My visit to the Hands On Children’s Museum

"Where Fun & Learning Go Hand in Hand"

This guide can help you and your child familiarize with the museum and its exhibits before you visit.

Written from the child’s perspective, the guide can be helpful in planning which exhibits to visit and in which order.

Check out the Museum’s Special Nights of Play for families of children with autism or other special needs.
Welcome to the Hands on Children’s Museum!

After we park our car, I will follow the path leading up to the Museum.

Then I will go through the front door and wait while my grown-up checks in.

*I can ask to borrow a pair of sensory headphones from the Front Desk if things are too loud.*
I will see happy staff members in blue shirts.

If I get lost or have a question, I can ask them for help.

There will also be Museum volunteers wearing aprons, some of their aprons are red and some are blue. I can ask them for help too.
I will see lots of different things at the Hands On Children's Museum. I can look at my map and choose where I want to play.

I must remember to use my walking feet and stay with my grown-up at all times.
After getting my hand stamp, I can hang up my coat in the coat room.

Then I am ready to play in the Museum!
Garden Shops & Carrot Cafe

I will see a garden and shops where I can buy and sell pretend food.

There is a truck and a house that I can play in.
Next to the cafe, I will see the Ballcano exhibit.

Here I can touch steam and water. Balls float in the water too.
In Our Puget Sound Gallery I will see a large cargo ship.

I can crawl through the bottom of the ship and see sea life.

I can also climb up to the pilot bridge to pretend to steer the ship.
In Our Puget Sound Gallery I will see a water table where I can make a boat.

I can also load cargo on the ship and explore on board.
Emergency Gallery

In the Emergency area I will see a place that looks like a small city to play in.

There is a fire truck, a police car, and an ambulance.

There is also a Nursery where I can care for infants.
Tree Climber

I will see a blue slide and the Tides to Trees Climber that I can go in if I want to and if my grown-up says is OK.

I will climb up many platforms. At the top, I will be in a giant eagle’s nest!
Fabulous Forest

Upstairs I can play at the wind tunnel or help animals in the Fabulous Forest.

On the stage I can dress up in costumes. Then I can sing or dance.
Some things might make sounds. Some things might have bright lights. I can use my words or show a picture saying I need a break.

There are many places to take a break. I can go to the quiet space (ask Museum Staff) to read a book.
I can send scarves and yarn poms through these tubes. I will see them fall slowly from the top of the maze.
Build It Gallery

I can build a house in the Build It Gallery or pretend to operate a yellow dump truck.
Arts & Parts Studio

Here I can sit down and have some time to do an art project. I can use scissors, tape, and glue to make something special.
If I need to go to the bathroom, I can tell my grown-up and they will take me.

There are bathrooms on each floor.
Play Outdoors

I will check to see if the Outdoor Discovery Center is open. It might be closed if the weather is bad or if it's nighttime.

I can play in the sand, move logs, or splash in the water.
Goodbye Museum

The grown-up I am with will tell me when the Hands On Children’s Museum is all done. We will hear a message on the museum speakers. It will be time to go.

This Social Story was developed by Scotty Jones, a former museum educator, and modeled after the Children's Museum of Houston.