



FAMILY ACHIEVEMENT
CENTER

FAMILY ACHIEVEMENT CENTER NEWSLETTER

February 2026

We are happy to introduce our newly created newsletter! In each edition, we will share resources, upcoming events and staff spotlights. We are open to suggestions for future newsletters and you can provide those by emailing info@familyachievement.com.

Celebrating 25 Years of FAC Sarah Mason, President/Owner

This year marks a truly special milestone for all of us at Family Achievement Center: our 25th anniversary. For a quarter of a century, we have been honored to serve families, strengthen communities, and live out a mission that remains as meaningful today as it was at the very beginning—providing hope and improving lives.

Family Achievement Center was founded in 2001 by Tom Hoel, inspired by his son Anthony's therapeutic journey. At the time, Tom recognized a significant gap in available services. Families needed more than isolated support; they needed collaborative, community-based care delivered by professionals who truly understood their challenges and shared a deep commitment to helping them thrive.

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Driven by that vision, Tom set out to build something that simply didn't exist yet—a place where families could find comprehensive support, connection, and understanding. In those early years, he was very much a trailblazer.

Collaborative care models were still emerging, and online resources were limited, yet Tom brought together a passionate network of professionals who believed in working together for the good of families. What began as a deeply personal mission grew into an organization that has touched countless lives.

Today, it is a profound honor for me to lead Family Achievement Center alongside my husband, Tom. As we celebrate this anniversary, we recognize not only his visionary leadership but also the enduring spirit and legacy of Anthony, whose journey continues to inspire our team every single day.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who has been part of this 25-year journey—families, staff, partners, and community members. Your trust, dedication, and shared belief in our mission are what have made Family Achievement Center what it is today.

As we move through this anniversary year, we look forward to celebrating with you and honoring the incredible community that makes our work possible. Stay tuned for more moments of reflection, gratitude, and celebration—we can't wait to mark this milestone together.



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STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Kyle Nelson, OTR/L

Occupational Therapy Manager- Woodbury

Kyle graduated from the University of North Dakota with a Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy. He brings a unique perspective and understanding to pediatrics through his experience of having and working with a sibling with Autism. *"I provide hope and improve lives by connecting with each individual through their own interests and abilities to help them live their lives to the fullest."*



Caitlin Buhr, CCC-SLP

Speech Therapist- Bloomington

Caitlin received her Masters of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. She has experience with the pediatric population in the outpatient setting (with the majority of her caseload having ASD and/or trauma history) as well as the school-based setting. Caitlin enjoys collaborating and building trusting therapeutic relationships with her clients, families, and coworkers to help reach the clients' fullest potential. *"I provide hope and improve lives by bringing a positive attitude to every session, working as a team with all that are involved, and making each session fun and individualized towards the needs and interests of the client."*

Mia Schmidke, PT, DPT

Physical Therapist- Woodbury

Mia received her Doctor of Physical Therapy from the University of Wisconsin La-Crosse. She has a passion for working with kids and loves to see them grow and succeed through life. Mia enjoys the constantly changing and unpredictable nature of working with the pediatric population. She loves to have fun and really get to know each kid she works with. Her favorite part about working with the younger population is the relationships she gets to build with both the kids and their family. *"I provide hope and improve lives by taking a team approach to developing a comprehensive and engaging treatment plan. I work with the caregivers and patients to determine where they need guidance and support in order to reach their full potential."*



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Immediate Physical Therapy Openings

Family Achievement Center has immediate physical therapy openings! We work with children from birth through early adulthood, helping them build strength, balance, and confidence. Our physical therapists support kids as they learn everyday skills like climbing stairs, improving coordination, and even riding a bike.

Common PT Diagnoses:

- Torticollis
- Gross Motor Delay
- Toe Walking
- Down Syndrome
- Pain or Injuries
- Cerebral Palsy
- Autism
- Chromosomal Abnormalities
- Many Others



Family Achievement Foundation

In order to continue to support families and caregivers on a challenging journey, Tom & Sarah launched Family Achievement Foundation in 2020. As a 501c3 nonprofit, our mission is to provide love, connections, and resources to families on a challenging journey. Family Achievement Foundation hosts many family meetups, parent/caregiver education events and an annual caregiver retreat. Family Achievement Foundation also grants quarterly Journey Awards to caregivers and parents on a challenging journey. Find out more about Family Achievement Foundation by visiting our website and following us on social media.

www.familyachievementfoundation.org

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Resources for Talking to Kids about ICE Operations

Recent events in Minnesota have been difficult and unsettling for many families in our community. As news spreads and conversations happen at school, online, and among adults, children may also be absorbing information that feels confusing, scary, or overwhelming.

At FAC, we want to acknowledge that parents, caregivers, and children alike may be experiencing a wide range of emotions — including fear, anxiety, sadness, or uncertainty. As a clinical practice specializing in pediatric services, we believe it's important to offer guidance and support during moments like these.

Talking With Children About Difficult Topics

Children often look to trusted adults to help them make sense of what they see and hear. Thoughtful, age-appropriate conversations can help children feel safer, more grounded, and more supported. While these discussions can feel challenging, you don't have to navigate them alone.

Below are several trusted resources that offer practical tips and compassionate guidance for talking with children about current immigration enforcement actions and related events:

- **Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health**

Guidance on supporting children during immigration enforcement operations

<https://macmh.org/supporting-children-during-immigration-enforcement-operations/>

- **Children's Minnesota**

Tips for talking to kids about U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) actions

<https://www.childrensmn.org/blog/talking-to-kids-about-u-s-immigration-and-customs-enforcement-i-c-e-actions/>

- **Childnet International**

What to say to kids about ICE and how to support them emotionally

<https://www.childnet.org/what-to-say-to-kids-about-ice>

We hope these materials provide reassurance and help families feel more confident in supporting their children through difficult conversations.

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Resources Continued from Page 5

We're Here for You

Please know that your family's privacy and safety are a top priority for us. Our team is trained in clear procedures to protect both, and we remain committed to creating a supportive, welcoming space for all families.

We continue to offer telehealth appointments for those who may feel more comfortable meeting virtually at this time. If you would like to switch to virtual sessions, please reach out directly to your therapist.

We will also continue sharing supportive resources on our social media channels. You can follow us on Facebook and Instagram for updates and additional information.

If you have questions, concerns, or need extra support for your child or family, please don't hesitate to contact us. You are not alone — and we are here to help.

Diaper, Wipe & Feminine Product Drive

Family Achievement Center is collecting diapers, wipes and feminine products to support Source MN.

Visit there website at <https://sourcemn.org/>

now through February 28th



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Save the Date:

Family Achievement Center's Annual Awards Day Celebrations

Bloomington Awards Day

Sunday, April 19th
Minnesota Masonic Heritage Center

Woodbury Awards Day

Sunday, May 17th
Lake Middle School

Awards Day is an annual celebration for the hard work families and kids put in at therapy every year. Your child will be celebrated with an award and trophy. Formal invitations will be sent soon.



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