



Science Center of Iowa

# SENSORY GUIDE



SCI




# WELCOME TO THE SCIENCE CENTER OF IOWA!









This guide is designed to assist you and your family in identifying exhibits and experiences that meet your sensory needs. Each exhibit at the Science Center of Iowa (SCI) is color-coded to offer ratings for sound levels, visual stimulation and tactile opportunity. *See example below.*

SCI offers families use of sensory-friendly toolkits available for checkout on a first come, first served basis. These backpacks include noise-reducing headphones, sunglasses, weighted blankets/stuffed animals and fidget materials.

We also encourage you to bring earplugs, sunglasses and other tools you may find useful during your visit.

SENSORY INPUT GUIDE		WHY THE SKY?
 <b>MODERATE</b>	 <b>LOW</b>	 <b>HIGH</b>

*These signs are displayed around the building to indicate Audio, Visual and Touch Stimuli.*

SENSORY INPUT KEY		
	LOW STIMULATION	 AUDIO STIMULUS
	MODERATE STIMULATION	 VISUAL STIMULUS
	HIGH STIMULATION	 TOUCH STIMULUS

# TIPS & TOOLS: CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- **Try Visiting SCI at Low Traffic Periods**

Looking for a quieter time to visit? The first hour SCI is open and after 2:00 pm typically see lighter crowds every day of the week, especially during the fall and winter. During the spring and summer, Saturdays are usually less busy until noon.

SCI also offers **Sensory-Friendly Hours** for families with members on the autism spectrum or children with sensory-processing disorders on the second Tuesday of the month from 4:00–7:00 pm.

- **Prepare for Transitions**

As you transition from exhibit to exhibit, there are noise and lighting changes. Some may be loud and distracting while others offer a quieter atmosphere. Take time to look over the **Sensory Input Guide** for each space prior to your trip and plan according to your needs. SCI also provides a photograph-based **Social Story** to help you make the most of your visit by walking through the experience before you arrive.

- **Quiet Space**

If you find the need for a quiet space, a staff member can direct you to a quiet room.

- **Restrooms**

Family restrooms are available on the main level directly east of the Visitor Services Desk. This restroom provides changing facilities and space for multiple people to be in the same, private space.

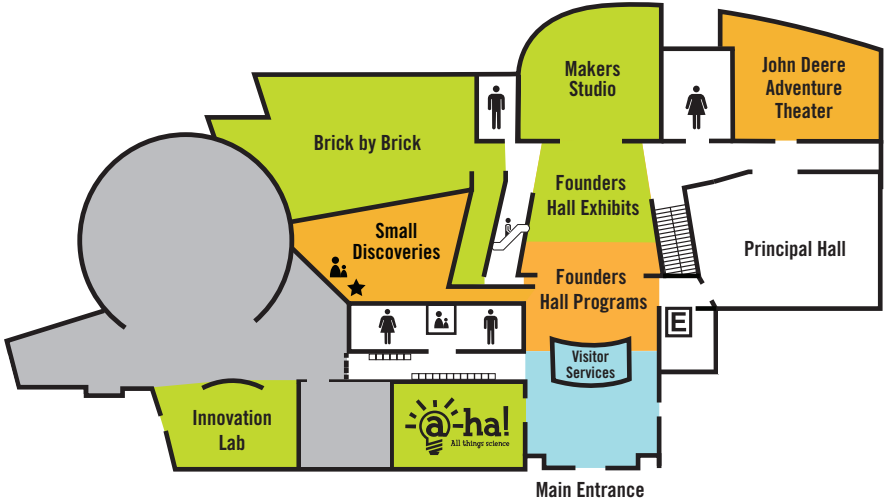
- **Food/Allergies**

You are welcome to bring your own food to SCI. Please note that food and drink are not permitted in the exhibits.

