

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF SONOMA COUNTY

# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



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Dear valued volunteers of the Children's Museum of Sonoma County,

I am honored to welcome you to our organization, where we strive to inspire curiosity and creativity in children of all ages. As the CEO and Founder, I am incredibly grateful for your dedication and willingness to donate your time and energy to support our mission.

Our Museum is a place where children can explore, learn, and discover in a safe and nurturing environment. With your help, we can continue to offer engaging exhibits, educational programs, and hands-on activities that foster a love of learning and a passion for discovery.

As a volunteer, you play an essential role in the success of our Museum. Whether you are greeting guests at the front desk, leading a workshop, or helping to maintain the facility, your contributions make a difference.

We are committed to providing you with a meaningful and fulfilling volunteer experience. Our team is here to support you and ensure that you have the tools, resources, and training you need to succeed. Thank you again for your generosity and dedication to the Children's Museum of Sonoma County. Together, we can make a positive impact on the lives of the children and families in our community.

Sincerely,

Collette Michaud

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Children's Museum of Sonoma County inspires curiosity and creativity through joyful, transformative experiences.

## WHO WE SERVE

The Children's Museum of Sonoma County serves families from all around the Bay Area.

Our experiences are designed for children ages 0-10 years of age, but many older children enjoy the Museum and our special events.

The Museum welcomes 200,000 visitors a year.



## The Volunteer Program

#### **Volunteer Mission Statement & Vision**

Children's Museum of Sonoma County needs our community's help to provide formative experiences to our community's children. Volunteers donate their time, hard work, and fun to support this vital service.

#### **Volunteer Program Goals**

The Volunteer Program exists to help community members support the Museum in serving all families in the North Bay. We prioritize helping volunteers achieve their own goals through volunteering. Volunteers gain pride, purposeful work, community, work experience, and our gratitude and respect.

Volunteers should bring into their work the spirit of safe, inclusive, and engaging <u>play</u> that is at the center of all Museum programs. Museum Staff and Volunteers work hard at making sure our <u>teamwork</u> is fun and our <u>communication</u> is open and effective.

The Museum has the responsibility to make sure we serve the diverse public, including with diverse volunteer opportunities. All volunteers bring their unique skills, interests, backgrounds, and connections to the Museum, and the value of that resource is enormous.

#### **Volunteer Classifications**

CMOSC is always finding new ways that volunteers can help. The active opportunities at any time are listed on <u>MyImpactpage.com</u>, our online volunteer portal. Listed are a few examples:



Play Docents are central to the function of the museum. They work among the exhibits and the kids, collaborating with our playologists to keep everything safe and fun. Possible tasks include straightening and cleaning everything visitors touch, encouraging safe creative play, and generally helping our visitors feel happy and welcome. Reporting to our Visitor Services Specialists, these volunteers move among the public and interact with a lot of children and their retinues.



<u>Painting Volunteers</u> keep the Museum looking great by painting both interior and exterior walls, as well as exhibits. Reporting to the Director of Facilities and Exhibit Production, Painting Volunteers should have enough experience painting to consistently achieve attractive durable results.



<u>Docents-on-the-Go</u> help the Museum's Outreach Coordinator represent the Children's Museum at community events and help kids at those events have fun and learn through mobile exhibits and activities. Docents on the Go must be outgoing, enjoy kids of all ages, and be able to lift 50 pounds. A background in education or experience public speaking is helpful but not required.



Art Popup Docents run art activities that visitors will encounter as they move around the Museum. Working with the Programming Manager and Art Studio Specialist, these docents surprise visitors with an art project they can interact with briefly or dive into. Docents must be comfortable guiding kids of all ages, ready to instigate creation, able to think on their feet, and a masterful manager of messes.



Event Activity Volunteers make our parties fun and exciting. Running games, being characters, leading art, Event Activity Volunteers must be excited to interact with the public. Some (but not all) activities require the ability to bend, lift, etc. so please let the Volunteer Coordinator know if these are challenging.



