

# GRCM Exhibits Social Story Guide



GRAND RAPIDS  
**Children's**  
MUSEUM



# Hello!

We are so excited that you will be visiting us soon! We hope you will find this **Story Guide** helpful before and during your visit. This guide can be especially helpful in planning visits for children and adults with special needs, or simply anyone who would like to know what to expect. This preview of our exhibits may help you to picture what it will be like to visit and to choose exhibits you would like to experience. If you would like a map of our exhibits, they will be available for you at the front desk when you arrive.

To learn more about our exhibits visit our website at [www.grcm.org](http://www.grcm.org).



# I'm going to the Grand Rapids Children's Museum!

I can ask my grown-up how we will travel to the Grand Rapids Children's Museum. My grown-up can use the Museum's website to look up directions. We might travel to the museum by walking, or by riding in a bus or a car.

I'll know when we get to the museum because I will see a building with a beautiful colorful mural. When I get to the museum, a friendly staff member in a dark blue apron will greet my group. If I came on a bus, the staff member will get on the bus to talk to us before we go inside. If I came in a car then we will probably go inside the museum to receive our greeting!



# I'm going to the Grand Rapids Children's Museum!

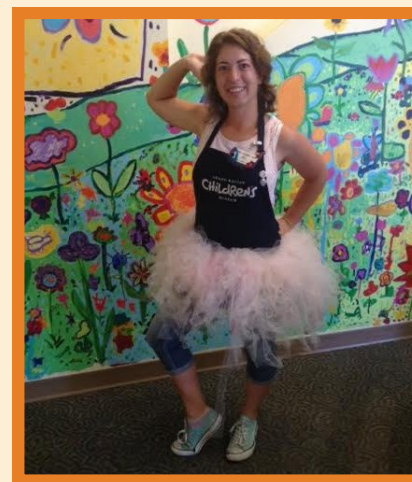
When I go inside, a nice person in a dark blue apron will say hello to me. I will need to stay with my grown-up while we check in. If I'm wearing a coat I might go hang it up. My grown-up can ask the person at the desk for a map of the exhibits to help us decide where to go. We can also ask to borrow a Sensory Resource Tool Kit, which is a dark blue backpack filled with things to help me while I'm at the museum. Before I leave the museum for the day, I will give my backpack back to the person at the desk so I can use it the next time I come!



# Things to Remember:

There are many fun things I can do in the museum! I can play by myself or with other people if I want to. While I'm at the museum there will be many things I want to do and see, and I should remember five important things:

1. I should stay with my grown-up at all times.
2. I should use my inside voice.
3. My feet should walk, not run.
4. I should not throw anything.
5. The people wearing aprons are nice and they like to play! I can ask them if I need help with anything. A person with a blue apron works at the museum, and a person with green apron is a volunteer.



# Amigo Amphitheater

There is an amphitheater where I can go on the stage and be an actor, a singer, a comedian, or anything I want! I can put on a costume and use props to make my own play, or I can join a play with others.

If I don't want to go on stage I can watch the other children. I can clap for the other performers and other people might clap for me!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Holding props, playing instruments

### Large Motor:

Dancing, acting, putting on costumes

### Communication:

"Can I tell some jokes?"

"Let's make a play together!"

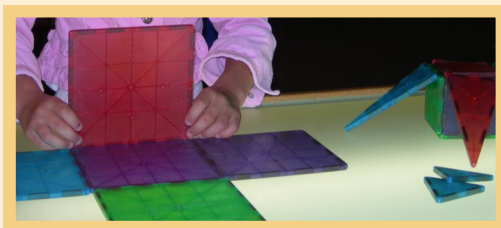
### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Light Table

At the light table I can make shapes and towers out of the colorful tiles. The tiles are magnetic, so they can stick together. If I want to, I can stack different colored tiles on top of each other to see how many different colors I can make.

There is a light inside of the table that will make my tiles shine brightly!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Picking up and placing tiles

### Communication:

"I made the color purple."

"How do magnets work?"

