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5 Reasons to Make a School Field Trip to Alcatraz East Crime Museum a Priority

Alcatraz East Crime Museum, located in Pigeon Forge, helps students understand crime and consequences

PIGEON FORGE, Tennessee (October 29, 2019) – Students today live during a time when crime in their communities reaches into their schools through bullying and violence and follows them online. Yet there can be teachable moments, to take advantage of interests in science or solving puzzles, to show students ways to make a difference. Alcatraz East Crime Museum, located in Pigeon Forge, plays an important role in helping students understand more about the societal factors that contribute to crime, and the judicial system that both protects and enforces consequences.

“Alcatraz East is a great place to bring school students for a field trip,” explains Rachael Penman, director of artifacts and exhibits at Alcatraz East Crime Museum. “The more they can learn about crime history, crime prevention, and the judicial system, we can hopefully encourage positive choices.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is no one factor that causes school violence. However, they advise that preventing school violence requires addressing factors at all levels of the social ecology. They report that preventing school violence requires understanding the factors that influence it.

The CDC has created a four-level social-ecological model that can better help students understand violence and the effect of potential strategies. The four areas include learning about crime risks and prevention in relation to the individual, relationships, community, and societal factors.

Here are 5 reasons why Alcatraz East makes a great school field trip:

- Alcatraz East helps fit the model for crime prevention that the CDC promotes to help prevent violence. Students who take a field trip to the museum will learn about crime, crime prevention, and consequences for those who commit crimes.
- While touring the museum they will learn about some of the most high profile criminal cases in the country’s history. The information presented will help them learn what societal factors may have contributed to an increased crime risk.

- Understanding how the judicial system works in America is important, and the museum gives students a hands-on approach to learning about it. They will learn about being in law enforcement and crime scene investigation.
- Students who visit Alcatraz East Crime Museum will gain more information about crime prevention and may be able to use that information to make themselves and their schools safer.
- Taking a field trip to the museum gives teachers and group leaders the perfect opening for an in-depth discussion on crime prevention. They can go back to the classroom and go more in depth with new things they've learned at the museum.

“Rather than simply talking to students about crime issues, our museum gives them a chance to make a connection,” added Penman. “Many students are visual or hands-on learners, which fits well with our many exhibits. We offer many learning opportunities that will help students gain a better understanding of the consequences of crime and hopefully inspire careers in forensic science and law enforcement.”

The museum will also be celebrating National STEM Day on November 8, 2019. The museum offers students a chance to explore STEM-related exhibits. Those interested in participating in a field trip for their students or scouts should contact the museum for group rate information.

The museum also offers a variety of specialty programs for homeschoolers and scouting groups, including:

1. Science! What does science have to do with a crime museum? From toxicology to fingerprints, Alcatraz East is the place to learn all about forensic science. Forensic science applications, such as latent fingerprint examination, are being taught in schools as early as 6th grade. Students can even get to learn all about these applications from a local forensic expert with national experience, Art Bohanan. You can even earn a badge with Alcatraz East's Girl Scout programs. Forensic science abounds at the Museum!
2. Students will get up close and personal with counterfeit items the museum's Counterfeit Crimes gallery. The display includes counterfeit games, toys, clothing items and electronics in order to educate visitors on the effects and dangers of buying and aiding in the sale of counterfeit items.
3. Go on a deep dive into the judicial branch of government top to bottom. Hear about local law enforcement all the way up to the Supreme Court. Do you remember your high school government class? The Museum helps students navigate our judicial process through famous cases and an in-depth look at the rule of law.
4. Get a taste of the consequence of crime. Follow the process from start to finish, from a line-up, to the court room, to a jail cell. Students will immerse themselves in it all and can contemplate life choices in a life-size replica of a modern jail cell.
5. Social media safety tips are placed throughout the museum, each teaching students the importance of not only staying safe while out in the community, but

staying safe online. You might want to tell everyone on social media you and your family are taking a Smoky Mountains vacation, but should you?

The museum is always adding to its collection and has a star-studded panel of experts who make up the Advisory Board, including those in law enforcement, collectors, a medical examiner, crime scene investigators, and others. The board includes Jim Willett, a retired prison warden, Anthony Rivera, a combat veteran and Navy SEAL chief, and Judge Belvin Perry, Jr., who is best known for the Casey Anthony trial. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.alcatrazeast.com.

About Alcatraz East

Alcatraz East is the most arresting crime museum in the United States. Guests of all ages can encounter a unique journey into the history of American crime, crime solving, and our justice system. Through interactive exhibits and original artifacts, Alcatraz East is an entertaining and educational experience for all ages - so much fun it's a crime! This family attraction is located at the entrance of The Island, located at 2757 Parkway, Pigeon Forge, TN. General admission tickets are \$14.95 for children, \$24.95 for adults. Group ticket sales are available. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., with the last ticket sold 60 minutes before closing. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit: www.alcatrazeast.com.

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Source:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Preventing School Violence*.

<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/youthviolence/schoolviolence/fastfact.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The Social-Ecological Model: A Framework for Prevention*. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/publichealthissue/social-ecologicalmodel.html>