

The National Museum of the Great Lakes Achieves Autism Certification and Partners with National Autism Sailing Program

The National Museum of the Great Lakes proudly announces the recent completion of IBCCES' Certified Autism Center™ certification process

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[National Museum of the Great Lakes](#)

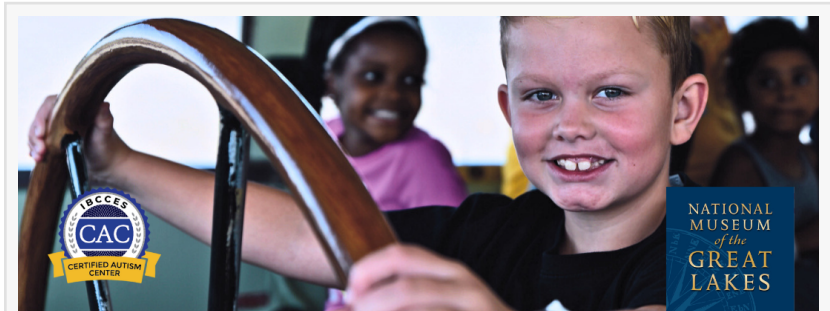
proudly announces the recent completion of autism training and certification through IBCCES

designating them as a [Certified Autism Center™](#) (CAC).

The museum joins a growing movement initiated by [Destination Toledo](#)

to attract more travelers to the destination. To meet CAC requirements, staff completed

training and certification to better assist and welcome autistic or sensory-sensitive visitors and their families.



“Statistics show that 1 in 6 people have sensory needs and 1 in 36 children are diagnosed with autism. The National Museum of the Great Lakes is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for all individuals,” explains Ellen Kennedy, the Museum’s Education and Visitor Experience Director. “Our team of staff and volunteers have completed hours of autism sensitivity and awareness training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to better understand and communicate with those who may have sensory sensitivities.”

Many autistic and sensory-sensitive individuals may find it challenging to visit new places or plan family trips due to a lack of staff training and understanding, the potential for sensory overload, and the need for flexible options or accommodations. In response to this need, IBCCES created training and certification programs specifically for theme parks, hotels, zoos, aquariums, and other attractions, to ensure all families and individuals can have fun and create memories. IBCCES is the only credentialing board offering these types of programs, which include training

from subject matter experts and autistic self-advocates, as well as long-term support and continuous learning, onsite reviews, and more.

By completing the CAC program, the museum becomes part of the larger Destination Toledo movement to achieve the Certified Autism Destination™ (CAD) designation, which is also awarded by IBCCES, to communities with a multitude of trained and certified lodging, recreation, and entertainment options. Currently, other organizations that have completed the CAC program include Destination Toledo, Valentine Theatre, Sylvania Chamber, Avenues for Autism, and Wingate by Wyndham Sylvania/Toledo, with many organizations in the area in the process of completion.



"We're excited to partner with the National Museum of the Great Lakes team, as they have joined this movement to help serve the millions of autistic and sensory-sensitive travelers and their

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We're excited to partner with the museum's team, as they have joined this movement to help serve the millions of autistic travelers and their families who are looking for more welcoming spaces”

Myron Pincomb, Board Chairman of IBCCES

families who are looking for more welcoming and accessible spaces,” said Myron Pincomb, Board Chairman of IBCCES. “Our programs provide long-term strategic supports and resources that go beyond training to ensure our partners have the tools to be industry leaders.”

In connection to achieving the Certified Autism Center™ certification, the museum has been actively searching for ways to increase partnerships with organizations supporting autistic individuals. This led to preliminary conversations with Spectrum Sailing—a nonprofit organization providing maritime education, programming, and outreach for autistic

children.

“When we discovered that Spectrum Sailing was expanding their 3-day sailing camp to numerous stops on the Great Lakes and that the Toledo-area would be host to one such camp, we gladly jumped onboard,” shares Kate Fineske who oversees the museum’s community partnership

work. "We plan to actively participate in this year's camp, hosted by North Cape Yacht Club from June 13 -16, and are offering a FREE Day at the museum for campers, their families, and all the applicants who submitted registrations.

Moving forward, the National Museum of the Great Lakes plans to continue its support of the sailing program and grow its autism spectrum partnership work in Toledo and the Great Lakes region. To learn more about the other certified options IBCCES created AutismTravel.com, a free online resource for families, 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 the National Museum of the Great Lakes:

Founded in 1944, the Great Lakes Historical Society has been preserving our shared cultural history by publishing a quarterly journal *Inland Seas*® since 1945; by operating a maritime museum since 1952; by offering educational programs to the general public since 1956; by conducting underwater archaeological research across the Great Lakes since 2001; and by managing the Col. James M. Schoonmaker Museum Ship since 2014 and Museum Tug Ohio since 2019. The opening of the National Museum of the Great Lakes enables the Great Lakes Historical Society to continue its mission to preserve and make known the important history of the Great Lakes.

About IBCCES

Committed to providing 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.

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