<u>Volunteer Groups</u> of 5-30 that assemble for one-time, weekly, monthly or annual facilities or programming projects. Groups may also serve as extra help at special.

## Volunteer Policies and Procedures

#### **Volunteer Application and Scheduling**

Children's Museum of Sonoma
County uses an online
volunteer management
system. Our volunteer
application is here
https://bttr.im/c2jxj



This application includes a waiver and background check authorization. All recurring volunteers (those not just coming once as part of an outside group) over 18 years old working at the Museum must pass a background check prior to volunteering. Volunteers 14-17 years old require a parent or guardian signing off in person before they begin volunteering.

The Museum uses an online volunteer management system called Better Impact. Volunteers can sign up for shifts, see schedules, and much more via myimpactpage.com or the My Impact smartphone app. Volunteers will be assisted as needed in using this system.

Using this system, volunteer will generally not need to log in or log out. Once you sign up for a shift, your hours will be recorded automatically. Staff will confirm as needed that volunteers attended scheduled shifts.

#### **Volunteer Training**

All volunteers are provided with training. While many volunteers come in with extensive skills, each volunteer has an assigned staff supervisor who will familiarize them with the Museum, its policies, and procedures and equipment relevant to their work. In some cases experienced volunteers may participate in training new volunteers.

#### **Volunteers agree to:**

- Sign a release of liability form, media release, and handbook acknowledgement form.
- Abide by Museum policies and procedures set forth in the volunteer guide.
- Wear a designated apron and badge while volunteering.
- Report promptly for scheduled events or shifts in your service areas.
- Make every effort to notify the team if unable to work your assignment.
- Notify the Volunteer Coordinator, in writing, of any change in contact information.



#### Volunteers will receive:

- A volunteer nametag and apron.
- An orientation session.
- The training and support materials needed for designated service area(s).
- Opportunities to develop new skills, make new friends, and learn about childhood development/engagement and the local community.
- Membership and Museum discounts in some cases (see below).

#### **Volunteer Recognition:**

Museum Staff appreciate and offer recognition to every volunteer every day. But we also acknowledge volunteers with gifts from the Museum at the end of each calendar year, depending upon the number of hours each volunteer donates during that year.

Achievement:	Incentive/Recognition:				
	Free CMOSC T-Shirt	Free Admission for 2 Cards (Fun Passes)	10% Off Retail*	25% Off Membership	Free four- person Membership**
25 service hours	1	2			
50 service hours	1	4	Unlimited		
100 service hours	1	8	Unlimited	1	
200 service hours	2	8	Unlimited	2	1

Hours are calculated at the beginning of each calendar year for the previous 12 months. \*Volunteers may use this discount continuously throughout the following year as long as their volunteer status stays active. \*\*You deserve it!

#### **Communicating with Museum Staff**

Volunteers are encouraged to develop positive working relationships with all the Museum team while being mindful of their daily responsibilities and time limitations. Each volunteer will have a staff supervisor depending upon the activity they are engaged in, but can also contact the Volunteer Coordinator at any time via volunteers@CMOSC.org.

During breaks volunteers are encouraged to visit the break room near the Museum's front desk. There they will find free snacks, but also are likely to encounter other volunteers and staff members on break. Respectful and friendly interactions among volunteers and staff help keep the Museum fun and on track.

#### **Background Screenings**

As part of the effort to provide a safe environment for children, the Children's Museum requires criminal background checks (investigative consumer reports) on all volunteers who serve in positions that may allow for unsupervised time with children or to whom responsibilities have been entrusted that may allow for unsupervised time with children. The Children's Museum complies with the Fair Credit and Reporting Act and all related regulations under California law.

