



A Guide to
Free and Low Cost
Activities to do
with Children
in New York City



New York
Early Childhood
Professional
Development
Institute





Welcome!

Welcome to the ACS/CUNY Informal Family Child Care Project *Guide to Free and Low Cost Activities to do with Children in New York City!* As a child care provider, you have the unique responsibility and joy of caring for children during an important time in their lives. Being out in the world adds variety to the day and helps children develop a sense of themselves and the world around them. We hope this guide makes your time with children easier, more interesting and more FUN!

Who we are:

The ACS/CUNY Informal Family Child Care Project (IFCC) is a partnership between the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the City University of New York (CUNY) created to support the important work you do with children and families every day. IFCC offers a variety of programs and services, including:

- Professional learning workshops
- Coaching and individualized support
- Career development, and
- Resources and materials to use with children

Who this guide is for:

Whether you are caring for one child a few days a week or several children on a regular basis, you are building relationships and providing important learning opportunities through the choices you make every day. IFCC created this guide for you, to share information about the rich resources and experiences available for young children in New York City, many of which are free or low cost.

How to use this guide:

Outings with children can include short trips – like a daily walk or a visit to a local park, library, or grocery store – or longer outings to specific destinations. In this guide, you will find information about places to visit with children and tips for making your outings safe and engaging. The guide is organized in two ways – by borough and by type of experience or venue – and puts information about the diverse resources NYC has to offer at your fingertips.



Places to Visit in

MANHATTAN

MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Plan Your Visit

- **CHOOSE** a museum or cultural venue to visit.
- **PREPARE** for the outing.
 - Visit the venue's website or call in advance for information.
 - Choose one or two exhibits or areas to focus on during your visit.
 - Consider logistics like transportation, supervision, weather, and meals.
 - Inform families in advance about where you're going
 - Ensure children are dressed properly.
 - Pack a first aid kit.
- **BUILD** excitement before your visit.
 - **TALK** with children about what they might see and introduce new words and concepts (*What is a museum? What is an exhibit?*).
 - **READ** books and share stories about some of the things they may see.
 - **ASK** questions to learn what children are curious about.
- **LISTEN** and **OBSERVE** for opportunities to introduce new words or concepts
- **ASK** open-ended questions like:
 - **What** do you **NOTICE**?
 - **What** do you **WONDER**?
 - **How** does it make you **FEEL**?
- **Make it FUN!**
 - Invite children to **ACT OUT** what they see.
 - **PLAY** "I SPY" (*I spy something red, round, HUGE, tiny, etc.*).

Extending Learning

- At home, **ENCOURAGE REFLECTION** about the outing.
You might ask:
 - What did you like the most about our trip today?
 - What new words did you learn?
 - What can we find or use at home to make our own art (*or structures, animals, etc.*)?
- **EXTEND** children's learning by trying the following activities after your visit:
 - **CREATE** an art gallery with children and **OBSERVE** each other's creations.
 - **READ** and **TALK** about art and creative expression.

While You're There

- **FOLLOW** children's lead and let them guide your exploration.
- **OBSERVE** children interacting with exhibits, displays, activities.
- **DOCUMENT** your observations with pictures or notes to help children remember the experience later.

MANHATTAN Museums and Cultural Institutions

El Museo Del Barrio

1230 Fifth Avenue (between 104th and 105th Streets)

New York, NY 10029

(212) 831-7272

elmuseo.org

Pay As You Wish

Mon - Sat 11am-6pm Sun 1pm-5pm

El Museo del Barrio's Education Programs offers something to people of all ages. It seeks to foster a space for individual and collective sharing and understanding through inquiry and dialogue. Participants have the opportunity to consider the experiences of people from Puerto Rico, Latin America, the Caribbean and the United States in a meaningful way by learning about these regions' diverse histories, and cultures.

