

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

of NEW HAMPSHIRE

Opened in 1983

19,000 sq ft exhibits &
classrooms

Budget \$1.6m

104,000 people year



Exhibits



STEAM Programs



Early Learning Experiences



Access for All

- Exploring Our Way sensory friendly hours
- Free field trips & bus reimbursement for Title 1 schools, HeadStart
- \$3 admission for EBT/SNAP families
- Free admission passes distributed to social service agencies
- Free admission for aides/therapists visiting w/client
- Military families 50% discount
- Library patrons 50% discount
- Deeply discounted membership for EBT/SNAP families



Advancing Play-Based Learning In New Hampshire

Why? A response to the 2018 state mandate that kindergarten teachers adopt a play-based learning curriculum

Who? A partnership with UNH Early Childhood Education coaching team to serve kindergarten teachers and families of kindergarteners. Reached 62,534 teachers and families (due to strong demand for online content during covid) in 2020/21.

Goals: educate families about the validity of learning through play and support teachers as they transition to a PBL curriculum

Initiatives:

20 Play Based Learning Tips & Activities

12 educational videos

4 virtual workshops for educators

2 kindergarten open house events at the Museum

20 free virtual field trips with materials shipped to 20 kindergarten classes



The graphic features a red background with the Children's Museum of New Hampshire logo at the top. A rainbow icon is positioned to the left of the main title. The title reads 'CMNH Play Based Learning Tip #10 Encouraging & Understanding Process Art'. Below the title are three bullet points describing process-based art, product-based art, and the benefits of process-based art. To the right of the text are three illustrations of children engaged in different art activities: one with a clay figure, one painting, and one at a desk. On the left side, there are icons for scissors, a clipboard with a drawing, and a paint palette with a brush. The website URL 'www.childrens-museum.org' is at the bottom.

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CMNH Play Based Learning Tip # 10

Encouraging & Understanding Process Art

- **Process based art** projects are projects where children are given materials to work with, but have **complete** control over the outcome of their project
- **Product based art** projects are projects where children are given materials to make something specific using a template or example.
- Children learn fine motor skills, and usually enjoy all types of art projects- product based art is not "bad"
- Process based art is important in allowing children to be creative, and it can help them working on problem solving skills, especially when framed with a STEAM or STEM challenge.

www.childrens-museum.org

Promoting the Power of Play



Why? To bolster NH's early childcare providers by providing them with the resources we'd already developed and robust kits of PBL materials to use with children and families.

Who? 83 licensed childcare centers, family resource centers and libraries throughout NH —reaching 9,946 children, with support from UNH in 2022/23.

Goals: Help childcare providers & families provide enriching, engaging & developmentally appropriate PBL activities to children ages birth – 5, ease their financial burden & increase job satisfaction & connectedness during the childcare crisis.

Initiatives:

- 83 kits of PBL materials
- 10 monthly activity guides for kits
- 2 new PBL videos for babies & toddlers
- 52 drop-in PBL activities for Museum visitors
- Free Museum admission for childcare providers
- PBL Social media campaign
- 10,000 PBL postcards with link to free resources distributed to childcare providers & families visiting the Museum



Play-Based Learning for NH Family-Based Childcare Providers

Why? Family-based caregivers are isolated, have limited resources, schedule constraints & can benefit from a community of support.

Who? 100 in-home childcare providers from every county in NH (see map) serving 846 children in 2024

Goals: support and connect family-based caregivers, share materials & tools to help the children in their care thrive

Initiatives:

