

BFK Rocket Report



Play • Imagination • Inclusion • Connection • Integrity



Framed: Step Into Art

New traveling exhibit: September 19 – May 30

Imagine wandering into an art gallery where the frame of a painting becomes a doorway into a new world. Beginning September 19, families can experience what it would be like to enter the worlds of famous paintings when a immersive traveling exhibit, *Framed: Step Into Art™*, opens at the Building for Kids!

This interactive exhibit, sponsored locally by Jewelers Mutual, transforms famous works of art into larger-than-life play environments. Families can climb into a campsite inspired by artist John Singer Sargent, prepare a meal in Grant Wood's *Diner for Threshers*, help decorate for a celebration in Diego Rivera's *Corn Festival*, and even ride atop a giant rooster inspired by the artwork of Clementine Hunter. Visitors can also put their own spin on the famous *Mona Lisa*!

Through hands-on play, *Framed: Step Into Art* helps children discover that art is not only something to look at but a way to communicate ideas, experiences, and perspectives. As they step into life-size paintings, families are encouraged to think about the

Sponsored locally by: ∞
Jewelers Mutual



Framed: Step Into Art™ was created by Minnesota Children's Museum.

stories behind the artwork and use their imagination to create their own.

Framed: Step Into Art will be open from September 19, 2026, through May 30, 2027, and will be located in our exhibit gallery on the second floor of the museum. As the exhibit makes its debut, we'll also offer several special events and opportunities to celebrate its opening.



Member Preview Night

September 18: 5 – 7pm

BFK members are invited to join us for an exclusive after-hours opportunity to check out the new exhibit before it opens to the public. The event is free for members and includes pizza and a ribbon cutting ceremony!

Night at the Art Museum

October 2 – October 3: 5pm – 7am

This lock-in event brings art, play, and after-hours fun together for an overnight experience at the BFK. Enjoy creative activities, explore the museum after closing, and make special memories inspired by the exhibit.

Art Heist: Building for Grown-ups

November 6: 6 – 10pm

A masterpiece has gone missing! The Building for Kids is turning into the scene of an art heist. Join us for an adults-only evening where you become a part of the mystery.

Step Into Art Parties

Available September 19 – May 30

Families can make their celebration even more creative with a new art-themed birthday party package. Each party includes an art activity and 30 minutes of exclusive access to *Framed: Step Into Art*.



Scan the QR code to learn more or register for these themed events!



Happy Member Appreciation Month!

September 1 - September 30

So much of the work that we do at the Building for Kids is made possible because of our members. That's why we're bringing back **Member Appreciation Month** this September, a month dedicated to celebrating and thanking our members for their ongoing support and the important role they play in the BFK community.

To show our appreciation, members can enjoy a few extra perks all month long, including:

- **Free Parking:** Parking will be free for members throughout September. Members must park in the downtown Red or Yellow parking ramps and bring their ticket into the museum to get it validated.
- **Extra guests:** Members can bring up to two free guests every visit!
- **Gift Shop Discount:** Each member family will receive a discount in our gift shop.
- **Member Preview Night:** Members get an exclusive preview of *Framed: Step Into Art* before it opens to the public (more details on page 1).

Member Appreciation Month will also mark an exciting transition as we introduce a new approach to membership designed to provide greater flexibility and accessibility for families. We're looking forward to sharing more details soon and continuing to improve the membership experience!

Thank you to all of our members for making the Building for Kids a part of your family's story. We hope you'll come celebrate with us this month!



Scan the QR code to learn more about
Member Appreciation Month!



Power Up, sponsored by U.S. Venture is now open! Have you had a chance to visit yet? From powering local landmarks to exploring the many ways energy shapes our daily lives, families are discovering plenty to explore in this brand-new, energy-focused exhibit that opened in May!

Inspired by the city of Appleton, Power Up invites visitors to work together to bring a miniature version of the community to life. Along the way, families discover how energy powers homes, businesses, transportation systems, and communities like our own. Come experience it for yourself during your next visit!



Scan the QR code to learn more about
Power Up, sponsored by U.S. Venture!

Launchpad Playful Preschool

Now Enrolling!

Enrollment is open for **Launchpad Playful Preschool** powered by the Building for Kids! Beginning this fall, Launchpad will help children ages 3 – 5 build critical cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and creative skills through hands-on exploration and child-directed play. Families can choose from flexible morning or afternoon schedules, with the option to attend two, three, or five days per week. Each day includes 2.5 hours of childcare and play-based programming. Give your child a strong foundation for learning, exploration, and discovery by securing their spot in Launchpad Playful Preschool today!



Scan the QR code to learn more and enroll your child!



