FRICK ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER: OUTDOOR DISCOVERY SPACE & SENSORY TRAIL *Pittsburgh, PA*

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Pashek+MTR designed inclusive sensory experiences within the woods and meadows adjacent to the Frick Environmental Center in Pittsburgh's Frick Park. Park visitors of all abilities can now experience and discover the natural world through sensory elements along an accessible path. Nassauer's "cues to care" were employed throughout the design.

(1) The Outdoor Discovery Space consists of two covered outdoor classroom spaces at the edge of meadow and woodland, with inclusive sensory elements such as a wheelchair accessible mud kitchen, meadow kaleidoscope, and timber fort. The stone seat walls and boulders along its edges provide an orderly frame for the "messy" natural areas beyond, as well as functioning as seating. Kids can explore natural materials and patterns with the meadow kaleidoscope, with textured botanical artwork on the stone wall caps, and through play at the mud kitchen.

(2) The Sensory Nature Trail invites visitors to explore the wooded hillside adjacent to the Frick Environmental Center via an accessible trail. Sensory elements include a raised forest floor and a pebble harp station to create gentle sounds. Each element was designed to provide multiple means of engagement for people with various abilities and to connect people with the sensory qualities of nature. The beloved Observation Deck with its tree-top vantage point was renovated with new decking, railing, and seating. Architectural elements such as stone walls create orderly frames; resting areas and gathering spaces create "breathing room" along the nature trail.



Outdoor classroom and stone seat walls





The Sensory Nature Trail Environmental Center accessible trail





Botanical Art Work on stone seat walls show "Cue to Care"

Observation Deck with wood seating



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