

Kalamazoo Valley Museum  
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News Release  
March 14, 2018

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### **New Sensory Program Offered at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum**

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum and the Center for Autism and Related Disorders (C.A.R.D.) are partnering to help parents learn from experts in the field how to enjoy the Museum with their families. A free hour-long program, Practical Hands-On Experience, takes place on March 17 at 11 a.m. in the Kalamazoo Valley Museum. It will include an interactive discussion for adults and activities for children.

For children with sensory difficulties, new places often mean new challenges. The Museum and the C.A.R.D will share with parents suggestions for preparing to visit new places as well as ways to use the Museum's hands-on interactives and exhibits for practice.

Suggestions for preparation and social skills to enhance visits to the doctor's office, shopping, eating out, and at school for recess, in the classroom, and in the lunch room will be shared. Visitors are encouraged to come with questions and share what has worked for them. Museum staff, volunteers, and C.A.R.D. behavioral specialists will supervise the children in the Innovation Lab adjacent to the ThinkTank, where the presentation will take place, on the second floor of the Museum.

The Museum strives to be inclusive for all. Sensory tool kits have been added to the front desk for visitors who would like to use them during their visit. They include noise-canceling headphones, a weighted snake, a fidget ring, and visual calming cards. Now available in the planetarium to make viewing more enjoyable are wiggle cushions, resistance bands, noise-canceling headphones, and a variety of fidgets.

The Kalamazoo Valley Museum is operated by Kalamazoo Valley Community College and is governed by its Board of Trustees.