

A Trip to the

Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota



I am going to the Children’s Museum of Southern Minnesota. They often call it “Museum.” It is in Mankato.

When I get there, my school bus will pull up to a set of doors. When it is time to get off the bus, I will make sure to stay with my group and go with them into the Museum. I will meet some of the people who work there. I will know who they are because they wear green name tags and aprons with a sunflower. They can help me while I am visiting the Museum.



The Museum Café is right next to the Front Desk. Visitors can buy snacks there or bring a snack or lunch from home. Food and drinks are not allowed in the Museum exhibits area.



The restrooms are across from the Front Desk and Café. I will tell the adult I am with before I go use them. The hand dryers in there can be loud. I can use the dryers or paper towels to dry my hands after I wash them.



There are a lot of things to see and do at the Museum. I will explore the Museum with my group. I will tell my chaperone if I want to go to a new area.



It is important to be careful with the toys and equipment in the Museum. I will try to help clean up when I am finished, too. Then everyone gets a chance to use things.

Remember:
Museum stuff stays at the Museum!



Many people love coming to the Museum. It can get very busy. There will be times I will need to wait my turn. I will try to wait calmly or just go to another exhibit.



If I need a break, my group or a Playworker will help me. We can ask for headphones or a bean bag. There may also be a quieter place I can go.

When I am ready, I can go back to exploring and having fun at the Museum.

It is important for me to stay with my adult chaperone. My adult chaperone will make sure I stay safe in and around the Museum.

I will try to be a good Museum visitor.

Exhibits

Kato Engineering Explorers' Lab & Cecil's Imagineering Loft



STEAM activities in these spaces will help me learn about Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math.

One thing in this area is a giant wind tunnel. It sounds like a loud fan when it's turned on. I can see if I can make objects float or fly!



In Eldon Marks' Workshop I can use tools to learn about woodworking and to make things.

I can get my hands wet and colored if I paint on the paint wall, that looks like a big window. If I wear a smock over my clothes, painting may be cleaner.

There is a loft upstairs that is sometimes open for visitors. My group might do a special program together there.

I should ask a Playworker if I have questions about equipment I can use or activities I can do.



Coughlan Quarry

The Quarry is a place where I can play in the sand, move big blocks with a crane, or crawl through a dark tunnel. I can wear a hard hat or work vest while I play. The Quarry can be busy and loud. Sometimes, I can just sit on a bench and read books.



Infant/Toddler Play Porch

The Play Porch is an area for babies and very young children. Older children can have fun in other areas of the Museum.



Mankato Clinic Tree of Forts Climber

The Mankato Clinic Tree of Forts is a humongous climbing structure with chutes, tunnels, stairs made of rope, and seven forts to explore. Some of the forts, tunnels, and bridges are high up in the ceiling. Kids and adults can climb and crawl through lots of spaces. I can use my strong arms and legs.



If I feel nervous or lost, I should call for a Playworker or my group to help me. It will be okay.

I may need to be patient and wait my turn to climb up or down or through the Tree.

Grow It Gallery



This is a big exhibit in the center of the Museum. There are many choices in the Gallery, so it can be active and loud. I will often need to take turns with other kids.

I might pick veggies or collect chicken eggs. I can pretend to be a cook and make food for my group. Or, I could be a farmer and even sit on a tractor.



In the Grow It Gallery it is especially important to help put stuff away when I am finished with it. That will make everyone happy.

