

Cheap Tricks: Catering To The Kiddos

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Moms have kids. That's what makes them moms. Moms also have money to spend and like to shop—you know, that 80%-woman-shopper thing. Not all retailers want to encourage bringing kids to the store and that's acceptable. However, if you would like to attract moms with their kids, here are some helpful hints for making life easier for her and increasing the amount of time (and money) she spends in the store.

It Starts in the Parking Lot



Start with coming and going. Moms who have younger kids will want to contain them (and you'll thank her for this). Cart corrals let her get the kids into a cart early. Upon departure, picture her trying to carry plants and kids while fumbling for the keys—all because she doesn't want to have to get (and leave) the kids in the car and then come back to the store to return the cart. Cart corrals like those pictured from Bordine's and English Gardens in the Detroit area solve this issue and allow her to fill her cart with lots of plants and accessories without worry.

More About Bathrooms

In case you didn't get enough about bathrooms last month, let's talk potties. This time, let's focus on changing tables. They range from \$150 to \$500 and give moms of yet-to-be-potty trained kids a chance to keep shopping. Ray Wiegand's Garden Center even has one in the men's room, because dads shop the garden center, too. If you want to get super fancy, you

could add a diaper pail to the mix (because the vast majority of times those dirty diaps are getting thrown in the trash—true story).

Plant it Up!



You know what you have in common with kids? Kids love to dig in the dirt. Deneweth's Garden Center in Macomb, Michigan, get the next couple of segments because they know what kids like. This is a homemade planting station that is sure to delight all ages of kids. The inputs? A flat, some pots and some media. The result? New gardeners and happy moms and dads.

Bugs—Why Did it Have to be Bugs?

Said no kid ever. Deneweth's knows this and also sees the opportunity for education with a fun chart on bad bugs for the garden. There are lots of educational opportunities like this and kids are sponges for information.

Something to Do

We ran this in an earlier Cheap Tricks, but it's worth repeating because it's a great idea. Ray Wiegand's brings in kids and their families during the summer with a butterfly house and educational activities about the life cycle of butterflies, as well as plants that attract them. The kids and parents are delighted by the butterflies in the house, and they leave with the knowledge to create a butterfly haven in their own yard (hopefully, with some brand new plants from the garden center!).

Kid's Corner

This is not a necessity in a garden center, but if you really wanted to be known as a family-friendly place that loves kids, a play area would go a long way to solidifying your kiddo street cred. Deneweth's has a play house, a little slide and toys in a colorful corner of the greenhouse adjacent to the kid's learning center.

Fun Carts



Here's a lesson from the local grocery store—the more you make shopping fun, the longer the kids are game for it. I had never seen race car carts in the garden center until I saw them at Deneweth's, but what a great idea. For the more independent little shopper, the garden center also has toy carts (that still can hold a few plants!).

Bring on the Schools

Okay, last one from Deneweth's. They're proud of the amount of children's education they provide and they even give tours of the production facility and garden center for schools to educate kids about plants and how to grow them. They're so proud of it that the option for field trips is on display in the garden center. GP

