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The Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin Recognizes the Building for Kids Children's Museum as First *Autism Friendly Communities Partner* in New Initiative

The Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin's new *Autism Friendly Communities Initiative* is pleased to recognize the Building for Kids Children's Museum as the first Autism Friendly Communities Partner. The initiative aims to increase the quality of life for those affected by autism by improving community understanding of autism and access to inclusive experiences, programs, and events. The initiative recognizes community partners that actively work to design spaces, programs, and events that include and support individuals and families with autism.

"ASGW and our local affiliates are excited for the opportunity to partner with local businesses and organizations to make community spaces more welcoming and inclusive to autistic individuals," says Kirsten Cooper, executive director, Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin.

"The Building for Kids Children's Museum has been a valued partner for years. While this Initiative is new to the Autism Society, the Building for Kids Children's Museum has long been committed to ensuring that children of all abilities can access their museum and programs. We are thrilled to recognize our continued partnership in this new way," says Diane Nackers, president, Fox Valley Autism Society affiliate.

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The mission of the Building for Kids Children’s Museum is to empower children, engage parents and energize communities. The museum offers a Sensory Superstars program once a month that includes free admission to families with children diagnosed with autism, a lower sensory experience, and special programming. Additionally, the museum has sensory kits and a quiet space available to children and families during their visit at any time. The kits include sound-reducing earmuffs, tactile toys, visual timers, decision boards, play scripts, and proprioceptive weights.

“Responding to the needs of all children, including those with autism, is central to our mission of empowering children, engaging parents, and energizing communities,” said, Oliver Zornow, executive director. “We are pleased to partner with the Autism Society and hope this recognition will increase access to even more families.”

The Autism Society and the Building for Kids invites community members to a special event in recognition of this partnership during the February Sensory Superstars program. The event will take place on Sunday, February 16th from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm with a presentation at 12:15 pm at the Building for Kids in Appleton.

About the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin

The Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin provides a community for those interested in increasing the quality of life for those affected by autism in its 53-county service area. Founded in 1979 as the Autism Society of Wisconsin, the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin has been passionately committed to improving the lives of those affected by autism for 40 years through its five core program areas; support, education, information and referral, advocacy and community building.

About the Building for Kids Children’s Museum

Established in downtown Appleton, Wisconsin in 1991, the Fox Cities Children’s Museum opened its doors in November 1992, occupying only a section of the current second floor. In 2006, the facility was expanded and completely renovated with new exhibits designed by kids for kids under the new name, Building for Kids Children’s Museum. The Building for Kids accomplishes their mission by providing specially designed exhibits, programs and events. Their goal is to inspire, teach and reinforce curiosity.

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