



Chicago Children's Museum Therapy Play Guide

Chicago Children's Museum has partnered with the Belle Center of Chicago to develop a play guide that supports your child in working on his or her therapies while visiting the museum.

Inside, you will find activities that utilize the museum's rich environments and enable your child to build skills in many developmental areas, including motor, sensory, language, literacy, social, cognition and self-care.












Background on the Belle Center of Chicago
























The Belle Center of Chicago is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the rights and expectations of all children to be fully included in the community. Belle's staff of professional speech-language and occupational therapists and educators travel to the places that make up a child's typical day—including schools, homes and community programs—to provide educational and therapeutic services to children with disabilities in their natural environments. The goals of the program are to promote the development of specific skills, maximize choices for families and facilitate the inclusion of children with disabilities in programs with their typically developing peers. The Belle Center also works in collaboration with teachers, administrators and community providers to share information, tools and strategies to help open doors to academic, social and community activities for all children. All of the Belle Center's programs are designed to help children with disabilities reach their greatest potential.

For more information about the Belle Center of Chicago, please visit www.bellecenter-chicago.org or call (773) 878-7868.

































Definition of Skills

	<p>Gross Motor Movement that involves the large muscles, including walking, balance, and shoulder movements</p>
	<p>Fine Motor Movement that involves the small muscles, including writing, grasping, and dexterity</p>
	<p>Visual Motor Activities that use the eyes and body together, such as writing and kicking a ball</p>
	<p>Sensory The ability to use the senses—vision, hearing, smell, touch, taste, and balance—to gather information about the environment</p>
	<p>Language (Communication) Receptive Language: Understanding spoken language and other forms of communication</p> <p>Expressive language: A system for communicating thoughts and ideas via spoken language, non-verbal language, and/or augmentative devices</p>
	<p>Literacy The ability to read and write</p>
	<p>Social Interactions with others</p>
	<p>Cognition Mental abilities, including awareness, perception, knowing, thinking, reasoning, judgment, and memory</p>
	<p>Activities of Daily Living Basic activities for self care-taking, including dressing and eating</p>





BIG Backyard

Talk	Tell me what you see in your backyard.  
	Can you name 3 different insects that fly?  
	Have you ever caught any bugs? Which ones? 
Listen & Watch	Scan the bug on the computer screen. 
	Track butterflies and falling pebbles on the shadow screen.  
	Listen to the bells and laughing flowers. 
Words to Use	Garden, flowers, petals, buds, bugs, insects, bees, butterfly, fly, bumble bee, dragonfly, flying, capture, move, still, shadows 
Play	Strengthen arms by holding them still in front of the shadow screen, and make a shadow with a friend.  
	Strengthen arms by reaching up to touch the flowers, ringing the bells, and turning the laughing flowers. 
	Increase coordination and grip by holding onto the computer controller while making the bug fly and race with another bug.  
	Practice finger isolation by touching the computer screen. 
	Touch the shoelaces, foam hats, foam wings, flower petals, tree trunks, and grass on the wall. 
	Put on costumes and become a bug.  
Think About	Name the Chicago landmarks as the bugs fly past them.  
	In what ways is your backyard different from a friend's or relative's backyard?  




















WaterWays

Talk	Where do we get drinking water?  
	How does water feel?  
	What do we do with water?  
Listen & Watch	Make water squirt from the pump, and dump water out of the buckets.   
	Listen to the water flow. 
	Watch the boats float through the waterway. 
Words to Use	Wet, dry, damp, pump, float, splash, pour, dump, sprinkle, boats, ships, currents, waves, raincoat, red, yellow, blue 
Play	Get ready to play by putting on your raincoat and walking through the tunnel and over the uneven surfaces.   
	Strengthen arms by pulling the ropes to spin the wheel and dump the buckets, and by directing boats through the waterways. 
	Maintain balance by reaching for boats.  
	Sail the boats on the water, and make up a story about their voyage.  
Think About	Gather materials and place barriers in the slots to create a navigation route for the boats.     
	Build a plumbing system.     
	Where else have you heard the noises you are hearing?   Examples: The water makes the same noise as filling up the bath tub. The hand dryers sound like bathrooms.