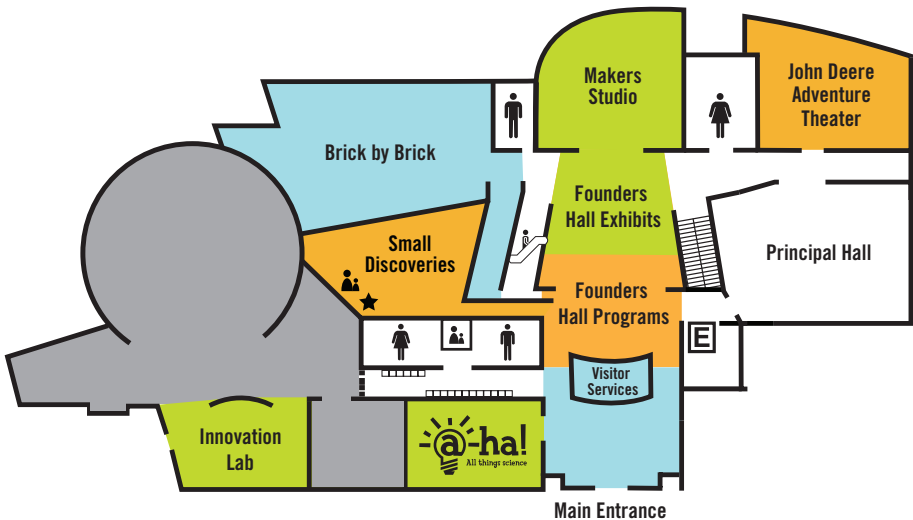
# MAIN LEVEL



## Audio Stimulus

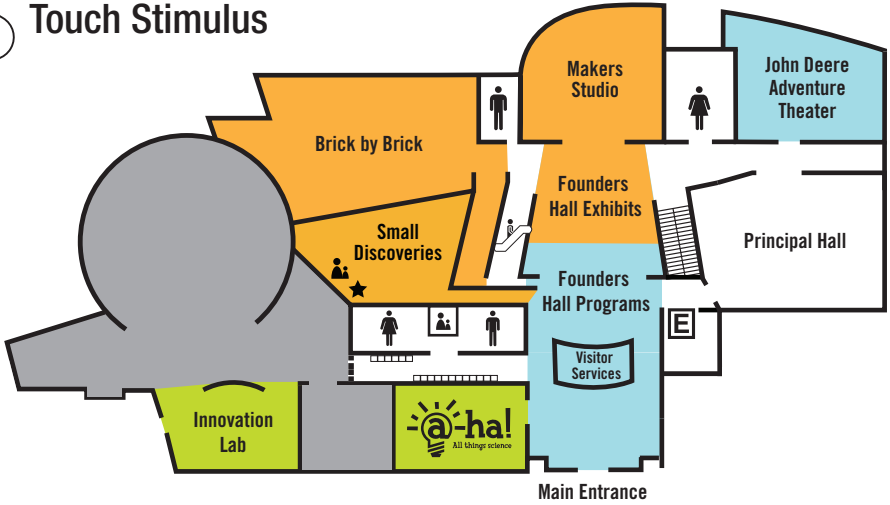


## Visual Stimulus





# Touch Stimulus



## Key:

= Low Stimulation
  = Moderate Stimulation
  = High Stimulation

E = Elevator
  = Stairs
  = Up Escalator
  = Lockers

= Women's Restroom
  = Men's Restroom
  = Family Restroom

★ = Caregiver's Corner

# MAIN LEVEL



## A-ha! Store

- Small space
- Bright lights
- Variety of textures and colors



## Visitor Services Desk

- Main entrance
- Bright and open
- Purchase tickets or check in with your membership card here



## Brick by Brick

- Hands-on interactive exhibits
- Some exhibits involve body movement
- Earthquake table has loud, sudden movements
- Some bright lights and sounds



## Founders Hall Exhibits

- Hands-on interactive exhibits
- Some components have button-activated smell, sound and light



## Founders Hall Programs

- Occasionally used for live programs and demonstrations
- Noise level and sensations vary with usage
- Sometimes live animals you can touch

 = Low Stimulation

 = Moderate Stimulation

 = High Stimulation



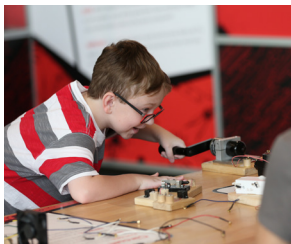
### **Innovation Lab**

- Hands-on interactive experiences
- Bright lights
- Access to a variety of hand tools
- Computers, A/V and VR equipment



### **John Deere Adventure Theater**

- Live programming varies based on usage
- Some shows involve bright and fast-moving lights and sounds



### **Makers Studio**

- Hands-on interactive exhibits
- Hand tools accessible
- Videos, initiated by button, can be startling and loud



