

At both campuses of the Mississippi Children's Museum, change is ever-present. Children are living examples of how quickly time flies and how much joy (and disruption) change can bring. As children grow and leap forward into the future, we know that our playful environments are performing important life changing work, particularly for children O-8 and their brain development. Our museums are designed to encourage the development of important executive function skills, language development, and resilience. Resilience is an increasing focus for our teams at MCM because in our own journey, the museum has encountered unique challenges, which made us more resilient. For children, resilience is developed when they can positively deal with challenges and bounce back from setbacks. Research indicates that strong relationships, particularly with the important adults in their lives, are foundational and imperative for strong social and emotional health, and building resilience.

As we begin a new initiative, The LIFT, around the role of the adult in the life of the child, we won't change our play-based approach. We recognize that childhood is fleeting and that we must share the best research and most effective resources to support our children's

journey with them. One initiative of The LIFT, *Talk from the Start*, encourages talking to and with children to support language development before five years old. We invite you to visit our online resources to learn more at TheLIFTms.org and TalkfromtheStart.org.

The MCM education team is also embarking on a new Computer Science teacher training curriculum, CS Wonder, with a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and in partnership with Mississippi State University. These important changes for our organization are springing us forward to better accomplish our mission of creating unparalleled experiences to inspire excellence and a lifelong joy of learning.



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11-12 Bringing a Character to Life

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Calendar

The MCM Playbook





Editors: Angela Mitchell & Clara Williams Contributors: Tracy Pitts, Rebecca Parker, MCM & MCM-Meridian Staff Graphic Designer/Photographer: Haleigh Collins

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through character-driven comedy. The series is co-produced by The Jim Henson Company and Herschend Entertainment Studios. The new exhibition builds on kids' connections to the characters and their habitats, immersing them in a larger-than-life marine environment and introducing them to the incredible world of ocean exploration.

TM & © Henson. © Herschend Studios.









MCM - MERIDIAN'S FANTASTICAL

There's so much to explore in MCM-Meridian's My Fantastical Backyard! trellises of the Wandering Woods, splash in the cool Wily Waters stream, build





Shade Structures

Time to stay cool in MCM-Meridian's My Fantastical Backyard! In the fall of 2022, MCM-Meridian installed waves of blue shade structures over the Secret Seashore, providing much needed shade to castle builders and treasure hunters. This "cool" new addition not only provides a practical shield from the summer sun, but it enhances the imaginative scene of spending the day near the ocean with the sounds of Wily Waters nearby.

Special thanks to the Phil Hardin Foundation and Riley Foundation for making this project possible!







A New Health Gallery

New experiences are on their way to the MCM-Jackson's Healthy Fun Gallery! One new experience will be Kareem's Dreamy Day, which will give children an opportunity to learn how to live a holistically healthy day and practice healthy sleep habits. In this exhibit, guests will have an opportunity to cook, play, exercise, and rest in a house not too different from their own. While in this house, Kareem, best friend of *Talk from the Start's* Rocky the Reader, and his friends will teach guests about how they can create their own dreamy days.

Guests will also have an opportunity to learn about heart health and personal exercise through a new biking experience located between our popular Gastro-Climber and Kareem's Dreamy Day. In this experience, children can learn about how to keep their hearts healthy through exercise in our own state. These new health exhibits are expected to open in 2023 and will elevate our current Home Par, Little Cook's Kitchen, and biking experiences.

Kareem's Dreamy Day is made possible in partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Mississippi Foundation. The new biking exhibit is made possible in partnership with the Jackson Heart Foundation.









A New Water Table

After 12 years of interactive play and learning, MCM-Jackson's iconic Mississippi River water table will be renovated with a new operating structure. While it will look similar to the current water table, there will be new hands-on play opportunities such as levee building, cargo ship navigation, shrimping, and a new steamboat obstacle course. MCM is working with Boss Display to engineer and install this new water experience with plans to open in the summer of 2023.