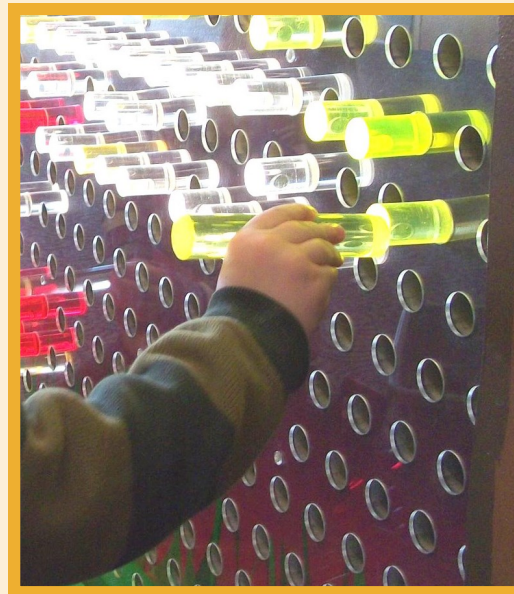
### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Starry Skies and Fireflies

At the Starry Skies and Fireflies exhibit, I can put colorful pegs in holes in the wall to make a design. My design will shine bright because there is a light inside of the wall!

It is okay to pull pegs out of the wall to make a new design if I want to, and it is nice when I share the pegs with others.



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Picking up and placing pegs

### Communication:

"I'm making a star."

"May I share your pegs?"

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Bubbles

At the bubbles exhibit I can go to the table and dip the bubble rings into the bubbly water. I can gently wave them through the air or blow air into them to make bubbles. It's okay if I get a little wet! There are paper towels I can dry my hands on.

If I want to, I can stand inside of the bubble tower and pull the ring down and try to make a giant bubble go around me! When the metal ring drops, it might sound very loud, but I am safe.



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Dipping and waving the bubble rings

### Large Motor:

Pulling on the ring in the bubble tower and keeping the body in the center

### Communication:

“What shape is your bubble ring?”

“How big can you make your bubble?”

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Wee Discover

At the wee discover area there are colorful balls I can roll and put into shapes on the wall, and there are many textures on the wall that I can feel with my hands. There is a small bridge I can crawl on or walk across. There is also a hill where I can climb try to climb to the top by using a ramp, stairs or rocks!

There are small children and babies playing on the floor, so I must be very gentle and careful.



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Picking up balls and placing them in the shapes in the wall

### Large Motor:

Rolling balls, crawling

### Communication:

"What color goes in the top of the rainbow?"

"I can make my ball roll fast!"

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Little GR

Little GR is an exhibit about the city, Grand Rapids! Here I can use my feet to drive a car, gather food at the grocery store, take money out of the bank, and go to the restaurant. At the restaurant I can be a chef and make pizzas! I can also try to fix the car at the auto shop. Sometimes this area can get very busy so it is nice if I share with the other kids.



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Using tools to fix the car, counting money

### Large Motor:

Driving cars, pushing shopping carts, lifting objects at the grocery store

### Communication:

"What would you like to order?"

"I'm going to work at the deli!"

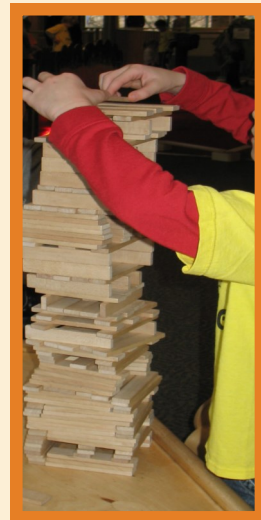
### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Funstruction!

There are several tables where I can build anything I want to! There are legos, blocks, metal objects, and wooden planks. The metal objects are on a table that is magnetic, so they can stick to the table and to each other.

Sometimes when I build a tall tower it will fall down and it might be a little loud, but that is okay. I can rebuild it if I want to!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Picking up and placing objects

### Communication:

"Do you want to help me build a tall tower?"

"May I use that green lego?"

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Just Playing Around

I can play so many different instruments to make music! There are drums, pipes, a piano, and other objects that I can use to make sounds. Sometimes it can get a little noisy, but that is okay. I can play loudly or quietly. I can even play along with other kids if I want to!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Picking up drumsticks and paddles, playing piano keys

### Large Motor:

Using drumsticks and paddles

### Communication:

“Some notes are higher and some are lower.”

