MUSEUM-GOING PARENTS: A 2019 Data Story Update (PART 1)

What do we know about parents?

A lot, including that they:
- Are the most likely segment of the population to visit museums
- Visit for their children (and not necessarily for themselves)
- Are stressed, with little leisure time

But there's more. When it comes to informal learning, museum-going parents do visit museums (a lot!). But the other activities they do the most as a family are:

- Outdoor nature experiences
- Hobbies and crafts
- Read fiction and travel (tied)

Compared to other museum-goers, however, parents are less motivated by curiosity.

This focus on their children makes parents and caregivers most likely to say that visiting museums is work ... work that overall makes their jobs as caregivers more effective and easier ... but still work. And it probably explains why they are so much less likely to be motivated by curiosity.

“IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I AM BEING A GOOD PARENT BY SPENDING QUALITY TIME WITH THEM AND BY GIVING THEM AN ENGAGING AND EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE.”

This presents an interesting conundrum.
- Museums are helping parents raise their children ... and children benefit from museums
- They highly value curiosity for their children, and look to museums to cultivate it
- But parents are not feeling all that curious (and thus engaged) themselves

So how can museums help spark their curiosity in engaging ways, make museums less work (and more pleasure), while also helping parents model curiosity behavior for their children?

And by doing so, can we become a solution for more parents and caregivers, increasing visitation (and impact) among more casual and non-visited?

Because that curiosity gap with parents comes at a price not only for parents themselves, but also for children and society.

To be continued ...