

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## Imagination Station's Little KIDSPACE and Early Childhood Programs Build Foundation for Lifetime Learning

TOLEDO, Ohio – Children learn about the world around them through play. Imagination Station's Little KIDSPACE along with its pre-school programs, workshops and activities are designed specifically to encourage kids kindergarten age and younger to role play, experiment and explore.

Beginning Thursday, September 19, little learners and their caregivers have new ways to engage in science as they observe, wonder and play together. Thanks to support from a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) in addition to the Clement O. Miniger Memorial Foundation and Landman Goldman Foundation, Imagination Station's Little KIDSPACE recently received several updates and upgrades with enhanced learning opportunities in mind.

"If you've ever spent time with a young child, you know they are naturally curious. They like to investigate everything and ask questions about what they observe," said Sloan Eberly Mann, Director of Education at Imagination Station. "Little KIDSPACE and the workshops Imagination Station offers are specifically designed to help support this desire to learn."

Visitors to Little KIDSPACE will see:

- updates to the giant treehouse, including new foliage and animals and birds to find
- new building materials in our construction area to help little engineers build big
- an added Ranger Station for little visitors to become mini naturalists
- a fresh new look for the grocery store, now known as The Market
- upgrades to the Science Studio which will have been renamed The Mini Explorers Clubhouse
- new carpeting throughout

"New signage throughout the space encourages parents to consider new ways to engage with their child as they explore," said Eberly Mann. "Prompts near each exhibit provide suggestions for guiding each child's experience as they learn through play."

In addition to the free play opportunities that are available in Little KIDSPACE, Imagination Station also offers special workshops and activities that support early learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM).

"Building upon best practices and research from The University of Toledo NURTURES program, we have developed high-quality children's curriculum," said Sloan Mann. "Our early learning programs and exhibits reflect the best experiences and strategies to engage young learners in deep, meaningful STEAM experiences."



Workshops and activities for curious kids:

pure science. pure fun.

- **Science Story Time, *kids kindergarten and younger***  
**Tuesday – Saturday, 11:15am**  
**Sunday, 1:15pm**  
***Included in science center admission.***

Science Story Time features monthly themed activities designed to promote early science literacy. Children will enjoy an exciting, interactive story and complete a related hands-on activity in the Little KIDSPACE Mini Explorers Clubhouse.

*September theme: Space; October theme: Critters*

- **Mini Explorers Club, *preschool kids ages 3 – 5***  
**Two Tuesdays each month, 1 – 2:15 pm or 2:30 – 3:45pm**  
**One Saturday each month, 1 – 2:15pm**  
***Included in science center admission.***

This program for preschool-aged children includes story time, STEAM activities and strategies to spark curiosity and ignite imaginations. A new science theme is introduced each month, and a snack and free play kick off every session.

*October 8, 9 and 22: Critters & Crawlers*

- **Little Scientist Workshops, *pre-kindergarten kids, ages 3 – 6***  
**Thursdays, 11:30am – 12:15pm**  
***Registration required. Imagination Station Members \$5 per workshop / \$40 per series; Non-members: \$7 per workshop / \$55 per series. Imagination Station admission must be purchased separately for non-members.***

These workshops promote early science skills by encouraging children to investigate the world around them through hands-on learning activities. This time of guided science exploration provides a great foundation for parents to guide their child's learning and development.

*Fall series: September 25 – November 21*

Imagination Station provides a critical layer of science enrichment by serving as an educational partner for teachers, schools and parents. It's with a thoughtful blend of exhibits, experiences, education and excitement that Imagination Station inspires visitors to pursue STEM careers in Northwest Ohio.

For more information about Imagination Station, please call 419.244.2674 or visit [imaginationstationtoledo.org](http://imaginationstationtoledo.org).

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