AgLab



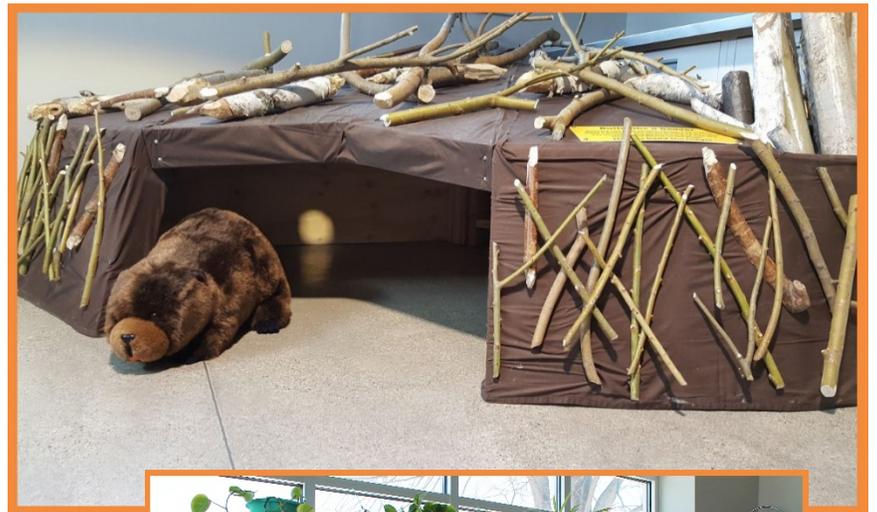
The Ag Lab is about animals and nature. If there are live animals, they will usually be in aquariums or terrariums. I shouldn't touch them, but I am welcome to look.

Plants may be growing on the shelves and I can look at those, too.

In this space, I may see a dairy barn with big stuffed cows or a beaver lodge with a stuffed beaver. There can be many different items on display that I can look at, touch, or play with.

If I have questions, my group or a Playworker can help me.

I can also choose to sit at a table in the AgLab to look at books or do other activities related to nature.



Alltech Farm Animal Experience & Dotson Back 40

This exhibit is outside, with a lot of space to play. There is usually a water play area with a pump I can work myself. Because it is outside, this space may not always be open.



Sometimes there are live animals outside, like pigs, baby calves, goats, chickens, or ponies. Things change with the seasons. There might be garden boxes in the summer or a pumpkin patch in the fall. Sometimes it is okay to pick and sample fruits and vegetables, but sometimes it isn't. I should always ask to make sure.



Lauri Kuch Memorial Stage

This exhibit is a stage where I can try on costumes, create characters, play music, or put on a show for others to watch. My group might like that!

If it's busy, I may need to wait my turn.



A Chaperone's Guide for a Great Visit

Thank you for chaperoning this visit to the Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota!

As a chaperone, you can make the difference between "Eh, that was okay" and "That was amazing!" and we encourage you to explore, play, and join in activities with your group. Below are some tips that can help make for an amazing museum visit, as well as space to record important details for your group.

Tips for making the visit an amazing one:

Ask questions! Museum staff and educators are available to share information and help as you explore the Museum. Invite your group members to ask questions, too.

Share Museum rules with your group. Remind them to use walking feet, inside voices, and to stick together as a group. This all helps make the visit safe and fun.

Hang out with your group. As an adult, you are responsible for your group and you should know where the members of your party are during the entire visit.

Listen for announcements from Museum staff about program activities, the group's snack or lunch time, or getting ready to leave. That way, your group will be in the right places at the right times, ready for awesome experiences.

Try something new and encourage your group members to try new things, too!

Have fun!

Things to know:

Teacher or group leader name: _____

Teacher or group leader phone number: _____

Lunch/snack time: _____

Departure time: _____

Names of children in your group:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Have fun exploring the Museum!

The Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota is especially designed for children age birth through 10, but there is plenty to do and see for any age and ability.



Several times a year, the Children's Museum hosts **Special Needs Accessibility Playtimes**. These events are a time for children with special needs or sensory challenges to come play and explore the exhibits and galleries when fewer Museum visitors are present. Special Needs Accessibility Playtimes are free to attend and no preregistration is required. Please watch the Museum's website and Facebook page for more information about these opportunities.

Developed in collaboration with Robin Boeke, retired Autism Resource Specialist,
Mankato Area Public Schools

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Children's Museum of Southern Minnesota

224 Lamm Street
Mankato, MN 56001
507.386.0279

www.cmsouthernmn.org

info@cmsouthernmn.org