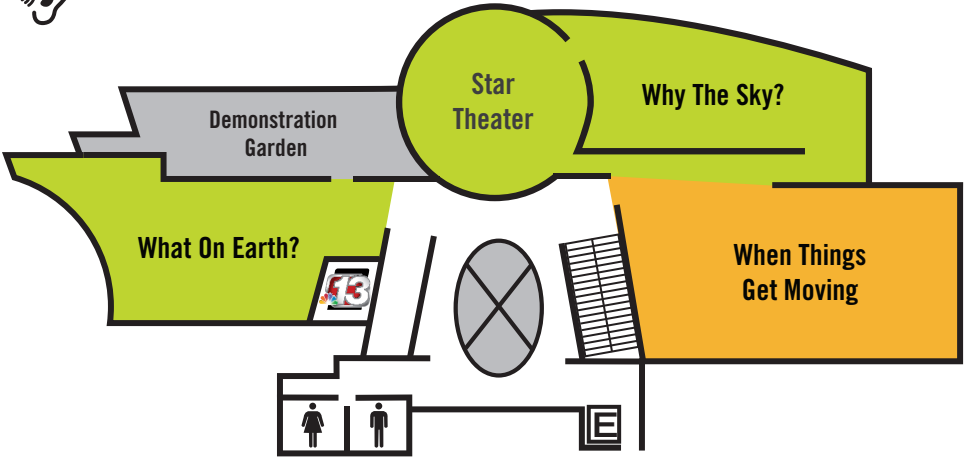
### **Small Discoveries**

- Some bright lights and sounds
- Some exhibits involve moving your body to activate
- Bubble exhibit with open tank of solution (may get wet)

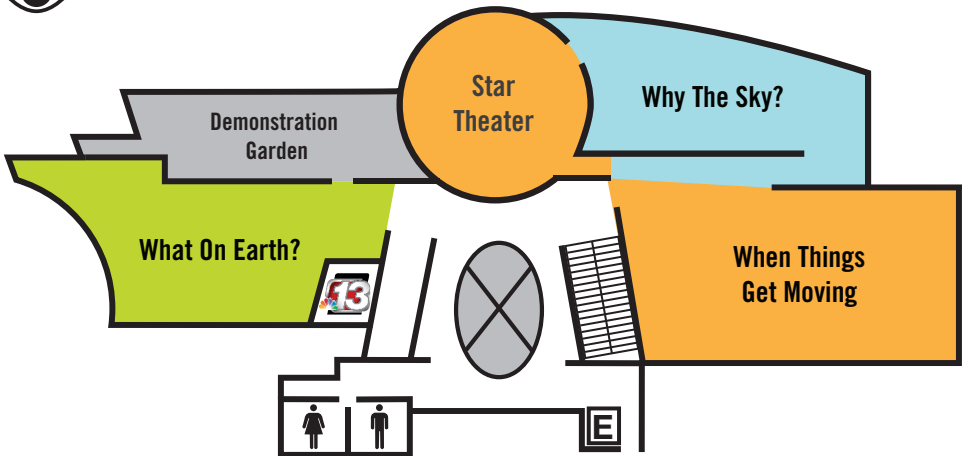
# UPPER LEVEL



## Audio Stimulus



## Visual Stimulus

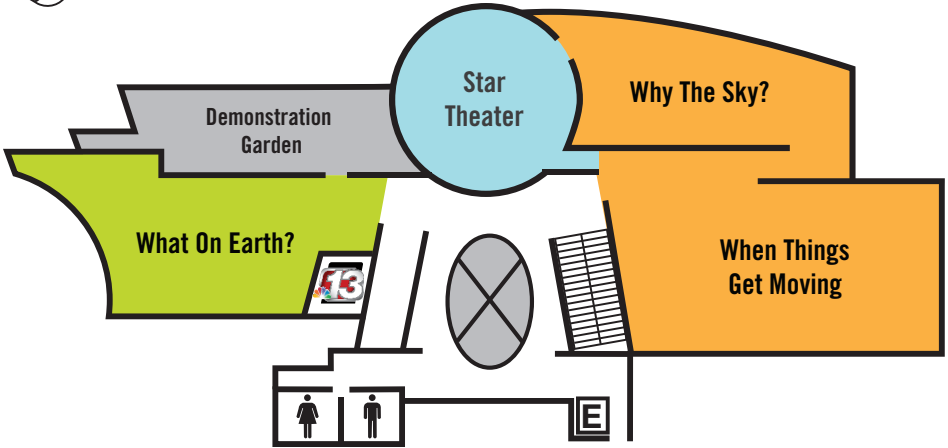




# UPPER LEVEL



## Touch Stimulus



## Key:



= Low Stimulation



= Moderate Stimulation



= High Stimulation



= Elevator



= Stairs



= Up Escalator



= Lockers



= Women's Restroom



= Men's Restroom



= Family Restroom



= Caregiver's Corner



### What On Earth?

- Terrariums of live snakes and animals
- Live broadcast of weather forecast (Thursday through Friday at noon, weather-permitting) in the WHO-HD Channel 13 Weather Studio



### When Things Get Moving

- Hands-on interactive exhibits and water table (may get wet)
- Some exhibits have loud sounds and sudden noises
- Bright lights
- Rocket launch produces sudden sound



### Why the Sky?

- Hands-on interactive exhibits
- Some exhibits have loud, sudden noises
- Lighting is low throughout



### Star Theater Planetarium

- Dark dome theater
- Night sky and high-resolution documentaries





[WWW.SCIOWA.ORG/SENSORYHOURS](http://WWW.SCIOWA.ORG/SENSORYHOURS)