“Let’s make a band together.”

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Buzzy Buzzy Bees

There is a bee exhibit where I can see real bees! The bees are behind a piece of glass so I can't touch them and they can't sting me. I can watch them crawl around and make their honey in their honeycombs. I wonder how many bees there are! I shouldn't tap on the glass because it might hurt the bees ears.



## SKILLS

### Communication:

"Look at all of the bees!"

"What do bees eat?"

### Social:

Asking questions, observing peers.

# Imagination Playground

This is a “Rotating Exhibit,” so it might not be at the museum right now.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out what's featured!

Here I can build with large blue blocks. I can make a fort, a sculpture, or anything I want! Other kids might want to help me build, or I might want to help other kids build.

Sometimes the blocks tip over and fall, and that is okay!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Connecting and stacking blocks

### Large Motor:

Lifting blocks, climbing, crawling

### Communication:

“Will you help me build a fort?”

“Look at the robot I built!”

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Aunt Daisy's Farm

This is a "Rotating Exhibit," so it might not be at the museum right now.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out what's featured!

At Aunt Daisy's farm I can pick apples and ears of corn, collect eggs from the chicken coop, and go fishing in the pond. It's fun to gather veggies and fruits in my red wheel barrel. I can also play with the chickens and cows, dogs, and a horse named Buttercup!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Picking up eggs and apples

### Large Motor:

Casting fishing poles, riding the horse, crawling through the dog house

### Communication:

"I'm going to pick all of the apples!"

"How many chicken eggs can I count?"

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Adventures in Balance

This is a “Rotating Exhibit,” so it might not be at the museum right now.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out what's featured!

There are many fun activities where I can try to balance. I can balance on stilts, rock back and forth on rocker boards, and walk on a balancing beam. I can even climb a wall if I want to! I can also try to juggle or balance an egg on a spoon.

Balancing can be hard, so it's okay if I fall a few times.



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Picking up and placing pieces of walkway, grasping climbing wall

### Large Motor:

Walking, climbing, balancing

### Communication:

“Look how high I can climb!”

“Let’s cross the lava pit!”

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Happy Animal Clinic

This is a “Rotating Exhibit,” so it might not be at the museum right now.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out what's featured!

At the Happy Animal Clinic, I can take care of many different animals! I can be a vet and can listen to the animals’ hearts, give them ultrasounds, and give them medicine if they are sick. I can also give them baths and dress them up.

All animals will leave happy!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Typing on computer, using stethoscope and other tools

### Large Motor:

Picking up animals

### Communication:

“I need help with this dog’s surgery!”

“Should I give this turtle a bath?”

### Social:

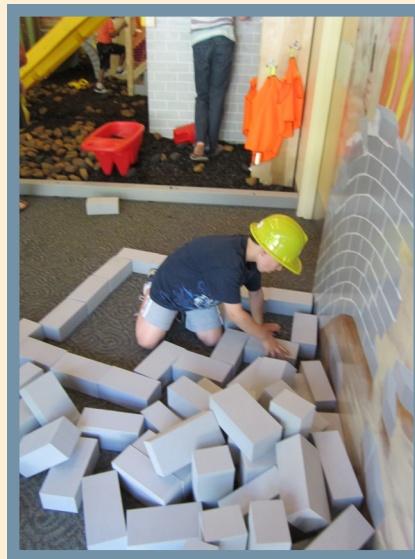
Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Kidstruction Zone

This is a “Rotating Exhibit,” so it might not be at the museum right now.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out what's featured!

When I enter the Kidstruction Zone area I will see a large structure and lots of gravel. I can climb the ramp and go down the slide if I want to. I can move the gravel and blocks around with a shovel and pile it in the wheel barrel. I can even sweep to clean up my work zone! Sometimes this exhibit is very busy, so if it gets too loud I can find another place to play.



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Using tools, punching in at the time clock

### Large Motor:

Shoveling gravel, sweeping, building with big blocks, pushing wheel barrels

### Communication:

“Can I go down the slide?”

