

Elmwood Park Zoo Recertifies as a Certified Autism Center™, Demonstrates Ongoing Commitment to Enhancing Accessibility

Since its initial certification in 2018, Elmwood Park Zoo remains a pioneer as the first zoo to achieve Certified Autism Center™ status

NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES, May 15, 2024

/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Elmwood Park Zoo](https://www.elmwoodparkzoo.org/) proudly announces its successful recertification as a [Certified Autism Center™](https://www.elmwoodparkzoo.org/) (CAC) by the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES). Following its initial certification in 2018, Elmwood Park Zoo continues to lead as the first zoo to earn this prestigious accolade, reaffirming its commitment to inclusivity and providing an enriching experience for all guests, including autistic and sensory-sensitive individuals and their families.



"We are thrilled to maintain our status as a Certified Autism Center™, highlighting our ongoing dedication to enhancing accessibility for every visitor," says Eric Donovan, chief operating officer of Elmwood Park Zoo. "This recertification is a testament to our company culture's transformation, emphasizing our unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional experiences for all guests. It has enabled us to implement various measures to accommodate the diverse needs of our visitors, fostering an environment of inclusivity and compassion."

Since its initial designation as a CAC in 2018, Elmwood Park Zoo has continually expanded its amenities to better serve its guests. Some of the offerings now include:

- Quiet Space: A gated, fenced-in enclosure designated as a quiet space, which provides guests with a peaceful retreat. Inside, visitors can find seats and custom sensory activity boards similar

to fidget spinners.

- Sensory Backpacks: Available for free by request at the admissions counter, these backpacks include noise-canceling headphones, fidget toys, a stress ball, thinking putty and copies of EPZ's Social Story, sensory map and sensory guides.

- Sensory Guides: Signage placed outside indoor exhibit spaces serves as sensory guides, allowing guests with sensitivities to know what to expect before entering.

- Accessibility Map: An accessibility map is available on the zoo's website, along with a comprehensive list of all available amenities.

- Quiet Events: Elmwood Park Zoo regularly hosts "quiet" events, including morning or evening admission before or after the zoo is open to the general public. Similar quiet versions of Halloween and holiday lights events are also offered.



The positive impact of these initiatives has been met with heartfelt appreciation from visitors, particularly initiatives such as the weekly "quiet mornings," which offer a calm and enjoyable atmosphere for a limited number of guests before general opening hours.

“

We are thrilled to maintain our status as a Certified Autism Center™, highlighting our ongoing dedication to enhancing accessibility for every visitor.”

Eric Donovan, chief operating officer of Elmwood Park Zoo

“Elmwood Park Zoo's dedication to maintaining its Certified Autism Center™ status sets a commendable example for other institutions,” shares Myron Pincomb, IBCCES board chairman. “The zoo's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility is truly commendable, and we are proud to continue our partnership with them in promoting a welcoming environment for all.”

IBCCES has been the leader in cognitive disorder training and certification for healthcare, education, and corporate professionals around the globe for more than 20 years. IBCCES is the only global credentialing board providing travel and entertainment organizations with training and certification from subject-matter experts and autistic self-advocates, and other resources, as well as long-term support that helps them understand how to better accommodate and assist autistic or sensory-sensitive visitors and their families.

For more information about Elmwood Park Zoo's accessibility offerings, please visit www.elmwoodparkzoo.org. Additionally, IBCCES has developed AutismTravel.com, a free online resource connecting families to certified destinations like Elmwood Park Zoo, ensuring a supportive environment for individuals with autism and sensory sensitivities.

###

About Elmwood Park Zoo

Elmwood Park Zoo was established in 1924 when a local farmer transferred 16 acres and a small menagerie to the Borough of Norristown. Today, the zoo is owned and operated by the Norristown Zoological Society, a non-profit organization whose mission is to foster an appreciation for wildlife and the environment that will inspire active participation in conservation. Under the Society's careful management, Elmwood Park Zoo has attained the elite status as one of only 230 institutions accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. The Zoo's accreditation was renewed in September, 2022.

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.

Meredith Tekin

IBCCES

+1 904-508-0135

marketing@ibcces.org

Visit us on social media:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/711452082>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.