This project is sponsored by Luckyday Foundation.











MCM EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



THE LIFT

Join us as we LIFT educators and students in Mississippi to new heights with our innovative resources, training, on-demand courses, and more. Created with the current and future educator in mind, The LIFT makes learning fun and resourceful, all in one place!

Educators can download free resources at TheLIFTms.org







CS WONDER

Thanks to a grant awarded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, MCM has launched a new project called Computer Science (CS) Wonder that will provide a cohort of educators from around the state with resources, skills, and support as they prepare to meet the requirements of House Bill 633, the Mississippi Computer Science and Cyber Education Equality Act, which states that all public schools in Mississippi offer computer science education by the 2024-2025 school year.

Over the next two years, a cohort of 20 teachers will participate in a series of professional development trainings and learn how to effectively introduce computer science to their students by incorporating it into all curriculums such as literacy, history, and math. Teachers will be trained in coding and robotics and will take those skills and robots back to their classroom.

The project will culminate in the Spring of 2024 with a coding competition at both MCM-Jackson and MCM-Meridian. We are thankful to partner with Mississippi State University's Cyber Education Department and Central Creativity in Laurel, MS.

PLAY. EAT. LEARN.

Play. Eat. Learn. is a free and educational learning series geared toward helping parents and caregivers understand the complex mind of a child. This program presents a wonderful opportunity for the community to learn more about the pressing issues and needs that children and families face from experts in the field. Dinner is provided on a first-come, first-serve basis and childcare is available for children ages 3-10. Children are allowed to play in the museum with supervision provided by members of the Junior League of Jackson while parents attend the program.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS:

February 21

"Understanding Autism: Symptoms, Assessments, and Intervention Options" with Tanja Seifen, PhD

April 18

Social Emotional Milestones" with Courtney Walker, PhD





HAPPY HEALTHY FAMILIES

MCM-Meridian is thrilled to host its second Happy Healthy Families program series in the summer of 2023 with support from Molina Healthcare! This four-part family program aims to empower children and their caregivers to take charge of their health by providing them with the tools, skills, and resources needed to put them on a path toward lifelong wellness. During this program, families enjoy shared meals and hands-on sessions focused on social emotional wellness, health and nutrition, and physical health. Each participating family is also given a free museum membership to enjoy through the summer.

JOIN US FOR THESE UPCOMING SPRING EVENTS

IN JACKSON AND MERIDIAN





March 11

Explore the final frontier at NASA Day! Here at the museum, we love all things space – from rockets to astronauts to space food. On NASA Day, guests will learn about what it's like to go to space and be an astronaut. Bring your aspiring space adventurers to NASA Day for a day of science fact, science fiction, and out-of-this-world science fun!

*NASA Day at MCM-Meridian is presented by Meridian Airport Authority.



February 25

You're invited to join us for a Seuss-inspired fantastic funday at MCM for Dr. Seuss' Silly Birthday Celebration!

Known as one of our guests' favorite events of the year, we look forward to welcoming visitors from all across the region to celebrate the beloved author, Dr. Seuss. You'll get messy with ooey-gooey oobleck, hunt for clues on a Seuss-tastical scavenger hunt, and participate in birthday-themed programming! Readings of Dr. Seuss' most popular books will be enjoyed throughout the day, and guests can snap their photo with Thing 1, Thing 2, and of course - The Cat in the Hat!



March 13-17

Visit MCM-Jackson and MCM-Meridian for a Week of Wonder during Spring Break, March 13-17! We have a WONDER-ful week of STEAM themed special programming and activities for you to enjoy.

Each day we will focus on a subject in STEAM: Monday is Science, Tuesday is Technology, Wednesday is Engineering, Thursday is Art, and Friday is Math.

