



**FAMILY
ACHIEVEMENT
FOUNDATION**

Building Community and Connection

Family Achievement Foundation

January 2026

Building Community and Connection

As we step into 2026, we find ourselves reflecting with immense gratitude on how far we've come together. When Family Achievement Foundation was founded back in 2020, we had a vision of creating a loving, connected community for families navigating the challenges of raising children with disabilities.

Looking back over these past few years, our hearts are full. Together with all of you, we've built something truly special - offering not only resources, but a real sense of belonging and hope. We know firsthand in our own parenting journeys how isolating and overwhelming it can be to raise a child with challenging diagnoses, and we know the stress and heartbreak that can accompany that journey.

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But through Family Achievement Foundation, we've also seen the incredible power of connection. We've created a space where families come together, share their stories, and support one another. It's been an honor for us to lead this organization and witness the strength and vulnerability of so many who share their journeys.

As we look forward in our mission, we've taken a fresh look at the organization to ensure we continue to innovate and stay true to the soul of how we dreamed of helping families. With that in mind, we're excited to share that as part of our renewal, we're updating our tagline to "Building Community and Connection." This change reflects our ongoing commitment to growing together and focusing on what truly matters: the special community we have built together.

From the bottom of our hearts, we want to thank each of you for being part of this beautiful foundation. You give so many people hope, connection, and a sense of community. We also want to extend a special thank you to our volunteer Board of Directors and to Cassie Madsen, Foundation Marketing Assistant. Their dedication and generosity are the backbone of our mission, and we couldn't do this work without their commitment.

With you in love and gratitude,

Founders Sarah Mason and Tom Hoel



Tom & Sarah at Family Achievement Foundation's Retreat in April 2025



Family Achievement Foundation's Peer-to-Peer Support Program

This fall, 18 families joined Family Achievement Foundation's Peer-to-Peer Support Program. Participants—both individuals and couples—were thoughtfully matched with others who share similar backgrounds and/or similar diagnoses in their children. Each family also received expectations and general meeting guidelines to help them begin their journey together.

We are thrilled to offer this program and look forward to seeing the meaningful relationships, shared wisdom, and mutual support that grow from these connections.

What is the Peer Support program?

The Peer-to-Peer Support Program connects pairs or small groups of families who share similar dynamics, challenges, and experiences. Through these connections, families can learn from one another, exchange practical knowledge, and feel supported by a community that truly understands their journey.

Who is this for?

Parents/caregivers who are raising or have raised children who have special needs or challenging medical diagnoses. o Child(ren) may be in any life phase from babies to adults. We'd like to connect the wonderful families in our community to share their experiences, knowledge, and support.

When can I sign up?

Because this program works best when groups begin together, our next large group enrollment will take place this spring. Stay tuned to our social media channels and upcoming newsletters for details.

If you'd like more information in the meantime, you're welcome to email peersupport@familyachieve.org.

[HTTPS://FAMILYACHIEVEMENTFOUNDATION.ORG/RESOURCES-2/PEER-TO-PEER-FAMILY-SUPPORT-PROGRAM/](https://familyachievementfoundation.org/resources-2/peer-to-peer-family-support-program/)

Nominate a Deserving Caregiver for our Journey Award

The Journey Award was created with the hope of touching a parent or caregiver on a challenging journey. While they may not see what they are doing as special because they love their children, those around them see their caretaking, tireless advocacy, and unconditional love for their children. The individuals selected will receive a \$500 check, a custom-made heart stone, and an award certificate explaining why they were nominated.

Nominate a deserving caregiver for our Journey Award at www.journeyaward.org

Local Resource Spotlight

Anna Elder Homes: Compassionate Real Estate Services

At Anna Elder Homes, real estate is about more than just transactions—it's about building safe, supportive environments for families, particularly those with children on the autism spectrum. As both a Realtor and a mom of a child with special needs, I understand the unique challenges families face during a move. My mission is to offer compassionate, personalized support throughout the process, ensuring each family feels truly cared for. I also run an autism support group and donate 10% of every sale to organize sensory-friendly events and parent meetups, helping our community thrive long after the move is complete.

Learn more or contact Anna by visiting her website.
<https://www.annaelderhomes.com/>



Family Achievement Foundation Resources Page

Family Achievement Foundation has a robust resource directory on our website. Please note that while Family Achievement Foundation provides links to these organizations, it does not necessarily endorse all of the information from these links. Clients, parents and caregivers should always consult the proper medical authorities on the most appropriate options for each individual's needs.

