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## **Explorations V Children's Museum is Re-opening September 1 to the General Public**

New hours, enhanced safety procedures, and more in place to welcome families back to the long-time Lakeland institution.

August 31, 2020– Explorations V Children's Museum is reopening to the public on September 1, 2020. The Museum is ready to welcome families back to a beloved Central Florida landmark.

The Museum is celebrating by adding Sunday hours to the schedule. Explorations V has never been open on Sundays until now. The new operating hours are a result of being able to serve the modern family. Guests can now visit Monday – Saturday 10 am – 5 pm and Sunday 10 am – 3 pm. With enhanced safety procedures, all three floors will be open to the public and the Museum will resume taking birthday party reservations. Visitors over age 8 are required to wear a mask per the City ordinance.

“The Museum has spent 6 months providing critical enrichment and care services to children of essential workers. We are so proud of that work but also very excited to welcome back families. The exhibits have missed everyone!” says Kerry Falwell, CEO.

The Museum closed on March 15, 2020, in line with Polk County Schools closing their facilities and transferring to virtual learning. With a grant from the United Community Relief Fund, the Museum was able to award 71-day camp scholarships for children of essential workers who needed a safe place for their elementary age children while the grownups provided critical community services. Explorations V did open for four weeks at the beginning of summer but closed again on July 15 so all staff could be devoted to the enhanced cleaning and safety procedures needed to run the summer camp program.

The reopening is also the first chance most families will have to experience “Build the Future”, a new exhibit produced by the Museum's exhibit team and presented by The Lunz Group. This new exhibit lets children engage with the design process for the new Museum facility at Bonnet Springs Park.

Reservations are not required to visit. General admission is \$10 per person. For visitors who want a low contact visit, they can pre-purchase their tickets online. Staff will wear



masks, visitors will wash their hands upon entering, and there is a safety partition at the front desk. Guests are encouraged to bring small toys to the front desk for a deep clean after their child has touched the item after coming in contact with their mouth or nose.

For a full list of current programs and workshops as well as the comprehensive reopen plan, visit [www.ExplorationsV.com](http://www.ExplorationsV.com) or call (863) 687-3869 to request a copy or receive additional information.

### **About Explorations V Children's Museum**

Children's Museums are family magnets and Explorations V Children's Museum is no exception. Founded in July 1991 by parent volunteers, Explorations V is located in the heart of historic downtown Lakeland, Florida. It is the only hands-on museum in Polk County dedicated to the education and cultural development of children and families.

### **Our mission is to curate the world for all children to explore.**

This is accomplished via three floors of kid-powered interactive exhibits and programs that celebrate the five senses, hence the "V" in the name. Exhibits & programs are designed with hidden learning concepts complementing Florida Sunshine State Standards for PreK through 5th grade. Art and science are the pathways for many learning concepts, freeing the child's creativity and unleashing the power of play. Explorations V opened in downtown Lakeland in 1991 and purchased the four-story historic Kress Building in 1998. A capital campaign ensued, and the new Museum debuted in 2000. The Museum partners with schools, colleges, arts & cultural organizations, foundations, government, civic groups, individuals, and corporations like Disney, Publix, United Way, Born Learning, Success by 6 and many others to provide engaging programs.

Almost 80% of the human brain is developed by the age of six. Most children who visit the Museum are under the age of six. In addition to the educational exhibits, over 18,000 people participated in an on-site educational program and 87,000 people were impacted through outreach in the 2017-2018 fiscal year alone. In total, 850 families have attended a financial education class and 135 four and five-year olds have graduated from Storybook Camp, which raises children living in poverty's chance at succeeding in kindergarten.

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