Week of Wonder at MCM-Jackson is in partnership with the LeFleur Museum District, where activities will take place at four unique museums: MS Sports Hall of Fame, MS Agriculture & Forestry Museum, Mississippi Children's Museum, and MDWFP's Museum of Natural Science.



April 8

Spring is right around the corner and we are fluttering with excitement for our annual Bunnies and Butterflies event!

Bunnies and Butterflies is the perfect way to welcome the warm, sunny weather of the new season. At this event, guests will enjoy gardening activities, interact with live bunnies, learn about our tiny insect friends, create a pair of bunny ears or butterfly wings, and so much more. Visit both MCM-Jackson and MCM-Meridian to help us celebrate spring!



SAVE THE DATE FOR MCM'S CHESS TOURNAMENTS THIS SPRING!

MCM - MERIDIAN : APRIL 15 MCM - JACKSON : APRIL 22





May 6

Put your superhero skills to the test at MCM's second annual SUPER-lympics on Saturday, May 6!

Step inside MCM's SUPER-lympic Village for a competition consisting of a series of challenging, hands-on games promoting both physical and mental health! The day will kick off with our Opening Ceremony, followed by MCM's SUPER-lympic Games, where children will focus on three priorities: physical activity, healthy eating, and social/emotional health.

STEM: TELLING TIME

MATERIALS: Two paper plates, Scissors, Markers, Brass fastener

DID YOU KNOW...

The first people to start telling time with calendars and clocks were the ancient Egyptians. They used patterns they saw in nature, such as the rising and setting of bright stars and the seasonal flooding of the Nile river, to help them keep track of time passing. They created sundials to tell the time of day based on shadows cast by the sun.



DIRECTIONS:

- 1. Color your paper plates two different colors. Choose one color for the minute plate and another color for the hour plate.
- 2. Cut a 4-inch arrow and color to match your minute plate, and a 3-inch arrow and color to match your hour plate.
- 3. Carefully write the numbers 1 through 12 on your hour plate, starting with 12 at the top of the circle and 6 at the bottom.
- 4. Cut a slit between each number, making them just long enough that you can fold the number up to see what's underneath.
- 5. Poke a hole through both paper plates. Use the brass fastener to attach your hour and minute hands to the front of your clock face, and your minute plate to the back.
- 6. Fold each hour back and write the minutes underneath. Make these match the numbers below.

12 → :00 $1 \rightarrow :05$ $2 \rightarrow :10$ $3 \rightarrow :15$ **→** :20 $5 \rightarrow :25$ $6 \rightarrow :30$ $7 \rightarrow :35$ $9 \rightarrow :45$ 8 →:40

 $11 \rightarrow :55$ 10 →:50

7. Practice telling time. Set a time on your clock and fold back the flap to see what your minute hand is pointing to.

$\bullet \bullet \bullet$









LITERACY: HOW WILL YOUR **STORY CHANGE?**

MATERIALS: Notebook or loose-leaf paper, Pencil, Crayons or other drawing utensils

DID YOU KNOW...

Nocturnal animals are most active during the nighttime. Diurnal animals are most active during the daytime. There are a lot of differences between these two types of animals. Nocturnal animals have better night vision, while diurnal animals' eyes are designed to see better in the daytime. Many nocturnal animals are colorblind, while many diurnal animals can see colors. Nocturnal animals mostly communicate by sound, but diurnal animals use a combination of sounds and vision to communicate. Owls, bats, and many reptiles are nocturnal, and many birds, deer, and cows are diurnal. Do you think humans are nocturnal or diurnal?

Think about your favorite book or movie. Does it take place mostly during the daytime or the nighttime? How would it change if it was told during a different time of day?

