

FAMILY ACHIEVEMENT CENTER NEWSLETTER

May 2026

Family Achievement Center's Annual Awards Day Celebrations

Family Achievement Center recently hosted its Annual Awards Day celebrations in Woodbury and Bloomington. Awards Day is a celebration to honor the incredible progress, hard work, and determination of children participating in physical, occupational, and speech therapy programs. Families, therapists, staff members, and supporters gathered to celebrate the achievements of every child who attends therapy each week with courage and determination. Between our Woodbury and Bloomington ceremonies, we were proud to host over 600 people for the families we serve.

The events were filled with encouragement and inspiration as children were honored with trophies and a personalized certificate for reaching their goals throughout the year. From improving motor skills and emotional regulation to gaining confidence in communication and daily activities, every achievement represented countless hours of dedication from both the children and their families.

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Owners, Tom Hoel and Sarah Mason highlighted the importance of perseverance and teamwork in the therapy journey. Tom also shared the story of his son Anthony's inspiration behind starting Award's Day. Therapists praised the children for their commitment, positive attitudes, and willingness to push through challenges during therapy sessions. Families were also recognized for their unwavering support and encouragement, which play a vital role in each child's growth and success.

Parents expressed gratitude for the dedication and compassion shown by the therapy team, noting the positive impact Family Achievement Center has had on their children's confidence, development, and overall quality of life. Many described the Annual Awards Day Celebration as a powerful reminder of how far their children have come and how much potential lies ahead.

As the events concluded, the atmosphere remained filled with hope and pride. The annual Awards Day Celebrations served as more than an awards ceremony, it's a celebration of perseverance, progress, and the extraordinary strength of children who work hard every week to achieve their goals. Family Achievement Center continues to provide encouragement, support, and therapy services that empower children and families every day, and this year's celebration beautifully reflected the determination and achievements of the amazing children we are honored to serve.



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STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Ben Stagg, OTR/L

Occupational Therapist - Bloomington

Ben graduated from the University of North Dakota with a Bachelor's in Psychology before pursuing an Occupational Therapy Doctorate. He has had experience learning in a variety of clinical settings including pediatric therapy clinics and loves to be part of a team with speech and physical therapy. Ben has always had a passion for working with children, which greatly contributed to his decision to become an occupational therapist. He cannot wait to work with each child and their family to help them be the best version of themselves. *"I provide hope and improve lives by meeting each child and family where they are at and collaborating to increase engagement in all parts of life."*



Aly Mueller, CCC-SLP

Speech Therapy Lead - Woodbury

Aly attended the University of Wisconsin - River Falls to obtain her Master of Science degree in Speech-Language Pathology. Her favorite aspect of Speech-Language Pathology is working with children and their families to support the growth of communication. Aly's areas of special interest include language development, articulation, and phonology. *"I provide hope and improve lives by collaborating with clients and their families to foster a fun, comfortable, and functional environment to learn and grow."*

Emily Stern, PT, DPT

Physical Therapist - Bloomington

Emily earned her Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and completed her undergraduate studies in Biokinetics at Bethel University. She is passionate about meeting each child where they are and walking alongside them to help achieve their goals. Emily wholeheartedly believes in the power of hope that FAC strives to provide for patients and their families. *"I provide hope and improve lives by building strong relationships with patients and their families, ensuring I fully understand the goals and activities that matter most to each patient. I do my best to help each patient reach their goals while making therapy fun along the way."*



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Register Now:

**Family Achievement Center's
Move to Your Own Groove
All Abilities Run Walk and Roll**

Get Tickets



FACMTYOG8.eventbrite.com

Sunday, September 13th

9:30 AM

Colby Lake Park



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Sponsor Move to Your Own Groove

Family Achievement Center has a goal to reach \$15,000 in sponsorships. All proceeds will be donated to Family Achievement Foundation. If you or your business is interested in sponsorship, please contact kgavin@familyachievement.com or learn more by visiting our website at <https://familyachievement.com/move-to-your-own-groove-sponsorship/>



