



EXPLORATION PLACE

THE SEDGWICK COUNTY SCIENCE AND DISCOVERY CENTER

300 North McLean Boulevard
Wichita, Kansas 67203
316.660.0600

exploration.org | [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [v](#) [d](#) [p](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 19, 2022

Contact: Laura Roddy, Chief Advancement Officer
laura.rodody@exploration.org, 316-660-0602

Thomas & Friends Exhibit Rolls into Exploration Place Sept. 23

WICHITA, Kansas — All aboard! The world's most beloved #1 blue engine will roll into Exploration Place on Sept. 23. The *Thomas & Friends: Explore the Rails* exhibit is included with museum admission and runs through Jan. 8.

The exhibit, inspired by the popular children's series, seeks to engage children ages 2 through 7 and their families in foundational skills that foster STEM literacy through playful learning experiences. Children will help Thomas and his friends solve a variety of challenges, from a simple sorting and shape identification to more complex engineering obstacles, such as completing a train track using track pieces with different levels of elevation. As children confront new challenges and test their abilities, the smiling faces of Thomas, Percy, Victor and others are there to offer encouragement and remind children how "really useful" they all are.

Children can:

- Climb into Thomas' cab and explore the engine's inner workings.
- Fix Percy's wobbly wheel by removing and replacing parts and experimenting to find a combination of wheels, rods and bolts that work.
- Explore the favorite Island of Sodor destinations including: Tidmouth Sheds, Brendam Docks and the Sodor Search & Rescue Station on an over-sized Thomas Wooden Railway train table.
- Work with old and new friends loading luggage, livestock and other freight into the coaches of two train cars.
- Collaborate with others to get Percy moving by loading coal into his coal box and filling his tank with water from a water tower.
- Suit up as the conductor to exchange money and sell tickets to other visitors taking a ride on the train.
- Wander through a Thomas & Friends retrospective featuring model engines from the original live action series produced in London, copies of the original drawings and manuscripts from the Rev. W. Awdry, the creator of Thomas & Friends, and a collection of memorabilia documenting the history and evolution of Thomas & Friends through books, television, and toys.

Thomas & Friends: Explore the Rails was designed and developed by Minnesota Children's Museum in partnership with HIT Entertainment, a subsidiary of Mattel. Fisher-Price is the presenting sponsor for the exhibit. Local sponsors include the Shaw Foundation, KidSpace Pediatric Dentistry, Campus Credit Union and Golden Plains Credit Union.

###

About Exploration Place

The mission of Exploration Place, Kansas' premier science center, is to inspire a deeper interest in science and technology through creative and fun experiences for all. Exploration Place is from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and through 8 p.m. on Thursday evenings. For more information, visit exploration.org.