#### **Attendance**

The Museum depends on you to honor your commitment. Upon your arrival, check in with your staff supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator. You are late if you arrive after the designated start time for your scheduled assignment. Attendance, late arrival and early departure will be tracked by the Volunteers Coordinator. Excessive absences, late arrivals and/or early departures will result in dismissal from the CMOSC Volunteer Program. Two absences without communication to the Volunteer Coordinator will result in immediate dismissal.

#### **Cell Phone Policy**

While it can be beneficial to carry a cell phone for safety reasons, cell phone use should not interfere with volunteer duties. Volunteers are discouraged from making personal calls while in the public areas of the Museum. Please make personal calls during volunteer breaks or lunch periods in a private area.

#### **Dress Code**

Volunteers should wear an apron and name badge to identify themselves at all times. The Museum will provide these items. Clothing should be comfortable, neat, clean and tasteful. Shoes will be closetoed. Remember you will be moving around outside and inside, including bending over and walking around.

Please avoid clothing that can create a safety hazard (ripped, hanging pieces, large accessories etc.), political, religious or otherwise controversial symbols or messages on clothing, inappropriate designs or offensive language, loungewear, sleepwear, sweatpants, or athletic tights, revealing clothing - low-cut tops, short skirts or shorts (more than 5 inches above the knee) and midriff revealing t-shirts etc.

Volunteers interacting with the public are encouraged, at their discretion, to wear big colorful fun and fabulous hats.

#### **Concerns or Complaints**

You can expect to be treated with respect and gratitude. If you have a concern or complaint, you are encouraged to discuss your concerns with the Volunteers Coordinator. It would be ideal to present these concerns or complaints in writing.

#### <u>Volunteer Departure</u>

If a volunteer needs to end their regular service for a short period of time or indefinitely, they should notify the Volunteer Coordinator via email or in writing. Ideally, we would appreciate receiving one-two weeks notice prior to any departure. Upon exiting our volunteer program, you will be asked to complete a short "Exit Survey". The information you provide will help us improve our program moving forward.

## What to do in Case of an Emergency

In the event of an emergency, alert a team member either in person or via radio immediately. They will see to it that response to the emergency is both efficient and appropriate. The team will alert proper personnel and emergency services.

#### **Lost Children**

If you find a lost child, encounter someone looking for a child; please report this to a team member either in person or via radio immediately as a "Match Making Opportunity."

Stay with the individual or family until a team member arrives. When waiting for the team, please collect and communicate the following information about the missing child:

- Name
- Age
- Hair color
- Description of clothing
- Where they were last seen

#### **Found Children**

If you find a child, please report this to a team member either in person or via radio immediately. Stay with the child until the team arrives.



#### **Minor First Aid**

If you come upon someone in need of a band-aid, you may access a the necessary supplies in the first aid kits throughout the Museum. Team members should not administer first aid; parents should do this. If the injury requires anything more than a band-aid or is a result of an accident that has just occurred, a team member must be contacted so an incident report may be completed.

## Things to Not Do

- Make false statements to a supervisor or other team members.
- Take unauthorized possession of property belonging to the museum, another volunteer, team member, or guests.
- Engage in offensive conduct or use profane or inappropriate language.
- Participate in physical confrontation or in any other conduct that may endanger the well-being of any guest, team member or volunteer.
- Use Museum materials or equipment for unauthorized projects including personal correspondence, etc.
- Release any confidential information regarding the Children's Museum, visitors, donors, volunteers, or team members to anyone (employee or non-employee) if the reason is not job related.
- Perform consistently unsatisfactory work.
- Have an excessive number of unexcused absences or be consistently late for service assignments.
- Use your cell phone in such a way that it interferes with your volunteer assignment.
- Use, possess, sell, purchase, or operate under the influence of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or other intoxicants while on duty or while representing the museum.
- Fail to take instruction from or perform reasonable duties assigned by a volunteer supervisor or team member.
- Perpetrate fraud, gamble, possess of weapons or explosives, or violate any criminal laws on Museum premises.
- Mistreat, harass or otherwise harm any person.
- Violate safety rules willfully or repeatedly.

