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Preparing for Your Visit to the Learn and Play Space

Preparing for Your Visit Helps Your Child and You

- Plan your visit for a good time of day when your child is rested and has eaten.
- Let children know where you are going and what you'll do. Use specific examples "We are going to the library after the supermarket. We'll check out some books and play in the Learn and Play Space and then we'll come home for lunch."
- Discuss expected behavior with them: using an "indoors" voice, acting in a safe manner, taking care of the library's materials by handling books and toys gently. We encourage small motor activities like drawing, writing, manipulating toys, and building with blocks. Running, jumping, throwing, and shouting are outdoor activities that do not belong in the Learn and Play Space.
- Explain that the library is a place that all people in the community come to visit: "we're sharing the library with everyone else, so we must be considerate of others."

The Role of the Adult

The Learn and Play Space has been set up with adult/child interaction in mind. Adults can greatly increase the value of exploration by staying with children, helping them to find new language for what they are discovering, making observations that lead to critical thinking, and stimulating interest and creativity. Remember, a parent is a child's first and best teacher.

The ages served in the Learn and Play Space are 0-7. A variety of activities are provided. Children can best be directed in play by the people who know their stages of development and needs best - their parents. The Children's Department staffs the Learn and Play Space with paid supervisors and volunteers whenever possible. However, we depend upon you to

insure your child's safety in this environment.

Sharing

Sharing is a learned behavior. You can help your child play with other children and develop socially by suggesting ideas for sharing. This might be accomplished through distributing piles of objects between children evenly, being a timekeeper ("When the big hand is on the three, it's Alex's turn"), or changing an activity when arguments occur repeatedly over the same item.

Discipline

By preparing for your visit and interacting with your child, many behavioral problems can be alleviated. Remind children upon your arrival to the library what you have previously discussed about today's visit. When nearing the end of your visit, remind children that it is almost time to leave.

When problems occur in a public place, it can be difficult to discipline children. If your child has lost control, remain calm and act quickly. Remember that your visit to the library should be a positive experience. Sometimes just removing a child for a few minutes from the bustle of activity can help her regain composure. You may remove your child from the room to a comfy corner and explain why her behavior is unacceptable. Discuss the consequence if the misbehavior should continue, and be prepared to carry it out. Sometimes, the only option left is leaving the library for the day. Again, use specific language to help children understand what is happening. "I told you that if you threw the blocks again we would have to leave. People can be hurt by thrown blocks. We'll try again another day."

For Further Information

Please give us a call at 349-3100, or email us at childref [at] mcpl [dot] info if you have any questions about the Learn and Play Space. We are excited about this unique service and hope you have a good visit at the Monroe County Public Library.

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Updated March 10, 2012

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- [3]

Monroe County Public Library | 303 E. Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington, IN 47408 | (812) 349-3050

Links:

[1] http://mcpl.info/print/printpdf/childrens/preparing-your-visit-learn-and-play-space?quicktabs_search_tabs=1

[2] http://mcpl.info/printmail/printpdf/childrens/preparing-your-visit-learn-and-play-space?quicktabs_search_tabs=1

[3] http://mcpl.info/printpdf/printpdf/childrens/preparing-your-visit-learn-and-play-space?quicktabs_search_tabs=1