“Lets get to work!”

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# To the Rescue!

This is a “Rotating Exhibit,” so it might not be at the museum right now.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out what's featured!

At this exhibit I can put on my uniform and rescue people like a hero! I can drive the firetruck, helicopter, or ambulance. I can also practice my first aid skills. It's good to take turns driving and don't forget that every hero can use a good partner or co-pilot!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Using the first aid kit, putting on uniforms

### Large Motor:

Climbing the firetruck, driving the vehicles

### Communication:

“Help me put out this fire!”

“Will you be my co-pilot?”

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Boxes

This is a “Rotating Exhibit,” so it might not be at the museum right now.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out what's featured!

At the boxes exhibit there is a huge pile of boxes and cardboard that I can play with! Boxes are very exciting to play in and there are usually a lot of other kids here, so it might be kind of loud and messy. I shouldn't throw the boxes! I can build a box fort, house, or anything I can think of! There are tools to connect, cut, tape, and color boxes. It's nice if I share, but if I get overwhelmed it's okay if I step away.



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Using tools to alter boxes, grasping cardboard

### Large Motor:

Picking up and stacking boxes

### Communication:

“Will you help me build a house?”

“We need to stabilize this tower!”

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Forts

This is a “Rotating Exhibit,” so it might not be at the museum right now.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out what's featured!

At the forts exhibit I can use stretchy cords, furniture, and blankets to make a cool place to hang out! If I want to, I can help others build a big fort for lots of people to fit in, or if I'd rather, I can make myself a quiet fort where I can read a book. Other kids might want to change my fort into something different, but it's okay to share my fort! I can also make up my own sign and rules for my fort if I want to!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Attaching elastic cords to furniture, drawing a sign for the fort

### Large Motor:

Moving furniture, climbing

### Communication:

“Want to help me move this chair?”

“The rule at my fort is you have to be nice!”

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, observing peers

# Rotating Spaces

These exhibits are part of a rotating feature space within the Little G.R. exhibit.

Please call (616) 235-4726 to find out which one is featured!

**Bluefish Aquarium:** at the aquarium exhibit I can use rocks, plants, and other objects to make little homes for fish, lizards, insects, and other creatures!

**Grand Rapids Public Library:** here I will find a space where I can sit and choose a book to read! I can read out loud to someone or quietly to myself.

**Dr. Molar, Fang & Tusk:** at the dentist I can learn about how to keep teeth healthy and can practice brushing teeth!



## SKILLS

### Fine Motor:

Carefully placing rocks and plants, turning book pages

### Large Motor:

Making the fish swim, crouching by the shelves

### Communication:

"Where does a lizard live?"

"Can I read this book to you?"

### Social:

Playing with others, sharing materials, reading together, observing peers, learning about dental hygiene

## MUSEUM HOURS

Monday .....closed  
Tuesday .....9:30am – 5pm  
Wednesday .....9:30am – 5pm  
Thursday .....9:30am – 8pm  
    Family Night 5pm-8pm \$1.75 admission  
Friday .....9:30am – 5pm  
Saturday .....9:30am – 5pm  
Sunday .....noon – 5pm

## ADMISSION PRICES

General Admission .....\$8.50  
    *Ages 1 and above*  
Seniors .....\$7.50  
    *Ages 65 and above*  
Tots .....Free  
    *Under 1 year*  
Military Family Member.....\$6.50  
Teachers.....\$6.50  
Museums for All (EBT).....\$1.75

## Discovery Field Trip

Discovery Field Trips are self-guided and allows the students and their chaperones to experience the museum at their own pace. Groups can be greeted by a field trip facilitator who will provide a short overview of the current exhibits and other important information.

## Discovery Field Trip Scholarships

Scholarship programs provide play opportunities for underserved populations in the Grand Rapids metro area and beyond. These scholarships give all children of West Michigan the opportunity to visit, learn and play at the Museum at no charge or for a minimal fee.

For more information about our scholarship program and to download an application, please visit: [www.grcm.org/visit/field-trips](http://www.grcm.org/visit/field-trips)

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