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KIDS FIND MUCH TO LOVE IN PHILADELPHIA'S HISTORIC DISTRICT
America's Most Historic Square Mile Has Big Fun—& Huge History—For Little Humans

PHILADELPHIA, June 6, 2018 – Kids have been having a ball in Philadelphia's Historic District for nearly three centuries now—but never more than lately. Today, the original city positively bursts with opportunities for children to learn, play, eat and even relax. Here's a list of go-to spots in the supremely easy-to-get-around District for visitors of all ages, but especially for ages 0 to 12. Keep in mind that every older group of kids should enjoy younger age groups' recommendations too.

The Early Years, Ages 0-2:

- **Franklin Square** – The tot lot at this historic city-block park—planned in the 17th century by William Penn himself—is perfect for early walkers, and benches on the Philly-themed carousel are great for taking the littlest children for their first whirl. Spring through fall, the 180-year-old fountain plays music and, after sunset, adds colorful lights for a free show. Free entry; ticketed attractions. 6th & Race Streets, (215) 629-4026, historicphiladelphia.org
- **Independence National Historical Park** – Anchored by the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, Independence National Historical Park does more than reveal the essence of United States history: It offers acres of green grass, from Independence Mall to Washington Square to an entire expanse behind Independence Hall and the Second Bank. Here, little ones can toddle, crawl and, if luck may have it, take a stroller nap. As for the most popular attractions, the Liberty Bell is fully stroller accessible—and, during peak hours, can attract a long line. Independence Hall has stairs to the Signers' Room but can accommodate strollers and wheelchairs on its first floor. Free. Between 2nd & 7th Streets and Walnut & Arch Streets, (215) 965-2305, nps.gov/inde
- **Momo's Tree House** – One of the region's cleverest toyshops conveniently shares the block with the Betsy Ross House and the Philly Tour Hub. Momo's specializes in small-maker finds that keep kids entertained and helps them reach those all-important milestones; it can also help furnish a much-needed play break. 205 Arch Street, (267) 457-2803, momostreehouse.com

The Preschool Set, Ages 3-5:

- **African American Museum in Philadelphia (AAMP)** – The country's first museum dedicated solely to exploring African-American heritage makes an abiding commitment to communicating to young audiences. Beyond its core exhibition (see below), is a Children's Wall where children ages 3 and up learn about the lives of African-Americans hundreds of years ago in the best way possible—through play. Admission: \$14 adults; \$10 students, children and seniors; free under age 4. 701 Arch Street, (215) 574-0380, aampmuseum.org

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- **Betsy Ross House** – The wee home of America's most famous flag maker doesn't seem so wee to wee ones. Touring the tiny house—strollers remain at the entrance—can go quickly for those with slower attention spans. But the woman who plays Ross is lively and engaging. A basement-level play kitchen encourages aspiring chefs to bake imaginary turkey pot pie. Also great: Visitors unable to make it through the house often receive a visit from Ross in her lovely courtyard. Every day at 10 a.m. from May 26 through September 3, Betsy raises the flag in her courtyard. Audio tours: \$7 adults, \$6 children, seniors, military and students; self-guided tours: \$5 adults, \$4 children, seniors, military and students. 239 Arch Street, (215) 686-1252, historicphiladelphia.org
- **Christ Church Burial Grounds** – Kids old enough to know American history basics will enjoy this historic Burial Ground's popular scavenger-style hunts, which highlight the resting places of famous American men and women including the founder of the Philadelphia Zoo, the inventor of soda pop and Ben Franklin. Admission: \$3 adults, \$1 ages 5-12, free under age 5; guided tour: \$8 adults, \$3 ages 5-12; free under age 5. 5th & Arch Streets, (215) 922-1695, christchurchphila.org
- **Fireman's Hall Museum** – Those fascinated with fire trucks discover heaven on earth in this circa 1902 former firehouse. Antique and vintage trucks, including horse-drawn models, occupy the first floor, along with old helmets, tools and photos, and models of fire alarms, which are the only thing that's okay to touch downstairs. Upstairs, uniforms to try on, puzzles to build, buttons to push and phones to call are all kid-friendly. The small gift shop benefits the Philadelphia Fire Department. Admission is pay-what-you-wish. 147 N. 2nd Street, (215) 923-1438, firemanshallmuseum.org
- **Independence Seaport Museum** – At this age (and height), kids can easily duck into the World War II submarine *Becuna* and reconnoiter historic steel warship *Olympia* docked on the Delaware River. Inside the building, they'll enjoy hopping aboard exhibitions of various vessels, including the life-sized pirate ship replica *Diligence*. Every weekend, Seafarin' Saturday offers crafts and other kids' activities from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., demonstrations in the Citizen Science Lab throughout the day, both for no additional fee. Admission: \$17 adults; \$12 students, seniors, military and children; free under age 3. 211 S. Columbus Boulevard, (215) 413-8655, phillyseaport.org

