Curiosity. It isn't something nice, but critical to human development.

Yet only 3 in 10 museum-going parents are explicitly motivated by curiosity, so let's take a look at how the curiosity drive plays out among museum-going families.

**MUSEUM-GOING (BUT NOT MOTIVATED BY CURIOSITY)**
71% of museum-going parents

**WHY DO THEY VISIT MUSEUMS?**
For their children, especially for:
- Learning opportunities for children
- Family time.

**DO THEY LIKE VISITING?**
Sort of ... maybe.
Because they are not that invested in visiting for themselves, these parents are the most critical of museums
- Most likely to say visiting museums is "work"
- Least likely to say museums are doing a "great job."

**OK, BUT WHAT MUSEUMS, AND HOW OFTEN?**
- Children's museums
- Zoos and aquaria
- Science centers
And they visit these museums regularly.

**WHAT KINDS OF INFORMAL LEARNING ARE THEY PURSUING?**
A wide range ... averaging 6.8/13 types of informal learning activities.

**AND WHAT DO THEY THINK THE IMPACT OF THAT INFORMAL LEARNING HAS BEEN?**
Substantial, averaging 5.5/10 possible impacts.

**HAVE MUSEUMS MADE YOU MORE EMPATHETIC OR COMPASSIONATE?**
1/2 say "yes, very much so."

**SHOULD MUSEUMS BE FORUMS FOR CIVIL DISCOURSE?**
< Half say "yes, absolutely"

**CURIOSITY-MOTIVATED MUSEUM-GOERS**
29% of museum-going parents

**WITH THEIR CHILDREN:**
- Even more likely for children's learning, family time
- But also for their own interests and learning

**YEST! VISITING CAN STILL BE CHALLENGING (ESPECIALLY WITH YOUNG CHILDREN), BUT THEY ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE POSITIVE THAN OTHER MUSEUM-GOING PARENTS.**

**The same as other museum-going parents, but also:**
- Art museums
- History museums/historic sites
- And other museum types ... more often too!

**Even more activities, averaging 8.3/13 types of informal learning activities. In fact, they were significantly higher on every single activity listed.**

**Even greater, averaging 7.2/10 possible impacts, and significantly higher on every single impact listed.**

The biggest gains were around prosocial impacts of cultural literacy, empathy, and conscientiousness.

**2/3 say "yes, very much so."**

**Half say "yes, absolutely"**

**What's the bottom line?**
Regardless of curiosity levels, visiting museums and other informal learning has a significant impact on adults and children ... at much higher rates than the broader population of parents.

So how can we cultivate more curiosity in parents, and help their children derive more personal benefits from informal learning? And by doing so, can we realize more prosocial impacts so that more Americans care about the critical issues affecting us today and in the future?

But curiosity drives even more impact, creating a snowball effect that accumulates throughout a lifetime.

“I’m so grateful for my innate curiosity and for all the informal experiences I have had that helped me grow. Museums and science centers have a huge role to play in connecting humans to larger systems, allowing them to see the role they play, and what we might do to make things better...”

---

Data Stories are created for The Data Museum, where research conducted by Wilkening Consulting is released. Sources include:
- Wilkening Consulting’s 2017, 2018, and 2019 Annual Surveys of Museum-Goers
- Wilkening Consulting’s 2018 and 2019 Broader Population Sampling

*Data reflect state research about regular museum-goers, who visit multiple museums each year and who respond to a survey about museum-going; broader population sampling provides relevant comparison data.**

Visit The Data Museum at wilkeningconsulting.com/datamuseum for supporting context and data.