

# BFK Rocket Report



Assembling 1,200 engagement toolkits for local students

## Museums in Motion

### Responsive Community Engagement Toolkits

The Building for Kids is committed to adapting and responding to the evolving needs of children and families throughout our community during the current public health crisis. One recent innovation is a new program called Museums in Motion: Responsive Community Engagement Toolkits. These non-virtual engagement toolkits aim to address the educational and social needs of local students during the pandemic.

We all know that students have been negatively affected by the complications of living, learning, and developing throughout a pandemic, especially due to a lack of access to supplemental learning materials and non-virtual, hands-on opportunities for engagement. With Museums in Motion, we hope to support local educators in providing accessible, engaging content that will enhance students' learning experiences.

The Building for Kids has begun distributing 1,200 engagement toolkits to all first-graders in the Appleton Area School District as well as other specific economically-disadvantaged early elementary school students, whose families have been more significantly impacted by distanced learning throughout the pandemic.

We are grateful to have worked alongside our partners at the History Museum at the Castle in developing these innovative learning extensions. Each kit contains everything students will need to complete six different projects, three developed by the History Museum at the Castle and three by educators at the BFK. Through these kits, students will learn and grow with hands-on activities including creating a graphite circuit to light an LED diode; building a dancing robot from a vibrating motor, battery, and toothbrush head; and reading about Harry Houdini and coloring pictures in a story that tells our local history.

Through this project, the Building for Kids hopes to support the future resiliency of students and their families and mitigate some of the negative impacts of the current public health crisis in our community – especially for those students most in need. This is possible in large part because of the financial support of the City of Appleton's Community Development Block Grant CARES Act Opportunity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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# Play-Based Learning at the BFK

From driving the big rig to giving a doll a check-up or painting in da Vinci Art Studio, our exhibits have a little something fun for everyone. But playing on the exhibits during a trip to the BFK goes beyond simple fun. At the Building for Kids, our exhibits are designed with play-based learning in mind. We believe that play is a form of research, encouraging experimentation and discovery. For example, operating the crane in Construction Junction doubles as fine motor skills practice, watching balls whiz through the air in Move It is also a lesson in science and engineering, and working together to put out the fire and save the day in the Pierce Fire Truck exhibit teaches collaboration and problem solving.

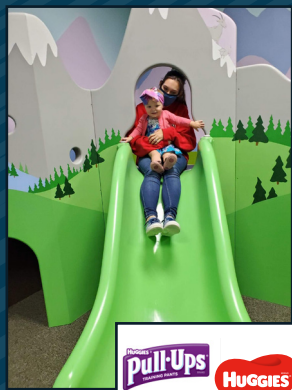
We are so grateful to our exhibit sponsors for helping us in our mission to inspire discovery and build resilience through intergenerational play-based learning and exploration of the arts, sciences, and humanities. Their support is essential to creating new, innovative play-based learning environments, where kids and their families can bond, grow, and explore together.

We understand that having a safe and engaging place to play and discover is critical to a child's healthy development, now more than ever. To ensure that families could still utilize our exhibits, we worked with local public health officials and adapted to create Exhibit Exploration sessions.

## Exhibit Exploration Sessions

With an Exhibit Exploration session, households can register for an hour of exclusive access to one of six exhibit groupings in the museum, meaning they will be the only ones playing on those exhibits during their designated time. Then, after each session, every exhibit component is thoroughly sanitized. This structure allows families to feel comfortable coming into the museum and engaging in hands-on learning and exploration.

To register for an Exhibit Exploration session, visit [buildingforkids.org](http://buildingforkids.org) or give us a call at 920-734-3226.



# Thank you!

CHILDHOOD is ESSENTIAL  
PAST · PRESENT · FUTURE

Through the generosity of our community, we were able to exceed our goal of \$100,000, helping us to continue supporting the needs of children and families throughout this crisis, recovery, and beyond.



**Total Raised:**  
**\$102,799**

## Director's Digest

I hope that you and your families are staying well and that your new year is off to a great start! In difficult times like this, we are so grateful that you are a part of our community and for your continued support. Your engagement is critical to achieving our mission to inspire discovery and build resilience through intergenerational play-based learning and exploration of the arts, sciences and humanities.

