



Museums & Gardens



What Works!

*Practical Tips for Getting
Involved in Let's Move!
Museums & Gardens*





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LET'S MOVE! *Museums & Gardens*

Let's Move! is a national initiative to get kids moving and eating healthy food. It aims to support healthy children and families.

Through *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*, museums, zoos, gardens, science and technology centers can join the call to action. With their impressive reach and great potential for impact, museums and gardens can launch community efforts to create a healthier generation using interactive exhibits, outdoor spaces, gardens and programs that encourage families to eat healthy foods and increase physical activity.

This toolkit is a collection of the best practices among museums and gardens that highlight the four key priorities of *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*. It is a resource to provide museums and gardens tips and ideas for supporting healthy and active lifestyles. Each segment highlights at least one priority, based on interviews with professionals at museums and gardens.

Priority One

Eat Healthy, Get Active Exhibits

Goal: Each year, 200 million visits will be made to Let's Move! Museums and Let's Move! Gardens that have committed to offering interactive experiences that promote healthy eating and physical activity.

Ideas for interactive exhibits:

- Create exhibits and spaces where families can be physically active, while learning about the appropriate amount of daily screen time.
- Develop programs or exhibits that help families learn the difference between healthy and unhealthy food choices and the impact those choices can make.
- Cultivate organic food/vegetable gardens, provide assistance for school and community gardens and offer related programs.
- Provide inside and outside spaces and programs that use principles of universal design to create experiences that enable children and adults of all abilities to actively engage in exhibits and programs.
- Create exhibits and/or host forums or discussions for the community considering the local impact of built environment policies and regulations on human health.
- Work with local government to provide space for children's indoor and outdoor recreation.
- Create exhibits, web experiences or apps that utilize technology to encourage physical activity in ways that are fun and interactive.



Edventure

Columbia, South Carolina

Introducing Eddie®, the Star of Health Education

The idea for Eddie®, the World's Largest Child, was introduced by the founders of EdVenture, Katherine Frankstone and Sue Oliver, and CEO and President, Catherine Horne. It all started with a planning retreat in 1998 where the discussion was centered on themes and identifying gaps in opportunities in South Carolina and North Carolina; the resulting missing link was human health.

In conversations about the development of EdVenture, members of the community wanted a world-class museum with exhibits and opportunities that no one else had, which led to the idea for a giant human body structure that children and adults can climb through. This conversation began before the museum was actually constructed. It took three years of construction and four years of fundraising to get EdVenture up and running in 2003. Through creative brainstorming the words *education* and *adventure* were combined to create the name EdVenture. During the master planning for the exhibits, Eddie® was chosen to represent all children.

Making Eddie® Relevant to Children and Adults

Through numerous focus groups of adults and children, the physical appearance of Eddie® was determined. The children were colorblind when it came to his appearance; they were more interested in his clothes, not his skin color, and just wanted Eddie® to look like themselves. The final result includes a background story that truly encompasses all children; Eddie® has an Irish grandparent from whom he received his green eyes, a Latino grandparent, an Asian grandparent, and a Black grandparent.

Constructing Eddie® was a challenge that required computer modeling and different configurations; standing Eddie® would reach 65 feet, whereas at his current seated position he is still a towering 40 feet high. His torso had to be large enough to accommodate the organs and climbing from level to level. In appearance, his back is exposed revealing a spinal column and internal organs, whereas his front is a physical child with clothing, a backpack, and a working watch made from a school clock.

Eddie® is considered a barrier-free exhibit, allowing adults and children of all shapes, sizes, and abilities to interact and get close to the experience; each of the four levels offers a floor and access points for those with accessibility needs. The only part

that offers limited accessibility is the spinal column with twists and turns for climbing. EdVenture is available for nighttime events and facility rentals, including proms, parties, and weddings. Just imagine a bride exiting the intestines in her wedding dress. Surprisingly, adults account for fifty percent of the audience at EdVenture. To help with the traffic flow and safety of experiencing Eddie®, new directional signs were implemented for ups and downs, although, you can always go back the way you came if you want to get out. Given the investment the museum made in Eddie®, the look and the concepts are heavily copyrighted, but that does not mean other museums and gardens cannot learn from Eddie®.