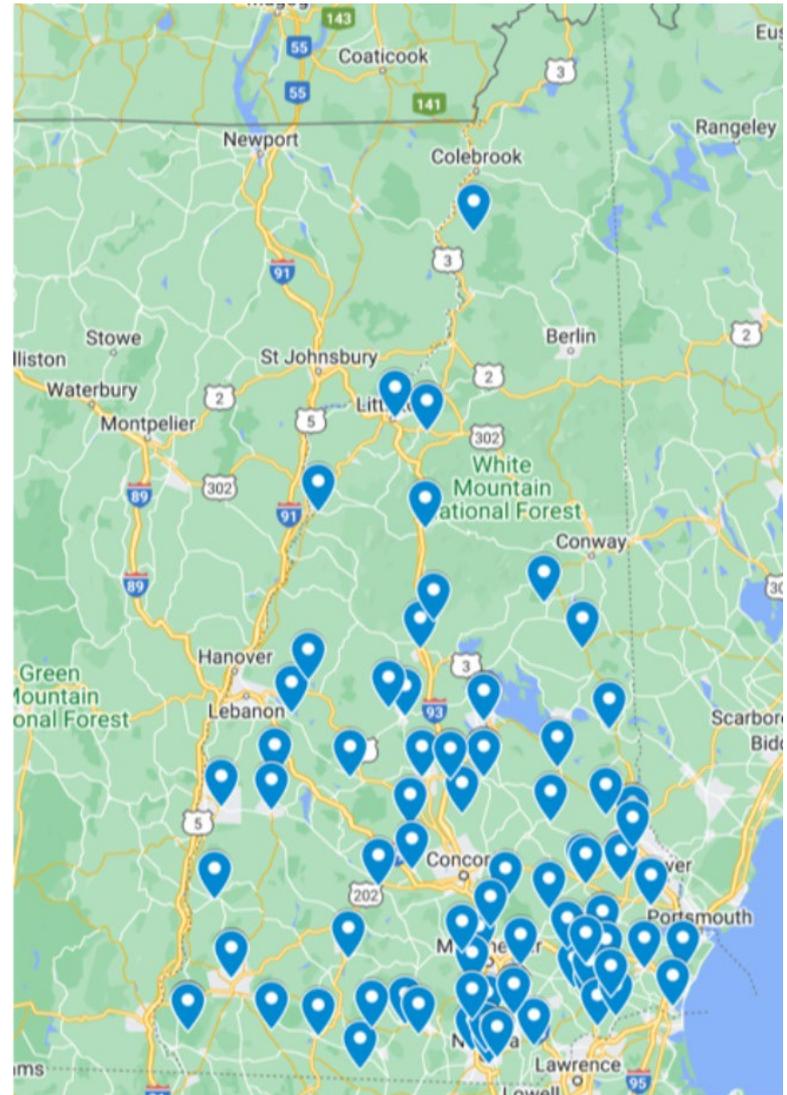
100 Kits of PBL materials & activity guides

8 workshops at libraries throughout NH

4 virtual workshops that can be accessed at their convenience

6 online gatherings with guest speakers & a facilitated Facebook group to share ideas

Open House for providers & their families at CMNH



Feedback from Childcare Providers

"Each week we had a playgroup for families. The children came back asking for the things we used or activities we did the previous weeks, and I had families telling me they would go home and recreate the play/activities they were doing with the other children or myself from our playgroup."

Families were amazed at how simple the activities were and how much the children got out of it (and how easily it could be incorporated into everyday activities and adapted for older/younger siblings.) All in all, it was a wonderful resource to have to help show families how to be more present and active in play and how it can add so much to their connection with their children, without adding extra stress."

-The River Center (Family Resource Center), Peterborough, NH

"Thank you so very much for allowing our participation in this program. The items and activities were so engaging and thoughtful. Particularly at a time where childcare centers are feeling unappreciated and underfunded this program helped to provide additional materials to our children and increase morale in our classrooms."

-Piggyback Rides and Slippery Slides Childcare Center, Bristol, NH

"Play based learning is infinitely critical to the development of young children. This project has allowed our teachers to refresh their ideas for classroom activities and been encouraging for them to think outside of the box with some of the materials. Thank you for the opportunity to participate!!"

-Inter-Lakes Day Care Center, Meredith, NH



In the works... Wonder & Wellness



Why? CMNH is a safe and stigma-free environment for connection and learning, can be a partner in supporting family mental health.

Who? Children ages 1 – 12 and their caregivers, community organizations who provide mental health support to children & families.

Goals: normalize family discussions about mental health & emotional well-being, give caregivers tools to support their own mental health and that of their family members

Initiatives:

10 Wonder & Wellness signs with “Try This” activities

Take-home cards to reinforce wellness concepts

Create a calming room with resources for visitors

Host wellness workshops featuring experts/community partners

Develop and host “Mindful Moments,” staff facilitated calming activities for families

Model a positive outlook for your child:

As grown-ups, we forget that we’re allowed to show big emotions in front of children. It’s okay to validate difficult feelings, however, it is our job to try to stay positive and model that for young children. “I’m disappointed that my bread didn’t bake right; it’s frustrating to feel that I wasted so much time. I learned something though, and I’ll try again another day.”

When children see that the grown-ups in their lives can handle emotions—like disappointment—in a healthy way, they are more likely to acknowledge and be able to manage their own big feelings.



Reach out with questions or ideas for future
partnerships:

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