Please note that any infraction other than those listed may also result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. We appreciate your understanding as we seek to create an atmosphere of trust and camaraderie within the Museum's volunteer program.

In case of misconduct, unprofessional behavior, unsatisfactory service performance, or failure to meet minimum requirements, appropriate corrective actions may be taken. These actions may range from counseling, to warning, to dismissal. All discipline is taken in management's discretion. A volunteer will have the opportunity to present their side of the alleged violation when the volunteer meets with the manager. The Museum reserves the right to terminate Volunteer Agreements at any time, with or without notice or reason.



## Museum Rules

CMOSC rules are in place to ensure the Museum is a safe and happy place for visitors, volunteers, and our team.

A volunteer who observes any of these activities or objects on campus should report the incident to a staff member.

Continued

#### **Prohibited Activities**

- Hate speech, slurs, and profane or obscene language are not allowed.
- Shoes and clothes are required to be worn.
- •Clothing with objectionable material, including obscene language or graphics, and clothing inappropriate for a family environment, are not permitted.
- Wading in or drinking the water from the Little Russian River exhibit is not permitted.
- Food is only to be enjoyed at the picnic tables.

#### **Prohibited Items**

- Strollers and wagons are not permitted in SIG (Science Imagination Gallery) There is stroller parking located outside. \*Special accommodations made for assistive devices.
- Balloons and sports balls.
- Large ice chests & coolers (small personal coolers are admitted), glass containers, or alcohol.
- Bikes, skateboards, hoverboards, segways, Heelies (wheeled shoes), and scooters.
- Weapons of any kind, including but not limited to, BB/pellet guns, slingshots, etc.
- Pets (trained service dogs, as defined by ADA, are allowed with restrictions.)

The Museum team will handle these situations and may remove visitors from campus depending on the severity of the violation.



#### **Policy Against Harassment and Discrimination**

The Children's Museum of Sonoma County is committed to providing a work environment free of unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. Museum policy prohibits all forms of discrimination and harassment including: discrimination or harassment on the basis of race (including traits historically associated with race, such as hair texture and protective hairstyles, including braids, locks, and twists), ethnicity, religion, color, sex (including childbirth, breast feeding, and related medical conditions), gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, uniform service member and veteran status, marital status, pregnancy, age, protected medical condition, genetic information, disability, or any other category protected by applicable state or federal law.

The Museum's policy against harassment, discrimination, and retaliation applies to all employees, volunteers, and any other persons serving the Museum. The Museum prohibits employees and volunteers from harassing co-workers and other volunteers. Any such harassment will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

Examples of prohibited sexual harassment: Sexual harassment includes a broad spectrum of conduct including harassment based on sex, gender, gender transition, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation. By way of illustration only, and not limitation, some examples of unlawful and unacceptable behavior include:

- Unwanted sexual advances;
- Offering an employment benefit (such as a raise or promotion) in exchange for sexual favors, or threatening an adverse action (such as termination or demotion) for a person's failure to engage in sexual activity;
- Visual conduct, such as leering, making sexual gestures, and displaying or posting sexually suggestive objects or images;

- Verbal sexual advances, propositions, requests, or comments;
- Electronically sending or posting sexually-related text messages, videos, or images;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal comments about an individual's appearance, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, and suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations:
- Physical conduct, such as touching, kissing, groping, assault, or blocking movement;
- Physical or verbal abuse concerning an individual's gender, gender transition, gender identity, or gender expression; and
- Verbal abuse concerning a person's characteristics such as pitch of voice, facial hair or the size or shape of a person's body, including remarks that a person is too feminine or too masculine.

