

January 1982
Public Relations Department 426-6500.



Museum Wharf
300 Congress Street
Boston, MA 02210
(617) 426-6500

FACTS	Boston Children's Museum
LOCATION	On Boston's waterfront at Museum Wharf, 300 Congress Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02210. Near South Station and a short walk from the New England Aquarium and Faneuil Hall Marketplace.
PHONE	Events, hours, and travel information: (617) 426-8855; all departments: (617) 426-6500 (includes TTY-TDD).
TRAVEL	Follow Museum Wharf signs. From North: Expressway (Rte.3) south to High St./ Congress St. exit, third left on Congress St. From West: Mass. Pike to Expressway North signs, Atlantic Ave./Northern Ave. exit, right over Northern Ave. bridge, right on Sleeper St. From South: Expressway (Rte.3) north to Atlantic Ave./ Northern Ave. exit, right over Northern Ave. bridge, right on Sleeper St. MBTA Red Line to South Station.
PARKING	Public lot at corner of Northern Ave. and Sleeper St.; some on-street parking on weekends and evenings. Parking for handicapped in front of building.
HOURS	<u>September-June</u> : Tuesday-Sunday, 10-5; Fridays until 9; <u>closed Mondays</u> except Boston school vacations and holidays. <u>July-Labor Day</u> : daily, 10-5; Fridays until 9. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's.
ADMISSION RATES	<u>Exhibit Center</u> : adults, \$3.75; children, ages 3-15, and senior citizens, \$2.75; children under 3 and members free. Family Night (Friday, 6-9pm), \$1.75 per person. <u>Resource Center and Recycle</u> : free admission.
GROUPS	School and community groups from Massachusetts are sponsored by a legislative grant funded through the Department of Education. Out-of-state groups: children, \$2.75; accompanying adults, free. Groups by advance reservation only, (617) 426-6500.

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ANNUAL
MEMBERSHIPS

Standard: sponsor, \$50; family, \$35; adult, \$20; child up to age 15, (Kid's Express Card), \$10. Privileges: free admission; newsletters and special notices; invitations to special events; window sticker; 10% discount on Museums' Shop purchases and on fees for workshops, courses, and kit rentals. Kid's Express Card includes permanent storage of information about child in museum's computer, retrievable by the child.

Borrower's: additional \$10. Privileges: all Standard plus free borrowing of books, media, and other educational resources; free introductory visit to Resource Center.

Organizational: school (all staff), \$200; community organization (all staff), \$100. Privileges: all Borrower's.

Library, \$300. Privileges: Standard family membership admission plus newsletters and special notices to library. Library circulates membership card.

Also available: Corporate Memberships at \$1000, \$500, \$250, and \$100. Call or write for more information.

EXHIBIT
CENTER

"Hands-on" exhibits for families are primarily designed for children, preschool through early teens. Length of visit ranges from 1½ to 2 hours or more.

Giant's Desktop: everything's twelve times normal size -- telephone, paper clips, blotter, coffee cup, and ruler.

Playspace: play structure, water gallery, and measuring arcade, primarily for preschoolers.

Factory: young workers assemble "Spree Spinner" spinning tops on a real production line. Shipping department, payroll office, and time clock.

Small Science: rotating series of exhibits demonstrating basic principles of technology using everyday materials. January 1981: bubbles and soap films.

Living Things: a natural history corner with small urban animals such as mice, ants, worms, and cockroaches; pigeon roost; rocks, shells, and bones; turtle tank.

City Slice: three-story cross section of a city street and mansard house -- exposed construction, telephone manhole, pipes and cables, sewer catch basin, and cut-away car.

EXHIBIT
CENTER

Grandparents' House: working kitchen and parlor; grandmother's attic with trunks of old clothes and Victorian memorabilia; grandfather's cellar with workbench and tools.

Work: exploring the world of work through role playing in the Congress Street Superette and the Health Care Clinic. Kids Look at Work is a changing exhibit produced by Boston school children.

Computers: twelve terminals programmed with games for all ages, such as tic-tac-toe, Hunt the Wumpus, and Inchworm. An electronic "turtle" navigates by computer commands and a voice synthesizer "talks" to visitors.

How Movies Move: zoetropes allow children to make their own animations.

WKID-TV: a TV news studio with camera, monitors, weather map, and script prompter; Instant Eye camera.

We're Still Here: compares how New England Native Americans lived then and now. Features wigwam and modern house. Study Storage allows study of the museum's Native American collections by appointment.