Director's Digest

With several new projects taking shape in the months ahead, we are entering an exciting season at the Building for Kids. Whether through new exhibits or enhanced experiences, we are always looking for ways to deepen the impact of play-based learning for kids and families in our community. This fall alone, I'm looking forward to seeing that work reflected in several new developments, including an upcoming traveling exhibit, the launch of Launchpad Playful Preschool, an improved membership experience, and much more.

Each change and addition to the museum is made possible by and created for the members and families who walk through our doors every day. By regularly refreshing our exhibit floor with new and rotating exhibits, we introduce new play patterns, expanded opportunities for learning, and different ways for children to explore their interests. This fall, we are excited to bring in *Framed: Step Into Art™*, a traveling exhibit that will encourage families to step into the worlds of iconic works of art and uncover the stories behind them. Since early in my career at the Building for Kids, I've treasured the opportunity to work in The Studio and watch children and families express themselves and make connections through art. *Framed: Step Into Art* will build on those experiences by encouraging families to engage with art in a new way, using play and hands-on exploration to discover the history, culture, and meaning behind the works they encounter.

While continuing to invest in the museum experience with new and rotating exhibits, we are also regularly seeking ways to extend our impact beyond our walls. After over 30 years of helping children learn through open-ended, child-directed play at the museum, we recently began exploring the value that a preschool grounded in those same experiences could bring to our community. Opening this fall, Launchpad Playful Preschool is the evolution of that work, leveraging our expertise in child-directed play to help build critical developmental skills in children ages 3 – 5. With registration now open, I invite you to learn more about Launchpad by scanning the QR code at the top of this page.



Additionally, as a part of our ongoing commitment to meeting the evolving needs of families in our community, we are launching a reimagined membership experience this September. Last fall, we conducted a survey of our membership to identify ways we can better serve our members, and we found that greater affordability, flexibility, and guest benefits emerged as key priorities. In response, we've developed a model with more customizable pricing and benefit options, allowing families to choose the experience that best fits their needs while delivering even greater value. We look forward to sharing more details as we launch these new memberships.

I hope you will visit us soon to enjoy extra benefits during Member Appreciation Month, experience *Framed: Step Into Art*, and learn about all of the exciting changes underway.

Thank you for helping make it all possible!

Oliver Zornow
President
ozornow@buildingforkids.org





Upcoming Events

Baby's Night Out

Wednesday, Sept. 9: 4:30 - 6pm

Babies are taking over the BFK! Join us for a night of play, exploration, and connection exclusively for families with little ones. Discover age-appropriate activities and community resources while spending time with other parents and their babies!

Character Playdate with Paddington Bear

Friday, Oct. 9: 5 - 7pm

Paddington Bear is making a stop at the Building for Kids, and you're invited! This character playdate, sponsored by Speedy Clean, will include exclusive, after-hours playtime, themed activities, storytimes, pizza, and lots of opportunities to meet the storybook star.

Plus, families in the autism community are welcome to join us for our sensory-friendly playdate on October 7.

Halloween Bash

Saturday, Oct. 31: 9am - 4pm

Join us for a spook-tacular day at the BFK! Enjoy themed activities and show off your Halloween costumes before you go trick-or-treating!

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



Summer Explorer Camp Volunteer Spotlight

This summer, a group of incoming Appleton Area School District freshmen volunteered at the Building for Kids, supporting our Summer Explorer Camps as peer mentors. They engaged campers in activities, projects, and play while building valuable leadership, communication, and teamwork skills. Meet some of the volunteers and learn what inspired them to spend their summer at the BFK:



"What I enjoy about volunteering at the Building for Kids is everyday is a new challenge, whether it's a new activity, new kids, or new event."

-Zimo



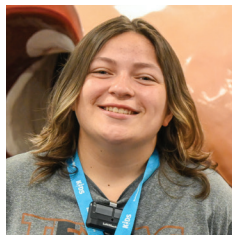
"I chose to volunteer at the Building for Kids because I thought it would be a great opportunity to get real life work experience. This ended up being nothing less than what I hoped; I have loved working here for the past three summers!"

-Samara



"I chose to volunteer at the Building for Kids to gain experience and spend time with the younger generation. I wanted something to do for the summer, and engaging with my younger peers on their journey through life seemed like it would be a great opportunity. I am proud to be a volunteer here, and my only regret is that it has to end!"

-Jocelynn



Volunteering for our Summer Explorer Camps is just one of the many expanded opportunities we've created for youth in our community. We recently launched our **Youth Educators in STEM** program, which gives high school students the opportunity to help younger children build confidence in STEM by facilitating activities in The Lab. Middle and high school students can also participate in our **Youth Advisory Group**, where they work together to develop and implement real-world projects that support the BFK. More information about our youth volunteer opportunities is available on our website.

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