St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Renews Certified Autism Center™ Designation, Building on Accessible Programs

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation has been a Certified Autism Center™ since 2024.





ST. JOHNS, FL, UNITED STATES, September 22, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- St. Johns County Parks and Recreation renews its Certified Autism Center™ (CAC) designation from the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards (IBCCES), reaffirming its commitment to creating welcoming and accessible experiences across its parks, programs, events, and facilities. Originally earning the designation in 2024, St. Johns County Parks and Recreation continues to apply the knowledge and tools gained through the certification process to enhance accessibility across its offerings. As part of the renewal process, at least 80% of staff completed updated autism and sensory training, equipping the department with up-to-date knowledge and practical strategies to provide more inclusive experiences for autistic individuals and all families throughout the community.

> This isn't something we want to accomplish once — it's a commitment we want to continue building on year after year."
>
> *Tess Simpson, community program manager*

"We want every family to feel like there is a place for them in Parks and Recreation," says Tess Simpson, community program manager for St. Johns County Parks and Recreation. "Renewing our Certified Autism Center™ certification shows that we are continuing to learn, train our staff and find ways to make our programs and facilities more welcoming and inclusive for individuals with autism

and their families. This isn't something we want to accomplish once — it's a commitment we want to continue building on year after year."



St. Johns County Parks and Recreation continues to apply the knowledge and tools gained through the certification process to create more welcoming experiences for individuals with autism and sensory needs and their families. The department incorporates this training into its day-to-day practices, helping staff feel more prepared to recognize and respond to different needs.

The CAC program provides parks and recreation staff with practical strategies for addressing a range of sensory and support needs. By incorporating these approaches across the department, staff can provide more consistent experiences and respond to autistic participants and families with greater confidence.

"St. Johns County Parks and Recreation's continued commitment to accessibility demonstrates the value of ongoing education and training in creating more welcoming community spaces," says Myron Pincomb, CEO and board chairman of IBCCES. "By renewing its Certified Autism Center™ designation, the department is continuing to build on the work it has already done and strengthening its ability to provide inclusive recreational experiences for individuals and families throughout the county."

St. Johns County Parks and Recreation's renewed certification continues to support the county-wide accessibility initiative led by the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, which is working toward helping St. Johns County achieve its Certified Autism Destination™ (CAD) designation. The initiative brings together organizations across tourism, recreation, entertainment, and lodging to build a more inclusive community and expand the range of welcoming options available to visitors and residents.

For 25 years, IBCCES has been a leader in providing autism, sensory, and neurodiversity training and certification for professionals worldwide, including those in healthcare, education, public safety, travel, and corporate sectors. As the only credentialing board offering these programs, IBCCES provides training from subject matter experts and autistic self-advocates, along with long-term support, continuous learning, onsite reviews, and renewal requirements to ensure continued growth and lasting impact.

To further support inclusivity efforts, St. Johns County Parks and Recreation is featured on the IBCCES Accessibility App, which is free to download. This app provides individuals with a variety of disabilities real-time guidance on certified destinations, sensory-inclusive spaces, and tailored recommendations. By connecting users to accessible locations worldwide, the app helps ensure

seamless, enjoyable experiences for everyone.

IBCCES also provides access to resources such as AccessibilityCertified.com and AutismTravel.com, which are free online tools for families that list certified locations and professionals. Each organization listed on the sites has met IBCCES certification requirements.

###

About St. Johns County Parks and Recreation
The St. Johns County Parks and Recreation Department is committed to a thriving local park system, the opportunity for our residents and visitors to enjoy healthy, active lifestyles, and the preservation of the natural beauty of our environment. Explore the many ways Parks and Recreation is making our communities happier and healthier by providing a place where it all comes together – a sense of community, an appreciation of history, and a respect for nature.

About IBCCES
Delivering the global standard for training and certification in the fields of autism, neurodiversity, and accessibility – IBCCES provides a series of certification programs that empower professionals to be industry leaders and improve the outcomes for the individuals they serve. For 25 years, IBCCES has been a global leader, setting the industry standard in autism and cognitive differences training. IBCCES works in over 125 countries and provides training in 8 languages, and its programs have been recognized around the world as the leading benchmark in training and certification.

In addition to individual certification programs, IBCCES partners with cities, destinations, and organizations on initiatives like the Certified Autism Destination™ (CAD) and Autism Certified City™ (ACC), ensuring autistic and sensory-sensitive residents and visitors feel welcomed and safe. Destinations that achieve the CAD designation have completed a specialized program that ensures a multitude of recreation, hospitality, and entertainment organizations have completed an autism and sensory-sensitivity training, certification, and IBCCES facilities review process. The ACC designation expands on that program and includes IBCCES training and certification for the public safety, education, healthcare, and workplace sectors.

IBCCES also created the Accessibility App, AutismTravel.com, and AccessibilityCertified.com – free resources for individuals with a variety of neurodiversities and disabilities, listing certified locations and connecting individuals to other resources and each other.

Meredith Tekin
IBCCES
+1 904-508-0135
marketing@ibcces.org
Visit us on social media:
LinkedIn

Instagram
Facebook
X
Other

This press release can be viewed online at: https://www.einpresswire.com/article/943394607

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.
© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.