Exhibiting Eddie®

Eddie® began as a signature exhibit, primarily devoted to the exploration of the human body. A health exhibit looking at the human body systems was also opened with Eddie®. Now on exhibit is Body Detectives, opened November 2011, which looks at what it takes to keep the body healthy. The museum offers a full wet lab for teaching science education. In our interview, Horne said it is really the Ying-Yang of programs and exhibits, the process of expansion and alignment. The goals are increasing the museum's value in the community, getting excited about the human body, educating visitors about being healthy and active, engaging over a continual period of time through visitor participation in physical fitness activities, and offering a career development component for middle school and high school visitors focusing on the bio-medical sciences. The Farm to Fork exhibition areas soon will be renovated, including the addition of a nutrition-teaching laboratory for cooking classes for both children and adults. The Green Fork Café recently opened, replacing the former fast food partner, so that visitors now have healthy food choices. EdVenture is encouraging conversations between



adults and children about foods and beverages, really showing reactions to coffee, sodas, and water, and describing how to make healthy choices at the table.

Integrating Museums' Existing Features into *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*

In a study released by the CDC, South Carolina was announced as the eighth obese state in the nation, showing that obesity is an issue in the state. Recognizing this, EdVenture strives to show the community that food and exercise is the responsibility of the citizen, changing the way an active lifestyle is viewed. Points to remember when developing an exhibition like Eddie® is to make health education feel more friendly, to focus on educating about the human body through fun and play, and to make organs less off-putting for small children. EdVenture staff wanted to participate in *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*, given their investment in promoting healthy, active lifestyles. The exhibition centered around Eddie® became the starting point for completing the *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens* priorities and other involvement grew from there, building on new ideas of interest to the museum.

Continuing Improvements

Given the amazing Eddie® exhibition and the other healthy living exhibits, plus the healthy food services, one would think that EdVenture is set, but even a museum with such a large exhibition still has missing components, and for EdVenture, what is missing is a garden. The museum is working to find a place for a garden to provide real, fresh food. Despite this missing link, EdVenture is working to change people's perceptions about museums in the community and working to address the obesity issue in South Carolina.

Based on an interview with Catherine Horne, President and CEO

Stepping Stones Museum for Children

Norwalk, Connecticut

Be Welcoming

Nutrition can be an overwhelming topic for all audiences, children and adults included. In order to make the nutrition exhibition Healthyville® more welcoming, Stepping Stones Museum for Children created fictional characters – Bree, Claudia, Jonathan, Milo, and Lucy – each with their own background story to deliver information about health. The characters bring topics to life, allowing children to relate to their stories. Lucy is 6 years old, adopted from her native country, Vietnam. She tells visitors about the brain and the importance of sleep. The other characters have similar stories and significant traits children can relate to, like Milo who has asthma and Claudia who wears glasses and has allergies. Bree tells visitors about nutrition, Claudia speaks about fitness and posture, Jonathan shows the importance of hygiene, and Milo encourages safety, especially wearing a helmet when riding a bicycle.

Start Small

Installed in 2006, Healthyville was developed from a conversation that began in 2000 coinciding with the museum opening. At that time, they were not developing exhibits internally yet, but working to that ensure ideas and topics were included in the exhibition strategic plans. Based on conversations with community members, health was an important topic and they wanted health exhibits both onsite and in offsite programs. This resulted in a statewide initiative, Healthy Children, Healthy Communities® which includes programming, events, outreach, and exhibitions, including Healthyville. The next phase of the exhibition includes a traveling version of Healthyville, set to launch in 2014. Through conversations with advisors, evaluations and surveys, content will be updated to include the latest messages about health and nutrition. Updated displays will feature the characters more prominently. Currently, the Healthy Children, Healthy Communities initiative also includes a community garden at the museum, which produces vegetables in four raised beds, offering fresh produce for the daily specials in the newly renovated café.



Bringing Food into the Experience

The Healthyville exhibit includes an interactive market area set up for children and adults to learn about different foods and food groups by scanning each food replica for more information. Integrating real food into the exhibit areas is not possible because of licenses, space, and the layout of Stepping Stones Museum for Children; however, the museum has methods for integrating food into the museum experience. A smaller program called Cooking Corner offers food experiences inside the classrooms of the museum, providing information related to exhibition content. The experiences involve demonstrations and hands-on practice and promotes healthier snack options than store-bought prepared foods.

Responses

In our interview, Kuta Dring said that visitors responded really well to the Healthyville exhibitions, offering responses to survey questions like “What did you learn?” and “How will you use the information learned?” Some responses: “promoting conversations with family members about healthy eating and exercise,” “understanding healthy meal preparation,” “trying different methods at home,” and “being relevant and timely.”

