

Dubai Announces Initiative to Become First Certified Autism Destination™ in Eastern Hemisphere

Providing specialized training to attractions and resorts as a first step to welcome autistic travelers and start journey towards autism certification

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Dubai is taking steps to enhance the destination's accessibility and inclusion for travelers

from all over the world to the next level. The Dubai Economy and Tourism department is spearheading this movement with the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards ([IBCCES](#)) to designate the first-ever [Certified Autism Destination™](#) (CAD) outside the United States. The first phase of this initiative means all Dubai attractions, hospitality



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and entertainment organizations will have access to specialized autism-specific training designed to enhance staff knowledge, understanding and strategies for communication, guest experience and safety to better serve and accommodate people of determination.

With 1 in 6 people having sensory needs and rising global autism diagnosis rates, there is an overwhelming need for more accessibility options in the travel and entertainment industry. Many autistic and sensory-sensitive individuals and their families find it challenging when visiting new places or planning family trips due to lack of staff understanding or supports.

In alignment with HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, National Policy for Empowering People of Determination, Dubai's Certified Autism Destination™ initiative helps support this plan by focusing on areas of inclusion and city stakeholder empowerment. Through the training and eventual certification

with IBCCES, Dubai's leading entertainment, hospitality and travel facilities will become essential entities to furthering the initiative and create an accessible destination for people of determination.

"We want to ensure that all visitors have the best possible experience when visiting Dubai. We are proud to partner with IBCCES to provide staff training to equip Dubai's hospitality and entertainment teams with the tools and training needed to better serve people of determination, including those who are autistic or sensory-sensitive," said Issam Kazim, CEO of Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce. "IBCCES is recognized all over the globe as the international standard for autism training and certification and millions of families look to them for guidance on travel questions and approved destinations. We want these families to know Dubai stands ready to welcome them with open arms. We aim to encourage all travel and entertainment facilities in Dubai to take the next step and complete the IBCCES autism certification program to help Dubai become the next Certified Autism Destination™."

This IBCCES and Dubai Economy and Tourism partnership will open a new destination for these families to visit where they can feel welcomed and understood. IBCCES training and certification programs specifically for travel and entertainment organizations such as theme parks, attractions and hotels, help staff feel knowledgeable and empowered to serve these visitors better and create a more standardized, credible and long-term approach to efforts toward accessibility and providing accommodations for the guests. Research released earlier this year by Expedia Group Media Solutions shows 7 out of 10 consumers would choose a destination, lodging, or transportation option that is more inclusive to all types of travelers, even if it's more expensive and 92% of consumers think it's important for travel providers to meet the accessibility needs of all travelers; therefore, the demand for more accessible travel options is a universal want among all travelers.

The next step to achieve the Certified Autism Destination™ designation will require a variety of travel and entertainment locations to undergo IBCCES' [Certified Autism Center™](#) (CAC) certification process. Beyond staff training, the CAC process will also include onsite reviews to provide additional recommendations and supports so that attractions and resorts can enhance the visitor experience.

"It is a great honor to partner with Dubai Economy and Tourism department to elevate the level of commitment to a city-wide mission and become leaders in the tourism industry," said Myron Pincomb, IBCCES Board Chairman. "So many families need more communication and understanding from travel destinations, so they can make those memories together that we all cherish. In some cases, small changes can make a huge impact. Our training and certification programs ensure each entertainment, hospitality, and service industry facility within Dubai is committed to long-term growth and understanding, not just a one-time training."

For more than 20 years, IBCCES has been the leader in cognitive disorder training and certification for healthcare, education, and corporate professionals around the globe. IBCCES

created programs specifically for hospitality and entertainment organizations such as hotels, theme parks, and other attractions so staff would be more knowledgeable and other accommodations offered to this growing, but underserved, part of the community. IBCCES is the only credentialing board offering these types of programs, including onsite reviews, sensory guide creation, and ongoing support to ensure locations continue to successfully provide accommodations and positive experiences. IBCCES also ensures autistic self-advocates and clinical and subject matter experts are featured in training content.

IBCCES also created AutismTravel.com, a free online resource for parents that lists certified destinations and connects families to other resources and each other. Each destination listed on the site has met the Certified Autism Center™ (CAC) requirements.

About IBCCES:

Delivering The Global Standard for Training and Certification in The Field of Cognitive Disorders – IBCCES provides a series of certifications that empower professionals to be leaders in their field and improve the outcomes for the individuals they serve. These programs are recognized around the world as the leading benchmark for training and certification in the areas of autism and other cognitive disorders.

About Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET)

With the ultimate vision of making Dubai, the world's leading commercial centre, investment hub and tourism destination, Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) is mandated to support the Government in positioning the emirate as a major hub for global economy and tourism, and in boosting the city's economic and tourism competitiveness indicators. Under this remit, DET is driving efforts to further enhance Dubai's diversified, innovative service-based economy to attract top global talent, deliver a world-class business environment and accelerate productivity growth. Additionally, DET is supporting Dubai's vision to become the world's best city to live and work in by promoting its diverse destination proposition, unique lifestyle and outstanding quality of life, overall.

DET is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai's business and tourism sectors. It is also responsible for the licensing and classification of all types of businesses, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. The DET portfolio includes Dubai Corporation for Tourism and Commerce Marketing, Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment, Dubai Industries and Exports, Dubai Investment Development Agency (Dubai FDI) and Dubai SME, as well as Dubai College of Tourism, Dubai Calendar and Dubai Business Events.

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