\$1,000 of \$15,000

SPONSOR LEVELS	DREAM \$2,500	HOPE \$1,000	ASPIRE \$750	JOURNEY \$500	FRIEND \$250
Event Entries	4	3	2	2	1
Event Page Promotions & Pre-Event exposure to over 2,500 followers	Color Logo with Hyperlink	Color Logo with Hyperlink	Color Logo with Hyperlink	Business Name Listed with hyperlink	Business Name Listed
Event Signage	Color Logo +Trail Signage	Color Logo +Trail Signage	Color Logo	Business Name Listed	Business Name Listed
Participant T-Shirt *(Submit logo & payment by August 11th to guarantee logo on shirt)	Logo*	Logo*	Logo*	Business Name Listed	-
Electronic promotion to over 5,000 contacts	Color Logo with hyperlink	Color Logo with hyperlink	Color Logo with hyperlink	Business Name Listed	Business Name Listed
Marketing Booth at Event	✓	✓	✓	-	-
Brochures or Business Information in Event Day Bags	✓	✓			
Business Spotlight on Social Media	✓				

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Five Occupational Therapy Tips to Make Daily Transitions Easier

By: Kristina Huscroft, OTR/L - Occupational Therapist at FAC

Each child and situation is different, and it may take a combination of the following strategies to help transitions go smoothly! As with most things, practice makes perfect- it is important to use pretend play to practice transition skills before they are needed in the moment. Additionally, please always allow for extra time when learning new skills, as this will decrease the overall stress of the transition.

Use first then language

- Everyone benefits from knowing what the plan is. By utilizing this phrasing, your child will know what is expected of them before the transition occurs.

“First, we need to clean up, then, we can eat a snack!”

Provide choice

- Often times we ask our children “Can you pick up the blocks?”. This opens up the possibility of children replying “no!” which leaves us up a creek without a paddle. Instead, by offering specific choices, we are allowing choice but also controlling what the choices are to encourage cooperation.

“Do you want to clean up the blocks OR the barbies?”

Time warnings or visual timers

- Time is such a tricky abstract concept- even for adults. There are many ways that we can make time more tangible and easier to understand for kids. By focusing on things that they can touch, feel, and experience, we can make transitions easier to understand. For example, when swinging, we can ask if they want two or three more pushes, offering choice in addition to providing a tangible limit before the transition. If we rely on timers, ensuring that there is a visible element to the timer to allow the concept of the passing time more understandable.

“Would you like two more pushes or three?”

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Make it a game!

•In the stress of a transition, it is easy to forget how children learn best- play! By making it a song or a game, we bring out the best in our children and change the atmosphere around the transition.

“Who can get dressed the fastest?”

Validate the feelings and keep the boundaries firm

•Transitions often bring up big feelings, and these feelings are valid- it is hard to stop doing fun things! It is important to validate these feelings while also holding firm to the boundary of transitioning to the new task. The phrase “the problem is” helps to explain the problem while also not negating their big feelings.

“I know it is hard to stop playing, THE PROBLEM IS, our appointment is in 20 minutes.”

Google Review Giveaway

Family Achievement Center is seeking new reviews to help us celebrate our 25-year anniversary! Review us on Google or Facebook for your chance to win a gift basket with gift card!

Reviews from now through May 31st will be entered into the giveaway!

Facebook Reviews



Google Reviews

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LOCAL INCLUSIVE PARKS

Augsburg Park - Richfield 7100 Nicollet Ave Richfield, MN 55423

Augsburg Park has an all-inclusive playground which includes rubber surfacing throughout the entire play area. Two accessible swings, and ramps on main playstructure. Augsburg Park also has ground level activities including musical instruments, wheelchair accessible whirl and crawl tunnels and spinners. There are also quiet sensory friendly areas including a playhouse. Two transfer stations and accessible benches and picnic tables also make Augsburg Park accessible and inclusive to all.



Madison's Place - Woodbury 4125 Radio Drive Woodbury, MN 55129

Madison's Place Playground stands out for its commitment to inclusivity and accessibility. The playground features wheelchair-accessible ramps, a soft rubber surface for safety, and a variety of play structures designed to accommodate all children. The 16,000-square-foot all-inclusive playground offers sun-shade-covered play decks, swings, sensory play equipment, and ramps for wheelchair access.

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