Café Renovations

When Stepping Stones Museum for Children first opened, the food services area was limited to a small vending machine space and seats for about ten or fifteen people; gradually the area grew to provide a small café space for prepared meals, though the limited seating remained. In the 2010 expansion of the museum, a near full-sized kitchen was included alongside a larger seating space. With the expansion came the opportunity to prepare meals at the museum through the services provided by an external deli. Finally in spring 2012 the café renovation ended with a café that

addresses the *Let's Move!* Museum priority, offering healthy foods and including produce from the edible garden.

Kuta Dring said it was challenging to get all stakeholders on board with the higher nutrition





standards. Through consultation with advisors and fresh food providers, however, they were able to turn the café into an internally run restaurant complete with a café manager and staff, fully taking over the food service operations and changing the menu. The menu renovation is still in planning stages with a partial menu

currently in place, highlighting healthy pizzas, gluten free chicken fingers, and daily specials featuring fresh produce from the edible gardens. The conversations with the advisors continue, guiding evaluation, planning, and future changes.

Creating an Exhibition

According to Kuta Dring, the keys to creating successful exhibitions are remaining opened minded and flexible. Start by looking at examples in the field, then talking with community members, family members, the board, funders, and health experts, in order to create the most relevant experiences for your audience.

In creating a unique but relevant approach, use community resources, allowing the community to set the direction and the standards. Here is the bottom line: the central topic may remain the same, but the execution by different museums varies greatly, demonstrating the distinctions between different community needs, wants, and desires.

Based on an interview with Kimberly Kuta Dring, Direction of Research and Evaluation



Marbles Kids Museum

Raleigh, NC

Be Active, Be Healthy

Since opening almost five years ago, Marbles Kids Museum has provided children, families, and visitors with Be Healthy, Be Active exhibits. These exhibits provide far more than a physical activity or lecture, at Marbles Kids Museum, the Be Healthy, Be Active exhibits provide play environments that promote physical activity and healthy choices.

Become an Olympian

In 2008, the Marbles Olympics began offering visitors the opportunity to become their own Olympic hero. The Marbles Olympics returned this year to celebrate the 2012 London Olympic Games with pool noodle fencing, scooter rowing, and paper boat sailing! The original event was such a hit that

the museum decided to update other museum exhibits, leading eventually to a third incarnation of Power2Play.

Bigger and Better Exhibits

Updated six months ago, Power2Play has seven different sections promoting physical activity and healthy choices for children and families. There are areas for younger children and older children to take part in physical activities and healthy eating activities, plus activities to take home and continue the healthy living outside the museum.

Center Ice requires just a pair of socks to participate; it is an ice hockey rink without the ice, set up so children can skate, pass, and take a shot at making a goal in the hockey rink. The rink is made from a smooth plastic floor, covering a huge room in the museum which allows numerous visitors to take advantage of this exhibit all at once.

The opportunities do not stop at the ice rink, they continue with a dance studio called Tumble'n Twirl; a children's gym, Fitness Fun with rings, jump ropes, and balancing equipment; and Center Court, a basketball court with a supersized basketball net for extra practice. Kids aren't limited to indoor fitness options. Corner Kick offers a grassy green patch for practicing dribbling, juggling, kicking, passing, and scoring.

Little kids have their own areas too. Little Leaguers offers a safe play zone for

children less than 3 years of age to play ball. The Healthy Kitchen has become a favorite spot for little ones to play with pretend food and create healthy meals for parents, grandparents, and other family members. All of these great activities provide a fun-filled day for visitors and the “Play at HOME the Marbles Way” section of the newsletter website offers tips and tricks for extending the fun at home.

Getting Active at Home

Almost any of these exhibits can be recreated in a museum or at home, just on a smaller scale. Take the Olympic Games and turn it into a backyard contest between family members; turn your bathtub into your own miniature lake and have a paper boat sailing competition in the bathroom. To have your very own basketball net, a laundry basket transforms into an oversized ring, perfect for practicing hoops.

Based on an interview with Christa Dreese, Funstigator

Priority Two

Learning about Healthy Choices through Afterschool, Summer, and Other Programs

Goal: Each year, 20 million participants will engage in programming that includes healthy food choices and physical activity with emphasis on afterschool, summer, and school-based programs.

Ideas for programs:

- Develop programs or exhibits that help families learn the difference between healthy and unhealthy food choices and the impact those choices can make.
- Provide professional development opportunities for teachers on nutrition (may or may not be integrated with gardening).
- Offer nutritious snacks and promote good nutrition at home.
- Offer and promote healthy foods; provide only healthy foods in classes, programs or camps.
- Offer programs for children and families on how to grow, harvest and cook healthy, organic food.
- Provide outreach programming to schools that trains faculty in fun ways to offer recess that promote physical activity and social skill development.
- Serve as community partners providing afterschool programs that offer and enhance physical activity.
- Create exhibits and/or host forums or discussions for the community considering the local impact of built environment policies and regulations on human health.
- Build safe and accessible parks and playgrounds on museum/garden grounds and off-site, in other locations.
- Provide outdoor opportunities for children to enjoy recreation activities, including walking, hiking and free play on or off museum/garden grounds.

