

## Getting to know YOU

**A new MOSI exhibit takes you on an interactive tour of the human body, led by some lovable, furry old monsters.**

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The Museum of Science and Industry just can't get enough of body exhibits.

This time, instead of human bodies on display, kids can get a glimpse of what the body looks like from a Sesame Street point of view. The new interactive exhibit, "Sesame Street Presents: The Body," is loaded with hands-on experiences. Along with the Sesame Street characters, you'll play and learn your way to healthy habits.

What lessons will exhibit visitors take with them? "Children, parents and caregivers will learn things to do to live healthier," says Jennifer Miller, tour manager from Thinkwell Design & Production. "Small things . . . Get out, get physically active, eat healthy foods, try new foods and simply (learning) their body parts all help to live longer and healthier."

Sesame Workshop joined with Thinkwell to create the exhibit in light of a disturbing trend in childhood obesity in the United States. A 2001 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed "the prevalence of overweight children 2-5 years old is 13.4 percent, and 15.3 percent of 2-5 year olds are at risk for being overweight."

The exhibit is divided into four parts: how you work, your insides, your outsides and staying healthy. It is intended for children ages 2-8, but if you ask me, it could be enjoyed by anyone. From the Sneeze Machine (take tissues) to the Count's Organ Organ, it's all multimedia and interactive fun.

Toddlers to grandparents will find it hard to resist getting "happy feet" to the heart-thumping beat at Grover's Disco, complete with mirrored disco ball and bouncing colorful lights.

Kids will enjoy Digestion with Oscar because just looking at the display will make them laugh. I laughed out loud. Oscar's gigantic machinelike digestive track is made out of recycled trash he has collected over the years. You get to make a pair of oversized chompers chomp on food, then turn and churn the digestive system and watch it through a glass-view duodenum (upper intestines). But be warned, you might just hear a toot in the end.

There is Mr. Hooper's Store and Baby Bear's Mini Mart to shop and stock up on healthy foods. You can play with UPC scanners, fill kid-sized shopping carts, ring up items on a cash register and build healthy meal options in the cafe. You'll learn it's easy to make healthy choices with simple changes like picking fruit instead of a candy bar.

The Count's Organ Organ is a humongous musical pipe organ with a human body diagram in the middle. When you press a musical key (go ahead, the Count doesn't bite, unlike other vampires), you'll hear the Count and his bats sing about a specific body organ. Up on the screen that body organ will light up. By the way, go easy on the liquids before pressing the bladder organ key; it will make the song a lot easier to bear.

You can crawl, jump and dodge around and even run into a swinging padded wall on Super Grover's Obstacle Course. It was exhilarating to run the course. I enjoyed and survived crashing into the swinging wall at the end.

At the Brain Control Center you can do tricky brain twisters and listen to your brain as it gives commands and receives data updates from your body. You can even control a virtual heart. It's the ultimate hands-on learning experience.

At MOSI you can get a double dose of body information through the summer. But unlike the grown-up "Bodies" exhibit, mostly all of the Sesame Street exhibit can be touched and handled. There are areas to dance, jump, row and play.

Please don't let the intended age fool you or keep you from seeing it. I'm a 10-year-old and I thought it was awesome.

William Harvey, 10, is in fourth grade at Chiles Elementary School in Tampa. He recently was named to MOSI's Kids In Charge student advisory board.

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