



# Experiential Environments CASE STUDY

Birmingham Children's Museum  
Itty Bitty Magic City  
Birmingham, AL

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Fabrication / Planning / Installation: McWane Science Center Exhibit Dept. Construction Team, Linell Graphics, Commercial Printing, American Printing & Fravert Graphics, Imagination Playground, KPS Group, Kraemer, Mindsplash, Safespace Concepts, and Southern Custom



The McWane Science Center in Birmingham, AL recently opened a fresh, exciting new exhibit that aims to educate and capture the attention of the museum's youngest visitors. The new section, Itty Bitty Magic City, features 9,300 square feet of interactive play and exciting, hands-on learning for kids ages birth to Kindergarten.

This massive project has been six years in the making from earliest concept to grand opening. Scores of individuals including architects, exhibit designers, graphic designers, project managers, fabricators and contractors played key roles in this complex process.

One of the toughest challenges faced by the design team was ensuring that the exhibit was colorful and eye-catching yet would withstand the rambunctious nature of its target audience. The group chose iZone Imaging's vibrant, durable custom high pressure laminate (CHPL) for many of its high traffic, functional pieces.

The main entrance of the exhibit uses iZone Imaging's CHPL as a multi-dimensional wall panel system. The entrance features cut-to-shape panels that are mounted together to create a seamless flow of graphics that actually appear to "pop" from the wall.

iZone Imaging also plays a major role in Itty Bitty Magic City's role-play focused "Main Street" area. Main Street consists of a variety of "storefronts" where kids can take on different roles in a town-like setting. In the Diner and Corner Market, iZone Imaging's CHPL panels help create touchable displays that resemble a real old-fashioned grocery store and art-deco diner.

Main Street also houses a Garage, which is a scaled-down auto shop featuring iZone Imaging's CHPL in one of its more common forms – signage. Vintage automotive-related CHPL signs in various shapes and sizes are displayed throughout the Garage's interior.



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One of the most interesting uses of iZone Imaging's CHPL in this exhibit can be found in the Main Street Fire Station. Nine panels of CHPL have been router-cut to fit like puzzle pieces that form an interactive GPS map on the back of a kid-sized fire truck. The pieces are separated slightly to create channels that allow a small model fire engine to travel along road paths.

From simple signage to cut-to-shape dimensional wall panels to intricate interactive systems, the Itty Bitty Magic City exhibit at McWane Science Center has created a one-of-a-kind children's learning experience. And iZone Imaging's CHPL will ensure that Itty Bitty Magic City will entertain the imaginations of children for many years to come.