Children's Museum of Manhattan

New York, NY

EatSleepPlay™

EatSleepPlay™ is more than an exhibit at the Children's Museum of Manhattan (CMOM); it is also a community outreach program, an early childhood curriculum program and a professional development program. Created in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the program has grown from a test pilot program to a successful initiative that can be applied across the nation in museums, libraries, and child development centers. As of February 2013, the curriculum entitled *EatPlayGrow™* has been approved by the NIH and Center for Disease Control (CDC) and is in final editing and approvals. Once complete, it will become the first early childhood curriculum of its kind, demonstrating how art and literacy can be used to learn about healthy living. The curriculum will also be the first to make the important link between lack of sleep and obesity.

Testing and Evaluating *EatSleepPlay™*

EatSleepPlay™ began as a 3-year test to integrate arts and literacy with healthy living in the South Bronx at the East Side House Settlement (ESHS) and in New Orleans at the Royal Castle Child Development Center in partnership with Louisiana Children's Museum. The key to success in the pilot programs was engaging community leadership in implementation. In order to change the wellness policies at the centers, including drinking more water and eating more whole grains, everyone at the facility needed to be trained. The staff was trained to make changes inside the centers, and parents were motivated to carry out the same changes inside their homes. CMOM understood that to make a successful change in the children's lives, parents had to be included in the decisions and commit to the changes as well. In order to fully convince parents of the benefits, the staff was trained to reach out to parents through workshops and demonstrations, to offer healthy catering for meetings and to display visuals in the classrooms and open spaces for reinforcement.

Collaboration was key to fully executing the pilot programs. The Children's Museum of Manhattan's nurses, graduate school programs, and an advisory board from the Department of Health and the Department of Education expand the reach and value of the programs. By reaching out to the health professionals, they were able to provide science-based nutrition education, leading to improved credibility for the program



EatSleepPlay™, the Exhibit

The Children’s Museum of Manhattan brings *EatSleepPlay™* to life inside the museum with a healthy living, interactive exhibition. The activities and information promote healthy lifestyles and new facts based on medical and behavioral research.

Children can learn the results of healthy and unhealthy choices on the body through the Decision Center and follow nutrients through the body and the digestive system through a section called Consequences. Visitors can also help pump a giant heart in this area. The Sleep Center was created to aid in understanding that sleep is a necessity for good health and disease prevention. Kids can get active at the Play Center by pedaling bicycles, dancing, running around, and jumping together. Nutrition information is also an important part of a healthy lifestyle, so the NYC Green Cart offers the opportunity to explore the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables. Super Sprowtz™ helps visitors explore the NYC Green Cart area; they are a team of super-powered vegetable heroes who talk to children about healthy foods.

Replication Tips, Using the Curriculum

Moving forward, the museum is building practices that can be sustainable across the country through a curriculum that will eventually be shared online through the We Can!, the Association of Children’s Museums, public libraries and Head Start centers. The online resources will include a training resource page with information about partnership development, professional development training workshops, and an area for suggestions for improvement. Additionally, components of the exhibition will be available for purchase to facilitate creation of interactive exhibits that combat obesity in other locations. Overall, the recommendation for successful implementation of such an initiative is community involvement and strong partnerships.

Based on an interview with Leslie Bushara, Deputy Director for Education and Guest Services

Old World Wisconsin

Eagle, Wisconsin

Turning a Negative into a Positive

Old World Wisconsin took a negative comment about the size of the outdoor facility and turned it into an opportunity, a chance for visitors to gain health benefits from walking across more than 500 acres of land. Participating in *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens* provided the Wisconsin Historical Society with an opportunity to connect the idea of walking around the space with health benefits and physical activity and provided additional channels to relay this message to the public.

Participating in *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*

Old World Wisconsin's emphasis on hands-on experiences made it an easy decision to participate in *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*, without the need to add new programming. The museum highlighted programs that aligned with *Let's Move!* priorities, reinforcing the message that you could get active while having fun. When visiting Old World Wisconsin, visitors talk about and engage in activities from 19th Century Wisconsin, including baseball, tug-o-war, and old-fashioned farm chores. During "Life on the Farm," participants receive a character card, identifying with a child or adult, male or female, and following their life as it would have been on the farm during history. On the back side of the card, a QR code is provided with access to more information about the character, providing further history to help get into character and learn more about the 19th century.

