



from

Providence Children's Museum

Come play, come learn!

Partners in Wonder

By Carly Loeper, Exhibit and Program Developer

I remember sulking alongside my father on a ramble through the woods when I was about 10 years old, annoyed because he was always spotting the best treasures before I noticed them – broken bird eggs underfoot, soaring hawks overhead, trickling water in the distance. He explained, “The secret is to not just look ahead, but to really *see* what’s way up... and down.” This simple gem guides me to be aware of the wonder around me, no matter how ordinary the travels.

Conservationist Rachel Carson wrote, “If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder...he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.” It’s easy to spot very young children experiencing the world through their senses, seeing beauty with fresh eyes. But as children grow, it’s harder to encourage their natural curiosity when leisure hours are increasingly filled by organized sports, television, video games and other activities removed from the world of natural sensory experience.

Spending time *together* in nature, whether tame or wild, is an opportunity to share something inspiring and unexpected – if you really notice. You’re not required to be prepared with lore and identifications of wildlife. It’s about involvement rather than information, feeling rather than knowing. Observe, draw pictures, ask questions, watch for answers along with your child. Turn

over rocks and logs, lie down and look up, see how many different colors you can find. Sharing wonder is about having fun together with a spirit of discovery!

Following your child’s curiosity is essential, and games can help focus the experience. In Human Camera, the “photographer” asks the “camera” to close his eyes and leads him to an outdoor “picture” she finds beautiful or interesting. She squeezes the “camera’s” shoulders to cue him to take in the scene for five seconds before closing his eyes again. To play the Sounds Game, have family members close their eyes and count a finger for each sound they hear. When eyes reopen after a few minutes, compare sounds.

You can explore outside and indulge your senses together at Providence Children’s Museum. Visit *The Children’s Garden* and follow the path of a bird, feel the cool water of a fountain splash over bare feet, and rub your fingers on native plants and take in their aroma. (Hint: one smells sweet and minty!)

Sharing curiosity with your child and finding wonder even in the ordinary is a fulfilling gift. As co-adventurers, you’ll have fun as you notice new things together!



Get ready for some cool summer fun!



Wheels at Work

Wednesdays in July & August
10:00 AM - Noon

A different vehicle visits each week to give children a close up look at how they work. Kids climb aboard a fire truck, a giant digger, an ambulance and more! Ages 3 - 11

Bubble Blowout

Saturday, July 12 • 1:00 - 3:00 PM

Big bubbles, bubble painting, kids encircled by bubbles! Families blow and stretch bubbles into astonishing shapes. Ages 3 - 11

Giant’s Garden

Sunday, July 20 • 1:00 & 2:00 PM

Look what the garden has grown! Children create a colorful field of magical proportions as they paint and “plant” enormous paper flowers outside. Ages 3 - 11

Visit www.childrenmuseum.org for a full calendar of events.

Providence Children’s Museum is open 7 days, 9 AM - 6 PM, and Fridays until 8 PM.

Admission is \$6.50. Members are always free.



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100 South Street, Providence, RI 02903 • (401) 273-5437 • www.childrenmuseum.org • Ride RIPTA to the Museum

