



London Museum Development

Family Friendly Programme

2018-2022

Zero and low-cost ways to meet the Kids in Museums Manifesto points

The following document has been pulled together to support London's non-national museums in their thinking and approach to providing a permanent offer to its children, families and young people. The aim of the document is to suggest zero and low-cost ways museums could utilise the Kids in Museums Manifesto to increase engagement from children, families and young people. London Museum Development hopes this document will enable museums to embrace and embed children, family and young people-friendly practices and create museums that are more welcoming to these groups.

1. Be welcoming

Create an environment where families can explore, have fun and learn together. Make sure staff and volunteers provide a warm welcome and make all interactions with visitors friendly and informative. Include things that can be touched and make labels clear to explain when they can't. Welcome enthusiastic comments and always keep instructions positive.

Zero Cost Ideas:

- Run training with front of house, volunteers and staff to encourage them to be more friendly to children, families and young people using the Manifesto
- Make changes to your website such as adding in a family page (e.g. the [Ashmolean Museum](#) or the [Museum of London Docklands](#))
- Use social media and external networks e.g. encourage young people and families to take photos during their visit and share them via Instagram or Twitter, or join local Facebook groups

Low-Cost Ideas:

- Buy a lollipop sign, display boards etc. to advertise children, family and young people activities in the museum
- Buy family friendly badges/sashes for volunteers/staff to wear during busy family events
- Pilot family friendly object labels, interpretation panels and signage
- Pilot different do/don't touch labels and wording
- Provide an activity for children, families and young people to provide feedback to their visit
- Create a film welcoming children, family and young people to the museum which can be at front desk or on your family webpages

2. Make it easy and comfortable

Think about your facilities and spaces from a family's perspective. Have seating for all generations to enjoy a rest. Can you provide a picnic area, make your café family friendly or direct people to

reasonably-priced eateries nearby? Having baby changing facilities, a breastfeeding welcome attitude, booster steps in your toilets and somewhere to keep buggies is important for those with younger visitors.

Zero Cost Ideas:

- Sign up to the [breastfeeding welcoming scheme](#)
- Create in-house activities for children to do in the café
- Work with your café caterer to offer affordable options in your café
- Move chairs to unused areas to create 'family-friendly' areas

Low-Cost Ideas:

- Create a 'family-friendly' area
- Buy chairs with comfy arms to support mothers breastfeeding
- Buy seating for all generations to enjoy a rest
- Buy a gazebo for families to eat lunch under/park prams and buggies
- Buy booster steps for toilets
- Buy supplies of nappies, wipes and slings along with books and boxes to store them in in toilets
- Add in baby changing facilities

3. Remember families come in all shapes and sizes

Consider what different family members need from their visit and provide ways for them to explore together. Families can include under 5s, young people, parents, carers, grandparents, cousins and friends. Reflect this diversity in your activities, displays and ticketing.

Zero Cost Ideas:

- Create simple paper-based trails/self-guided materials in-house for different age groups
- For older children you can ask young people who are doing work experience placements, or the Duke of Edinburgh Award with you to create a resource that they would like to do

Low-Cost Ideas:

- Create a consultation group to discuss with children, families and young people what they would like to do during their visit, as well as feedback on activities, displays and ticketing
- Buy self-guided resources – such as pencils, foam dice, binoculars, books, soft mats, under 5 toys etc.
- Create backpacks for different ages groups
- Trial different ticketing options for different size families

4. Be accessible to all

Ensure all your visitors are equally supported and welcomed. Families face many challenges when visiting museums, including the cost of a visit and language and cultural barriers. For those with disabilities, it may be difficult to access your space and its collections. Ask a range of children, young people and families how you can better communicate with them and make their visit easier.

Zero Cost Ideas:

- Make changes to your website e.g. a social story, a sensory map, an access page (e.g. the [Museum of English Rural Life](#))

- Explore using free apps such as Seeing AI and TapTapSee for people with visual impairments where the phone will describe what's around them using photos
- Think about how much a day out at your museum might cost. Can you include lower cost options to be more accessible to a range of families (e.g. [Erewash Museum](#))

Low-Cost Ideas:

- Create paper-based activities in different languages
- Develop [Family Friendly tours](#) using London Museum Development's resources and training bank
- Develop a sensory map, social story or visual timetable
- Run training with front of house, volunteers and staff around disability awareness, autism-friendly practices and/or developing activities for Deaf and hard of hearing visitors, tactile images and maps, basic sign language, fun signing and/or basic Makaton training
- Run a consultation session
- Create a quiet space or trial quiet hour events 'lights on, noise off' events and resources (e.g. the [V&A Museum of Childhood](#) and [Epping Forest District Museum](#))
- Buy some kit e.g. ear defenders, torches, fidget toys, magnifiers etc. (see [Autism in Museums free sensory equipment](#) for more examples)

5. Communicate well

Make sure you let families know everything you have to offer them. You can do this through outreach visits, posters and leaflets, and online through your website and social media. Think about where families might find information before a visit and communicate clearly on arrival.

Zero Cost Ideas:

- Use social media (Twitter, Facebook and Instagram) to promote your activities
- Use existing networks to communicate your activities e.g. [Family Arts Campaign Fantastic for Families](#) and local Mumsnet groups
- Think about how you respond to your Trip Advisor reviews
- Do a digital takeover
- Think about how word of mouth can help you attract families e.g. through school children after a trip, local uniformed groups etc.
- Contact local primary schools to see if you can distribute leaflets after school in the lead up to planned activities
- Make sure children, families and young people get a farewell

Low-Cost Ideas:

- Run a stall at a local event
- Run an outreach session with a community partner
- Create flyers and share locally within libraries, cafés, schools and other places families go and remember to upload it to your website
- Run a consultation group to gain feedback on your posters, leaflets, website and social media posts

6. Work together

Collaborate with children, young people and families as equal partners on events, displays and exhibitions. This will help to include their stories and give them a stronger sense of ownership.

Zero Cost Ideas:

- Ask families for their own stories or ideas for stories they would like to see told in your museum via social media platforms
- Run a [Teen Digital Takeover](#) or [Takeover Day](#) and use the event to consult with children and young people
- Create displays of work with children, families and young people in workshop spaces
- Feature favourite objects chosen by children, families and young people online – this could include gifs of objects in motion like [Headstone Manor and Museum](#)

Low-Cost Ideas:

- Work with children, families and young people to create in-house resources e.g. take away activities/ideas to do at home after sessions, self-guided resources etc.
- Work with children, families and young people to create illustrations and mascots which can be used more than once in trails, labels, publicity (e.g. the [Museum of the Order of St John](#) and [Headstone Manor and Museum](#))
- Work with children, families and young people to create new interpretation
- Run a [Gig in Museums](#) event
- Co-create displays e.g. including objects and labels within current cases by children, young people and families
- Co-produce events



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