

ACADEMY FIELD TRIP INFORMATION FOR CHAPERONES

(Teacher/Group Leader: Please Read, Copy, and Send Home)

Information for Chaperones

Thank you for chaperoning on a field trip to the Academy today. Below are some tips and museum rules to help you and your charges enjoy your visit.

Read these rules to your students before you start exploring the museum:

1. Stay with your chaperone or adult leader at all times. This applies to students of all ages, including high school students.
2. Always walk, never run.
3. Climbing on the exhibits, including the dinosaurs in Dinosaur Hall, is not allowed.
4. Use inside voices while exploring.
5. Respect exhibit boundaries and areas that will be used by others (restrooms, the lunch room, and exhibit halls).
6. Also, **we ask that groups not use elevators.** Elevators are for seniors and guests that have disabilities.

Groups must stay together

Work out a plan so you can easily locate all children in your group. **Set behavior expectations.**

Read the rules to your group and answer any questions they may have. You have the right (and responsibility) to stop a child from misbehaving. Discuss your expectations beyond the rules.

You are not permitted to take children outside of this building unless you have prior permission from your group leader. **Smoke breaks** and (non-emergency) **cell phone** use should not happen while you have children in your care. Children are not permitted in the Academy Shop without chaperones.

Know the schedules and the floor plan

Know your schedule, the locations of programs, and when it is time for exploration. If you are scheduled for a visit to an exhibit or for a Discovery Lesson, look over the map ahead of time so that you can arrive at all programs at least 5 minutes before the scheduled time. Have your group wait quietly outside the door until A museum teacher greets you.

Not all exhibits are open to all groups

Certain exhibits must be scheduled in advance. These exhibits include Outside In, The Big Dig and Butterflies! If your group is NOT scheduled to visit these exhibits, you may not visit them with your students during your schools' visit. Your lead teacher would have made these arrangements prior to your field trip.

Please turn off cell phones in programs

Cell phones and personal conversations are distracting to the children and to the museum teacher. If you must have a conversation or answer a phone, please leave the room.

If you are coming on the trip and would like to take advantage of the group rate, make prior arrangements with the group leader. If your small group prefers you to pay individually (not as part of the group), you must pay the general admission price at the main admissions desk. We will not accept individual payment at the group check-in desk. Be aware of the price difference.

One adult must be designated as a lunch room coordinator. All lunches are to be stored in boxes or containers with the name of your group clearly printed on the outside.

Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. If disruptive behavior persists, the Academy has the right to remove the entire group from the museum.

Tips for Exploring the Academy with Children

The Academy is home to many hidden gems if you take the time to look closely.

Encourage investigation

Scientists are expert observers of the world around them. Encourage your students to slow down and observe details in the dioramas and other exhibits. Ask open-ended questions such as “What do you notice?” “Why do you think that?” “How do you know that?” “Have you seen anything like this before?” “What is the same about the animals in the diorama?” “What is different?”

Don’t worry about knowing all the answers! You are a facilitator, not an expert. These questions are to encourage your students to look for answers and information in the exhibits. Some are to encourage imagination and do not have specific answers. Encourage discussion and feel free to take part!

What is a diorama?

A diorama is a life-like exhibit that shows a scene from nature. The dioramas at the Academy feature mounted animals arranged in native habitat settings against painted backgrounds.

Real or Fake?

The animals in the dioramas are REAL but they are not alive. They have been specially prepared by people called taxidermists to look like they did when they were alive. The animals you see here are made of real animals skins put over a model of the animals’ body. The eyes, teeth, and tongues are not real.

Why do we have dioramas?

The dioramas were constructed before television and before it was easy to travel around the world to learn about the animals. Dioramas brought the natural world to the interested public and they are still a great way to learn about these animals and their habitats today!

Fun Facts about the Academy

The Academy is home to 17 million scientific collections from diatoms to snails to catfish to fossils.

The Live Animal Center, located on the ground floor, is home to over 100 live birds, mammals, reptiles and invertebrates.

The collections in the Ewell Sale Stewart Library range from journals from the 1500’s to snippets of hair from George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.

The Patrick Center for Environmental Research is helping us to understand how humans effect aquatic ecosystems.

Hadrosaurus foulkii, a duckbill dinosaur on display in Dinosaur Hall, was found in Haddonfield New Jersey in 1858. It was the first dinosaur skeleton mounted for display in the world here at the Academy in 1868!