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First Look: Financial Literacy at the Please Touch Museum

BY STEPHANIE HALINSKI



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Starting tomorrow, Tuesday, Aug. 2, the Please Touch Museum launches two months of activities that make finance fun and accessible for kids of all ages, whether your toddler is just starting to count numbers or your fourth grader earns a weekly allowance. MetroKids recently visited the children's museum in Philadelphia for a preview of the new Financial Literacy program. Here's a look at the lessons your kids can learn about personal finance at the Please Touch Museum.

Try This At Home

Can't make it to the Museum? Here's an activity that can help kids decipher the difference between a "want" and a "need." Instructions were provided by First Financial Group, who is presenting the Please Touch Museum program.

What You Need: A poster board, sticky notes or index cards, writing tools

How To Play: Divide the poster board into two sides: "wants" and "needs." Have kids write down or draw things they want (one item per sticky note or index card). Place the notes or cards on the appropriate side of the poster board. Discuss why each item is a "want" vs. a "need." For example, a new pair of sneakers could be a "want" if your child has two other pairs already, but it could be a need if one sneaker has a hole in the sole or the child has outgrown the size. Then talk about the ways your family could get each of the items they want, and create a purchase plan for one item. Ideas include buying the item used or on sale, making it at home, doing chores to earn extra income to buy the item, or having siblings work together to make a purchase.

The Pinch & Penny Show

Head to the Please Touch Playhouse (on the Museum's lower level, near the Wonderland maze) to watch a 25-min. puppet show about Penny, who spends every coin she earns, until she eventually learns the hard way that saving is more worthwhile than careless spending.

See *Pinch & Penny* on Saturdays for a bonus experience: after the shows, First Financial Group leads MassMutual Kids \$mart Start Financial Literacy Workshops to further emphasize the concepts of spending and saving. Working with their parents, kids discover the difference between a "want" and a "need" and develop plans for managing money and making purchases.

Watch the show in the Please Touch Playhouse at 11am, 1pm & 3pm on Mondays through Saturdays; 1pm & 3pm on Sundays. No shows Tuesdays and Thursdays after Labor Day. Workshops run Saturdays in August and Sept. 3 & 10.

More Financial Fun

Look for a new puppet pal, Billingsworth the Banker, who will stroll the Museum to talk with kids about numbers and counting. Daily storytimes in the Kids Castle in the Museum's gift shop focus on money, savings and numbers. Every day in the Program Room, kids can create their own currency, while exploring the design behind money, including historical figures, symbols and more.

All Financial Literacy programs are free with admission, \$15. Financial Literacy programs run through Fri., Sept. 30. For a complete activity schedule, visit the Please Touch Museum website.

Stephanie Halinski is calendar editor of MetroKids.