

BFK Rocket Report



Prioritizing an Inclusive & Connected Community



Access at the BFK

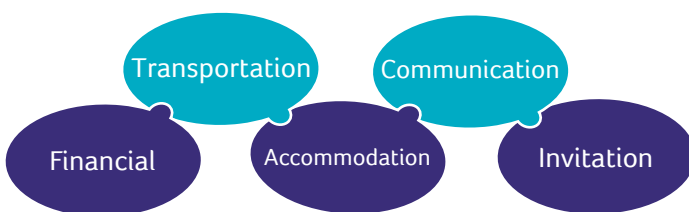
Inclusion is one of the core values of the Building for Kids. We aim to approach relationships with intention and respect to ensure that everyone feels like they belong at the museum. Every family, regardless of the barriers they face, deserves the opportunity to access the safe, play-based learning opportunities offered by the BFK.

The Building for Kids has a long history of identifying financial barriers. Whether a family is simply looking to play for the day or are interested in an annual membership, a financial barrier can be hard to overcome.

Due to the generous support of our community, we have been able to establish the Access Scholarship Fund. The scholarships from this fund allow families who face financial barriers to visit the museum for a reduced admission of \$2 per person or purchase an annual family membership for as low as \$20 for the year. **Currently, 22% of our members receive an access scholarship.**

However, we recognize that financial barriers are not the only barriers families face when coming to the museum. To help create a truly inclusive environment, we are also intentional about addressing barriers of invitation, communication, transportation, and accommodation.

Barriers to Play



To ensure that all families feel welcome at the BFK, we rely on trust-based relationships with a wide variety of community partners. For example, last year we worked with World Relief Fox Valley to welcome a group of refugees from Afghanistan to our community. We sent Welcome Neighbor Boxes full of age-appropriate toys, as well as a free membership to the museum. To help the families feel comfortable and confident during their first visit to the BFK, they were accompanied by a volunteer from World Relief. This resulted in many refugee families visiting the museum as well as attending our Summer Explorer Camps.



Similarly, we work to strengthen belonging for families who may not feel like the museum is for them. One specific audience we connect with on a regular basis is new or expecting first-time parents. We understand that becoming a parent can be an isolating experience, so our goal is to help them create a community of others going through the same transitions in life. Along with a free membership to the BFK, we also use the museum as a place to host Welcome Baby play groups and events with community resources and local experts who lead discussions on parenting topics.

In addition, we also aim to ensure that the museum environment accommodates the needs of all families. For example, the museum is a fun, colorful, and highly stimulating environment, which, for many, adds to its appeal. However, for a child with Autism, the experience can sometimes be overstimulating. To address this, we have worked with community partners such as the Autism Society of Greater Wisconsin to create special opportunities, including Low Sensory Sundays. Every Sunday morning, the volume on exhibits and music is turned low or off and calm-down kits and self-regulation tools are available at our Welcome Desk.

To learn more about our Access and Inclusion Initiative at the BFK, visit buildingforkids.org/access-and-inclusion.

Volunteer Committees

A letter from the Vice Chair

Like other non-profit membership organizations, the Building for Kids Children's Museum is governed by a Board of Directors elected by our members. The Board of Directors has several standing volunteer committees which guide its work and support the mission of the museum in tangible ways.

At this time, the following committees exist:

- **Executive Committee** - made up of officers of the Board, leads the Board meetings and supervises the Executive Director
- **Governance Committee** - ensures policy compliance and nominates Board members
- **Finance Committee** - provides oversight and strategic guidance on the museum's financial assets
- **Development Committee** - assists in maintaining and furthering the museum's relationship with our supporters
- **Marketing Committee** - develops strategies and tools to support the museum's storytelling
- **Facilities Committee** - oversees the maintenance and development of our physical infrastructure and exhibits
- **Education Committee** - forms and oversees advisory groups to ensure the museum is providing relevant educational and enrichment opportunities for kids and their grown-ups

Each of our committees call upon the unique sets of skills, experiences, and perspectives of volunteer members to ensure that the work of the



museum is relevant, efficient, and effective at achieving our mission to inspire discovery and build resilience through intergenerational, play-based learning and exploration of the arts, sciences, and humanities. We strive to ensure our board and committees reflect the diversity of our community.

If you are interested in getting more involved in the work of the Building for Kids through committee or board service, please reach out to me with my contact information below.

Thank you for your support,

Kristen Trimberger

Kristen Trimberger
Vice Chair, BFK Board of Directors
vicechair@buildingforkids.org



BFK Children's Parade

Presented by ThedaCare | July 26

You're invited to the 14th annual BFK Children's Parade presented by ThedaCare, a signature event of U.S. Venture Children's Week!

During this annual parade, kids and their grown-ups stroll through downtown Appleton in themed costumes and non-motorized floats. Families are encouraged to brainstorm their themes together with costumes often ranging from old Halloween attire to hand-made floats to simple group themes, like a day at the beach. Join us for this summer tradition that celebrates the kids in our community!

