

SOUTH CAROLINA'S CHILDREN'S MUSEUMS

WHERE LEARNING IS FUN *By Katie McElveen*

Ever since Bert, Ernie and the gang on Sesame Street taught Generation Xers their ABCs and 123s with a combination of singing and dancing (and those were just the number and letters!) the word was out: learning can be fun!

And no where is learning more fun than in South Carolina's three children's museums.

Feel like waterman at Charleston's Children's Museum of the Lowcountry, casting nets and counting the catch, steering the boat through stormy waters, cooking dinner and hearing the sounds of ocean life on a 30-foot Shrimping Trawler... the only thing missing is the smell of that salty sea air. Across the way, switch eras completely and check out life as a medieval duke or duchess at Castle Stories, where you can dress up in medieval costumes, put on a puppet show or explore the shadow wall! Toddlers can twist and turn and slide through the tunnels in the Totally Toddler area. Kids can create, make and take home projects of their imagination in

Creativity Castle, aka The Art Room, where three different themed activities are featured each week.

Just across the street from the Myrtle Beach convention center, the Children's Museum of South Carolina is a learning playground of interactive exhibits that invite touching, exploring and playing. Take a trip through Bubble Mania and see what the world looks like from the inside of a bubble; play Indiana Jones and dig for real fossils; draw, cut, color and paint at the Express Yourself make and take station. Older kids will have fun learning boating safety and nautical terms at USS Kids Afloat. Future doctors will have a chance to take blood pressure, look at real x-rays, listen to their hearts and even check vision.

EdVenture Children's Museum in Columbia is the largest museum for kids in the Southeast. To help even the smallest visitors explore real-life items such as a fire truck, and even their own bodies, surreal creations such as a realistic firefighter, a talking skeleton,

and other friendly creatures are on hand to offer age-appropriate explanations and activities. For bigger kids, there's Eddie.

Eddie, the world's largest child, is the centerpiece of the museum. A 40-foot-tall structure made primarily of molded plastic, Eddie is large enough for everybody to climb in, on and through.

EdVenture is divided into six sub-galleries, each with a different theme. One gallery is the World of Work, which offers a look into what really goes into some of the state's more well-known jobs. Future farmers will enjoy collecting eggs from chickens, milking a cow and driving a tractor through a field while city slickers can learn the skills necessary to manage a grocery store.

Whether you're looking for a fun way to spend a rainy afternoon, or just want to have a play date with your children, South Carolina's children's museums will help spark a love of learning for your child... and create memories along the way.



South Carolina Smiles 2005



Learning is more fun in South Carolina's three children's museums.

FIND OUT MORE...

- Children's Museum of the Lowcountry
www.explorecmll.org
- Children's Museum of South Carolina
www.cmsckids.org
- EdVenture Children's Museum
www.edventure.org