



# **Volunteer Handbook**

## **Appreciation for Your Service**

Regardless of your contribution to The Building for Kids Children's Museum, you are making a dramatic difference in the lives of others by volunteering your time. You are a vital resource for this organization, which could not survive without the assistance and determination of community members like you. While partaking in this experience, we're confident you will feel a sense of giving to others and thoroughly enjoy the impact you have made on someone else's life. In order to make sure your experience is wholly positive, we have created this Volunteer Handbook to keep you informed. Thank you for your time and effort.

Sincerely,

*Hope Eike*

**Hope Eike**  
**Visitor Experience Manager**

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## **About the Museum**

### **Mission**

The Building for Kids Children's Museum is a not-for-profit children's museum for children 0-7 and their families featuring interactive exhibits, special events and programs, birthday parties, and hands-on art and science activities.

We provide exceptional learning opportunities that are innovative, deeply-engaging, and long-lasting to build children's imagination, creativity and confidence.

### **Goals**

1. Challenging children to learn in new ways while exploring interactive exhibits at their own pace in a safe environment
2. Providing science, art, and cultural programs to supplement the K-5 school curriculum and are accessible to all children in our community
3. Engaging parents and caregivers as a child's first teacher

### **Vision**

To be a connecting center for families, schools, and community artists, cultural leaders, performers. This will provide our community with an affordable resource to help young children do their best in school, realize their talents and interests in the arts and sciences, and build self-confidence and social skills needed in life. This will also provide families with a center for quality time together, where adults can learn about their children's skills and interests with them.

## **About the Handbook**

This handbook is designed to introduce you to the Museum and to provide a basic overview of the policies and procedures which provide all of us – paid and volunteer staff – with guidance and direction. Much of the information contained here is also in our Employee Handbook. As a volunteer staff member, we extend to you the same rights as paid staff with regards to the work environment, necessary job training, supervision, evaluation, and recognition.

In return, we expect you to honor your commitments to the Museum, respect other staff members – both paid and volunteer – and perform your assigned duties to the best of your abilities.

As our organization grows and changes, there will be a need to modify the policies, practices, and other information described in this handbook. When such changes occur, you will be notified by an announcement or update. It is then your responsibility to keep current with the policies and changes that affect you.

If you have any questions or need any clarification of the information contained in this handbook, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **THE BUILDING FOR KIDS CHILDREN'S MUSEUM Facts**

### **Recommended Age Groups:**

The museum is recommended for children ages 0 -7.

### **Admission/Supervision Policy:**

To enter the museum, children must have an adult present, and adults must have a child present. With prior permission from museum staff, a babysitter age 16 years and older may accompany children under the age of 12 to the museum. While in the museum, all children must be accompanied and supervised by an adult.

### **Museum Staff:**

Museum staff is identified by red staff t-shirts, khaki pants and nametags or by professional dress with nametags.

### **Volunteers:**

Museum volunteers are identified by purple BFCMK aprons or blue volunteer nametags.

### **Restrooms:**

The restrooms are located on the second floor by the Fire Truck. Family restrooms are located on the 1st floor behind the Gulfstream Jet and on the 2nd floor inside the Mielke Family Theater.

### **Water Fountain:**

The water fountain is located on the second floor next to the restrooms.

### **Food and Beverage:**

For school groups, the museum provides classrooms for lunch when needed. For museum visitors, there is the Dino Cafe on the first floor. These tables are first come-first serve. On the brochure rack near the Welcome Center, there is a red flyer that contains the information for family friendly restaurants within walking distance of the museum.

### **Address/Phone:**

The Building for Kids Children's Museum is located at 100 West College Avenue.  
Phone Number: 920-734-3226

## Your Service

### **Attendance and Absenteeism**

As a volunteer staff member, we depend on you to complete your scheduled shifts. We do understand that from time to time, certain situations may arise that prevent you from doing so. Please alert the Volunteer Coordinator, and/or your direct supervisor, of any scheduled absences – such as a vacation – as far in advance as possible so that an appropriate substitute may be found. In the event of an unscheduled absence – illness or emergency – please alert the Volunteer Coordinator, and/or your direct supervisor, as soon as possible, preferably before your scheduled shift begins. If absenteeism becomes excessive, your volunteer relationship with the Museum will be reevaluated.

