



Exploration Station

Field Trip Guide & Group Information



Exploration Station®

1095 W. Perry St. Bourbonnais, IL 60914

btpd.org (815)933-9905 ext. 352

Email: explorationstation@btpd.org

Exploration Station®

A facility of the Bourbonnais Township Park District

About Us:

Exploration Station® opened its doors on July 28, 1990 through the efforts of dedicated and inspired volunteers. Late in 1987, Marilyn O'Flaherty, a retired Bradley art teacher, presented the concept of a hands-on exploration and discovery museum for children to the Bourbonnais Township Park District. The Park District adopted the concept and soon began work on developing a children's museum under the leadership of Mrs. O'Flaherty.

In October 1997, a 10,000 square foot facility to serve as a permanent home for the Exploration Station was opened on the Perry Farm Park. While the children's museum serves a 65-mile radius, visitors from more than 45 states and 25 foreign countries have explored in the museum.

Our Philosophy:

Exploration Station® is a play centered discovery museum with emphasis on creating a child-centered environment for learning, encouragement to broaden children's horizons and to challenge themselves, with the interaction of adults and children. The museum is a welcoming, pleasurable and entertaining environment that helps to stimulate learning through imagination, creativity, and discovery.

Our Mission:

To develop a tolerant, safe, joyful space where all children can be fully immersed in the world of creativity and knowledge, so they may feel free to be completely themselves and learn about the world around them. Exploration Station® is a place for hands on discovery, creative play and – of course - exploration!

Planning your Visit

Group Fees

For Public Hours Field Trip

Tuesdays - Fridays

Fee per child— \$5

***1 free chaperone (adult 18+) for every 5 children**

Fee per additional adult— \$3

- Provides **2 hours** of time in facility
- MPR/lunch room access is NOT included
- A non-refundable **\$100 Reservation Fee** will be added to the Total Facility Fees and must be paid in full at the time of booking
- Public groups must have a **minimum of 10 children** and a **maximum of 50 children**
- Groups must be paid in full upon trip arrival, no exceptions.

For Private Hours Field Trip

Mondays after 10am

Fee per child— \$5

***1 free chaperone (adult 18+) for every 5 children**

Fee per additional adult— \$3

- Provides **2 hours** of time in facility
- Includes MPR/lunch room use for 2 hours
- A non-refundable **\$200 Reservation Fee** will be added to the Total Facility Fees and must be paid in full at the time of booking
- Private groups must have a **minimum of 30 children** and a **maximum of 180 total guests**
- Groups must be paid in full upon trip arrival, no exceptions.

Extra Fees

For Use of Multi-Purpose Room

Available option for public groups

This **additional fee of \$75** allows groups to access the lunch room/MPR for **2 hours**

**This fee does not include provided lunch.*

For Extra Hour of Time in Facility

Available option for public and private groups

This **additional fee of \$55** allows groups to use the **Exploration Station facility for an additional hour, providing a total of 3 hours in the Exploration Station**

Groups are first come, first serve and contracts with pre-reservations will be required for all group visits. We do not accept groups at the door without a proper reservation and confirmation.

Step 1: Gather your group information.

We need to know:

- Contact Information for contract (name, organization, phone, address, email).
- Date of trip
- Arrival and departure times
- Special accommodations needed
- Total number of students. We require a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 150 students per trip. If your trip will be larger, we suggest breaking them into smaller groups. (group visits on Mondays when the museum is closed to the public, we require a minimum of 25 students (first come first serve).
- Students age (ex: 5-7) Students grade (ex: k-1st)
- Estimated Adult Chaperones. **You receive 1 free adult chaperone for every 5 children.** Each child with special needs will also receive a free adult chaperone if necessary. (head start and at risk are not considered special needs)
- Lunch Plans (using our MPR, eating outside, more than one lunch time during visit)

Step 2: Contact the Exploration Station at (815)933-9905 ext. 351 to speak to our General Manager. Groups can reserve Mondays when the museum is closed to the public. Other weekdays are based on capacity limits from Tuesday- Friday. Some dates fill up quickly so we recommend booking as early as possible. We know educators are busy, so we also take reservations via email. Please contact our Guest Services Coordinator at explorationstation@btpd.org to get started. When requesting reservations via email, please include all information from Step 1 so a contract can be started.

Step 3: Confirm your visit with the applicable reservation fee and a completed and signed contract to finalize your reservation. **The completed contract and reservation deposit fee must be sent in and paid at least 14 days prior to the date of the trip to confirm your spot.** The deposit will be used towards your group admission fees. Please verify that all information including lunch options is correct prior to your visit. Please note that the non-refundable deposit reservation fee will not be refunded for cancellations, or no shows.

