

Play Area Themes and Favorite Toys (and other useful stuff)

Theme: Dinosaurs

Key Concepts: size, mass, fact vs. fiction, habitat

Favorite toys:

[Tuff Tray](#): Adjustable height, stores flat, raised edge, very versatile.

Habitat boards: Made by us. We cut shapes from a large piece of plywood then sanded and stained. These add a lot to any nature based play.



Tuff Tray



Habitat Boards

Theme: Cardboard City

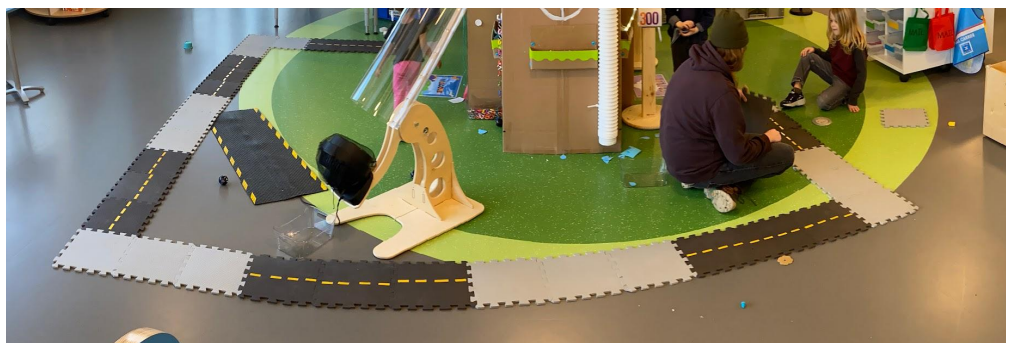
Key Concepts: community, infrastructure, occupations, ways of attaching

Favorite toys:

[Makedo cardboard building tools](#): The kids use these, but we also use them to build Cardboard City and other features.

PVC pipe building set: You can cut PVC pipe pretty easily with a [tool](#). There is a lightweight PVC pipe with thinner walls that works well for this. Add an assortment of joints. This is another thing that the kids play with that we also use for creating play experiences.

[Puzzle mat foam tiles](#): We added duct tape dashed lines to play mats. The kids love putting these together and driving cars on them. They get a lot of play!



Theme: Nature

Key Concepts: water cycle, plants, animals, habitat, conservation

Favorite toys:

[Treehouse Cottage](#): This is supposed to be all one piece, but parts of it came off easily. We use the pieces separately which actually works better because more kids can use them at once. They love building their own structures.

[Wind Tunnel](#): Highly engaging and encourages endless experimentation. Great for toddlers and up. This is out every day at KPL Kids and has held up well. You can also [build your own budget-friendly version](#).

Garden Sensory Table: [The Farmer's Market Color Sorting Set](#) includes fruits, vegetables and bushel baskets. Our 'dirt' is strips of felt which is inexpensive and works really well for digging and hiding. The sensory table is one of our activity tables that we converted for this purpose.



Treehouse cottage



Wind Tunnel



Garden Sensory Table

Theme: Construction

Key Concepts: building, engineering, tool use

Favorite toys:

- [Foam Bricks](#)
- [Foam Cinder Blocks and Planks](#)
- [Foam Archway Blocks](#)

Lightweight, realistic, and large enough for a big build.



Foam bricks, blocks, and planks



PVC structure for wrecking ball

Theme: Physics

Key Concepts: Laws of Motion (inertia, velocity, and acceleration)

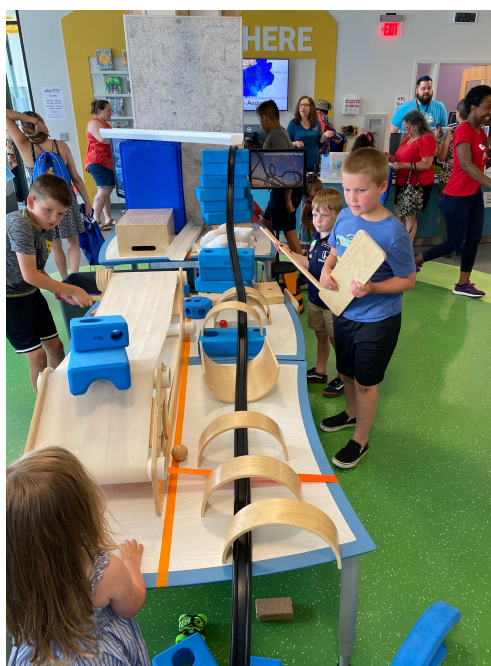
Favorite toys:

[Blue Blocks](#): Lightweight for big builds. We supplement our set with budget-friendly [Pool Noodle Boosters](#) and [Party Cup Buckets](#) from Dollar Tree.

[Conveyor Belt](#): A unique and engaging way to experience a simple machine.

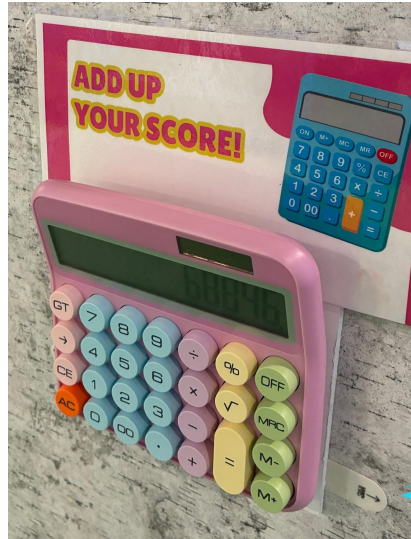
[Rubber Ramp](#): Extra long size fosters communication, collaboration, and problem solving with endless creative possibilities.

[Gutter Ramps](#): Gutter ramps are budget-friendly and versatile. You can purchase a 10' vinyl gutter for under \$10 and cut it into smaller pieces with a hacksaw. They are wider than other ramp sets and have raised sides, so they are great for younger kids too.

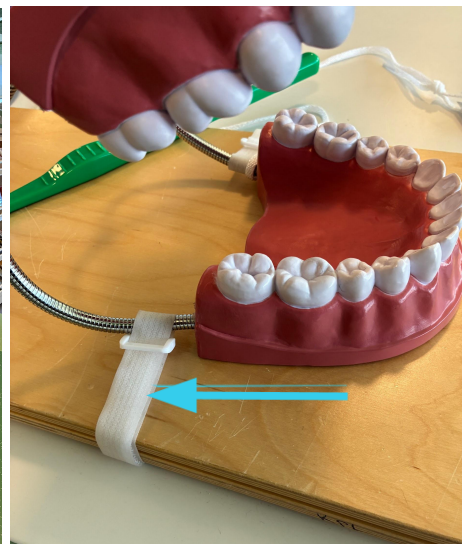


Other Useful Stuff

Command Strips: Single [replacement strips](#) and [picture hanging pairs](#).

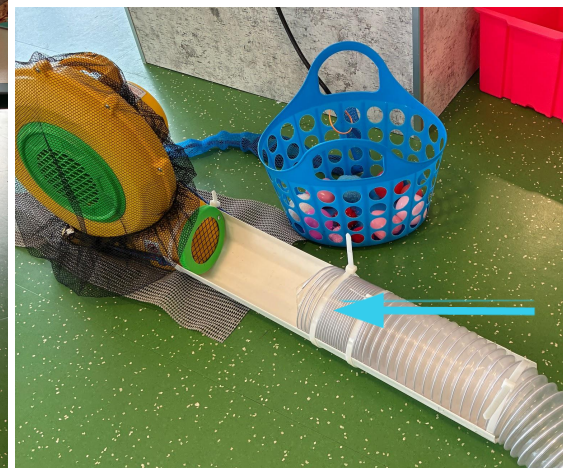


Hook and Loop Straps: These come in 32' increments, but can be cut to any length.



Big enough to go around a column.....or can be cut to secure a smaller item.

Zip ties



Sand bags, tent weights,
free weights



Tent weights, painters tape

Painters tape, paper
packing tape, Gorilla tape