Other examples of what constitutes prohibited harassment: In addition to the above listed conduct, the Museum strictly prohibits harassment concerning any other protected characteristic. By way of illustration only, and not limitation, such prohibited harassment includes:

- Racial or ethnic slurs, insults, and any other offensive remarks based on a protected characteristic;
- Jokes, whether written, verbal, or electronic, that are based on a protected characteristic;
- Mocking or ridiculing another's religious or cultural beliefs, practices, or manner of dress;
- Threats, intimidation, horseplay, or other menacing behavior that are based on a protected characteristic;

If you have any questions about what constitutes prohibited harassing behavior, ask the Volunteer Coordinator, Director of Operations, or the designated Human Resources representative.

## What You Should Do If You Feel You Are Being or Have Been Harassed or Discriminated Against

If you feel that you or anyone else are being or have been harassed or discriminated against on any basis prohibited by this policy, you should immediately report it to the Volunteer Coordinator, the Human Resources representative, the Director of Operations, or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as soon as possible after the incident.

In addition, if you observe harassment by another volunteer or employee, please report the incident immediately as indicated above.

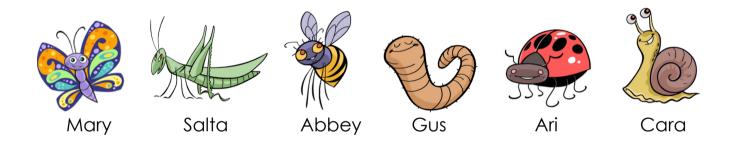
Your notification of the problem is essential to us. We cannot help to resolve a harassment problem unless we know about it. Therefore, it is your responsibility to bring your concerns and/or problems to our attention so we can take appropriate steps to address the situation. The Museum takes all complaints of unlawful harassment seriously and will not penalize you or retaliate against you in any way for reporting a harassment problem in good faith.

All complaints of unlawful harassment which are reported to management will be investigated as promptly as possible by an impartial and qualified person and, upon conclusion of such investigation, appropriate corrective action will be taken where warranted. The Museum prohibits employees from refusing to cooperate with internal investigations and the internal complaint procedure. All complaints of unlawful harassment reported to management will be treated as confidentially as possible, consistent with the Museum's need to conduct an adequate investigation.

## **MORE ABOUT THE MUSEUM**

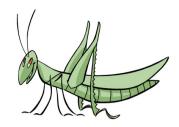
Volunteers who interact with the public will frequently be asked about the Museum, its exhibits, its history, etc. Please make yourself familiar with the information in the following pages.

## Our mascot Mary & her friends





## <u>Museum History & Timeline</u>



#### 2005:

A group of Sonoma County mothers inaugurated plans for a children's museum, addressing the need for a local place for parents, grandparents, and teachers to provide children with enriched, learning experiences. Faced with increasing budget cuts to science and art programs within schools, this educated team established Children's Museum of Sonoma County (CMOSC) as a federal 501 (c)(3) corp. Without funding from outside groups or donors, they launched the Museum-on-the-Go (MOG) mobile science and art outreach program.

#### 2008:

The Junior League of Napa-Sonoma provided the first seed funding to officially sponsor MOG, expanding outreach across the county. CMOSC launched the Founding Family program – more than 100 families committed to the vision over the next three years.

#### **DECEMBER 2010:**

The Museum signed a thirty-year lease for two existing buildings on 4.2 acres located at 1835 West Steele Lane, adjacent to the Charles M. Schulz Museum.

#### 2012:

The Museum team launched an \$8.3M capital campaign, which included a state grant as well as additional funding to build the permanent Museum. The Ella Bisbee Foundation was the first major seed funder for the capital campaign when they approached the Museum about a legacy gift of an art room.

Continued

## Museum History & Timeline

#### 2014:

The Museum opened Mary's Garden to the public. This was the first phase of the capital campaign. "Mary's Garden" was named after the Spanish word "mariposa" which means "butterfly".

#### **JUNE 2015:**

The Science & Imagination Gallery opened to the public with indoor exhibits offering a variety of interactive experiences for children. This indoor area of the Museum was made possible by a generous \$1M stakeholder gift from the Ernest L. and Ruth W. Finley Foundation.