Resources include:

- Therapeutic & Educational Resources
- Adaptive Sports
- Home & Respite Care
- Equipment and Environment
- Mental Health & Behavior
- Family & Sibling Connection
- Financial, Legal & Advocacy

Scan to visit our Resources Page



Upcoming Events

Free Family Meetup WeRock the Spectrum- Woodbury

Saturday, February 7th
10:00 AM- 12:00 PM



Free Resource Series: Self-Care for Parents/Caregivers of Children with Special Needs

Tuesday, February 10th
6:30 PM
Virtual on Zoom

Free Family Movie Meetup Zootopia 2

Saturday, March 28th
Check-in at 11:45 AM Movie at 12:00 PM
Woodbury 10 Theater

EMAIL INFO@FAMILYACHIEVE.ORG
TO REGISTER FOR THESE EVENTS



SAVE THE DATE: Parent/Caregiver Retreat

A DAY OF REST & CONNECTION

Please save the date for Saturday, April 25th as Family Achievement Foundation invites you to join us for a special retreat. This event is dedicated to offering a day of respite, reflection, and meaningful connection for parents and caregivers in our community. Stay tuned for more details, but for now, mark your calendars and get ready to join us for a rejuvenating day.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25TH
9:00 AM- 5:00 PM
HUDSON, WI



Join Family Achievement Foundation's online closed group for parents/caregivers on Facebook!



Follow Family Achievement Foundation on social media to stay updated!



All About Me Profile

Introducing your child to new teachers and caregivers can be challenging for both the parents and the child. Every child has unique interests, strengths, and needs. Parents/caregivers often need a simple and effective way to communicate that information to their child's teacher at the start of the school year or a new PCA/babysitter anytime throughout the year. Family Achievement Foundation's All About Me profile can help make this easier for everyone involved!

An "All About Me" profile is a great way to introduce your child to their teacher(s), therapists, other caregivers and/or any other professionals that will be working with them. It can be used when your child enters a new grade, moves to a new school, or is preparing for a big transition. The document is a great summary of your child's needs, safety considerations and medical information.

This profile will allow you to drive the narrative for your child. It will include all the important things you think your child's team should know and is a great way to open the lines of communication between you and your child's team. This is a great tool for teachers and care providers to reference all year long! You can fill this out as the parent/caregiver or you and/or your child can fill out together.



The image shows a sample of the 'All About Me' profile form. It features a large graphic on the left that says 'ALL ABOUT ME' in orange and white. To the right is a form for a child named Abby. The form includes a photo of Abby, her name, age (7 years old), and a list of conditions she has: Down Syndrome, Asthma, and Epilepsy. It also lists her medications (Epi Pen), allergies (Eggs), and speaking abilities (Non-speaking). Contact information for her mother, Andrea, and father, Thomas, is provided. A section titled 'ABOUT ME:' describes her interests, including watching Bluey and Disney Movies, and her favorite things to do. Two boxes at the bottom list 'I HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH:' (sitting still, trying new foods, jumping, loud places, waiting) and 'THINGS THAT HELP ME:' (visual schedules, calm voices, quiet spaces, big hugs). A final section says 'I AM REALLY GOOD AT:' (reading, puzzles).

ALL ABOUT ME

About Me
Hi, I'm Abby
I am 7 years old

I HAVE
Down Syndrome
Asthma
Epilepsy

Medications:
• List medication and dosage here
• List medication and dosage here
• Epi Pen

Allergies
• Eggs

Speaking **Non-speaking**
• I use Verbal communication, Sign Language and my AAC Device

Mom: Andrea
mom@youremail.com
085-598-7734

Dad: Thomas
dad@youremail.com
083-598-7734

Other Caregivers: Grandma- Tami
PCAs- Emily, Sophie

ABOUT ME:
I have a two younger brothers named Joey & Evan. I have a dog named Beau & a cat named Bear. I live in Duluth, MN. I love to go on walks with my mom. My favorite things to do are Miracle League Baseball and Darby's Dancers. I love to watch Bluey and Disney Movies. Frozen and Moana are my favorite.

I HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH:

- Sitting still at a table
- Trying new foods
- Jumping and doing stairs
- Loud places
- Waiting & being patient

THINGS THAT HELP ME:

- Visual Schedules
- Calm Voices
- Quiet Spaces when I need a break
- Big hugs from familiar people
- Being patient with me

I AM REALLY GOOD AT:
• Reading
• In a book and doing simple puzzles.

familyachievementfoundation.org/resources/about-me-tool/

Make your own "All About Me Profile" by visiting <https://familyachievementfoundation.org/resources/about-me-tool/>



Fundraising Updates

Give to the Max Day

Thanks to the generosity of our community, we raised \$675 during Give to the Max Day on November 20th, 2025. Your support helps us strengthen our mission and bring meaningful events to life in 2026.

These contributions allow us to:

- expand programming and create new opportunities for connection
- invest in resources that enhance the experience for all participants
- bring our mission to life in ways that reach even more people

We're excited about what's ahead in 2026, and your generosity makes it all possible. Thank you for standing with us and helping our work grow.



Hubbard Broadcasting Grant

Family Achievement Foundation is proud to share that we have been awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Hubbard Broadcasting Foundation on December 31, 2025. This generous support will directly fuel our 2026 events and the Journey Awards, helping us continue celebrating and empowering the families and children we serve.

We are deeply grateful for this partnership and the continued belief in our mission.

Donate to Family Achievement Foundation anytime on our website:
<https://familyachievementfoundation.org/donate/>