

The Speed Museum of Art

How Findings Inform Practice

The Families in Interactive Galleries study results have reinforced the knowledge and wisdom of museum staff who work hard on creating informal learning experiences. Hearing parents tell us again and again, “I value creativity and want my child to have chances to be creative, that is why I visit.”

The primacy of families telling us how important it is for them to play and be together is also a powerful reinforcement for our ongoing work. Knowing the personal stories and the backgrounds of our families gives us a vibrant point of connection – that lets us see them as people. Our staff has amassed a rich array of wisdom from creating operating Art Sparks

It has been a real gift to have an in house researcher on staff. We have done a variety of listening and responding projects even beyond the study. Related Listening projects conducted by our researcher ranged from getting visitor feedback on the beta testing of a new in-gallery kiosk based on a medieval book of hours to polling our visitors on what they would like their museum of the future to be like.

Our partnership with the Frist and the High Museums has helped us learn about our colleague institutions and our commonalities in serving the public and our differing missions. We also learned much from working with the two evaluation firms, Audience Focus and Institute for Learning Innovation, and the ideas and suggestions that the principal investigators offered us.

Going forward we are excited to share our research with our museum colleagues nationally and internationally. Over the years, many colleagues have contacted us or come to visit Louisville regarding starting up or doing research on interactivity. We love the idea that building and sharing the toolkit here online will give other museums interested in starting an interactive area the benefit of both the research and useful start up resources.