



FACTSHEET

What is the Children's Science Center? www.childsci.org

The Children's Science Center is a non-profit, 501c3 educational organization dedicated to instilling a love of learning science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in all children by providing unique opportunities to explore, create, and be inspired. The organization was founded in 2004 as the Children's Museum of Northern Virginia and then, recognizing the need and interest in STEM, it became the Children's Science Center. Its beginning has been an outreach program—"Museum without Walls"—that has engaged more than 65,000 children since 2010. The Children's Science Center Lab is now open in Fair Oaks Mall and, in 2020, a Children's Science Center Museum is expected to open in Dulles, VA.

Museum without Walls

In the past, the organization has operated as a museum without walls by bringing hands-on science activities to thousands of children throughout the area. Museum without walls is a popular STEM outreach education program with hands-on science activities for audiences throughout the region.

Programs offered include Family Science Night, a citizen scientist program, the Youth Leadership Council for teens as well as participation in community events.

Children's Science Center Lab at Fair Oaks Mall www.childsci.org/lab 703-648-3130
11948L Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax, VA 22033 (enter mall between Sears and Lord & Taylor)

The Children's Science Center has opened its first operating site, the Children's Science Center Lab at Fair Oaks Mall. Launching the Lab provides a strategic first step to grow awareness and regional visitors and support for this innovative approach to STEM learning in our area. The Lab concept was developed as a means to provide children museum-quality, hands-on STEM learning experiences. The Lab is focused on children aged 2-12 and also offers summer camp, birthday parties, field trips and other group visits. The Lab is 5,400 sq. feet.

Exhibits: The mission of the Lab is to instill a love of learning science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in all children by providing unique opportunities to explore, create and be inspired. The Lab will have four experience zones offering dynamic content to inspire all learners:

- **Experiment Bar:** Order from a rotating menu of experiments that demonstrate the wonders of science
- **Inspiration Hub:** Hands-on exhibits demonstrating real-world applications of STEM; future museum prototyping zone
- **Tinker Shop:** A space for making, creating, building based on open-ended engineering design challenges
- **Discovery Zone:** Hands-on learning designed for budding scientists aged five and under

The Lab facility also includes a flex-space called the **Garage**, for camps, classes, workshops, parties, and occasional mini-expos to showcase STEM talent in-action within local industry and among area youth.

The Lab includes both traditional interactive exhibits in the Inspiration Hub and Discovery Zone as well as platforms for learning with the Experiment Bar and Tinker Shop. With these platforms, content can be changed on a weekly and monthly basis, allowing for a fresh, dynamic experience that encourages repeat visitation and cultivates growth of

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excitement and engagement among children in the STEM subject areas. The interactive exhibit areas allow for rotation of exhibits and prototyping.

While the primary aim of the Lab is to expose more students and families to hands-on STEM learning experiences, an equally important benefit and purpose of the Lab is to allow staff to prototype and test STEM learning experiences as the Children's Science Center plans exhibits and experiences for the full scale museum.

Design: Alchemy Studio has designed the experience and exhibits for the Lab. Alchemy Studio principals have designed exhibits for highly-regarded children's museums and science centers including the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose, Ca., the Liberty Science Center in Newark, New Jersey, and the Brooklyn Children's Museum.

Admission and Hours: Admission to the Children's Science Center Lab is \$12.00 for visitors ages 2 years and older, no charge for those under 2. Admission for seniors and members of the military is \$11.00 and the group rate for field trips and other groups is \$10.00. Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily, open until 8:00 p.m. on Fri. and Sat. during the summer (check the website).

Children's Science Center Museum at Kincora

Kincora, Routes 7 and 28, Dulles, VA.

The Children's Science Center, expected to open in 2020, will be a world-class, full scale, STEM-focused, accessible, children's museum with activities and exhibits centered around six main exploration zones [the universe, the earth, the city, transportation, information technology and the human body].

When open, the museum will occupy more than 30,000 square feet, with plans to expand up to 70,000 sf over time. The site selected for this museum is at the Kincora development, located in Dulles, Virginia at on Route 28 North at Nokes Boulevard close to Dulles Airport.

The goal is to inspire STEM learning for ALL children, by providing programs and facilities that serve the large population in our region and in particular reach economically disadvantaged youth, girls and other groups underrepresented in STEM. In addition, the Children's Science Center is committed to incorporating children's input as part the design process so the museum is truly "For Kids, By Kids."

Core elements and design principles:

- Providing a hands-on, interactive space for children **aged 2-12** and their families, with elements for older children, that includes family learning environments and serves mixed-aged, intergenerational groups;
- Integrating feedback from children in the design process and thereafter to ensure that the discovery experience is built "For Kids, By Kids";
- Developing interactive, accessible indoor and outdoor exhibits and programs
- Reach economically disadvantaged youth, girls and other groups underrepresented in STEM
- Being accessible to children with special needs through universal and inclusive design
- Creating LEED-certified museum facilities and exhibitions and making the facility an example of environmental stewardship

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