"Rousing with the Roosters" is a true life on the farm experience, according to museum director Dan Freas; immersing visitors in the farm life of the 19th century, beginning with early morning chores that start before the onsite museum opens. It is not all work and no play though; visitors participate in games and prepare a morning breakfast with the activities, served hot and fresh. Most of the produce used in the activities is grown on the farm and any extra vegetables are canned and preserved for winter months, just like in the 19th Century, whereas the meat used on the farm is brought in from a modern source. The gardens offer large raised beds for growing heirloom vegetables, cultivated by the staff and volunteers.

The *Let's Move!* logo is promoted on the visitor's map, generating conversations about the initiative and Old World Wisconsin's involvement in *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*. The end result is an appreciation from parents as they understand the importance of keeping their families physically active. Additionally, by encouraging



movement and hands-on participation at the site, the experience is elevated, creating a memorable way to learn history through play, rather than through studying or a run-through tour. For those not able or not interested in participating through walking around the grounds, a tram is available for transportation to and from different sections of the grounds. The museum is planning to expand its focus on environmental history through the use of trails and wooded settings, thus maintaining a strong commitment to getting visitors active and moving.

Based on an interview with Dan Freas, Museum Director

Mississippi Children's Museum

Jackson, Mississippi

Committing to Healthy Living

At Mississippi Children's Museum, the activities and programs are not just limited to children; teachers, adults, and caregivers can visit, learn, and have fun too. The museum opened in December 2010 and is located in a state park. From the very beginning, the board and developers made a commitment to healthy eating, physical activity, and overall healthy lifestyles. In developing the museum's exhibits, the programming staff felt the museum could be a great platform for teaching children about the dangers of unhealthy living, given that this is a known problem in the state of Mississippi. The entire building is designed so children can move; in addition to the Healthy Fun Gallery, each gallery and exhibition area provides opportunities for movement.

The Healthy Fun Gallery

The Healthy Fun Gallery provides visitors with the tools for an active lifestyle and the knowledge for making healthy choices. The gallery includes six different sections devoted to making healthy choices for eating and exercising and seeing how each choice affects the body.

1. Boney You is designed to teach children and caregivers about the importance of skeletal health and how bones help with physical activity.
2. Given that Mississippi is an agricultural state, the Farmer's Market section helps children understand about their families' and neighbors' livelihoods and learn about nutrition benefits found in fresh fruits and vegetables.
3. About six months prior to the USDA's implementation of MyPlate, Mississippi Children's Museum's introduced Healthy Helpings, instructing visitors on portion control through puzzle pieces in the shape of a plate. The portion that is too big won't fit in the puzzle, visually demonstrating the recommended amounts of nutrition in a meal.
4. Little Cook's Corner is an area for children to play in the kitchen, demonstrating the uses of appliances and kitchen tools in a safe setting.
5. The Gastro Climber is the museum's most popular exhibit, according to Blanchard and McDonald, teaching children and parents about what happens to food after you eat it. The space includes a climbing structure complete with sounds and videos of digestion.

6. The last section of the gallery is Home Par Course, which gives visitors tools to take home after a visit. Recognizing that many of the visitors to the museum do not have access to gyms or physical education classes, this exhibition was developed to teach children and adults how the home can become a family gym and activity center.

The Healthy Fun Gallery is also the central focus of many class field trips to the museum. Prior to climbing in the Gastro Climber, students receive demonstrations on the journey of digestion, furthering their knowledge on muscle movements and body functions related to digestion. They can also participate in a scavenger hunt around the gallery, learning about nutrition and healthy lifestyles through questions and answers in the exhibition areas.

Afterschool Programming

At the end of the school day, students and families can visit the museum for a new program called Afterschool Zumba, developed by the programs associate. The idea came from the success and excitement of the dance studio in the museum, where families get moving. The programs associate decided it was a great idea to learn how to teach Zumba through a certification process. The museum staff acted as her first students, offering critiques and suggestions for implementing the teaching methods in

the new afterschool program. After the success of the pilot program, staff interest led to a continuation of that program as well.

Workshops for Teachers

In order to promote the incorporation of science and health into the classroom, Mississippi Children's Museum's began offering workshops for teachers devoted to healthy fun for grades K through 6. After extensive



research on inquiry-based learning, Blanchard and McDonald found a model for the program and began to incorporate exhibitions and galleries with literacy, arts, and the state of Mississippi as supplemental subjects. Teachers participating in the workshop receive continuing education credits, which are required for license renewal in the state. This past summer, the workshops were offered in late July, right before teachers went back to school. This allowed the teachers to incorporate new ideas into curriculum preparation and experience the museum for themselves, previewing what the museum would offer for their students. Given the success of this past year, the museum expects to continue the workshops and expand on the curriculum based on responses from teachers and students as to what they are looking for in a visit to the museum.