DIRECTIONS:

- 1. Choose a short story that you and your child know very well. Bonus points if you can tell it from memory!
 - a. Ideas might include: The Three Little Pigs, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, or The Tortoise and the Hare
- 2. Tell the story together. What time does the story take place? Is it morning, afternoon, or night?
- 3. Imagine if the story were set during a different time of day. How might it change?
 - a. If The Three Little Pigs happened at night, would it be easier for the pigs to hide?
 - b. If Goldilocks and the Three Bears took place first thing in the morning, would the bears still be home when Goldilocks stumbled upon their house?
- 4. Try to rewrite one of these stories at a different time of day. a. If your child doesn't write yet, try drawing how the story might be different.
- 5. How did your story change?
- 6. How many new stories can you make just by changing the time of day when they take place?

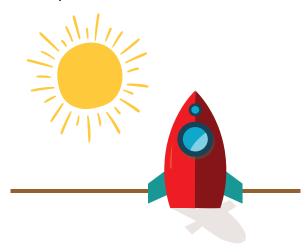
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ART: SHADOW DRAWINGS

MATERIALS: Large sheet of paper, Different colored drawing utensils (crayons, colored pencils, or markers), Small to medium size toys/objects that can stand on their own (blocks, action figures, toy dinosaurs, interesting shaped rocks)

DID YOU KNOW...

Sundials are the oldest known instruments for telling time. The surface of a sundial has markings for each hour of daylight. As the sun moves across the sky, another part of the sundial casts a shadow on these markings. The position of the shadow tells us what time it is. Today, we are going to use the changing shadows throughout the day to make a piece of art!



DIRECTIONS:

- 1. Do this activity when you will be at home for most of the day, such as a weekend or school holiday. Start as early in the morning as possible.
- 2. Place your paper somewhere outside where the sun will shine on it for most of the day. If there is a breeze, use books or something similar to weigh down the edges.
- 3. Stand your toys at one end of your paper so their shadows are cast on the paper.
- 4. Choose your first color and use it to trace the shadows onto the paper. Mark what time it is in the same color at the top of your paper.
- 5. After you are done, leave your paper alone. Come back after an hour.
- 6. What do you notice about the shadows?
 - a. Have they shifted?
 - b. Have their shapes changed?
- 7. Choose another color and trace the new shadows.

 Make sure you mark the time at the top in the same color.
- 8. Continue retracing the shadows throughout the day, choosing a different color each time. Always record the time in the same color.
- 9. At the end of the day, or when the sun stops hitting the paper, bring it inside and look at all the different tracings.
 - a. What do you notice about the different shadows?
 - b. How did the shadows change throughout the day?
 - c. Can you think of other ways to use shadows and the passage of time to create art?



HEALTH/FITNESS: CIRCADIAN RHYTHM & SLEEP HYGIENE

MATERIALS: Time for Bed by Mem Fox (optional)

DID YOU KNOW...

Our bodies have their own clock? This clock is called the circadian rhythm, and these rhythms control our sleep cycles. They tell us when to get sleepy and when to wake up. Everyone has their own rhythm—are you a night owl, or an early bird? Our circadian rhythms are controlled by a small part of our brain called the hypothalamus, but they are also regulated by light and darkness. If you feel groggy in the morning, try getting up and opening your curtains to let in the sunshine!

SO, WHAT IS SLEEP HYGIENE?

You've heard of hygiene, like brushing your teeth and taking a shower. But we have sleep hygiene, too! This means making choices that help us get the best sleep we possibly can. Nightly routines, keeping our sleeping space dark, and being active during the day are all elements of sleep hygiene! In this activity, we will try some calming bedtime stretches to help us get ready for sleep.

DIRECTIONS:

- 1. These bedtime stretches match up with the book *Time for Bed* by Mem Fox. If you have this book at home, take a minute to read it, looking at how the animals get ready for sleep. If you don't have this book, that's okay! You can still do the stretches that go along with it!
- 2. Hold each stretch for 2-3 minutes, breathing deeply and staying quiet, readying your mind for sleep.
 - a. Goose: Lay on the floor on your back with your feet raised up on the wall. Keep your knees straight and spread your arms out on the floor like a goose. Slowly bend and point your toes.
 - b. Cat: Sit crisscross applesauce on the floor. Bend forward at the hips and place your head on the ground. Stretch your arms out on the floor over your head.
 - c. Puppy: Do a downward dog yoga position. Put both your hands and your feet on the floor and raise your hips to the sky, making a triangle shape with your body. Feel the stretch in the backs of your legs.

