The data generated by SIG-2 provided a wealth of answers and questions.

- Review of initial study questions
- Participants
- Themes
- Next Steps
Who We Are!

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CHILDREN'S MUSEUM RESEARCH NETWORK

RESEARCH AGENDA: PROJECT GOALS

Identify & synthesize existing research about the learning value of children's museums

Develop a field-wide Research Agenda that guides future research efforts in children's museums
The Work of the Network

Research Network Purpose

To create a sustainable network of children's museums that collaboratively works to generate answers to research agenda questions.

Priority Areas

1. Parent Engagement
2. Learning Frameworks
3. Family Learning

Identification of three priority areas

Exploration of Play and Learning identified as the second Special Interest Group (SIG)
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP - 2

Research questions to guide the exploration of play and learning within Children's Museums:

- How do children's museums (as institutions) conceptualize play?
- How do these museums position their institutions and their work relative to play?
A random, stratified sampling of ACM member institutions generated a sample set of 49 interviewed staff members.

Questions focused on the role of play in the mission of the museum, definitions of play, types of play, indicators of play, relationship between play and learning, measuring play, and the benefits of play.

Results stratified by region, location, budget/size, longevity. A follow-up study was completed 6 months after initial interviews with a subset of 30 individuals.
Themes from SIG-2 Questionnaire

Key Data from the Analysis:

Data show a lack of clear consensus regarding the role of play in institutional missions and experiences in children's museums.

- 57% of respondents indicated that play is stated in the mission statement;
- 31% said play was implied in their mission;
- 71% of respondents see play as a learning process in their Museum.

The relationship between Play and Learning varies from museum to museum, as did the working definition and evaluation of play.

- 41% of those surveyed defined play by explaining it as a process for learning;
- 33% defined play by describing the characteristics of play;
- 29% of interviewees indicated their museum has a definition of "play";
- 20% indicated that their museum measures play.

Participants agreed that at their museums, the benefits of play include social, cognitive, emotional, and physical development.
SIG-2 CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION:

HOW DOES PLAY RELATE TO PRACTICE?

DO MUSEUMS NEED A STANDARD DEFINITION OF PLAY?

COMPARATIVE APPROACHES TO PLAY
Impact of SIG-2: Research to Practice

Defining Play

Building A Shared Vocabulary & Understanding

Institutional Change
Impact of SIG-2: Translating Findings into Action!

Play Observation

Training for Staff, Play Guides and AmeriCorps Members

Mind Lab
Activity: Step In
Play Is… Reflection and Planning Workshop

Play Worksheet
Think - Pair - Share
Round Table Discussion
Note-Taking & Documentation
Next Steps / Action Items

Take Home Play Worksheet
Visit CMRN Website
Review full data from SIG-2
Continue the conversation!
Thank You!