Elementary Schoolers, Ages 6-12:

- **African American Museum in Philadelphia (AAMP)** – Predating Washington DC's National Museum of African American History by 40 years, this Historic District stalwart created the core exhibition *Audacious Freedom* to appeal to most ages. In it, video projections recount 100 years of black history, from 1776 to 1876, including cameos by heroes Octavius Catto, Richard Allen, Frances Ellen Watkins Harpers. Admission: Adults; \$14; ages 4-12, \$10; free, under age 4. 701 Arch Street, (215) 574-0380, aampmuseum.org
- **Benjamin Franklin Museum** – On the site where the Founding Father and inventor lived, this museum offers artifacts and interactive exhibits that give insight into Franklin's one-of-a-kind 18th-century life. A squirrel named Skuggs has been deputized as a kids' guide—Franklin himself had pet squirrels, then called skuggs—and points out places to touch and learn about curiosity, hard work and team play. In the courtyard, Franklin's post office hand stamps cards, and a ghost house stands where his home once was. Admission: \$5 adults; \$2 ages 4-16; free under age 4 and 4th graders with an Every Kid in a Park pass. 317 Chestnut Street, (215) 965-2305, nps.gov/inde
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- **Betsy Ross House** – In addition to the offerings mentioned above, the Ross house offers an audio guide designed for ages 8-12. In it, a prim voice portrays the early 20th-century child and former house resident Vexil Domus Weisgerber and points out the essentials of the dwelling's story, including the giggle-inducing presence of chamber pots in two bedrooms. Ross, in her upholstery shop, has been known to quiz kids' on their knowledge of American Revolution history, and gladly demonstrates how to cut a five-point star. Audio tours: \$7 adults, \$6 children, seniors, military and students; self-guided tours: \$5 adults, \$4 children, seniors, military and students. 239 Arch Street, (215) 686-1252, historicphiladelphia.org
- **Blue Cross RiverRink** – Summer and winter, this Penn's Landing attraction opens up its outdoor rink for skating—roller in summer, ice in winter. The rink is the centerpiece of Summerfest and Winterfest—surrounded by a lodge, arcade and dining. Visitors can count on boardwalk-style amusements and games, including a Ferris wheel, carousel and mini golf, in summer, and warming fire pits in winter. Free entry; fee to skate. Summerfest: through September 3; Winterfest: November 2017-February 2018 (exact dates TBA). 101 S. Columbus Boulevard, (215) 629-3200, delawariverwaterfront.com
- **Franklin Square** – Bigger kids enjoy a big-kid playground, the fun mentioned above, plus an 18-hole, Philly-themed mini golf course. 6th & Race Streets, (215) 629-4026, historicphiladelphia.org
- **Independence National Historical Park (INHP)** – On top of its many kid-friendly attractions, INHP, America's most historic square mile, engages kids with its Junior Park Ranger program. Kids pick up a booklet from the National Park Service desk at the Independence Visitor Center (6th and Market Streets) or on their own iPads and earn badges by visiting sites in the treasured historic park. Each day ends at 4 p.m. with a Junior Ranger ceremony back at the Independence Visitor Center, when participants receive official certificates. Free. Between 2nd & 7th Streets and Walnut & Arch Streets, (215) 965-2305, nps.gov/inde
- **Liberty Bell Center** – A requisite stop during any Historic District class trip, the historic bell that has come to symbolize a city offers a vital civics lesson too. Kids can't help but connect its origins and longevity to the role the Bell played and plays in American movements for civil rights. They can also touch a replica of its inscription. Free. 6th Chestnut Streets, nps.gov/inde
- **Military Muster** – Most days, twice a day, Memorial Day through Labor Day, kids gather at the Signer's Garden to play-enlist, if for only a few minutes, in the Continental Army. A mini 18th-century boot camp includes drills, marching and musket etiquette. 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. 5th & Chestnut Streets, (215) 629-4026, historicphiladelphia.org
- **Museum of the American Revolution** – With interactive exhibitions, easy-to-read guides and incredibly lifelike dioramas, one of the first U.S. museums dedicated to the conflict that birthed a democracy is well suited to first graders on up. Littler ones might want to try on soldiers' uniforms and explore the deck of a replica 18th-century privateer ship. Older kids will find images, films and stories of everyday colonial-era people, including native, enslaved and young Americans, more than arresting. All ages will appreciate the dramatic reveal of the real thing after the film about General Washington's War Tent. Admission: \$19 adults; \$17 seniors, students and military; \$12 ages 6-17; free under age 6. 101 S. 3rd Street, (215) 253-6731, amrevmuseum.org
- **National Constitution Center** – Anchoring Independence Mall is the absolute go-to for social studies classes doing units on the U.S. government's most essential founding document. Voting booths, a mock Supreme Court bench, justices' robes, recordings of historic speeches and a hall full of original signers (in bronze) impart the vitality and importance of the *U.S. Constitution*. The Center gets extra family-friendly on civic holidays, when admission is often discounted or free and staffers with activity carts populate the halls. Admission: \$14.50 adults; \$13 seniors and college students; \$11 ages 6-18, free active military and under age 6. 525 Arch Street, (215) 409-6600, constitutioncenter.org