Directions:

2 **3** to Central Park North - 110th St **6** to 103rd St

International Print Center NYC

508 West 26th Street, Room 5A (between 10th & 11th Ave)

New York, NY 10001

(212) 989-5090

ipcny.org

Pay As You Wish

Tue -Sat 11am -6pm

Conceived to be the first and only non-profit exhibition space, resource and learning center devoted solely to artists' prints, serving the needs of artists, printmakers, educators, publishers, students, collectors and general viewing public. It offers exhibition opportunities for contemporary artists through its New Prints Program which inaugurated the comprehensive program of exhibitions embracing all time periods and cultures, launched in 2000 with Hard Pressed at AXA Gallery and continuing today through our international and thematic exhibitions series.

Directions:

C **E** to 23rd St **1** to 28th St

MANHATTAN Museums and Cultural Institutions

National Museum of The American Indian

One Bowling Green
New York, NY 10004
(212) 514-3758
nmai.si.edu
Free Admission

The National Museum of the American Indian is committed to advancing knowledge and understanding of the Native cultures of the Western Hemisphere. The Museum encourages families to explore history together through permanent installations targeted for children 8-13 and a wide range of family learning programs for toddlers, children and preteens.

Directions:

4 **5** to Bowling Green **R** to Whitehall St **2** **3** to Wall St

American Museum of Natural History

Central Park West at 79th Street
New York, NY 10024-5192
(212) 769-5100
amnh.org
Pay What You Wish

The American Museum of Natural History, located on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, is one of the largest and most celebrated museums in the world. The museum's collections contain over 32 million specimens of plants, humans, animals, fossils, minerals, rocks, meteorites, and human cultural artifacts, of which only a small fraction can be displayed at any given time.

Directions:

B **C** to 81st St - Museum of Natural History

MANHATTAN Museums and Cultural Institutions

Children's Museum of Manhattan

The Tisch Building
212 West 83rd Street
New York, NY 10024
(212) 721-1223
cmom.org

On the first Friday of every month admission is free from 5 – 8pm

CMOM believes that children learn best when provided with nurturing, creative environments that support play, imagination, curiosity and discovery. Our comprehensive early childhood curriculum engages all facets of your child's life by bringing together the arts, language, science, math and the humanities.

Directions:

B **C** to 81st St - Museum of Natural History **1** to 79th St

2 **3** to 72nd St

PARKS, RECREATION AND OUTDOOR VENUES

Plan Your Visit

- **CHOOSE** a park or other outdoor venue to visit.
- **PREPARE** for the outing:
 - Visit the venue's website or call in advance to plan trip logistics.
 - Choose one or two areas to focus on during your outing.
 - Consider logistics like transportation, supervision, weather and meals.
 - Inform families in advance about where you're going.
 - Plan your route and be prepared to adjust based on children's needs.
 - Ensure children are dressed properly.
 - Pack a first aid kit.
- **TALK** about what to expect.
 - What do they think they will see?
 - Are there games or equipment they look forward to playing with?

While You're There

- **ENCOURAGE** children to use their SENSES.
 - **ASK** them to close their eyes and tell you what they hear or smell.
 - **TOUCH** tree bark and other clean, safe objects you find and talk about texture, shape and size.
- **ENCOURAGE** children to **LOOK** for wildlife.
 - **LOOK** under rocks and sticks for bugs, look up in the trees for birds.
 - **LOOK** for animal tracks or for feathers that can tell the story of the animals that live in the area.

- **GO** on a scavenger hunt! Work together to create a list of items you may find and see outdoors.
- **COLLECT** leaves, rocks, sticks and other items to bring back with you.

Extending Learning

- When you get home, **ENCOURAGE REFLECTION** about their experience and discoveries.
- You might ask:
 - What did you like the most about our time outside today?
 - What did you find on our outing today?
- **DISCUSS** what they see and **EXPAND** on their observations using descriptive words.
- **EXTEND** their learning by trying the following activities with them after your outing:
 - **ASK** children to share their observations and discoveries.
 - **OFFER** books and **FACILITATE** discussions about the outdoors, living in a city, the animals they saw.
 - **MAKE** art using the items you collected. Press flowers, glitter pinecones or draw part of your favorite park outdoor activity.