Visit MCM-Meridian's Goodnight Moon exhibit to practice good bedtime habits.









Enjoy unlimited visits to MCM in Jackson
AND Meridian by becoming a Dual Member!
Already have a Membership at one of our
locations? You can add on a Dual Membership
for only \$50! By joining as a member, you will receive
exclusive Member Benefits, including invitations to
members-only events, a subscription to the MCM
Playbook, 10% off at the Trading Post, and so much more!



The Mississippi Children's Museum is the ultimate imagination destination to celebrate your birthday! Give your little one the gift of a memorable, fun-filled birthday at the museum. With a variety of party package options, complimentary invitations and more, our museums offer the perfect space to celebrate any child's big day!

NEW 2023 birthday party themes... Mermaid Party, Pirate Party, Superhero Party, Unicorn Party



BIRTHDAY PARTIES

MCM TRADING POST



Complete your visit to the museum by shopping our unique selection of toys at MCM's Trading Post! This fully stocked gift shop features a wide variety of items for children of all ages and offers complimentary gift wrapping and convenient curbside pickup upon request.

VOLUNTEERS

Sign up to volunteer at the Mississippi Children's Museum in Jackson and Meridian! Our volunteer programs for ages 16+ are the perfect way to earn community service hours, gain real-world experience, and make a positive impact in the lives of children. Explore our volunteer opportunities for all ages and skillsets today!



FACILITY RENTALS

The Mississippi Children's Museum in Jackson and Meridian offer an engaging and playful atmosphere to make your event unforgettable. Each unique space has a colorful ambiance that is multifunctional to suit every event, from business meetings to evening gala affairs. Our spaces include on-site parking, handicap accessibility, wireless internet access and more.





LORI QUARLES
MCM-JACKSON PARTNERS PRESIDENT





HALLIE SWINDOLL MCM-MERIDIAN PARTNERS PRESIDENT

IGNITE THE NIGHT



IGNITE THE NIGHT

MCM-Jackson Partners' fundraising event, Ignite the Night 2023 celebrates "The Love of Fun" on Saturday, February 11. Prepare to fall in LOVE with music that will move you, food that will delight you, and artwork like no other! Unforgettable memories will be made - For the Love of FUN!



MIDNIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

Guests spent the last hours of 2022 dancing to live music, experiencing immersive art, watching awe-inspiring performances, and counting down to the New Year during the second annual Midnight at the Museum: Cirque du Curiosite fundraiser. We are grateful to our event committee for making this incredible night a success and raising vital funds to underwrite the mission and vision of MCM-Meridian!











A VERY MERRY NIGHT & A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS

MCM-Jackson and MCM-Meridian Partners kicked off the Holiday Season with a first look for guests to experience each museum's holiday exhibits. MCM-Jackson Partners hosted their inaugural family fundraising event, A Very Merry Night, on Nov. 19th which also served as the opening night for MCM's ultimate holiday exhibit, Journey to the North Pole. MCM-Meridian Partners hosted A Merry Little Christmas on Dec. 1st for families to preview their Winter WONDERland holiday exhibit. Guests danced to cheerful music, visited with Santa, enjoyed cookies and hot cocoa, and participated in festive educational programming.













MINGLE AT THE MUSEUM IN MCM - MERIDIAN

JUNE 15, 2023 Step right up for

MCM-Meridian Partners' signature summer fundraiser! This event will present playful carnival games, live music, festive fair food, and opportunities to win amazing prizes.





NEON NIGHT IN MCM - JACKSON JULY 15, 2023

Mark your calendars to dance the night away under neon lights at MCM Partners' signature summer event, Neon Night in Jackson!