### **Dress Code**

Yes we have a dress code, but don't worry. It's very simple – Clean Comfortable Casual Clothes. There are a few things we ask you NOT to wear:

- **Shirts**– School or BFKCM logo T-shirts are okay. Please no other pictures or words on shirts. Keep warm-no low necklines, bare midriffs or tank tops!
- **Shorts**– Sorry, no shorts or Capri's.
- **Pants**– No athletic, nylon, sweat or mesh pants.
- **Shoes**– No sandals! Closed toed shoes are a must. Athletic shoes or other comfortable shoes are great!

### **Parking**

Parking is available inside the Midtown Parking Ramp for \$2.00 the entire day. This ramp is located on Appleton Street, south of College Avenue.

### **Reviews or Progress Reports**

Many volunteers consider volunteer work as a transition path to nonprofit employment, or as a great way to develop new professional skills. If you are interested in pursuing this course the Volunteer Coordinator will help you establish goals, and will provide progress reports or a review as requested.

### **Representing the Organization**

Volunteers are only authorized to act as a representative of the Museum if specifically tasked with this responsibility in your volunteer job description. Please consult with, and receive permission from, the Volunteer Coordinator, and/or your immediate supervisor, before engaging in any actions which may affect or hold the organization liable including but not limited to, social media posts (i.e. – Facebook, Twitter, etc.), public statements to the press, signing contracts or entering into financial agreements, or lobbying or forming partnerships with other organizations.

### **Ending Your Volunteer Service**

You may resign from your volunteer service with the Museum at any time. We request that you notify the Volunteer Coordinator, and/or your immediate supervisor, ideally two weeks prior to your departure, and request that you complete a volunteer survey upon your departure. We will ask you to fill out an exit survey, if you have not already done so. You are welcome to ask for an exit interview as an opportunity to communicate your views about any relevant information you feel it is important for us to know.

## **Policies and Procedures**

*All volunteers are expected to uphold the following standards:*

### **Customer Service**

Everything we do at The Building for Kids Children's Museum is intended to meet one goal: provide an environment where all our guests (families, field trips, parties etc.) can have a fun unique learning experience – get excited about art, science, culture, music, whatever fits their age and interest. We want the parents/caregivers to be engaged with them, not detached. This means we have to “set the stage” for their visit. This is a service-driven business, so the service we provide will set the mood for the adults and will in turn encourage them to get involved with their kids, want to come back again and again.

*CUSTOMER SERVICE and GUEST SAFETY are our top priority.*

First Impressions are important. In the first 7 seconds a parent or other adult guest will assess our level of service. We want to convey a sense of friendliness, professionalism, courtesy, and helpfulness. All of these will make adults and children feel welcome as they walk in the door. Next, we want to make sure the Museum has an overall sense of cleanliness and that the layout is attractive and inviting. Finally, staff needs to be helpful, confident, understanding and responsive to our guests' needs.

*If our visitors have a happy experience here they are likely to tell 4-5 people. If they have a bad experience they will tell 9-12 people.*

### **WE WANT EVERYONE TO HAVE A GREAT EXPERIENCE AT BFKCM**

#### **Policy:**

- **Smile:** When customers walk up to the front desk, this demonstrates that we are happy they came in and we are ready to help them have fun! We want both children and adults to feel welcome and that we want them here.
- **Greet both adults and children:** this gives a feeling of welcome for the entire family/group. Children feel more comfortable if they feel that the place is theirs. That we (and other adults) trust them and are there to help them discover things.
- **Interacting/playing with children** and finding special things to show them are good ways to make them feel welcome.
- **Be available** by paying close attention to our guests. Cell phone/texting, doing homework, reading books, etc., is not acceptable while you are volunteering – even when it is slow.
- **Pick Up around the Museum:** When you are not busy, help out by going through the Museum to tidy things up, pick up trash and clean popular hand spots – the drinking fountain, rails, etc. It is important to show our guests that we care about the appearance and cleanliness of the museum. *FOR SAFETY- Make sure there are clear walkways throughout the museum.*

### **Answer Guest Questions**

Smile and listen carefully to the request or question.

- Determine whether the guest needs assistance right away or not, prioritize when necessary. (A safety issue is always a top priority)
- Don't point when you can walk. Our guests appreciate the extra customer service.
- It is always ok to say “I'm not sure, let me get back to you”
- It is better to smile, slow down, check the details and then get back to them with the right answer. This creates less confusion in the future.

## Safety

The safety of our guests is a top priority at the Museum. Exhibits, layout, policy, programs and classes are all designed with this in mind. Walk around to see what's going on, intervene when you see any risky behavior – you don't have to wait for the parent to notice and stop it. Address safety issues immediately and to the best of your ability (remove item, rope off an area etc.) If there is a serious risk and you don't know what to do, report it to a manager on duty - don't just leave a message in the staff notebook.