MANHATTAN Parks, Recreation and Outdoor Venues

Battery Park Pier A

Battery Park City Authority
200 Liberty Street
New York, NY 10006
(212) 417-2000
bpcn.ny.gov

City Pier A is a municipal pier in the Hudson River at Battery Park near the southern end of Manhattan in New York City. It has also been named Liberty Gateway. It is the last surviving historic pier in the city.

Directions:

2 R to Rector St **4 5** to Bowling Green

Central Park

Manhattan, NY
(212) 310-6600
centralparknyc.org
Free Admission

Central Park is an urban park in the central part of the borough of Manhattan. It was initially opened in 1857, on 778 acres of city-owned land, later expanding to its current size of 843 acres.

Directions:

N Q R to 5th Ave/59th St **A B C D** to Columbus Circle / 59th St
B C to 72nd St, 81st St, 86th St or to Cathedral Parkway -110th St
2 3 to Central Park North - 110 St

Christopher Street Pier 45

Hudson River, Greenwich Village
New York, NY 10014
212) 627-2020
hudsonriverpark.org/explore-the-park/locations/pier-45
Free Admission

Amenities on this 850-foot-long pier include shade structures, seating areas, wood decking and passive grass lawns. This is a favorite spot for sunbathing in the neighborhood and an event space in the summer.

Directions:

1 to Christopher Street

MANHATTAN Parks, Recreation and Outdoor Venues

Chelsea Piers

23rd Street, WestSide
New York, NY
(212) 336-6666
chelseapiers.com

Free Admission

Chelsea Piers is a series of piers in Chelsea, on the West Side of Manhattan. Located to the west of the West Side Highway (Eleventh Avenue and Hudson River Park) and to the east of the Hudson River, they were originally a passenger ship terminal in the early 1900s.

Directions:

2 **3** to 14th St **C** **E** to 14th St **L** to 8th Ave

El Cataño Community Garden

171 East 110th Street (between Lexington and Third Avenues)
New York, NY 10029
(646) 474-4424

nyp.org/green-spaces/garden-details/el-catano-community-garden

Free Admission

Named after a city on the northern coast of Puerto Rico, this beloved garden is enthusiastically supported by local residents.

Directions:

2 **3** to Central Park North - 110th St **6** to 110th St

Family Garden – Sponsored by Tiffany & Co.

431 East 114th Street
New York, NY 10029

nyp.org/green-spaces/garden-details/family-garden-sponsored-by-tiffany-and-co

Free Admission

Directly facing Thomas Jefferson Park, the Family Garden's location inspired Loring to weave historical references into his design plan. Garden highlights include a wrought-iron entry gate that echoes the façade of Jefferson's beloved Virginia home, Monticello, and garden furnishings that feature the Founding Father's silhouette.

Directions:

6 to 116th St

MANHATTAN Parks, Recreation and Outdoor Venues

Friendship Garden

499 West 150th Street (between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue)

New York, NY 10031

nyp.org/green-spaces/garden-details/friendship-garden-wicked

Free Admission

Echoing themes of the Land of Oz – and as portrayed in the Broadway production – the Friendship Garden features unique Oz-inspired lampposts and fencing, a poppy-painted mural, a “yellow brick” path, an “emerald” granite patio, a spiral-twisted stone barbeque and two new street trees in front of the space. The revitalized garden is also lush with plant life, including a variety of roses, lilies, hostas and hydrangeas. Finally, a wishing well, located in the middle of the garden, symbolizes that a community working together, as one, can truly make any wish come true.