Step 4: Talk with your group and get them excited about their visit! Ask them what they think about what they will learn and see when they visit. What are they most excited about? Stuffed Animals can be purchased for \$10 (8 inch) and \$15 (16 inch) each. The kiosk will be available 30 minutes before a group's departure time. Gift shop items range from \$1 up to \$15.

Step 5: Arrive for the visit. Please bring your check in form that is attached to this packet with you. This will be used to compute payment for total children and adults upon arrival. (Groups scheduled on Mondays during the school year must be paid in full 2 weeks prior to the field trip date.) **Checks made out to B.T.P.D.**



Exploration Station

Bourbonnais Township
PARK DISTRICT

Procedures:

Before you Arrive

Please be sure all chaperones are aware of these procedures. You may make as many copies as necessary. Please go over these procedures at your facility or en route to the museum.

- **All children must be assigned to an adult.** There should be 1 adult chaperones for every 5 children at the minimum. **All chaperones must stay with their assigned children at all times** including exhibit exploration and purchasing items from the gift kiosk. Chaperones should interact with their assigned children. **Please keep cell phone use to a minimum.**
- Please have all lunches and personal item labeled. Large groups may want to bring bags/boxes to keep each class's lunches together. Coats will be placed in bins located in the museum's lobby.
- Outside lunches: Picnic tables are located throughout the Perry Farm Park. Tables are first come first serve. The pavilion and/or gazebo may be rented for the day. Please be respectful to patrons in these paid and reserved spaces.
- All food and drinks must stay in the lunch room. This includes water, coffee and snacks.
- Please remember to use your **walking feet** inside the museum.
- The toddler area located in the castle room is for infants and crawlers only.
- **Field trip reservation are for 2 hours only.** Groups are welcome to visit the Perry Farm Park after their designated time in the museum for no additional fee.
- Restrooms are located down the hall just left of the stop light. Outside restrooms are located in the pavilion.
- **Please pick up exhibit areas before moving to the next exhibit.**

Upon Arrival

- Please remain on the bus until the museum staff directs you into the building.
- Have 1 representative, for the entire group; enter the museum to check in with the admission clerk. Please give your check-in form to the clerk with the number of children, adults, infants, and children with special need that are present.
- A museum staff member will board the bus and give a brief orientation.
- Lunch groups will have 20 minutes in the lunch room (56 capacity). Please do not enter the lunch room until your group has been announced.



Exploration Station

Check In Form

Please bring this form with you the day of your field trip. Have a representative check in with the museum's admission clerk.

Attendees Today

_____ Number of Children (over 12 months)

_____ Number of Children under 12 month of age

_____ Number of Adults (teachers/staff/chaperones)

_____ Number of Participants with Special Needs (Head start and at Risk groups are not considered special needs)

Lunch:

We will be eating: _____ Inside MPR _____ Outside

Our Multi-Purpose Room is equipped to hold 56 people at a time. Larger groups are asked to split up for lunch. Groups will have 20 minutes to eat. Groups will have access to the room for the total of 2 hours of their trip to eat whenever they like. How would you like your groups announced for lunch?

Group #1: _____

Group #2: _____



Exploration Station

Exploration Station Exhibits

Exploratown

Exploration Station Railway
My House
Fire Dept./Hospital
Shop-A-Lot Market
Lickety Split Soda Shop & Diner
Wreck Resort (auto repair/raceway)
Pet Clinic

Storybook Forest

2-Story Fair Tale Tree
Puppet Theatre
Mother Goose Nook
Alice in Wonderland Tea Party
Peter Rabbit Bunny Patch (infant area)

Up, Up & Away

Air Fountain
Amazing Airways Air Tubes
Flight Simulator
Creative Flight
S.T.E.A.M. Lab
Sensory Room

Back Area

Paleontology
Gravity Wall
Critter Creek
Music Area



Outdoor Attractions

Patio Area (open May-September)

Picnic Tables
Grass Play Area
Sensory Activities
Painting

Perry Farm Park Amenities

170+ acres of prairie, meadows,
woods & canyons
4.2 miles of walking trails
Indian Caves
Nature Preserve
Perry Farm House
Barns with Farm Animals
Animal Food Vending Machine
(takes quarters)
Fruit Tree Orchard
Barnyard Theme Play Ground
Picnic Areas
Pavilion & Gazebos
Ziplines
Ninja Course