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- **National Liberty Museum** – The main gallery of this attraction tells just the stories kids want to retell, stories of everyday advocates for change such as teachers, firefighters, police officers and ordinary citizens. Among the artful displays are the sculpture *Jellybean Children*, made out of rainbow-colored candies, and glass artist Dale Chihuly's dramatic *Flame of Liberty*. \$7 adults, \$6 seniors, \$5 students, \$2 ages 5-17 (with adult), free under age 5. 321 Chestnut Street, (215) 925-2800, libertymuseum.org
- **National Museum of American Jewish History** – This modern, four-story representation of 360 years of Jews in America offers more than chances to dress up in western wear and play in a covered wagon, don Purim masks or play at industrial work or mid-century modern house. It also offers easily understood access into immigrant stories that can't help but compel kids to think about their own heritage and traditions. \$15 adults, \$13 seniors & ages 13-21, free under age 12. 101 S. Independence Mall East, (215) 923-3811, nmajh.org
- **Once Upon A Nation** – The absolute perfect way to tell the story of revolutionary Philadelphia and its history makers is even centuries-older than the city itself: storytelling. At 13 benches across the district, professionals recount true tales of soldiering, clothes making, debating, investigating and being George and Martha Washington—in three to five minutes. Any kid who does them all wins a ticket to the Franklin Square carousel. Tuesday-Saturday, Memorial Day through September 3, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Various locations. (215) 629-4026, historicphiladelphia.org
- **Spruce Street Harbor Park** – Each summer, families frolic on an urban boardwalk with tree-slung hammocks, bocce courts, ice cream and funnel cake vendors and games galore (think skeeball, air hockey, claw crane, Ms. Pacman). Every Sunday (11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.), PopUpPlay teaches kids about science, art, music and more through physical play. Columbus Boulevard & Spruce Streets, (215) 922-2386, sprucestreetharborpark.com
- **U.S. Mint** – Created in 1792 by the one-and-only Alexander Hamilton, this active money-making center offers a great background video and free, self-guided, 45-minute tours Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m., including July 4 and Labor Day. Numismatists (coin aficionados) will find rare coins for sale in the gift shop. Free. 151 N. Independence Mall East, (215) 408-0112, usmint.gov

Philadelphia's Historic District campaign, from VISIT PHILADELPHIA®, showcases the city's incomparable place in early American history and the still vibrant neighborhoods of Old City, Society Hill and the Delaware River Waterfront. The campaign celebrates America's most historic square mile in the country's first World Heritage City, as designated by the Organization of World Heritage Cities. Funded by The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development and H.F. (Gerry) Lenfest, the initiative runs through September 2018.

Between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends, visitors can engage with costumed history makers, hear stories of the real people of independence and take part in colonial reenactments. And every day of the year, they can tour, shop, dine and drink in the area just like the founding fathers and mothers once did. For more information about all there is to see and do in Historic Philadelphia, go to visitphilly.com and uwishunu.com.

Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of the Historic District, visit the Photos & Video section of visitphilly.com/mediacenter.