Directions:

1 B D to 145th St **C** to 155th St

South Street Seaport / Titanic Memorial

Pearl St and Fulton St

New York, NY 10038

South Street Seaport: (212) 748-8600

Titanic Memorial: (212) 830-7700

southstreetseaport.com

Free Admission

Directions:

2 3 C to Fulton St

Moira Ann Smith Playground

Madison Square Park, Between 24th & 25th Street

New York, NY 10010

(212) 520-7600

madisonsquarepark.org/kids/playground

Free Admission

The innovative Police Officer Moira Ann Smith Playground provides hours of fun for children. There are swings, slides and a 15-foot waterwheel sprinkler.

Directions:

N R 6 to 23rd Street **B Q** to 34th St / Herald Sq

MANHATTAN Parks, Recreation and Outdoor Venues

Morningside Park Down to Earth Farmers Market

110th St. & Manhattan Ave

New York, NY 10026

(914) 923-4837

downtoearthmarkets.com/markets?region=Manhattan&market=Morningside+Park+Winter+Farmers+Market

Saturday 9am-5pm

Free Admission

Directions:

B **C** to Cathedral Pkwy - 110th St

Fulton Stall Market

91 South St

New York, NY 10038

646) 801-5499

fultonstallmarket.org/

Sundays 10am-4pm

Free Admission

Fulton Stall Market operates an indoor farmers' market on the weekends and a permanent market shop seven days a week. Fulton Stall Market offers chef demos from local restaurants, music performances by local artists, Saturday cartoons and movies for kids, and nutrition education workshops for school groups.

Directions:

2 **3** **4** **5** **C** to Fulton St



Toyota Children's Learning Garden

603 East 11th Street

New York, NY 10009

nyrp.org/green-spaces/garden-details/toyota-east-childrens-learning-garden/

Free Admission

Directions:

L to 1st Ave

Target East Harlem Community Garden

415-417 East 117th Street (between First and Pleasant Avenues)

New York, NY 10035

nyrp.org/green-spaces/garden-details/target-east-harlem-community-garden

Sundays 10am-4pm

Free Admission

Directions:

6 to 116th St

Indian Road Playground

Inwood Hill Park, W 214th St between Indian Rd and Seaman Ave

New York, NY 10034

nycgovparks.org/parks/inwood-hill-park/highlights/12342

Free Admission

Situated in what may well be Manhattan's wildest, most history-laden nature preserve, the refurbished Indian Road Playground in Inwood Hill Park lends its bucolic surroundings a welcome kid-friendliness. Built with American Indian references in homage to the nearby road of the same name and the people who used it, the playground sports a wooden canoe that kids can sit in or fill with sand, a Native symbol-bearing tic-tac-toe game and a thoughtfully shaded circular sand pit, plus two climbing structures (one for tots, the other for older children) that resemble science-class atomic models.

Directions:

A to 207th St **1** to 215th St

LIBRARIES

Plan Your Visit

- **CHOOSE** a library to visit.
- **PREPARE** for your visit:
 - Visit the library's website or call the branch you will be visiting. Most library branches offer interactive story times for different age groups as well as many other free programs and activities.
 - Consider visiting the library in advance to meet the children's librarian and learn the layout of the library.
- **SIGN UP** for your own library card if you don't already have one, and ask parents if their children have library cards before you go.
- **PREPARE** children for story times at the library by setting aside a daily Story Time when you read aloud to children. If there are older children in your care, you may want get them involved in reading aloud to children as well.

While You're There

- **INTRODUCE** the children to the children's librarian and encourage children to ask for help with finding books. Older children may ask for help with homework assignments or projects.
- **DO** a Picture Walk.
 - Choose a book – preferably with lots of illustrations – and “walk” through the book, one page at a time.

- **OBSERVE** what children **NOTICE**.
- **TALK** about the characters and ask children to **PREDICT** what might happen, then
- **READ** the book together.
- **ENCOURAGE** children to select one or two books (or more!) to bring home. You may also consider checking out books on tape or CD, DVD's and other available resources.