WaterWays continued

Think About	Does this exhibit smell like anywhere else you have been?   Example: The pool smells just like this exhibit!
Read & Write	Write letters in the cool water with your fingers. ABC  
	Read the signs in the exhibit and have the child read them back to you. ABC
























Dinosaur Expedition

Talk	Have you ever seen fossils somewhere else? If so, where?  
	What is your favorite dinosaur? 
Listen & Watch	Hear how quiet this place is when everyone is working. 
	See how many fossils you can find on the wall.  
Words to Use	Dinosaurs, expedition, adventure, jeep, skeleton, bones, skull, fossils, predators, vest, apron, gloves, tools, dig, explore, search, identify, paleontologist, ancient, history 
Play	Put on your vest, apron, and gloves. Get your tools, and decide where to dig.   
	Keep your balance while you walk to the dig site, but make sure to watch out for flying pieces!     
	Find the bones you uncovered on the map.  
Think About	Does this exhibit smell like anywhere else you have been?  Example: The tire chips smell like some playgrounds.
Read & Write	Read the Expedition Scrapbook. ABC
	Recite the equipment list in the jeep at the entrance of the exhibit. Have your child point to the items as you name them. ABC 
	Name a place on the map of Africa and have your child point to it. ABC































Inventing Lab

Talk	<p>If you could invent anything, what would it be? What would it do?</p> 
Listen & Watch	<p>Watch the inventions soar to the top and fly back down.</p> 
	<p>Listen to the music the slide makes as you slide down.</p> 
Words to Use	<p>Build, invent, create, imagine, predict, attach, connect, invention, machine</p> 
Play	<p>Strengthen your arms by turning the crank to send your invention to the top.</p> 
	<p>Assemble an invention on the computer using the trackball.</p> 
	<p>Make an alarm clock to wake up the bear.</p> 
	<p>Make your own invention to wake the bear.</p> 
Think About	<p>Guess how long it will take for your invention to fall, and check your guess by timing it.</p> 
	<p>How do all the different building materials feel?</p> 
Read & Write	<p>Read the signs to create the inventions.</p> 

















Kids Town

<p>Talk</p>	<p>Where do you go to: Buy food? Get your car washed? Mail a letter? Wait for the bus?</p>	 
	<p>Who: Drives a bus? Fixes cars? Works in a store? Delivers mail?</p>	 
<p>Listen & Watch</p>	<p>Watch what happens when you flip the switches in the bus and car.</p>	 
	<p>Change the route number on the bus.</p>	 
	<p>Drive the car and bus, but keep an eye on the street light!</p>	    
	<p>Watch the balls roll down the ramp by the car wash.</p>	 
	<p>Listen to “The Wheels on the Bus” and do the motions.</p>	   
<p>Words to Use</p>	<p>Town, city, community, gas station, car wash, mechanic, fix, change, rotate, wash, tire, license plate, windshield</p> <p>Bus station, bus driver, drive, bus stop, stop light, steering wheel, gas pedal, brakes, transportation</p> <p>Grocery store, store clerk, customer, grocery cart, sell, buy, shop, dairy, milk, eggs, butter, bread</p> <p>Post office, mail carrier, mailbox, envelope, address, stamp</p> <p>Construction, build</p>	
<p>Play</p>	<p>Practice getting in and out of the car and bus.</p>	
	<p>Work on balance and grip by washing the car windows and pumping gas.</p>	 

























Kids Town continued

Play	Change the car's tires, but make sure you put them in the correct spots!   
	Turn the rollers in the car wash to wash the car.  
	Make license plates for the car.   
	Be a store clerk: Put on an apron; sort the food onto the appropriate shelves, in the fruit sorter, or on the bread board; make change for customers buying food.    
	Go shopping for items on your list.  
	Be a construction worker: Put on a hard-hat. Push the truck of bricks over to the wall and build a pattern.    
	Explore the town's different surfaces, tunnels, and stairs by walking, crawling, and pushing carts throughout the area. 
	Be a plumber: Design or copy someone else's plumbing system using the tubes in the basement of the house.    
Think About	Prepare your favorite recipe in the kitchen after you buy the ingredients at the store.  
	What other foods start with the letters in the alphabet-pictures on the store wall?  
Read & Write	Read the envelopes and deliver them to the correct mailboxes. ABC  
	Write a grocery list. ABC 


























The Kovler Family Climbing Schooner

Talk	How will you get from the beginning to the end?  
	How did it feel to climb up through the rope, across the bridge?  
Listen & Watch	Watch the fish swim around the tank.  
	Hear the difference between crossing the rope bridge and the wooden bridge. 
Words to Use	Up, down, across, through, behind, below, bridge, ladder, ship, rope, wooden 
Play	Strengthen your arms, legs, and trunk by climbing through the rope tunnels and bridges while maintaining your balance.   
	Take turns sliding up and down the rope ladder at the bottom of the schooner  
Think About	Have you ever climbed through anything like this before?   Example: Think about not being on stable ground
Read & Write	Read the directions about how to enter the climbing structure ABC 





















