

BFK Rocket Report

Fall 2020

Learn about
our Childhood
is Essential
campaign
inside!



Welcome Baby Community

at the **building** for **KIDS**

The Building for Kids recently received funding from the Basic Needs Giving Partnership and the Mielke Family Foundation to implement an innovative support program for first-time parents in the Fox Valley region, called the Welcome Baby Community. For a first time parent, life changes quickly and navigating those changes can be confusing, overwhelming, and isolating.

The Welcome Baby Community is designed to support the needs of first-time parents by connecting them to local organizations and valuable resources early in their child's life, helping to ensure future success. Familiarizing parents with the support services and networks available will allow parents to feel comfortable utilizing these local resources when the need arises.



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Through Virtual Connecting Events, new or expecting parents can ask questions and join in conversations on various parenting topics led by experts from local organizations, while also connecting with other first-time parents. Members of the Welcome Baby Community are also invited to participate in Grow Together programs, designed specifically for families with children 0 – 18 months. During these programs, families will sing songs, tell stories, and engage in other fun, developmentally-appropriate activities.

Additionally, all first-time parents from the Fox Valley region who participate in a Connecting Event will receive a FREE membership to the Building for Kids for the first 18 months of their child's life along with a Welcome Baby Box delivered to their front door, filled with items to engage and support their child's development.



More information at buildingforkids.org/welcomebabycommunity

Sponsored by:



In partnership with:



CHILDHOOD is ESSENTIAL

PAST · PRESENT · FUTURE

The Building for Kids is excited to launch its first ever peer-to-peer fundraising campaign, Childhood is Essential!

We all know the first years of life are crucial and that the experiences of childhood are essential to reaching our developmental potential and ensuring emotional, mental, and physical health. The on-going COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted routines, activities, and many of these experiences while children continue to age through these critical years.

Now, more than ever, it is essential that families have access to safe, play-based learning experiences that build resiliency through intergenerational relationships and connections to the broader community. Throughout this pandemic, the Building for Kids has continued to provide critical learning and developmental experiences while supporting the health and safety of our community.

Since 1992, the Building for Kids has reached over 2 million visitors—impacting generations of children and families across the Fox Cities and Northeast Wisconsin.



Our commitment to serving the needs of these families has earned us the support of many great partners, building a strong, sustainable organization working to ensure a bright future for our community. However, as a result of the lost revenue and increased costs of services the COVID-19 crisis has created, the Building for Kids is seeking the support of our community. Your generosity can help us preserve these critical experiences of childhood as we remain committed to providing quality programming that strengthens families, supports our formal education system, and builds a brighter, stronger future for the Fox Cities.

Ways to support the BFK:

- Help us spread the word by sharing our story or how the BFK has positively impacted your life!
- Invest in the future of our community by creating a fundraising page or making a donation on our campaign website.

give.buildingforkids.org

Thank you to our Campaign Launch Match Partner!



Jewelers Mutual is matching all gifts made to the BFK up to **\$5,000!**

★ ★ ★ Sensory Superstars ★ ★ ★

We are excited to once again host Sensory Superstars on the third Sunday of each month. Families with children on the autism spectrum are able to come safely play at the Building for Kids for FREE!

Since masking requirements will be relaxed for children with sensory processing disorders, only one family will be allowed in the museum at a time and we will have various time slots available throughout the day. To allow our team space and time for cleaning, families will be limited to the exhibits on one floor of the museum.

Families will also be able to take home an activity kit with the instructions and materials for a fun activity.

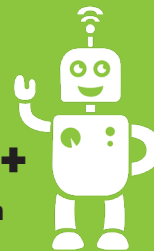
Registration is required. To register, give us a call at 920-734-3226 ext. 110.



2,600+
take-home
activity kits



92,000+ virtual
program
views



1,600+
in-person
program
and exhibit
exploration
participants

100% of surveyed families said they had a safe experience visiting the BFK.

**A Look
at the
Numbers**

Director's Digest

I sincerely hope that you and your family are staying well and connected during this unprecedented year. As we enter Fall, our community continues to struggle with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Engagement programming at the BFK looks very different, since our team has been hard at work over the Summer adapting our programming and updating our exhibit spaces. We are especially grateful this year for a renewed partnership with Fox Communities Credit Union and their support of the *Littlest Branch*.

