

10:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. Concurrent Museum Study Tours

Pre-registration is required; cost for each tour is \$25. Minnesota Children's Museum study tour participants will meet in the lobby level of the Crowne Plaza Saint Paul-Riverfront Hotel at 10:45 a.m. to walk four short blocks to the museum. Minnesota History Center study tour participants will depart by bus at 10:45 a.m. outside the Crowne Plaza Saint Paul-Riverfront Hotel entrance.

Museum Study Tour: The Early Literacy Thread at Minnesota Children's Museum

A love of reading is one of five focus areas at Minnesota Children's Museum. Tour with Learning Experiences staff members to learn first hand about the museum's philosophy, staff training and initiatives around early literacy. Observe how early literacy is infused in environments, public spaces and programs and hear about models that the museum uses for community partnerships around early literacy.

Museum Study Tour: Engaging Children with History at Minnesota History Center

When the Minnesota History Center (MHC) opened in 1992, it aimed to set the standard for designing history museum programs for all generations. Today, MHC has embarked on a new exhibit program designed specifically for K-12 students. This hands-on study tour will give participants a behind-the-scenes look at a major exhibit effort in the prototype stage. Learn how MHC plans to produce an engaging, active and fun experience for young learners while integrating new technology, onsite and distance educational programming and printed/online state history and social studies curriculum for teachers.

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. ACM MarketPlace Lunch

Enjoy a light lunch buffet and have a blast seeing the latest, greatest products and services that the exhibitors have to offer the children's museum field.

2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Concurrent Salons

● **Nature, Nurture & Play**

Biology and environment influence each other, especially during childhood. Research shows that humans are wired for math, reading, language, even music. From an evolutionary point of view, research suggests that play is a biological necessity. Through play experiences children can develop their innate abilities. However, many educators and caregivers usually wish to organize play for children in some way and not leave it to nature. In this salon, speakers will discuss the benefits of self-directed and structured play, the importance of wild play and the impact that play has on the rate of emotional and social development in children.

● **Salon: To Be Announced**

3:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. ACM MarketPlace Break

Re-fuel with light refreshments in the ACM Marketplace between professional development sessions.

4:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Concurrent Sessions

Play and Taking Risks: Kids' Perspectives ● E/E

All play involves some level of risk. Without challenge, play is simply marking time. What qualifies as acceptable risks for a five-year old when swimming in a pool, selecting a book to read, exploring a creek in the woods or even visiting a children's museum? For good reason, adults usually determine for children which risks are acceptable or not. Join panelists for an exploration of defining risk from a child's perspective.

Strategies for Nature-Based Early Childhood Experiences ● P/E

Did you know that the average child in the U.S. spends an average of 30 minutes per week outdoors in an unstructured activity? While many adults assume outdoor time is just for physical fitness, there are many valuable benefits to being outside. This session will introduce strategies for taking your programs outdoors, give you suggestions for bringing the outdoors in, and let you sample some nature-based activity stations sure to please young kids and their parents.



Evaluation as Investment (Part Two) ● L

Part one scheduled at 10:45 a.m.

Are you prepared to respond to the ever-changing needs of your exhibits and programs? An investment in the skills and know-how of evaluation can help you get there. The purpose of this interactive, double-session is to present examples of exhibit evaluation findings in family learning, and provide attendees with opportunities to practice basic evaluation skills to conduct simple exhibit and environmental studies. Using common scenarios from museum life, attendees will identify and practice strategies to design appropriate evaluation studies, receive a packet of materials with best practices in research as well as valuable resources for further skill development.

Uniting the Children's Museum Brand Around Early Childhood ● M/PR

Children's museums nurture early childhood development, and now it's time to integrate that promise into the children's museum brand. Learn how ACM communication resources can help brand children's museums and highlight their role as early childhood development leaders. See examples of how children's museums use research and ACM resources to enhance their grant proposals, interviews, staff and board trainings, press materials and outreach. Participants and panel will then dialog to request materials that would be of further benefit in communicating the value of children's museums to various audiences.