Ruth Harmony Green Hall of Toys: doll houses, dolls, and toys; games from Parker Brothers' archives.

What If You Couldn't?, An Exhibit About Handicaps: demonstrates what it is like to have an impairment and how it can be helped with prostheses, braille, glasses, etc.

Meeting Ground: explores multiethnic diversity through shared experiences such as food, music, festivals, and language. Changing community gallery currently features Boston's Chinese community.

Japanese Home: two-story artisan's house, shop, and garden from Kyoto. Programs include crafts, home and work activities, traditional festivals.

HANDICAPPED
ACCESS/
PROGRAMS

The museum is accessible to the handicapped and has a ramped entrance and elevator. The Exhibit Center also has a program each Wednesday morning for groups of children and adults with special needs; one staff member accompanies each visitor.

RESOURCE
CENTER

The center:

-- lends and rents exhibit-related books, objects, audiovisual materials, games, and educational kits to teachers, community workers, students, and museum members.

-- conducts workshop and courses on museum themes.

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RESOURCE CENTER	<p>-- develops and publishes educational materials including books, slide/tape and film presentations, and curriculum units.</p> <p>-- displays educational materials and activities in studies:</p> <p><u>Ethnic Study</u>: books, films, and projects concerning folk arts and crafts, traditions, history, and contemporary life styles of diverse ethnic groups.</p> <p><u>Science Study</u>: a milk carton structure housing homemade equipment and instructions for investigating mechanics, physics, and chemistry.</p> <p><u>Child Study</u>: materials for exploring physical, intellectual, emotional, and social growth, with a focus on puppetry for children of different ages.</p> <p><u>Asian Study</u>: resources for comparative exploration of the Japanese and Chinese cultures including their languages, foods, and daily life.</p>
COLLECTIONS	<p>A cultural collection of about 40,000 objects represents people and cultures from around the world. The museum is committed to interpreting its collection to describe how people have lived and continue to live their lives, the range of objects they use, and crosscultural solutions to common problems.</p> <p>A natural history collection contains more than 60,000 specimens: rocks, fossils, shells, minerals, birds, mammals, and reptiles.</p>
RECYCLE	<p>Barrels of industrial by-products -- wood, foam, paper, and plastic parts -- are sold at nominal cost as raw materials for arts, crafts, and science projects.</p>
MUSEUMS' SHOP	<p>Books, gifts, games, antiques, and reproductions that reflect museum themes. Operated jointly with the Museum of Transportation.</p>
ORGANIZATION	<p>Independent, nonprofit organization with a 25-member Board of Trustees and 50 Corporators. President of the Board is David H. Burnham. The museum has three divisions: Exhibit Center, Resource Center, and Support Services.</p>
STAFF	<p>Staff of 100 plus 35-60 interpreters, volunteers, etc. Director, Michael Spock; associate director, Phyllis O'Connell; director of Exhibit Center, Elaine Heumann Gurian; director of Resource Center, Pat Cornu.</p>
BUDGET	<p>FY 1981 operating budget of \$1.7m. Sources: user fees, sales, and royalties, 65%; research and development grants and contracts, 15%; unrestricted gifts and investment income, 20%.</p>

ATTENDANCE Exhibit Center attendance, July 1979-June 1980: 500,000. Attendance, July 1980-June 1981: 395,500. Projected attendance, July 1981-June 1982: 400,000. 55% of visitors are children; 45% are adults. An additional 200,000 to 300,000 adults and children are served directly and indirectly by the Resource Center.

BRIEF HISTORY The museum was founded in 1913 by a group of university and school science teachers to supplement natural science programs in schools.

Since then, the museum's educational programs and exhibits have expanded in scope to include the study of cultures, the man-made world, and the processes by which children grow and learn.

In the early '60s, the museum launched a major expansion of activities including community-based programs, curriculum development, educational research, and training programs for teachers and community workers. Explorations began, too, on new ways to use exhibits to present information and concepts to children. Traditional glass cases were replaced with interactive exhibits in which kids directly participated: making their own movies, celebrating a Japanese festival, and using a computer terminal.

The exhibits and programs caught the imagination of children and educators, and today, the museum is a national research and development center for non-traditional forms of education.

The museum's original site was Pine Bank at the north end of Jamaica Pond in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston; it subsequently moved across the pond to a larger site on the Jamaicaway in 1936. In April 1979, the museum closed the Jamaicaway site and reopened July 1979 at Museum Wharf, a late 19th century brick and timber warehouse on Boston's waterfront. The Children's Museum shares Museum Wharf with the Museum of Transportation.