

While talking to friends and community members about the potential closure of Portland Children's Museum a friend shared this story and gave her permission for it to be shared as testimony here. The following are her words.

"Throughout the years, I haven't been the greatest mother. I have had 4/5 of my children taken by DHS at some point. The Children's Museum was one of the places we were allowed to go for public supervised visitation. They gave us free admission. I have taken all of my DHS involved children to the museum for visitation throughout the years. It was so nice to feel like a "normal" family. It was so nice to see my kids' faces light up. Every single one of them obsessed with the water. I would explore the museum and for two hours I would imagine what it would be like to continue to bring them there on my own and watch them grow and play when I got custody back. Well, I got custody back. To say I'm upset that they're closing is an understatement. I am forever grateful for the 2 hours of hope that they gave me weekly. I hope other families involved in DHS can find a place that will continue to give them hope for their future. Thank you PCM, for allowing us to visit for free and helping me to continue to bond with my children and look back at visitation with a smile. We will miss you."