

Exploring Our Way: the Children's Museum of New Hampshire's Autism Partnership Program



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. What if my child gets overwhelmed just walking in?

A. A “map room” will be available during Exploring Our Way to serve as a transition to the museum. The goal is to create a plan for your visit and return to the room as often as needed. The map room is located through the coatroom across from the front desk in the museum’s entrance. There are many tools on the website, including our social story, MAPPS™ (Museum Advance Planning Picture Stories), to help plan your visit in advance.

Q. What if my child is nonverbal?

A. There are MAPPS™ (Museum Advance Planning Picture Stories), available in PDF format on the website. You can select the story most appropriate for your child and print it in advance of your visit.

Q. What if my child is sensitive to light?

A. The museum has plenty of natural sunlight. You may choose to bring sunglasses for your child.

Q. What if my child is sensitive to sound?

A. A few exhibits have sound, such as the Music Matrix. You may choose to bring headphones for your child. We have headphones available at the front desk.

Q. Can I drop off my child?

A. No, all children must be supervised by an adult at all times.

Q. How can I connect with other families?

A. Exploring Our Way name tags are available at the front desk and in the MAPPS™ room.

Q. Is there a train exhibit?

A. Yes, trains are one component of *Primary Place: An Early Learning Landscape* on the second level of the museum. This exhibit is designed specifically for infants and toddlers through age 4. For safety reasons, older children are restricted from this space.

There are two other exhibits on the second level that are open to all visitors. If the trains are a concern for you and your older child, you may wish to avoid the second level of the museum.

Q. How much is admission to the Museum?

A. Exploring Our Way is a free admission program. Admission during regular hours is \$10 per person for everyone over the age of 12 months; seniors over age 65 are \$9. Families may opt to join the museum as Family Members. Members receive free unlimited admission for a year, discounts in the museum shop, and other benefits. Membership information is available on the museum website and at the front desk. Museum staff members can answer any membership questions.

Q. When is the best time to visit the museum during regular hours?

A. The museum is quietest mid-day (lunchtime) and later in the afternoon. Mornings are the busiest time at the museum. You are welcome to call ahead to ask how busy the museum is before you visit. On rainy days, the Children’s Museum tends to be busier than on mild, sunny days.

Q. Can I bring my own food?

A. Yes, however food, drinks and gum are not allowed in any part of the museum except the snack room. The museum offers a 1950's-style area where families can have a quick snack. The snack area features a SnackSmart LLC vending machine offering a variety of healthy options including soy milk.

In good weather, families are welcome to picnic outside in Henry Law Park – just ask front desk staff for a hand stamp or sticker for re-entry to the museum. There are many family-friendly restaurants close by. A binder of menus is available at the front desk.

Q. What other activities are available nearby?

A. The museum is located near a public park with lots of trees and picnic tables (in good weather). A public playground, a large open field and a river walk along the Cocheco River are also nearby. Downtown Dover has many family-friendly restaurants, shops and viewing area for waterfalls. The Downeaster train has service from Boston to Portland and stops in Dover, www.amtrakdowneaster.com. The train station is three blocks from the museum.

Q. Where can I park?

A. There is metered parking in the Henry Law Park Facilities lot located behind the Rotary Arts Amphitheater & Dover Public Pool off Henry Law Avenue. There is a parking garage on Orchard Street near the playground. **Parking is free Saturday and Sunday.**

There are four handicapped spaces on the Washington Street side of the museum near the access ramp to the front door.

Q. What if I have other questions?

A. Check the museum website www.childrens-museum.org or call 603-742-2002. Museum staff and volunteers can assist you when you visit on Exploring Our Way Sundays.