Thanks to the continued generosity of FCCU, we are currently renovating this exhibit with cosmetic updates as well as new interactive exhibit components. Once these updates are completed later this Fall, we look forward to re-opening the *Littlest Branch* for private household use as part of our exhibit exploration sessions.

As many of the routines, lives, and livelihoods of families in our community continue to be completely upended by this crisis, the Building for Kids remains committed to supporting our community's response and mitigating the long-term impacts on our children.

Our team continues to rely on feedback from families and educators as we all navigate this new system of virtual learning and programming together. In recent weeks, we have launched small-group programming that was designed in partnership with both local public health officials and local educators to support and supplement the learning objectives that students are working on during this semester of virtual instruction while ensuring a safe environment for families to play and learn.

In addition to our support of the formal education system, we are excited about the launch of the Welcome Baby Community and the re-launch of Sensory Superstars as ways we can work to improve accessibility and strengthen our community through connection to resources during this time of isolation.



The Littlest Branch
— Established 2015 —



As we enter the eighth month of this public health emergency, the Building for Kids remains committed to meeting the needs of families today and ensuring our sustainability for generations to come. To do that, we need your help. Please consider visiting our Childhood is Essential campaign page and setting up your own fundraising page to share with your network why you believe childhood is essential and why the Building for Kids is important to our community.

If you are unable to create a page, consider making a donation at this time to invest alongside of us and the broader community in the future of the Fox Cities.

Thank you!

Oliver Zornow
Executive Director

Ways — to — Play



1. BFK At-Home Activity Kits



2. Small Group Programs



3. Exhibit Explorations

For more information on these opportunities, visit buildingforkids.org.

Meet the Board

— *Michael McCormick* —

How long have you been a member of the Board of Directors for the BFK?

I believe I'm entering my 4th year as a board member, but I've been having so much fun, I've lost count! I am currently serving as the Chair of the Board.

Why did you join the Board?

I was approached to join the Board from a former colleague of mine who knew I had a young son and thought I would be interested in bringing him to the museum. After visiting the museum and meeting the staff, I was blown away by what the museum offers in keeping kids active in addition to developing their skills and imagination. It was something that I wanted to be part of. My son is now 8 years old and he loves coming to the museum to play and build things.

What has kept you engaged on the Board?

Being able to participate in museum activities with my son while also building meaningful relationships with the operations staff has kept me engaged as a Board member.

During the challenges and uncertainty of the pandemic, I feel it is even more important to stay engaged and offer my support so that the Building for Kids can continue to be an important and impactful part of this community.



What do you enjoy most about your role as a Board member?

I enjoy interacting with other professionals outside of my work environment. The Board is made up of a diverse group of amazing and passionate people with different experiences and expertise. I've learned quite a bit from this team!

Why does the BFK matter to the community?

The Building for Kids plays a major role in providing families with a space that empowers a child's imagination and creativity and allows parents to be a part of that journey. The exhibits provide a fun approach to stimulate kids' minds and abilities to solve puzzles, build vessels and motors, and learn skills that we as adults usually apply to our everyday lives.

How has the BFK impacted your life?

The Building for Kids has allowed me to interact with my son in multiple different ways through the programs, events, and other engagement opportunities that the BFK provides. I've watched my son grow at the museum since being involved, and he always looks forward to coming back!

Board of Directors

Michael McCormick, *Chair* - Kimberly-Clark
Eric Lempke, *Vice-Chair* - BMO Harris Bank
Rick Stezenski, *Treasurer* - Grant Thornton
Neil Wait, *Secretary* - SECURA Insurance
Cindy Flauger, *Past Chair* - Neenah Animal Shelter
Bob DeKoch - The Boldt Company

Cody Floeter - Thrivent
Tom Hardwick - SECURA Insurance
Joi Kennedy Brown - Community Leader
Kurt Krizan - Appleton Area School District
Ben LaFrombois - von Briesen & Roper, S.C.
Debra McDowall - Community Leader
Dr. John Mielke - Community Leader
Kristen Trimberger - Reach Counseling

Empowered children. • Engaged Parents. • Energized Communities.

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