Healthy Food and Recipes

The healthy lifestyle suggestions do not stop with the exhibitions, they continue into the Red Rocket Café and Fueled for Adventure. The Red Rocket Café was made possible by the contributions of donors. Viking became an early naming donor for the café and supplied the primary kitchen equipment. US Foods also was a main contributor, bringing the kitchen to fully functioning status and acting as the food supplier. US Foods also committed to the healthy lifestyle goals by offering no fried foods and no sodas, offering whole wheat, whole grain, and nut free options as often as possible, and promoting healthy snacks. The no-soda option is being well-received by the parents and families who can now choose water, milk, orange juice, or flavored waters. People rarely question the beverage choices, and can see the connection between healthy choices and the museum's café offerings.

Fueled for Adventure provides children and adults with hands-on culinary experiences at the museum, teaching about healthy snacks. The teaching chefs rotate between the café manager and children who submit healthy snack recipes to become chef of the day. Alongside the cooking experience, nutrition information and dietary standards are provided with each recipe, furthering the healthy experience. The museum works with sponsor St. Dominic Health Services to ensure that nutrition information is correct.

Introducing Healthy Foods

In integrating healthy foods into the museum experience, the museum recommends getting children involved in the food preparation by choosing the recipe together, preparing the foods together, and learning about the benefits of what you just ate. The Mississippi Children's Museum's activities can be implemented at a smaller scale. Small exchanges like removing soda from the beverage selections, or substituting fruit for cookies, can make large improvements towards a healthy lifestyle.

Based on interviews with Alicen Blanchard, Director of Education, and Chavanne McDonald, Director of Programs

Priority Three

Healthy Food Service

Goal: Each year, 90% of Let's Move! Museums and Let's Move! Gardens that offer food service will already offer or will change their menu to offer food options that reflect healthy choices.

Ideas for food service:

- Offer and promote healthy choices for all ages.
- Cultivate organic food/vegetable gardens, provide assistance for school and community gardens and offer related programs.
- Provide space for local farmers to sell fruits and vegetables. Museums and gardens connect families to farmers through programs.
- Offer and promote healthy foods; provide only healthy foods in classes, programs or camps.
- Encourage food service providers to develop healthy choices that are appealing to children and young people.

The Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum

St. Louis, Missouri

Meeting Visitors Desires with a Café

When the Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum, first opened it did not include a café or eating space, limiting visitors' food options to outside restaurants, which primarily consisted of fast food chains in the vicinity of the museum. A café was opened in 2008, so families could have a space to enjoy fresh, healthy foods. Food service modeled what a healthy lunch would look like. The menu focuses on healthier options such as sandwiches, soups, and salads, whole grains and fresh vegetables, plus fruits and yogurt for desserts. No fried foods are offered. Inspiration was taken from the Association of Children's Museums' initiative, Good to Grow!, which promotes health and wellness in children's museums and their communities.

Implementing a Healthy Food Mission

The café is part of the museum's healthy food mission. In order to make the restaurant green, a rooftop garden was installed, resulting in fresh vegetables for café ingredients. A young chef was hired to run the café, who supported the mission above and beyond the expected green values; this past year, the tomatoes grew to about 6 feet tall, promising delicious dishes, including a July special of BLT sandwiches. The crops shifted to lettuce when the seasons changed, and in the winter other suppliers will supplement the crops. Throughout the year, local suppliers provide preservative-free foods for the museum's café and bread products are provided by a local bakery, just a few blocks away. Not only does the food in the café promote healthy eating, it also demonstrates the importance of using local growers, producers, and food suppliers.

Making the Menu Kid Friendly

Kids are often perceived as picky eaters, only wanting chicken nuggets or fried foods; however, in implementing the healthy food mission, the museum found that when the unhealthy option is removed, there are still choices that most children will enjoy, including a half slice of soy and jelly sandwiches or turkey sandwiches with an apple on the side or yogurt. The argument and decision between unhealthy and healthy is not an option with an all-healthy menu.

