



KidsPlace

Science Is Always Changing...And So Are We

Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

HARRISBURG, PA (March 8, 2008)—KidsPlace, a new destination for the youngest explorers and their favorite grown-ups, officially opens today on the Arcade level of Harsco Science Center. Designed with a cityscaped theme, the new gallery offers an extraordinary collection of friendly exhibits and fun activities for young children ages 0-5 (babies, toddlers, and pre-schoolers).

KidsPlace has many features sure to delight and engage children, including a crawling-climbing space for toddlers with an adjoining aquarium. A multi-level waterworks will encourage cause and effect reasoning and hands-on exploration of dams, spouts and water jets. Preschool visitors will be challenged to use their construction skills in the renovation of a child-sized three story home that resembles one of Harrisburg's fine historic buildings. Young minds will be encouraged to imagine stories with their favorite characters on Storybook Stage, a theater complete with lighting effects, costumes and changing scenery. Finally, KidsPlace would not be complete without an ambulance to handle health emergencies as well as a Midtown Market with bins and shelving to hold a bounty of farm produce.

"Activities throughout the gallery provide a wide variety of age-appropriate mental and physical challenges that have been proven successful in many children's museums," said Steve Bishop, vice president of the science center. KidsPlace will immediately offer more than one third of families in Central Pennsylvania a place to call their own, where the youngest children and their parents can explore unique interactive learning experiences together, free from competition from older children."

KidsPlace located on the Arcade level as guests enter through the science center gateway, permitting easy access for families with children in strollers. Signage offers parents and caregivers some simple tips on how to help their children get the most out of their visit to KidsPlace.

The new gallery is the first in a series of renovations within Harsco Science Center's Exhibit Master Plan. In eight years of operation, Harsco Science Center has provided exciting, hands-on learning opportunities for nearly one million visitors. A year-long study conducted by a task force of community members, board members, area educators and professional staff concluded that the time had come to renew the science center. Many of the exhibits had been heavily used and needed to be replaced, while the remaining exhibits needed to be refurbished and refreshed.

"KidsPlace forms a crucial bridge between young families and a lifelong relationship with Whitaker Center," said Michael L. Hanes, Whitaker Center president and CEO. An important goal of Harsco Science Center's Exhibit Master Plan is to generate new energy and interests in science. Our intent is to explore ways to create totally new science experiences for all our visitors—young as well as mature learners."

KidsPlace Gallery is made possible with the generous support of:

The John Crain Kunkel Foundation, Inc.

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Lois Lehrman Grass

Tres Bonne Annee

Drs. Michael and Madlyn Hanes

R. Timothy and Mary Webber Weston

Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts, located at 222 Market Street in downtown Harrisburg also features Select Medical IMAX® Theater and Sunoco Performance Theater. For more information call 717/214-ARTS or visit www.whitakercenter.org.

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