This past year has presented numerous challenges to the families we serve, our community, and the Building for Kids as the result of the pandemic. To ensure the strength of our organization in meeting our mission for children and families throughout this crisis, recovery, and beyond, we launched our first ever peer-to-peer fundraising campaign in October with the ambitious goal of raising \$100,000 in three months. We are happy to report that, through the incredible support of our members and community, we exceeded this campaign goal -- thank you!

These contributions not only help support the resilience of our organization through this difficult time, but ensure that we can continue to meet the evolving needs of children and families throughout our community. These past few months, we have worked closely with our local public health officials to re-imagine and redesign how we serve families. While the quantity of these engagements are fewer due to the public health precautions we have put in place, the depth of impact continues to grow.

Despite the pandemic, we saw over 32,000 visitors safely through our doors to explore our exhibits and participate in hands-on programs. We were also able to engage with families at home, accumulating over 100,000 views on our virtual programming and providing over 2,800 take-home family activity kits.

In addition to our standard pandemic-based operation plans, we were able to launch and re-imagine several

### Matching Partners

Together, we flourish.  
**Community Foundation**  
for the Fox Valley Region

 **BRIGHT IDEA FUND**  
Sawyer Family Fund

EST 1913  
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GROUP

 **We Energies Foundation**

exciting community partnerships including our Welcome Baby Community, which combats isolation and serves as a conduit to quality information and services for first time parents, as well as Museums in Motion, which seeks to support local students and address the challenges of learning in a pandemic through hands-on engagement opportunities.

We know the needs of our community are constantly changing, so we've prioritized listening to our members, visitors, schools, and other community agencies. We welcome any suggestions, feedback, or emerging needs you may see. Please don't hesitate to reach out – my contact information is below.

I want to thank you for being a critical part of this work and look forward to what we can accomplish together for kids and families in 2021 and beyond.

Stay well,



Oliver Zornow  
Executive Director  
ozornow@buildingforkids.org





## Phase 2

# 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](http://buildingforkids.org).

## Member Spotlight

### The McGregor Family

— Members since 2017 —

#### Why did you become a member of the Building for Kids?

We originally visited the Building for Kids at the invitation of our friends, but we chose to become members because of the unique and ever-changing opportunities for growth that it offered our family. We were looking for something that would engage our kids in learning through hands-on, exploratory play, and the Building for Kids provided that and more.

#### What do you enjoy most about visiting the Building for Kids?

What we most enjoy about visiting the Building for Kids are the evolving programs, activities, and exhibits that we encounter each time. The sheer size of the complex means that we never explore the whole thing in a single trip, and each time we visit our kids are presented with different challenges, tasks, activities, and stories to interact with. About the time we feel as if we have made our way through everything, a new exhibit is under construction and we get excited all over again.

#### Do you have a favorite memory from the Building for Kids?

When I asked my son what his favorite memory from the Building for Kids was, he quickly responded with "Reading about Pablo!" Though we love the exhibit play times and explorations, we try to take advantage of other activities, and one of them was a finance-week-



inspired read of *Count on Pablo*. The kids--who were just learning to count at the time--were enthralled by all the counting that took place during the book. Best of all, they got to bring a copy home! We have read that book so many times it has fallen apart, but the kids will still gather all the loose pages and ask for just one more read!

#### Why is the Building for Kids important to our community?

The Building for Kids is an important part of our community because it is inclusive and welcoming. Families with little kids of all ages, those from diverse backgrounds and from families large and small, can always find something to do. While visiting, it feels like a visit with family. It's easy to strike up a conversation with other parents/guardians, and our kids can always find someone to play with. We all always have friends at the Building for Kids!

#### How has the BFK been a resource to your family during this public health crisis?

During this public health crisis, the Building for Kids has continued to provide quality learning opportunities to my family. Even though we were unable to visit for a time or could only visit under certain constraints, the project kits and classes provided helped to keep our kids engaged and excited during a time where opportunities for fun--especially those outside of a screen--were very limited.

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