Fitness Challenges

On the first Friday of every month, the Magic House offers Fitness Fridays, an event devoted to fitness, healthy living, and fun. Coinciding with Fitness Fridays is the Fitness Challenge, which offers free admission to participating children that from 4 to 8 P.M. Past challenges have included summer safety, creating first aid kits, sports safety, and exercising at home. In September, the challenge brought in the local football team, the St. Louis Rams. One of the team members came as a special visitor to kick off the opening of the new Rams Training Center exhibit at the museum. These fitness activities are not just limited to sports, because the museum staff understands that sports aren't for all kids, so past Fitness Fridays have included a local YMCA demonstration on ZUMBA! and outdoor demonstrations for kayaking and water safety.

The main obstacle that comes with the Fitness Fridays is that most of the visitors are already committed to healthy living and exercise. In order to broaden the reach for the event, museum President Beth Fitzgerald said they decided to change the name to Fitness Fun Fridays, hoping to draw in more participants that haven't already made the commitment to healthy living and fitness, offering new ideas and options for those families.

Advancing towards Success

By committing to healthy food service, Fitzgerald recommends drawing a line in the sand and make the decision to not offer the unhealthy foods like chicken nuggets. The organization must take the stand against the unhealthy options and commit through a healthy food mission. The Magic House has furthered its commitment to going green through a recycling program with Blue Skies, so everything used inside the Picnic Basket Café is compostable. This past year, the Magic House was named a four-star restaurant by the Green Dining Alliance for fully embracing sustainable practices and being a community leader for healthy food services. sustainable practices and leading as an example in the community for healthy food services and being environmentally friendly.

Based on an interview with Beth Fitzgerald, President



Priority Four

Learning about Healthy Food Choices and Physical Activity Using Food Service Operation

Goal: Each year 90% of Let's Move! Museums and Let's Move! Gardens that offer food service will incorporate interpretation about healthy food choices.

Ideas for learning:

- Create exhibits that help families learn the difference between advertising for healthy and unhealthy food.
- Develop programs or exhibits that help families learn the difference between healthy and unhealthy choices and the impact those choices can make.

Atlanta Botanical Garden

Atlanta, Georgia

Bringing Fresh Foods to the Garden

The Edible Garden opened in May 2010 at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. Now in the area of an old parking lot, the site was chosen for the amount of sunlight that reaches the area. They also opened an outdoor kitchen, complete with food preparation tools, a giant countertop for up-close interaction during demonstrations, and a slanted mirror so food preparation can be viewed by participants.

The Edible Garden was not the only change made to the Garden during the renovations; MetroFresh in the Garden, a new onsite restaurant, was also integrated into the changes. MetroFresh offers many salad options that feature the seasonal fruits and vegetables grown in the garden throughout the year, and fully promotes healthy food services in the garden.

Healthy Food Service Programming

The amount of healthy food programming available at Atlanta Botanical Garden is astonishing. Programs include weekend cooking demonstrations where the chef prepares and discusses seasonal and garden harvest recipes, Cocktails in the Garden on Thursday nights, where participants can connect with garden foods in a social setting, and yoga or Tai Chi in the garden, promoting fitness outside.

The Well-Seasoned Chef Series lets participants learn from local chefs from high-end restaurants during a four-course meal preparation with a side of wine. Not only does this class offer tasty signature dishes while learning the behind-the-scenes preparation, but the chefs gain local recognition for themselves and their restaurant. The Fresh Plates is a similar program. Chefs from favorite neighborhood restaurants, cook healthy recipes using ingredients from the Edible Garden. Most of the chefs are donating their time, as they are interested in local eating and promoting the use of fresh, healthy foods.

At Cocktails in the Garden, visitors mix and mingle with others, take in the scenery of the garden, explore the Edible Garden, or watch surprise cultural performances from local arts organizations. Past performances featured the Atlanta Ballet and Atlanta Opera. In the Edible Garden, the garden chef demonstrates ideas for using the fresh produce in new, tantalizing recipes that would satisfy both one's hunger and need for healthy foods.

Staff integrated physical fitness into the healthy programming with classes in Tai



Chi and Yoga. For rainy days or cold weather, there is an indoor space available. The garden environment provides a beautiful and relaxing space for practicing both art forms.

Cooking Summer Camp

Children are not left out of the healthy food programs at Atlanta Botanical Garden; kids aged 4 through 10 can join the cooking summer camp. Here, they learn about harvesting vegetables and fruits, fresh food preparation, and of course, taste the end products. This past summer, a new recipe was an apple and fennel salad. Many of the children had never seen fennel before, let alone tasted it, and got excited about the new food. At the end of the camp, recipes are given to families so they can try the new foods together. Parents are often astonished with the change in their children, with some asking for salads for lunch, when in the past vegetables and fruits never even made it on the fork.