Extending Learning

- When you get home, **ENCOURAGE REFLECTION** about their experience at the library.
- You might ask:
 - What was your favorite part of the story you heard today?
 - Why did you choose these books today?
- **EXPLORE** the following activities to continue promoting **EARLY LITERACY** and **LANGUAGE** development.
 - **READ** to and with children
 - **OBSERVE** how they **INTERACT** with books and stories
 - **INVITE** children to create books of their own.
 - **CREATE** a quiet and comfortable *Book Nook* or area in your home with books and soft materials.

Main Branch

Grand Central Library

135 East 46th Street (between Lexington & Third Aves.)
 New York, NY 10017
 (212) 621-0670
 nypl.org

Other Branches

115th Street Library

203 West 115th Street
 New York, NY 10026-2403
 (212) 666-9393

125th Street Library

224 East 125th Street (near Third Ave.)
 New York, NY
 (212) 534-5050

58th Street Library

127 East 58th Street (between Park &
 Lexington Aves.)
 New York, NY 10022-1211
 (212) 759-7358

67th Street Library

328 East 67th Street (near First Ave.)
 New York, NY 10065-6204
 (212) 734-1717

96th Street Library

112 East 96th Street (near Lexington Ave.)
 New York, NY 10128-2597
 (212) 289-0908

Aguilar Library

174 East 110th Street (between Lexington
 & Third Aves.)
 New York, NY 10029-3212
 (212) 534-2930

Andrew Heiskell Braille and Talking Book Library

40 West 20th Street (between 5th and 6th Aves.)
 New York, NY 10011-4211
 (212) 206-5400

Battery Park City Library

175 North End Avenue (at Murray Street)
 New York, NY 10282
 (212) 790-3499

Bloomingdale Library

150 West 100th Street (between
 Amsterdam & Columbus Aves.)
 Manhattan, NY 10025-5196
 (212) 222-8030

Chatham Square Library

33 East Broadway (near Catherine St.)
 New York, NY 10002-6804
 (212) 964-6598

Columbus Library

742 10th Avenue (between 50th & 51st)
 New York, NY 10019-7019
 (212) 586-5098

Countee Cullen Library

104 West 136th Street (near Lenox Ave.)
 New York, NY 10030-2695
 (212) 491-2070

Donnell Library Center

20 West 53rd Street
 New York, NY 10019-6185
 (212) 714-8400

Epiphany Library

228 East 23rd Street (near Second Ave.)
 New York, NY 10010-4672
 (212) 679-2645

Fort Washington Library

535 West 179th Street
 New York, NY 10033-5799
 (212) 927-3533

George Bruce Library

518 West 125th Street (at Amsterdam Ave.)
 New York, NY 10027-3407
 (212) 662-9727

Grand Central Library

135 East 46th Street
 New York, NY 10017
 (212) 621-0670

Hamilton Grange Library

503 West 145th Street
 New York, NY 10031-5101
 (212) 926-2147

Hudson Park Library

66 Leroy Street (off Seventh Ave. South)
 New York, NY 10014-3929
 (212) 243-6876

Jefferson Market Library

425 Avenue of the Americas (at 10th St.)
 New York, NY 10011-8454
 (212) 243-4334

Macomb's Bridge Library

2650 Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd.
 (between W. 152nd & 153rd Sts.)
 New York, NY 10039-2004
 (212) 281-4900