Skyline

Talk	What is your favorite building to visit and why? 
	What is the name of the tallest building in Chicago?  
	Answer the questions by the video.  
Listen & Watch	Play <i>I Spy</i> while looking out the window at the Chicago skyline.  
	Watch the video. See if you can find the spider! 
	Listen to the directions on the computer for building your skyscraper.   
Words to Use	Fabric bolt, strut, washer, nut, brace, nut driver, architect, builder, contractor, construct, create, skyscraper, tower, safety, careful, tall, short, hard-hat 
Play	Be an architect: Design a skyscraper, and use the computer to guide your plans   
	Be a construction worker: Put on a hard-hat and apron. Gather the tools and use them to put the materials together.    
Think About	What types of materials are used to build different kinds of buildings? How do these materials feel?    Examples: Wood for houses, metal/glass for skyscrapers, fabric for tents
	What shapes are the best supports/bases for the building?  


























Treehouse Trails

Talk	Collect [a series of] items in the log cabin area.  
	Tell me about the different kinds of fish in the stream, vegetables in the garden.  
	Do all animals have the same kind of homes? How do animal homes differ?   
Listen & Watch	Place the balls on the treehouse ramp and watch them roll down.    
	Listen to the water in the stream. 
	Listen to the birds. 
	Look for animals through the telescopes.  
Words to Use	Camping, camp site, tent, campfire, canteen, cooler, picnic, log cabin  Pond, stream, waterfall, fishing net, fishing rod, catch, canoe, paddle Fish, frog, salamander, rainbow trout, bull frog, sockeye salmon, amphibians Garden, planting, vegetable, dirt, cabbage, green onion, carrot, artichoke
Play	Fish in the stream: Put on the raincoat, get a pole and net, and catch the fish from the cool water.       Match the type of fish caught to the list at the stream. See who got the most!
	Crawl into the dark animal house. Look at the different types of imaginary animals.   












Treehouse Trails continued

Play	Be a turtle: Wear the heavy shell while crawling around.  
	Go mountain climbing by climbing up the ropes at the campsite.   
	Ride in the canoe. Don't forget your lifejacket!    
	Gather vegetables from the garden, and prepare a meal at the campfire or in the cabin. Replant the vegetables, making sure to match them to the right row.    
	Explore the tree house by walking across the shaky bridge and sliding down the slide.  
Think About	What do all the walls feel like? Do the leaves feel different from the bark? 
	Think about camping and what you might cook over a campfire.  
Read & Write	Read the names of the vegetables in the garden.  ABC
	Read the names of the fish and amphibians.  ABC

The Allstate Foundation presents **Play It Safe**

Talk	Talk about important people that help keep you safe in the community. 
	Discuss important steps if smoke is seen or smelled in the house.  
Listen & Watch	Listen to the phone operator, look at the picture, and answer her questions about the emergency.     
	Find the identified objects in the fire safety house.   
	Watch the flames go out as you spray the water from the hose.  
	Activate the siren in the fire engine and discuss what cars do on the road when a siren is heard. 
Words to Use	Safety, emergency, ambulance, 911, siren, alarm, uniform, paramedic, firefighter, fire chief, police officer, doctor, street light, evacuate, fire engine, fire escape, ax, smoke detector, mask, bunkroom, fire pole, exit, gauges 
Play	Put out the fire! Pretend to drive the fire engine and climb up to the top of the truck and then put the hose together to shoot the water.    
	Be a firefighter and put on the uniform.  
	Crawl out of the “smoke-filled” bedroom to safety.  
	Play with the different hose lengths and connect them to the hydrant and/or fire engine and see which hoses are short and which are long.  

The Allstate Foundation presents **Play It Safe** continued

Think About	What are the differences between the alarms? How do they sound different?   
	What number do you call when you see or smell smoke? 
	What are some other safety vehicles and how are they similar to or different from the fire engine in the <i>Play It Safe</i> exhibit? 
Read & Write	Make an emergency escape route for your house.   
	Where else do you see safety words: Chicago Fire Dept., Truck Co 51, In, Out   
	Create your own fire engine sign and engine number. 