

Planning Your Preschool Field Trip

Preschool trips to the library generally include a special storytime, followed by a brief introduction to what is found in the children's area and what you can do at the library, and/or time to play in our Learn and Play Space (LAPS). Preschool visits typically last about an hour.

Special visits are arranged on a first come, first served basis, and are subject to staff and room availability. Requesting a trip at least two weeks in advance gives us time to arrange for staffing. To request a visit, please use our online form to Schedule a Library Visit, or call Children's Services at 349-3100.

A FIELD TRIP PLANNING GUIDE

Before the trip:

- **Ideas about the library and words to learn and use**

Library	Books	Librarian	Borrowing
downtown	reading	helpers	sharing
community	stories	questions/answers	check-out
shelves	author	storytime	due date
exit	information	computers	library card

- **Show and tell**

Show the children your library card and ask if any of them visit the library. Explain that your library card allows you to borrow books and other materials from the library. When you return those items you may get others. Materials at the library belong to everyone in our community. We all share them and take turns using them.

- **Bring a library book to class**

How can your class tell that this book came from the library? Note the spine label on the side and barcode label on the back, etc. After you share the book with your class, explain that you will take it back to the library when your class visits.

- **Questions and answers**

A library also is a place to find answers to your questions. Librarians can help you find answers or good books to read. Questions often begin with the words: *Who, What, When, Where, Why* and *How*. Maybe your group would like to think of a question they would like the librarian to help them answer?

- **Check Out!**

Library cards are free to residents of Monroe County. If you wish children to check out books on their own library cards on the day of the tour, you'll need to arrange for children to apply for and obtain library cards in advance of their visit. The library has an online application form for people to use. Or, invite parents to visit the second floor check-out desk to apply for a library card for their preschool child. (You must visit the second floor checkout desk to receive the library card, even if the application process is started online.)

- **Behavior**

See our [Advice for Adults Bringing Children to the Library](#) . The library also has general [Behavioral Rules](#) that explain appropriate behavior while in the library. The general rules have to do with being considerate of other people, taking care of shared materials and shared space, and acting in a safe way.

It's always helpful to remind children before they visit that the library is a place used by many people, some of whom are studying or reading. We speak in an "indoors" voice instead of yelling, we act in a safe manner by not running or climbing inside, and we take care of the library by handling books with care, not banging on computers, and putting away puzzles or puppets used in the room.

The Day of the Trip:

• **Outside the library**

- Notice the library's setting. It's on a major street in downtown. On the south (Kirkwood) side of the building, take note of our limestone bears.
- Point out the signs in front of the library. There's the general sign that says what this building is, as well as signs that post the library's hours and the word "open".
- There also are places to return books and videos when the library is closed -- bookdrops at each entrance and a drive-thru pick-up and return window off the library's parking lot.
- How do people get to the library? There's a parking lot in back for cars, a bus stop in front of the library, bicycle racks near the entrances, and many people walk to the library, too.

• **Inside the library**

- Enter from the south (Kirkwood) side of the building.
- After coming down the steps, you'll see the first floor checkout desk and our large atrium. The atrium is a good place to pause and gather your group (be forewarned that sound echoes loudly in this space!). Explain that the library is used by all types of people; books for grownups are on the second floor, children's books are downstairs.
- It's also a good place to pause and remind children about the behavior that is expected in the library. When in this building we use our "indoors" voice since many people use the library as a reading place. We'll stay together as a group, act in a safe manner, and take care of shared books or toys.
- Next, come into the Children's Department to meet the librarians -- we're glad to have you visit!

• **Follow Up: Talk about your trip to the library. Who remembers seeing:**

- a place to ask questions?
- a place to check out books?
- a drinking fountain?
- a puzzle table?
- a train table?
- a bathroom?
- a place to hang up jackets?
- an outdoor observation area?

For more suggestions on preparing for a field trip, see:

Redleaf, R. [Open the Door - Let's Explore More!](#) .

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[4] <https://mcpd.monroe.la.in.us/patronaccount/billing/register.aspx?csw=1.1033.0.0.7>
[5] <https://mcpd.info/childrens/advice-adults-bringing-children-library>
[6] <https://mcpd.info/general/behavioral-rules>
[7] <http://mcpd.monroe.la.in.us/view.aspx?cid=1884854132920>