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Tulsa Children's Museum
A Museum Without Walls

Where are you located?

It's a question we get a lot.

Our answer -- we currently don't have a building, but that's not stopping us from bringing quality programming to the Tulsa community.

We are a museum without walls -- enriching the lives of Tulsa families through our traveling exhibits, outreach programs and a concert series.

We plan to eventually be in a central, accessible location.

But the ultimate success of TCM will depend on the involvement of the community.

So please support this exciting project!

Tell other parents about us, attend our concert series, check out our traveling exhibit at festivals, volunteer, whatever you can do to make this a success, is bonus for

Tulsa Children's Museum
Family Concert Series

Get ready to boogie down, sing catchy tunes and dress like wild animals -- TCM is proud to announce our Family Concert Series!

Over 400 of you filled out our event survey and now it is time for us to pony-up with some great entertainment -- and boy, do we have a line-up for you: Trout Fishing in America, Ralph's World and the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra.



With their irreverent and plucky sense of humor, [Trout Fishing in America](#) will kick off the concert series with a fall

Family Music Party on Saturday, September 20, at 4 p.m.

Kids and adults will both be humming the tunes of catchy songs like "My Hair Had a Party Last Night," "Mine!" and "Alien in

everyone.

Autism Awareness Month

Children's Museums React

By Allyson Jannotta

Chances are -- you know someone with autism. More children will be diagnosed with autism this year than pediatric cancer, diabetes and AIDS combined, with a diagnoses occurring about every 20 minutes.

The numbers are staggering. Autism affects more the 1.5 million Americans, and is growing at a startling rate of about 15 percent each year.

With that in mind, TCM is looking for ways to help these families.

Autism is a neurological disorder that affects communication skills. It is a spectrum disorder, affecting each individual differently and in varying degrees. But it is often associated with repetitive behaviors such as obsessively arranging things or following rigid routines.

As April is Autism Awareness Month, children's museums across the country are doing their part to help families and bring awareness to the community:



The Chicago Children's Museum in partnership with the Chicago Children's Theatre presents [The Red Kite Project](#), a highly interactive production for young people with autism.

Children work with specially trained performers to create a unique performance that caters to their needs using multi-sensory techniques such as water and bubbles, paperfans, music, colorful costumes and video projections.

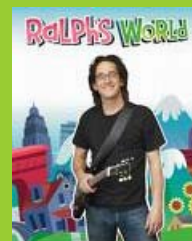
Kids Quest in Bellvue Washington

My Nose."

The trio mixes folk, reggae, Latin, blues, jazz and classical styles to create their award winning hits.

In the lobby before and after the show, audience members will also get a chance to play with TCM's very own traveling exhibit: *POP! The Art and Science of Bubbles*.

TCM will welcome [Ralph's World](#) to Tulsa for two concerts on Saturday January 4, 2009 which will be the second featured performer in the concert series.



The Chicago based indie rock band is best known by their music videos featured on Playhouse Disney.

Ralph's World has received rave reviews from diverse publications such as the Village Voice, Parents Magazine, Family Fun and The New York Times.

And Ralph was also one of the most requested artists on our event survey.

In the lobby before and after the show, kids will learn to make instruments from recycled materials with TCM's traveling exhibit: *Re-imagine, Re-create, Re-play*.

And finally, in the spring of 2009, kids will be able to come dressed as their favorite animal to an animal inspired performance by the [Tulsa Symphony Orchestra](#).

featured photographer Charlie Cotugno's portrait series, [Stories of Autism](#) during Autism Awareness Month.

And to help families with special needs, the DuPage Children's Museum in Naperville, Illinois offers visual guidebooks.

Autistic children tend to be visual learners, so visual schedules are often used in schools to help children with autism get through their school day.

Many children with autism are passionate about learning, but struggle in school because they have difficulty with transitions, experience sensory overload and struggle with social interactions.

For these same reasons, parents of these children find it stressful to take their children to museums.

The guidebooks at DuPage are photobooks that show a layout of the museum, that way children are able to anticipate transitions during their museum visit.

Many children's museums across the country, including DuPage, offer private playtimes for children with autism.

Tulsa Occupational Therapist, Judy McCarter, believes these private playtimes are incredibly important.

"A lot of children with autism have sensory dysfunction and sensory integration problems that are very specific," she said. "Some things that may not be irritating to us may cause anxiety to them."

An example of this is fluorescent lights. She said some children with autism can actually hear the vibration of the lights which upsets

Families will be taken on a classical music safari on Saturday, March 28, with two concerts featuring musical portraits of animals and an introduction to the instruments in the orchestra.



All shows will be at the John H. Williams Theatre at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center in downtown Tulsa.

Each concert will include a creative interactive art project in the lobby before and after the performance.

TCM is committed to providing quality, low-cost cultural programming, with tickets \$10 - \$12 per person.

All tickets will go on sale August 1st and can be purchased at the PAC box office.

TCM wants all Tulsa children to have the opportunity to enjoy this quality programming and will donate at least 5% of the tickets from each concert to families in need.

Traveling Exhibit POP! On The Road

For kids and adults alike, bubbles are hard to resist!



TCM took its traveling exhibit *POP! The Art and Science of Bubbles* to [Crosstown Learning Center](#) in April so kids of all ages could make three-dimensional bubbles.

their auditory system.

Other autistic children may be sensitive to certain odors or to touch, making them anxious if they are in a crowded room or if items are placed too close together.

McCarter recommends for all children, a quiet room with limited items where kids can take a safe break or a time out.

Children's museums are filled with hands on activities which McCarter believes is a great way for all children to exercise their senses.

"The wonderful thing about hands on play - is that while the children are doing things, they are able to use all their sensory systems: they use their vision, hearing, smell, and they use their whole body with movement - so they exercise the different systems through the participation of activities," McCarter said.

Children's museums also offer pretend play or imaginative play, which she said really stretches the ability to generate ideas.

"Children too have occupations and their occupation is to play," McCarter said. "If you learn how to play, that is the beginning of everything to make them available for learning to have that social, emotional ability to be able to communicate."

For more information about autism, you can contact the [Tulsa Autism Foundation](#).

Children engage in hands-on learning, using bubbles as a medium for exploring scientific and mathematical concepts..

Unique bubble shapes are formed using an award-winning construction set called [Zometools](#), which is also used by professionals in the math, science, technology and education fields.



TCM's exhibit was part of the Community Resource Fair hosted by Crosstown Learning Center.

Crosstown is a child care center in North Tulsa, serving 120 children ages 6 weeks through pre-kindergarten during the regular school year, with a summer program for kids in kindergarten through fifth grade.



Crosstown's nationally accredited program is part of the pediatric rotation for the University of Oklahoma College of Pediatric Medicine. . The center also offers Head Start and Early Head Start classes for children whose families meet income eligibility requirements.

Look for TCM and their *POP!* exhibit at upcoming events, including the American Cancer Society's annual fundraiser, [Relay for Life](#), in May.

Be sure to check out next month's newsletter on Health and Wellness and learn all about TCM's exciting Outreach Program!

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