



WHAT IS FREE PLAY?

Free play is just that, free from rules, restrictions, and external rewards. It is motivated by curiosity, the desire to explore, and for the simple joy of playing. Free play is also the foundation of our entire museum philosophy. Children are able to play and interact with our exhibits in whatever way their imagination deems fun.

WHY DO WE TAKE THIS APPROACH?

Well, because for littles, free play supports brain development, motor skills, cooperation, emotional regulation, problem solving skills, empathy, concentration, confidence and the list goes on! For adults, play can help to mitigate the effects of depression and anxiety, strengthen emotional bonds, alleviate stress, and enhance mood. Free play is simply amazing for everyone!

HOW CAN I FREE PLAY?

- A) Let your little one direct the story and play along. Take a ride on their imagination and see where the story goes!
- &) Taking your little one to the store? Make it a scavenger hunt instead of a chore!
- @) Have a "Try Not to Laugh" contest. Regardless of who laughs first, you both win!

Take time to put play in your day.

CONTACT US!

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childrensmuseumstockton.org

NEW HOURS!

9am - 4pm
Wednesday-Sunday

Closed
Monday and Tuesday



Name the Toy Soldiers!

OPEN TO ALL AGES!



Do you have a great name for one or all of our toy soldiers? Mail this form or use it as a template to email us your suggestions to SRodrigues@childrensmuseumstockton.org.
Suggestion forms will also be available at the museum.

Red Toy Soldier: _____

Blue Toy Soldier: _____

Yellow Toy Soldier: _____

Name (Optional): _____

Your Age (Optional): _____



Hi!

I am Lila.
I love to play
Hide & Seek.
Find me
somewhere
on this
newsletter.
I could be
anywhere
and any size!



Follow us @ChildrensMuseumStockton on Instagram and Facebook for the latest updates!



SUPPORT PLAY & IMAGINATION!

Scan the QR code below to donate online.



THE POWER OF PLAY TOUR

Join us for a powerful and inspirational hour. Our tours are informational in nature, so please leave your checkbooks at home.

Upcoming Tours: 11am-Noon

JANUARY 13th & 27th FEBRUARY 10th & 24th

To RSVP for a tour, please contact Selina Rodrigues, Development Director, at 209-465-4386.

We ask that all tour attendees be at least 16 years of age.

Have a joke to share for the newsletter?

Send jokes to srodrigues@childrensmuseumstockton.org Subject Line: Jokes

The Children's Museum of Stockton is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Tax ID: 68-0224599

JANUARY 2026 Newsletter



WELCOME, LINH!

We are extremely excited to welcome Linh Vo, Regulatory Supervisor at Valley Strong Credit Union, to our Board of Directors!

We asked Linh to tell you a bit about himself.



As a child, what was your favorite game to play?

I loved Monopoly. It has valuable lessons about earning and saving money.



What makes you feel playful now?

Making my daughters laugh by talking in a 'computer voice' on their way to school.



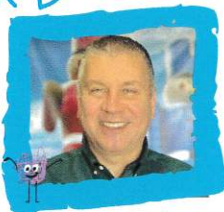
What is your favorite thing about the museum?

The helicopter. All the emergency vehicles, really. They aren't things you get to see close up on a daily basis.



A MESSAGE FROM EDWARD

They say perception is everything. This past year, staff and I truly began to see the museum through a lens of wonder, whimsy, and of course, playfulness. We want to always carry a sense of curiosity and continue asking, 'is it fun for a child'? This has been the spark to so many changes in the museum! Many of these changes have been in recent weeks and I am happy to hear the yells of excitement from children and the positive feedback from their adults for the new exhibits, new activities, and new energy about the museum. We are taking that momentum right into 2026.



If you have not yet been to the museum, or if it has been a few years, I invite you to bring your little ones (and your own inner child, of course) to come and play at the museum. Experience the fun and excitement for yourselves.

Edward Figueroa Executive Director

Ever the playful professional, Edward believes that playfulness and professionalism are not mutually exclusive. One way he brings whimsy to his day is singing LOUDLY while driving into work!

Jokes to Share with Your Littles



WHY DIDN'T THE PONY SING?

Because she was a little horse.



WHY DON'T EGGS TELL JOKES?

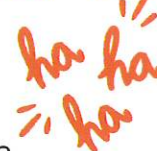
Because they might crack up.

WHY DO HUMMINGBIRDS HUM?

Because they don't know the words!

WHAT KIND OF TREE FITS IN YOUR HAND?

A palm tree!



WELCOME!

YOU'RE

Tank who?

TANK.

Who's there?

KNOCK KNOCK.