

NEW YORK TRANSIT MUSEUM

Contact:

Chelsea Newburg (718) 694-4915
chelsea.newburg@nyct.com

August 15, 2016

Applications Now Open for Transit Museum's Subway Sleuths After-School Program for Students on the Autism Spectrum

Subway Sleuths, the New York Transit Museum's renowned after-school program for students on the autism spectrum in the 2nd through 5th grade, is now accepting applications for the fall session. The program uses a shared interest in trains among kids on the autism spectrum as a means to encourage peer-to-peer interaction and develop social skills and confidence over 10 goal-oriented sessions. Using a strength-based approach, participants explore the Transit Museum's decommissioned subway station home, solving transit mysteries, becoming transit experts and sharing that enthusiasm with others. Families interested in participating must submit applications by **the deadline of September 8**. Additional information and a link to the application can be found at www.nytransitmuseum.org/access.

To form Subway Sleuths groups, expert facilitators observe students in fun, half-hour sessions at the Transit Museum to assure that all accepted students show similar social and communication profiles. Group sizes are specifically left small so spaces are limited. Screening sessions will be held on September 10 for Saturday morning groups, September 14 for Wednesday afternoon groups, and September 15 for Thursday afternoon groups. All screenings and sessions take place while the Museum is closed to the public, which means that Sleuths have the trains, buses, and turnstiles all to themselves!

By working in pairs as well as collaborating as a group, "Sleuths" practice different forms of social engagement. Each class is facilitated by a special education teacher, a speech-language pathologist, and a Transit Museum educator, all trained in ASD support. The program costs \$350 and scholarships are available.

Since its creation five years ago, the Subway Sleuths program has welcomed almost 100 school children in grades 2 through 5 and has been widely praised by disability advocates and museum professionals alike. The program was awarded a prestigious Autism Speaks grant in 2012 and the American Alliance of Museums' Excellence in Programming Award in 2016, and is a finalist for the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities' 2016 National Arts & Humanities Youth Program Awards. The Transit Museum has also developed a step-by-step printed guide for other museums and after-school programs looking to implement similar projects.

Subway Sleuths was created with support from Autism Speaks and the Brooklyn Community Foundation. Ongoing support is provided by the FAR Fund, the Joseph LeRoy and Ann C. Warner Fund, the Meringoff Family Foundation, the Tiger Baron Foundation, and generous individual donors. Special needs programs at the New York Transit Museum are also supported by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and

by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

ABOUT NEW YORK TRANSIT MUSEUM:

The New York Transit Museum, one of the city’s leading cultural institutions, is the largest museum in the United States devoted to urban public transportation history and one of the premier institutions of its kind in the world. The Museum explores the development of the greater New York metropolitan region through the presentation of exhibitions, tours, educational programs and workshops dealing with the cultural, social and technological history of public transportation. Since its inception nearly forty years ago, the Museum – which is housed in a historic 1936 IND subway station in Downtown Brooklyn – has grown in scope and popularity. As custodian and interpreter of the region’s extensive public transportation networks, the Museum strives to share through its public programs their rich and vibrant history with local, regional, and international audiences.

When: Screening sessions are scheduled for:

- September 10 for Saturday groups
- September 14 for Wednesday groups
- September 15 for Thursday groups

Class Schedule:

- Wednesday afternoons
2nd and 3rd graders / 4:30pm – 5:45pm
- Thursday afternoons
2nd and 3rd graders / 4:30pm – 5:45pm
- Saturday mornings
4th and 5th graders / 10am -11:15am

Where: New York Transit Museum
Boerum Place and Schermerhorn Street
Downtown Brooklyn

How: Downloadable Flyer: www.nytransitmuseum.org/Access
Application form: <http://www.nytransitmuseum.org/SleuthsApplication>

Media: High-resolution Subway Sleuths photos are available.
Contact: Chelsea Newburg, chelsea.newburg@nyct.com

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