## Policy:

- **Adult Supervision-** children are not permitted in the Museum without adults for safety. Adults are responsible for ensuring their children's safety in the Museum and interacting with others. We do have some exhibits with small pieces that require adult assistance and supervision.
- **Museum Rules-** as children come in we explain the rules of the Museum. This is for their safety and for the safety of others. The two easiest and most important are
  - Use your walking feet (avoid injury)
  - Use your inside voices (so adults/supervisors can hear if anyone needs help)
- Other valuable rules for safety are: Keep your hands to yourself, no rough/wrestle/fake fighting play, and no gum (choking hazard, and it makes a mess!)
- **Clear Pathways-** we pick up around the Museum many times a day and safety is at the heart of the reason. Clear pathways are also a requirement for ADA accessibility (American Disabilities Act) a wheel chair or person with limited mobility must be able to maneuver through the Museum at all times. (This makes it convenient for strollers as well.)
- **Open Doors Slowly-** little kids don't always know not to stand next to doors.
- **Choking Hazards-** it is important to monitor exhibit components daily to make sure there are no broken pieces or items worn down to a choking size (items under 1.75" are consider a choking hazard an easy test is to make sure it cannot pass through a paper towel tube).

## **Emergency Procedures:**

### ***For Fire Emergency***

If the alarm is a shrill whistle, only the box protecting the alarm has been activated. Firmly close the box and the alarm will deactivate. If there is a loud buzzing sound throughout the museum, an actual alarm has been set.

The floor manager will call 911. The team member at the Welcome Center will lock the cash register and take the key. Remaining staff will guide visitors on the second floor down the main stairs through the front entrance. If an alternate route is needed for the second floor, staff will lead museum visitors through the emergency exit outside of the Mielke Family Theatre. This exit will lead through City Center to College Avenue.

On the first floor, staff will guide visitors to the front entrance. Everyone will meet at Houdini Park. If there is inclement weather, staff and visitors will utilize the lobby of Chase Bank as a meeting place.

During evacuation, strollers should remain in the museum. A final walk through will be performed by management to ensure that everyone has exited the building safely.

Fire extinguishers on the first floor are by the Welcome Center, the Gulf Stream Jet, Gift Shop Storage and the Field Trip Entrance. Fire extinguishers on the second floor are by visitor survey kiosk, the kiln room, the Mielke Family Theatre, the Fire Truck, the Main Office and in the back of each classroom. To activate the fire extinguisher, remove the pin from the handle, aim the nozzle toward the fire and squeeze the handle. After a team member uses a fire extinguisher, notify Julie so that the equipment can be replenished. Fire extinguishers should only be used in the case of a fire.

### ***For Tornado Emergency***

The Main Office and Welcome Center are equipped with a weather alert system linked to the National Weather Service. If a tornado warning is issued for Outagamie County, the sirens will go off. Staff will evacuate visitors into the basement through the back doors by the fire truck on the second floor and through the exit by the control tower on the first floor.

A final walk through will be performed by management to ensure that everyone has exited safely. All strollers should be left behind, and, if visitors choose to leave the premise, they may do so.

### ***Code Yellow***

A team member calls Code Yellow when a child is lost. The team member who calls the Code Yellow should remain with the adult at all times in order to provide a description (age, hair color, clothing, etc.). Once the description is given over the headsets, remaining team members and volunteers will search the first and second floor.

### ***AED Machine***

There is an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) machine outside of the Welcome Center Office. If the AED machine is necessary, notify a manager immediately and provide the location of where the machine is needed.

## **First Aid Kits**

First Aid Kits are in the Welcome Center Office on the 1st floor and the Main Office, Temporary Exhibit Space, the Staff Kitchen and Da Vinci Studio on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Please notify a staff member if basic first aid needs to be administered.

If a First Aid Kit is running low on supplies, notify a Visitor Experience team member of the items that need to be reordered.

## **Handling Inappropriate Behavior**

**First and foremost, please alert a paid staff member to the problem immediately!**

### **Altercations**

#### **Between Children**

- It is easier to try to prevent problems between children than stop them
- Encourage Sharing and inclusive play
- Discourage play fighting (physical type punching, kicking etc.)
- “Keep your hands to yourself please”
- If an altercation is taking place between children
- Try to mediate
- Ask them to share or create another solution
- Help them change the game
- Give them options that are all acceptable and allow them to choose their own solution
- Involve the parents (sometimes this may mean walking the child back to the parents)

#### **Between Adults, or You and a Guest**

Hopefully this will never happen, especially when you are always giving excellent customer service.