#### **PRESENT:**

The CMOSC campus includes over 7,000sq ft of existing interior space, coupled with 36,000sq ft of outdoor exhibits. All exhibits are devoted to science, art or nature, with a specific emphasis in Mary's Garden on environmental sustainability, water conservation and renewable energies.



### Museum Exhibits

The Museum site and programming allows us to facilitate and engage with the families that visit. Exhibits are focused on science, art, or nature. The outdoor exhibit garden has a specific focus on environmental sustainability, water conservation, and renewable energies.

#### Exhibits can be categorized into one of five main areas of the Museum:

#### Science and Imagination Gallery (SIG)

On June 20th, 2015 the Children's Museum opened the Ernest L. and Ruth W. Finley Foundation Science and Imagination Gallery. Interactive exhibits within this area of the Museum are designed for hands-on play, perfect for families with children ages 10 years and younger.



#### **TOTopia**

TOTopia is our interactive play space custom-designed for infants and toddlers 35" and smaller (2 ½ years and younger). TOTtopia is a no shoe zone for safety reasons. The entry invites visitors to take off their shoes and store them neatly in the cubbies provided.



#### Ella's Art Studio

Children of all ages will find plenty of ways to express their creativity in Ella's Arts Studio. Artistic themes are presented, offering wonderful ways for children to create with and experience various media and materials. With an emphasis on collaboration, projects are simple and geared toward success and a feeling of confidence and accomplishment no matter what age or ability.



#### **Mary's Garden**

Mary's Garden opened in 2014 and acted as the main Museum campus for one year. It houses the Museum's sensory farm garden, an Imagination Playground (big blue blocks), water tables, Little Russian River exhibit, Megaflora, the Noodle Forest and our Mechanical Waterway.

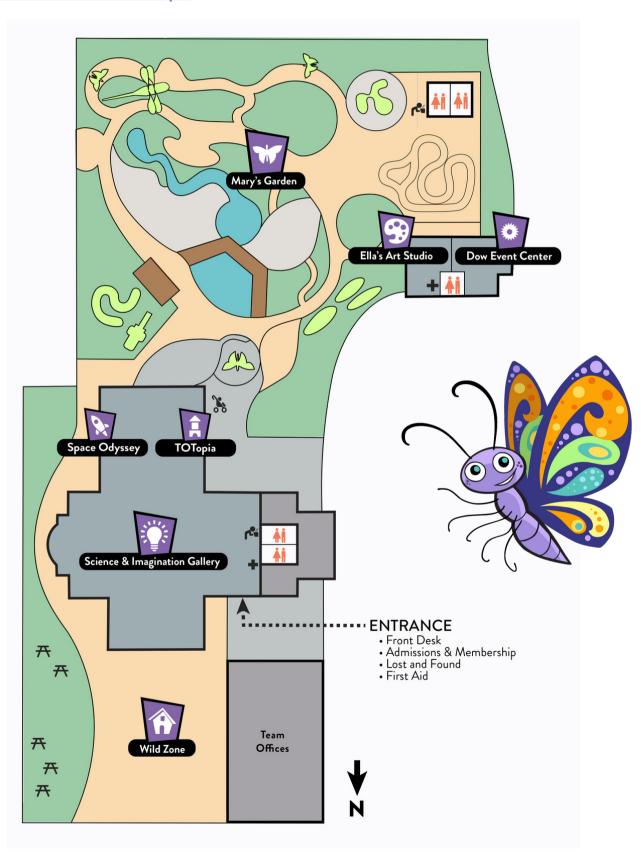


#### **Wild Zone**

The Wild Zone allows children to use natural and fabricated materials in this open ended playscape. They can discover the Mud Lab or set sail on an adventure in the Wonderstruck sailboat.