MEET ROCKY'S FRIENDS!

When the MCM and Barksdale teams joined forces to develop *Talk From the Start* we knew how important it would be to have a fun and friendly mascot to champion that work! Rocky the Reader was created and illustrated by MCM's Senior Graphic Designer, Lori Nesbitt.

"Rocky the Reader was a joy to create and illustrate! Rocky embodies a playful spirit, inquisitive mind, and a joyous sophistication that is beyond his years. I designed Rocky as a "jolly pup" in a way to make him welcoming and friendly for our youngest audience, ages 0-5 years old. The color of his fur, an oversized soft nose, and the light shining in his eyes are elements of Rocky that make everyone attracted to him. Rocky's bookbag and glasses are two iconic accessories that display his love of reading and his readiness for adventure. It's been a huge reward to see children interact and fall in love with Rocky, in just the same way that I have a special fondness for the Talk from the Start character."

— LORI NESBITT



Shortly after, the team decided Rocky needed friends to help spread his message, and then Mateo, Cody, Mei, Ella, and Kareem were created. MCM's Exhibits Assistant, Shelby Sessums, created the initial concept drawings for the characters by working with the MCM and BRI teams to model a diverse population with different strengths and challenges to language development. Once the initial characters were created, Lori worked to bring the characters to life through illustration.

Rocky and his friends help spread the message that talking with and to children from birth is critical to their development. The team was very intentional in ensuring all children were represented in their ages, ethnicities, abilities, and even their names! The goal for the campaign is to help young children in developing their language skills to ultimately become fluent readers, so we thought there was no better way to do this than to name Rocky's friends so that vowel sounds were clear and easy to identify. An example of this is the long "o" sound in the name Cody! We selected the ages of the friends to aid parents, teachers, and caregivers in easily identifying the ages and stages of development in the children in their lives. We are so proud of the work that our team has put into this campaign and exhibit.

Take a moment to get to know each of Rocky's friends and the next time our Rocky's House Traveling Exhibit is in your area please check it out!

CODY & MATEO

"Hi, my name is Cody and I'm 4 years old. I love to dress up and pretend to be different characters, especially superheroes. I'm learning to read sight words and write the alphabet, so I'll soon be able to write down the stories I imagine and love to act out."

"This is our friend Mateo. Mateo is only 9 months old, but he still loves to play with us, and we love to talk to him! His family speaks both English and Spanish, so he's learning words in both languages."



ELLA & MEI

"Ella is my name. I'm 6 years old and my two favorite things are exploring the outdoors and learning about the things I find. Sometimes I ask people about them. But, since I'm learning to read, I can also read about the things I see!"

"Our friend Mei is just 2 years old, but she's already saying a lot of words. And she says them in three different ways: English, Chinese, and with her hands. Since her dad is hearing impaired, she's learning American Sign Language. I can't wait for her to teach me to speak Chinese and sign language when she gets a little older."



KAREEM

"I'm Rocky's best friend,
Kareem. Our favorite thing to
do together is fish and talk
about the adventures we want
to have together. I am 8 years
old and since I'm Rocky's
oldest friend the others ask
me a lot of questions. I don't
mind because that's how I
learned so much. And if I
don't know the answer, I can
get a book and find it."





MCM STATEWIDE DONORS

THANK YOU DONORS!

Contributors to the Mississippi Children's Museum from JUNE 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2022

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If you wish to change your recognition, please contact us at donate @mcm.ms.



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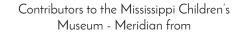
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JUNE 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2022

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MCM - JACKSON'S SPRING CALENDAR

Please note that these dates and events take place in Jackson, MS.







Neon Night

Mississippi Children's Museum











Harry Potter



MCM - MERIDIAN'S SPRING CALENDAR

Please note that these dates and events take place in Meridian, MS.

















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