Sign up your family or put together a group of families from your school, work, daycare, or any other organization. This is a free event, but registration is required at buildingforkids.org.



U.S. Venture Children's Week

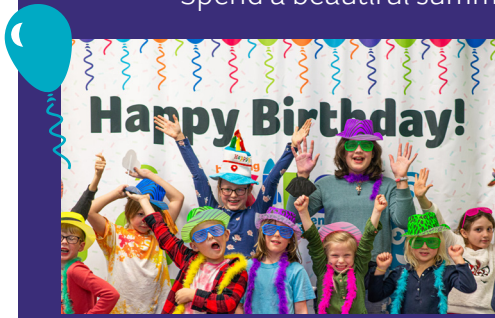
July 23 - 29, 2023

Join us for a week of free or reduced-cost family activities with organizations across our community. Check out the full schedule of events at appletonchildrensweek.com



Summer After-Hours Parties at the BFK

Spend a beautiful summer night celebrating in downtown Appleton!



Whether it's for a birthday party, family reunion, anniversary, or any other occasion, bring your family and friends together at one of Wisconsin's largest children's museums and get the whole place to yourself!

You can now book after-hours events online. Learn more or check out our availability at buildingforkids.org/after-hours-parties/.



Director's Digest

With over 41,972 visitors, 3,430 field trip attendees, and 110 birthday parties in the first quarter of 2023 alone, it is easy to get excited about the fun that happens every day here at the Building for Kids. However, many might not realize the joy that comes from playing is not the only important activity happening at the museum. Under the surface is a tremendous impact, affecting kids and their grown-ups in our community and beyond.

To further our impact, we often work with community partners to reach more families that would benefit from the play-based learning opportunities offered by the BFK. As part of our Access and Inclusion Initiative, many of our partner organizations, like Pillars, have a BFK membership for families to check out and use.

A Story from Pillars

A single father recently entered shelter, but his kids lived with their grandparents to reduce the trauma of their experience of homelessness. Since the kids were not staying at the shelter, the dad was not allowed to host visits on site. Instead, the family was able to use Pillars' BFK membership regularly when the father had his kids. This allowed them to spend time playing together and creating positive memories. They loved the museum so much that the dad would share pictures and videos of his family's BFK visits with Pillars' staff when he got back to the shelter.

In addition to individual relationships within a family, we also aim to build a sense of belonging and connection within our community as well. One recent way we have put this into action is through our advisory groups for our two new permanent exhibits, Food to Grow and the Living Lab. Advisory groups, made up of



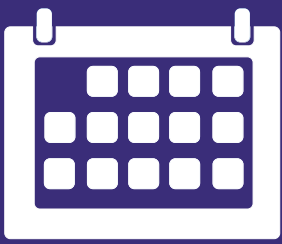
volunteers from our community, help us ensure that our exhibits better reflect our entire community. In some of our recent discussions with our Food to Grow Advisory Group, we have talked about the cultural significance of food and how we can best incorporate the food identity of different cultures in the exhibit's design.

When we help build a community that is thriving, welcoming, and connected, we create a place where people want to live and visit, supporting local tourism, economic development, and workforce attraction and retention. We look forward to all of the community partnerships, exciting announcements, and new engagement opportunities for kids and their grown-ups coming up this year. We hope you will join us!

All the best,

Oliver Zornow
Executive Director
ozornow@buildingforkids.org





Upcoming Events

May 11
4:30 – 6:30pm

Educator Appreciation Night

Educators and their families are invited to come play at the museum for free!

May 19
5:00 – 7:00pm

PJ Party with Curious George

Put on your pjs and come meet Curious George! Enjoy snacks, storytimes, and themed activities!

July 26
6:00 – 8:00pm

BFK Children's Parade

March through downtown Appleton in themed costumes and non-motorized floats!

For more information about these and other upcoming events, visit buildingforkids.org

Member Spotlight

The Schairer Family *Members since 2020*

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

We moved to the Fox Cities in 2020 and visited the Building for Kids soon after. While we have visited many different children's museums, we were astounded by the size and amount of exhibits the BFK had to offer. We became members after our very first visit in 2020.

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

What we enjoy most about the Building for Kids is the vast number of exhibits and the friendly staff members. We have kids that range in age from 10 years old to 1 year old and we love the fact that there are exhibits for every age. Our kids are never bored when we visit the BFK.

3. What has the Building for Kids meant to your family?

As a new family to the Fox Cities, the Building for Kids has helped us connect



with the community. The Explorer Camps are our favorite thing to do at the BFK. As a homeschooling family, these camps provide an excellent opportunity to get out of the house and meet new friends. Each week the kids get to play with their friends and explore new art and STEM activities.

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

When I asked my children what their favorite memories are from the Building for Kids, the answers I got were:

- "Building a community in our Explorer Camp"
- "Making art in the da Vinci Studio"
- "Eating a snack in the movie theater during Explorer Camp"
- "Playing The Floor is Lava in the space exhibit"

We are always making new memories when we visit the Building for Kids.

Board of Directors

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