents. What does upset look like? Excited? How should your learner respond to these different cues?

**EXECUTIVE FUNCTION**
Challenge your learner to some coloring fun by inhibiting them from using specific colors or from coloring certain areas a specific color. This will challenge their flexibility and creativity!

**EXECUTIVE FUNCTION**
Give your learner a sequence of actions to follow. When they are finished coloring, tell them to put the crayons up, push their chair in, put their picture in the mailbox, and put up the red flag! Not only does this teach tidying, it also teaches them to follow multiple-step instructions.

**Talkin’ Trash**

**Serves All Ages**

Help Greenzilla clean up at Talkin’ Trash! Say hello to TCMU’s very own recycle dinosaur, Greenzilla–or sort different recyclable materials into the trash truck.

This exhibit facilitates learning through visual processing, with other opportunities for reading, counting, and identifying.

**EXECUTIVE FUNCTION**
Encourage your learner to use their voice! See how many things they can label as you point them out. Label: pink car, xylophone, purple cone, rocking horse, drum, elephant.) Or, build fluency by seeing how fast they can identify the objects you point to on Greenzilla!

**LANGUAGE**
Take a dive through Greenzilla’s eyes! How does she feel being covered in trash? Would you like to be covered in trash? How can you help other animals from not being covered in trash?

**LANGUAGE**
How about challenging your learner to find items on Greenzilla? Send them on a scavenger hunt by having them find items. (Find: football player, orange popsicle, Elmo, ninja turtle, camera, yellow ducky, helicopter, cow, pink suitcase, piano keys.)

**Cognition**
Discover Greenville! Children can visit this exhibit to learn about the local community. Color a picture or write a note and put it in our mailbox to show your appreciation.

This exhibit facilitates learning through a focus-building exercise that stimulates creativity, and provides the opportunity to practice handwriting.

**Constructing Community**

**Serves Ages 5 & Up**

**Motor**
Grab a coloring sheet and practice keeping the colors in between lines! Get creative and mix up the colors! A blue tree? A yellow firetruck? Our community workers love seeing the creative artwork you make for them.

**Executive Function**
Challenge your learner to some coloring fun by inhibiting them from using specific colors or from coloring certain areas a specific color. This will challenge their flexibility and creativity!
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