Morningside Heights

2900 Broadway (at W. 113th St.)
 New York, NY 10025-7822
 (212) 864-2530

New Amsterdam Library

9 Murray Street (between Broadway &
 Church St.)
 New York, NY 10007-2223
 (212) 732-8186

Riverside Library

127 Amsterdam Avenue (at W. 65th St.)
 New York, NY 10023-6447
 (212) 870-1810

Seward Park Library

192 East Broadway (at Jefferson St.)
 New York, NY 10002-5597
 (212) 477-6770

Terence Cardinal Cooke-Cathedral Library

560 Lexington Avenue (at E. 50th St.)
 New York, NY 10022-6828
 (212) 752-3824

Hamilton Fish Park Library

415 East Houston Street (near Avenue D)
 New York, NY 10002-1197
 (212) 673-2290

Harlem Library

9 West 124th Street
 New York, NY 10027-5699
 (212) 348-5620

Inwood Library

4790 Broadway (near Dyckman St.)
 New York, NY 10034-4916
 (212) 942-2445

Kips Bay Library

446 Third Avenue (at E. 31st St.)
 New York, NY 10016-6025
 (212) 683-2520

Mid-Manhattan Library

455 Fifth Avenue (at 40th Street)
 New York, NY 10016-0122
 (917) 275-6975

Muhlenberg Library

209 West 23rd Street (near Seventh Ave.)
 New York, NY 10011-2379
 (212) 924-1585

Ottendorfer Library

135 Second Avenue (near E. 8th St. - St.
 Marks Place)
 New York, NY 10003-8304
 (212) 674-0947

Roosevelt Island Library

524 Main Street
 New York, NY 10044-0001
 (212) 308-6243

St. Agnes Library

444 Amsterdam Avenue (near W. 81st St.)
 New York, NY 10024-5506
 (212) 621-0619

Tompkins Square Library

331 East 10th Street (near Avenue B)
 New York, NY 10009-5099
 (212) 228-4747

Washington Heights Library

1000 St. Nicholas Avenue (at W. 160th St.)
New York, NY 10032-5202
(212) 923-6054

Webster Library

1465 York Avenue (near E. 78th St.)
New York, NY 10021-8895
(212) 288-5049

Yorkville Library

222 East 79th Street (between Second &
Third Aves.)
New York, NY 10021-1295
(212) 744-5824



MTA New York City Subway

with bus and railroad connections

Key

- Part-line extension
- Local service only
- All rights flex (local and express service)
- Free subway transfer from non-subway transfer
- Free subway transfer (local and express service)
- Commuter rail service
- Bus connections
- Short-run express
- Subway transfer (excluding single ride ticket)
- (N) = northbound/uptown only
- (S) = southbound/downtown only

Station Name

To-day service most clearly, geography on this map has been modified. © 2014 MTA. www.mta.info

MTA New York City Transit Subway Service

A 8 Avenue Express	L 14 St-Canarsie Local	1 Broadway/77th Local
B 6 Avenue Express	M Nassau Street Express	2 7 Avenue Express
C 6 Avenue Local	N Nassau Street Express	3 7 Avenue Express
D 6 Avenue Express	O Broadway Local	4 Lexington Av Express
E 6 Avenue Local	P Broadway Express	5 Lexington Av Express
F 6 Avenue Local	R Broadway Local	6 Lexington Av Local
G Brooklyn-Queens Crosstown Local	S Broadway Local	7 Flushing Local
H 6 Avenue Local	T Franklin Av Shuttle	
I 6 Avenue Local	U 42 St Shuttle	
J 6 Avenue Local		
K 6 Avenue Local		
L 6 Avenue Local		
M 6 Avenue Local		
N 6 Avenue Local		
O 6 Avenue Local		
P 6 Avenue Local		
Q 6 Avenue Local		
R 6 Avenue Local		
S 6 Avenue Local		
T 6 Avenue Local		
U 6 Avenue Local		

Subway service may vary by time of day. Call 511 for travel and accessible service information, 24 hours a day. Check mta.info for the most up-to-date list of accessible stations.





This guide was produced with the generous support of the NYC Administration for Children's Services and the CUNY Service Corps program. Special thanks to CUNY Service Corps interns Amera Rime-Lulu, Anmol Kaur and Amanda Ernano.



ACS/CUNY Informal Family Child Care Project
NY Early Childhood Professional Development Institute
City University of New York

16 Court Street

Brooklyn, NY 11241

Phone: 718-254-7354

Email: IFCC@earlychildhoodny.org

