TCMU Museum Guide

An educational guide for exploring TCMU’s two floors of hands-on exhibits
Designed for children ages 18 months and under, this hands-on exhibit directs parents to engage their children using the Palmetto Basics elements.

MAXIMIZE LOVE, MANAGE STRESS
Infants thrive when their world seems loving, safe, and predictable. When you express love and respond to their needs, you teach them that they can count on you!

TALK, SING, AND POINT
Babies learn language from the moment they are born. Every time you talk, sing, or point, you provide clues to the meaning of what you are saying. You are providing important information to their brains about how language works.

COUNT, GROUP, AND COMPARE
Developing math skills begins long before a child enters school. Even infants are wired to learn simple math ideas—including small numbers, patterns, and making comparisons.

EXPLORE THROUGH MOVEMENT AND PLAY
Movement and play are good for children’s coordination, strength, and overall health! Both give children opportunities to explore and learn about the world. Each stage of development comes with new opportunities for learning.
READ AND DISCUSS STORIES

The more we read with young children, the more prepared they become to enjoy reading and perform well in school. Stories expose children to words and ideas that they would not otherwise experience and encourage them to use their imagination. What they learn can be important building blocks to later life success. For both parents and children, time together with books form fond and lasting memories.

WARM UP

Before you open the book, check out the cover. Read the title. Look at the picture. Ask your child, “What do you think the book is about?”

HELP THEM FOLLOW ALONG

Point to the words and pictures. This helps your toddler understand how reading works.

Farm To Table Fun

Let’s be healthy, together! This exhibit teaches healthy lifestyle choices and incorporates the entire farm-to-table process through collaborative pretend play.

SOCIAL

The market is a great place to practice social skills! Does your learner respond to greetings? Are they making eye contact and answering questions? Prompt them through these skills to increase social development.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

Make a game out of grocery shopping by making a short list of items! On the list are two bananas, peanut butter, and flowers for a friend. Prompt them to maneuver through a grocery store by grabbing a cart, putting items in the basket, checking out, and putting their items and basket back!

ADAPTIVE

After a trip to the grocery store, it may be time to grab a snack from the garden! Teach your learner to gain the preferences of others by asking them what they would like and help them make and gather those items! When finished, encourage your learner to tidy up and return their dishes.
Spartanburg Regional Health Center

Doctor, can you hear the heartbeat? This child-scaled hospital allows children to play the role of doctor, patient, or caregiver through imaginative pretend play.

Duke Energy’s Treehouse

It’s time to climb! This exhibit introduces guests to South Carolina’s native species in a multi-level treehouse and miniature orchard.

Encourage your learner to play a game of Operation. As they attempt to remove organs and bones, have them label all the body parts they can! (Label: arm, leg, heart, lung, bone, eyes, toes, nose, hands, feet.)

Teach your learner how to button up their physician coat and take care of sick babies. What questions do doctors ask patients? What is the best way to make the baby feel better?

Do the puzzles need a doctor? Completing jigsaw puzzles builds finger strength, perseverance, and problem-solving. Set your learner up for success by having them complete with one or two missing pieces.

Exploring the treehouse will increase your learner’s awareness of the space their body takes up. Challenge your learner to climb through the treehouse or make their way up the steps!

Teach your learner how to take turns by encouraging them to wait for their friends to go up the treehouse or down the slide first.

Practice listening skills by giving your learner simple directions to follow in a sequence! See if they can slide down the slide and give you a high five. Take it up a notch and see how fast they can do it!
Come in, grab a seat and let's LEARN together! This space is used for public programming and other special learning opportunities.

**steamWORKS Jr. Classroom**

**Serves All Ages**

**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!

Give your learner a sequence of actions to follow. When they are finished coloring, tell them to put the crayons up and push their chair in! This encourages tidying, as well as following directions.

**COGNITION**

While your learner may enjoy free drawing, challenge them to understand concepts of distance, size, 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, and straight.

**MOTOR**

Encourage your learner to trace, copy, or draw. Do they need help writing their name? Write their name out for them and encourage them to trace the letters!
MAXIMIZE LOVE, MANAGE STRESS

RESPOND
Watch and respond to your toddler’s words, feelings, and behaviors when they are upset as well as when they are happy.

TALK ABOUT FEELINGS
Teach your toddler to name their feelings. This will help them understand and express emotions. You can say things like, “It looks like you’re scared because you fell. Falling can be scary! But now you’re OK.”

TALK, SING, AND POINT

BE SPECIFIC
The more specific you can be with words, the more your child will learn. For example, instead of saying “Let’s go,” you could say, “Let’s go shopping at the grocery store to buy some food.”

ASK QUESTIONS
Encourage your toddler to think. Have them explain what they are doing or what they think is going to happen. You may get some funny answers!

COUNT, GROUP, AND COMPARE

COUNT
Practice counting with your toddler! Move to bigger numbers as they get the hang of it.

EXPLORE THROUGH MOVEMENT AND PLAY

USE POSITION WORDS
In these activities, use words like “over, under, near, far, through,” and “around” to describe locations of objects.

FOLLOW THEM
Toddlers learn a lot by experimenting on their own. If your child looks like they are concentrating on something, stand back for a moment and let them problem-solve for themselves.
What can you build? This exhibit features a variety of free block play—to inspire our young learners to become architects, engineers, and members of a construction crew.

**Executive Function**

Motivate your learner to **accomplish a goal** at Spartanburg Rising! Help them identify a simple goal—whether it’s building a house or making a shape. **Encourage them** to keep trying until they meet their goal.

**Play**

Head over to the 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**.

**Cognition**

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.

**Spartanburg Water**

Splish, splash, squirt, pump! This fantastic water table explores Spartanburg’s rivers and the critical role water plays in our community.

**Motor**

Do you see the sunken boats? Teach your learner how to pour by having them save a boat from the bottom of the table! Can they pour slowly or onto another surface? **What other parts can you interact with?** Pull? Twist? Push? Dump?

**Cognition**

Teach your learner **cause and effect** by encouraging them to identify what happens when things change throughout the river. Did the fountain cause the boat to sink? **What happens when the boat gets stuck?**

**Language**

While your learner is splashing at the Water Table, ask them to **label** everything they can—from objects to textures...the more, the ‘wetter’! (Label: wet, dry, boat, fast, slow, float, sink, water)
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