- Listen and try to understand what the problem is
- Be understanding this helps to diffuse anger
- “I hear what you are saying”
- If you cannot handle the situation, offer to get a manager to talk to the person.
- If you feel unsafe or very uncomfortable call the Police at the non-emergency phone number
- This is also a good choice when two other parents/adults in the museum are having a problem they cannot solve. The police are always willing to mediate.
- If you are threatened call the police at 911 if the threat is immediate or the non-emergency number if you are not sure
- If someone thinks something has been stolen from them while at the museum, that person must call the police, not you.
- The Building for Kids Children’s Museum is not responsible for lost or stolen items at the Museum. This is stated at the front door and that is also why you as a staff member must not call the police (you can give them the phone to use and the police non-emergency phone number).

## **Policy Against Harassment**

The Building for Kids Children's Museum is committed to maintaining a work environment free of unlawful harassment. Museum policy prohibits harassment based on sex (including sexual harassment, gender harassment and harassment due to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions) and harassment based on race, religion, creed, color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, sexual orientation or any other status protected by federal or state law or local ordinance or regulation. All such harassment is unlawful. The Museum's policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of the Museum (both paid and volunteer staff) and prohibits unlawful harassment by any volunteer/employee of the Museum, including supervisors and co-workers.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, unwelcome touching;
- Verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs, or unwanted visual conduct such as derogatory and/or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures;
- Threats and demands to submit to sexual requests as a condition of continued employment, or to avoid some other loss, and offers of employment benefits in return for sexual favors;
- Inappropriate conduct or comments consistently targeted at only one gender, even if the content is not sexual;
- Retaliation for having reported or threatened to report sexual harassment.

This behavior is unacceptable in the workplace itself and in other work-related settings such as off-site activities and Museum-related social events.

## **Smoking**

In response to state and local laws and building code, smoking is not permitted in or around our building. This includes private offices and other common areas.

## **Substance Abuse**

The possession, use or sale of illegal drugs and/or alcohol is never acceptable in our business environment. Also, the abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs and alcohol can compromise your job performance and conduct. We recognize that substance abuse can be successfully treated. Seeking help or assistance is not considered grounds for discipline, but refusal to get help in certain circumstances may be. It is your responsibility to get professional help to improve your performance or conduct.

## **Unacceptable behavior also includes, but is not limited to:**

- Gum chewing while on duty
- Possession of firearms or other lethal weapons
- Physical violence (includes pushing & shoving), lying or stealing
- Cursing, verbal abuse/intimidation of co-workers or visitors and inappropriate hand gestures
- Lack of attention to job duties, wasting time, and/or hindering others in the performance of their jobs
- Not remaining in your scheduled area or eating in exhibit spaces
- Using cell phones or other electronic devices while on duty

## **Disciplinary Actions**

- Depending on the severity, immediate dismissal may be implemented
- The volunteer will receive one verbal warning. If problem persists, the volunteer may be expelled from the Volunteer Program at the discretion of the Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Useful Information**

### **Museum Hours**

Monday: Closed  
Tues - Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Sunday: 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### **Holidays**

The Building for Kids Children's Museum follows the Appleton Area School District calendar. BFKCM is open on Mondays for Appleton Area School District School Holidays (Winter Break, Spring Break). BFKCM is closed for the following holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter, Memorial Day and Labor Day.

### **Admission Fees:**

Adult or Child: \$7.25  
Seniors (65+): \$6.00  
Children under 12 months old: *Free*

Admission is valid all day. Museum Memberships, discounted, and group admissions are available.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions, comments or concerns regarding this handbook, or about volunteering, please contact our Visitor Experience Manager, Hope Eike, at:

The Building for Kids Children's Museum  
100 W. College Avenue  
Appleton, WI 54911  
920-734-3226 x23  
heike@buildingforkids.org

## **Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook**

I acknowledge that I have been given a copy, or access to a copy, of The Building for Kids Children's Museum's Volunteer Handbook. I understand that this Handbook summarizes the Museum's volunteer guidelines, and that it is furnished to me solely for my information.

I understand that volunteering with the Organization is not for a specified term and is at the mutual consent of me and the Organization. Accordingly, the Organization or I can terminate the volunteer relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time.

I understand that the statements contained in the Handbook are not intended to create any contractual or other legal obligations. I also understand that the Museum may modify or rescind any of its policies, or practices described in the Handbook at any time, except for those policies required by law.

I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to read and become familiar with the contents of the Handbook.

**Volunteer Name (Printed)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

If volunteer is under the age of 18:

**Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_