Joining *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*

There was no doubt in School Programs and Outreach Manager Kathryn Masuda's mind about participating in *Let's Move! Museums & Gardens*. She said it is a wonderful movement in the U.S. and it lets the garden link ideas with what's happening accross the country. In the future, Masuda hopes that it will bring more opportunities for institutions to collaborate, furthering the vision of promoting healthy lifestyles.

Overall, Atlanta Botanical Garden tries to sprinkle the idea about healthy food across the board in programming, visits, and events. It is an engaging place for visitors, giving them the chance to be outside, enjoy the scenery, and learn something new. The Edible Garden also works to benefit the community. The food is used for classes and demonstrations at the garden. Any additional food is donated to Atlanta Community Food Bank, which provides services for the hungry.

Based on an interview with Kathryn Masuda, School Programs and Outreach Manager

Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose

San Jose, California

Making a Commitment to Healthy Living

The Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose focuses on healthy eating through exhibitions and food services, demonstrating a strong commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles for adults and children alike. Partnering with the Center for Disease Control initiative, Rethink Your Drink, the museum took on the role of educating visitors and the community about sugary drinks and the importance of increasing water consumption; not only did they display this message, they also incorporated it into the exhibitions and the café. With the support of Kaiser Permanente, three areas were transformed inside the museum, promoting healthy food choices; the Kids' Café Menu, the Rainbow Market exhibit, and the Jumpstart Initiative. Each of these areas provides strong examples of promoting healthy food choices in daily life. The organization has made an effort to make each experience visually similar, so visitors are more likely to make the connection that each element combines together to include all elements of a healthy lifestyle.

Kids' Café and Kids' Garden

The Rainbow Garden is named from the wide selection of vegetables grown and harvested in the raised beds. The area offers a space for fresh vegetables of all colors, teaching children to look at the colors of foods and encouraging them to eat a rainbow every day. The Rainbow Garden provides fresh foods to the café for healthy meals. In the future, the museum hopes to strengthen connections between the café and the garden, furthering its efforts to educate visitors about healthy foods through their food service.

The Rainbow Pizza and Market

The colorful rainbow does not stop at the café or the garden, it continues inside the museum to the exhibition space. Prior to featuring the Rainbow Market, the space was used for a pizza exhibit, where children could experience making a pizza starting with rolling the dough, a space visitors loved. With the transformation towards a healthy museum, the area was converted into the Rainbow Pizza and Market, where visitors can gather fruits and vegetables to create some very humorous pizzas, like the "Sunshine Pizza" with pineapples and peppers. Other sections of the market provide a space for learning farm-to-fork practices, sorting vegetables and weighing them; a



kitchen prep area where kids create smoothies, often times from vegetables like broccoli; and a composting bin used to educate children about healthy, environmentally-friendly practices.

One of the challenges in changing the area to include healthier foods

is the availability of props for the pizzas. The supply of fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods is limited quite often to whole or half foods rather than slices or leaves, so a pizza may include a half head of cabbage as a topping because there are no cabbage leaves. New props are being added as budget allows.

Jumpstart Initiative

Embracing the ideas of healthy eating and food-to-fork as an institutional practice, the museum has been researching other business models that will allow for healthy food practices while being sustainable and breaking even. Revitalizing the cafe and its offerings is complicated by the fact that it is operated by an external source, Hope Services, an organization that provides jobs and training for persons with developmental disabilities.

New Exhibitions

Still in conceptualization stage, a new exhibition, Kids in Motion, may eventually become the most popular area for visitors with its placement in the busiest area of the museum at the crossroads of all exhibitions. Brainstorming sessions have revealed an idea for the open, tall ceiling space to be transformed into a physical activity exhibition, where visitors can participate in exercises to activate the ceiling area above, possibly through stationary bikes that light up bulbs on the ceiling when pedaled or a hanging climbing structure that allows visitors to go to great heights. The end result of this space transformation is unknown, but it is sure to promote physical activity for visitors.

Connecting with the Community

The Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose is located in a culturally diverse community, offering plentiful opportunities to promote festivals and holiday celebrations. Each event has an advisory committee that guides the planning stages and development, adding suggestions for activities or exhibitions from their own lives. These events provide an opportunity for the museum to share a healthy living message with the participants through food samples from many cultures. The majority of the food samples are donated by community members or a local store. In the future, the museum wants to tie in the celebrations and events into the café menu, featuring a culturally diverse cuisine on the day of the celebrations, continuing the message of healthy culturally relevant foods into food service operations.

Based on an interview with Patricia Narciso, Director of Development and Marketing

