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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## FREE ADMISSION FOR CHILDREN TO KICK OFF A YEAR'S WORTH OF LGBTQ ACCESS AND INCLUSION EVENTS

CHICAGO, IL— Chicago Children's Museum (CCM) will launch a year of programming dedicated to celebrating Chicago's LGBTQ community with International Family Equality Day (IFED) on Sunday, May 5, 2019. CCM will wave admission for all children 15 and under to celebrate and encourage an inclusive environment for all. This is the first of many events the museum will host throughout the year to provide a welcoming and accepting space for all children to play.

"CCM celebrates diversity in all its forms, and it is our belief that every family has the right to play, learn, and celebrate life in a nurturing environment," said CCM President and CEO Jennifer Farrington. "We take pride in being a museum where all families are welcomed, represented, and valued— regardless of their composition."

International Family Equality Day is an official event of the Family Equality Council that recognizes all family structures and gender expressions while providing visibility and support to LGBTQ families.

"Chicago Children's Museum has been a terrific partner for many years," said Family Equality Council Chief Program Officer Amanda Hopping-Winn. "We are thrilled to once again support the museum in hosting an International Family Equality Day event in such an inclusive environment that welcomes and celebrates all families."

Chicago Children's Museum continually works to create an evolving, inclusive environment that welcomes and engages visitors of all backgrounds and perspectives. The museum's LGBTQ Access and Inclusion initiative, created in 2011, has a dedicated committee of staff members working to ensure that CCM furthers its commitment to LGBTQ families.

2019-2020 LGBTQ Access & Inclusion events and programs include:

### ***May 5, 2019 — International Family Equality Day***

Join us as we celebrate International Family Equality Day with colorful hands-on activities that celebrate all families!

- Contribute to our Rainbow Ribbon Staircase art installation.
- Groove to tunes by guest musician Stacy Buehler.
- Collect all the colors of the rainbow to make a bracelet that shows your pride.
- Show your creativity in an Illustration Workshop with Visiting Artist Ricki Proper.

- Explore resources from Family Equality Council, The GenderCool Project, Illinois Safe Schools Alliance, and Chicago Children’s Museum.
- Meet staff from Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital’s Sex and Gender Development Clinic.

***June 29, 2019 — Navy Pier Pride***

Join Chicago Children’s Museum on the Navy Pier South Dock as we celebrate LGBTQ families!

- Make a rainbow bracelet to wear and show your PRIDE!
- Learn about the museum’s LGBTQ Inclusion resources for parents and teachers.
- Enjoy favorite children's books brought to life in fabulous fashion during Story Time with Drag Queens!

***October 2019 — Costuming with Drag Queens***

Join us in the Art Studio as performers teach the Art of Transformation! Make your own costume or accessories to transform yourself into *someone* or *something* else!

***February 2020 — Celebrating Families Through Story***

Throughout the month, we’re featuring stories that highlight families in every wonderful form: LGBTQ families, grandparent-led families, adoptive families, single-parent families, multi-race families and more. Visitors will have the opportunity to celebrate their *own* unique families as well as appreciate others’ through a variety of hands-on creative activities including book-making, illustration, and collaborative art-making.

**About Chicago Children’s Museum**

The mission of Chicago Children's Museum (CCM) is to improve children’s lives by creating a community where play and learning connect. CCM is dedicated to young children and the important adults in their lives. Play-filled experiences, including more than 15 interactive exhibits and daily programming, tap into how kids learn, and engage from ages 0-10 to develop the foundation for a lifelong love of learning. CCM aims to deliver at least one-third of its total annual attendance to low-income or underserved community members. In its last fiscal year, CCM hosted more than 400,000 visitors. For more information, please visit [www.ChicagoChildrensMuseum.org](http://www.ChicagoChildrensMuseum.org).

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