



The DoSeum San Antonio Children's Museum

BY ROBIN FARMER

My trip to The DoSeum, an interactive wonderland billed as the new San Antonio Children's Museum, lasted about an hour. I could have stayed all day, even though I long ago leapfrogged over the new facility's target demographic.

Aimed at children up to age 10, the 65,000-square-foot facility, which opened in June, offers features found nowhere else. From the moment I walked in and was greeted by Baxter, the hand-waving robot stationed near the entrance, I knew innovation surrounded me. Where else can you find a musical staircase that makes having a pep in your step a fun way to create a signature tune?

Other one-of-a-kind exhibits to encourage children to work out their minds and bodies include a Spy Academy, featuring plenty of math challenges, and an interactive Puppet Parade that made me jump and giggle like a first-grader.

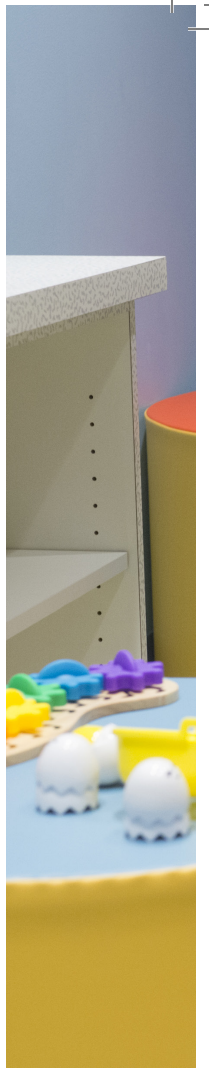
Aptly named The DoSeum, the world-class facility also offers 39,000 square feet total, including an additional 39,000 square feet of outdoor space that includes a unique ADA-accessible treehouse designed by South African Attie Jonker, a stream and lots of shade. The outdoor space is zoned by age and activity and has a quiet area as well as livelier sections.



The museum is aimed at children up to 10 years of age.
- Credit Farmer



All building materials for the museum were extracted, harvested or recovered, and manufactured, in Texas



The DoSeum aims to transform the educational landscape of San Antonio. Nearly all of the new exhibits will focus on how concepts in science, technology, engineering and math are connected. Attendance is expected to swell to nearly a half million visitors in the first 12 months, up from 175,000 annually, said Vanessa Lacoss Hurd, CEO of The DoSeum.

“With so much more to discover and explore, kids can create and learn on a grand scale while learning 21st-century problem-solving skills and creativity, two important cultural and educational concepts,” Hurd said.


To make the museum’s exhibits and programs accessible to all children, “we are poised to underwrite 30 percent of admissions, ensuring that all kids, regardless of financial standing, can experience The DoSeum. This includes scholarships for summer camps, field experiences for Title 1 schools, and underwritten family memberships. Only by making access a priority can we transform our city’s educational landscape and prepare our children for 21st-century careers,” Hurd said.

This summer, the museum will work with educators to pilot a project to tailor camp curriculum to support academic skills students are most likely to lose during the summer months.

While youngsters will adore the multiple activities, exhibits and learning opportunities, the space also challenges and inspires open-minded adults like me, who remain young at heart. In town for the annual Fiesta throw-down, a series of memorable parades, festivals and parties celebrating local and state history and culture, I still found the DoSeum ranked among the trip’s highlights.

To my surprise, I navigated a rope course, explored a structure that can only be described as a high-tech teepee that houses a sliding board, and wore the tall striped hat adorning the head of The Cat in the Hat in a wind tunnel because there were few witnesses and, well, why not? The DoSeum is a place to explore, engage, create and let loose.

The facility is also designed to be environmentally friendly. The DoSeum roof has more than 600 solar panels producing 228,000 kilowatt hours annually, which is approximately 20 percent



Even the youngest child will adore the multiple activities, exhibits and learning opportunities. Credit: DoSeum

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- ▶ Boston, MA 02210
- ▶ (617) 426-6500.
- ▶ <http://www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/>

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- ▶ 480 N. Arroyo Blvd.
- ▶ Pasadena, CA 91103
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- ▶ Indianapolis, IN 46208
- ▶ (317) 334-4000.
- ▶ www.Childrensmuseum.org

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- ▶ 516 S. Kirkwood Rd.
- ▶ St. Louis, MO 63122
- ▶ (314) 822-8900.
- ▶ www.magichouse.org

of the facility's energy. Such green features of the building are highlighted so that visitors have the opportunity to see them in action and learn from them.

All building materials for the museum were extracted, harvested or recovered, and manufactured, in Texas.

Nontoxic materials, wood and flooring, were used throughout the building to create a safe play environment for children. At least 50 percent of the museum's outdoor footprint was restored with native or adopted vegetation to help promote biodiversity. The DoSeum is LEED Gold Certified.

For 20 years, the museum was located in downtown San Antonio. The new space is located along Broadway in an area that is quickly morphing into a cultural corridor with peer institutions like the Witte and the McNay to the north and the San Antonio Museum of Art and the Pearl complex to the south. Said Hurd, "It's exciting to be a part of this transformation for a city on the rise." 🐾

IF YOU GO:

The DoSeum

- ▶ 2800 Broadway St.
- ▶ San Antonio, TX 78209
- ▶ www.museumtothedoseum.com. (210) 212-4453.
- ▶ www.visitsanantonio.com. (800) 447-3372.