## Museum Map



### Hours & Admission

#### **Regular Hours**

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday-Monday Closed Tuesdays (with the exception of school breaks or field trips)

#### **Closed on the Following Holidays**

- New Year's Day
- Easter
- Independence Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

#### **Annual Special Events**

- Lunar New Year: January or February
- Annual Gala, Time to Wonder: April
- Museum Anniversary "Bubbly Birthday Bash": June
- The Great Train Days: TBD
- FUNtazmagoria: October

#### **Admission**

The Children's Museum of Sonoma County is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. As a result, we rely on the philanthropic generosity of our community and revenue from Museum memberships and daily ticket sales to present exhibits and programs encouraging curiosity and creativity.

We currently offer a \$1 discount when full-price tickets are purchased online. Tickets may be applied to the cost of a membership as long as the membership is purchased within two weeks from the day the tickets were used. Some restrictions may apply; ask at Front Desk for details.

#### **Admission Prices**

Adults - \$16.00
Youth ages 1 to 17 - \$16.00
Seniors - \$13.00
Infants - Free
Members receive FREE admission
\*Prices are subject to change

\*Discounted admission available for those receiving WIC, EBT, Medi-Cal, ACM Reciprocal, teachers and members of the military through our Museum of All Access Program.



## <u>Memberships</u>

Each Children's Museum membership level allows a specified number of adult cardholders to be listed as named members:

#### You+Me

Daily Admission for 2, with 2 named adult cardholders

#### **Fun Four**

Daily Admission for 4, with 3 named adult cardholders

#### **Super Six**

Daily Admission for 6, with 4 named adult cardholders

Each membership MUST have at least one named adult member on each membership. We will refer to this adult member as the primary cardholder. Only the primary cardholder can make changes to the list of other named members.

Discounted memberships are available for those receiving WIC, EBT, Medi-Cal, ACM Reciprocal, teachers and members of the military through our Museum for All Access for All Program.

\*Please speak with our Front Desk Coordinator for pricing details.

## **Birthday Parties**

There are many ways to host a group at the Children's Museum, including:

#### **Picnic Table Parties**

Picnic Table Parties include an area designated for your party and unlimited play at the Museum. Picnic Table Parties take place during regular hours and the public is present in the Museum during these times.

#### **Private Playdates**

Private Playdates allow you to exclusively reserve the entire Children's Museum of Sonoma County after-hours for two hours of fun.

## Museum Accolades

Voted "Best Children's Museum" by the Northbay Bohemian 12 years in a row, 2010 – 2023



Voted "Best Place to Take Kids in Sonoma County" by the Press Democrat, 2018, 2022, & 2023

The Press Democrat

Voted "Best Place in the World for Kids to Play That is not a Playground" by Landscape Architects Network, 2016



Top Things to Do in Sonoma County with Kids, Sunset Magazine, 2018



Voted "Best Children's Education Center" and "Best Children's Museum" by The Bohemian for 10 consecutive years



Voted "Top 3 Places to See in Santa Rosa" by Three Best Rated, 2019



# Thank You!



As we come to the end of this handbook, we want to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude.

Thank you for being the heart of the Children's Museum of Sonoma County. Your dedication and enthusiasm will enrich the experience we offer here at CMOSC. Your willingness to give your time, creativity, and passion to our mission is what makes the Children's Museum a place of wonder, discovery, and joy. We can't wait to see the incredible moments you'll create and the lives you'll touch in the future.

Unwavering support and dedication from volunteers like yourself has shaped CMOSC into the vibrant and inspiring space it is today. The impact you will make reaches beyond the walls of our Museum. You touch the lives of families, our team, and our entire community. The commitment you have made to the youth of Sonoma County is truly awe-inspiring. Your smiles, patience, and willingness to engage with every child who walks through our doors will make a world of difference and we are truly excited to continue this journey together.

On behalf of the team here at CMOSC, we are deeply grateful for your contributions. Here's to many shared adventures and discoveries ahead.

Let's get started!











