

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PLEASE TOUCH MUSEUM AND VARIETY TEAM UP TO HOST AUGUST 21 EVENT FOR FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Please Touch Museum, the Children's Museum of Philadelphia, is collaborating with Variety- the Children's Charity of Greater Philadelphia, to host a night dedicated to families of children with all disabilities. The evening of hands-on, interactive, sensory-filled activities will take place at Please Touch on Saturday, August 21 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Children of all ages are welcome. Families may register at www.varietyphila.org/events. Early registration is recommended.

The event is a partnership between Variety, which provides services and support for children and youth with developmental and physical disabilities, and Please Touch Museum's Accessibility Program, which aims to provide families of children with disabilities with innovative tools to make a museum visit more comfortable and enjoyable. Families can connect with caregivers and other professionals while exploring and playing in the museum's exhibits, where accommodations have been made to provide a sensory-friendly experience for all.

A highlight of the event will be a resource fair. Over a dozen disability-related organizations from all over the Delaware Valley will be present including the event's Presenting Sponsor LoJack SafetyNet. Families will be able to ask questions and receive valuable resources from these organizations.

Tickets are required to attend the event and are available at a cost of a \$20 donation per family. One hundred percent of the \$20 donations will go toward the growth of Variety's programs. Families can register for the event at www.varietyphila.org/events. Organizations interested in sponsoring a resource table at the event may contact Marissa Tabak, Variety's Autism Resource Center Director, at marissatabak@varietyphila.org.

"Our Variety at Play program is all about providing children with disabilities and their family's opportunities to connect with each other in an uplifting and accepting environment. We are so excited to be partnering with the Please Touch Museum again," said Marissa Tabak. "Events such as these not only help the families of the children with autism, but allow the children themselves to learn new things and make new friends with other children. Teaming up with Please Touch Museum is very exciting because it allows us to provide these families with a fun and educational environment that is tailored to the needs of their children."

"We know it's sometimes hard for families of children with autism to find outside activities for their children to take part in, which is why it is important to host events like these. These events allow families to bond with each other while also meeting other families just like them in a welcoming learning environment," said Laura Foster, President & CEO of Please Touch Museum.

Please Touch Museum's Autism Access Program provides families of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) with innovative tools to make a museum visit more comfortable and enjoyable. The program creates a comprehensive welcoming structure for families of children with ASD through accessibility tools for families of children with ASD; specialized training focusing on children with ASD and their behavioral patterns; mobile programming enabling children who would otherwise not be able to visit the museum to interact with PTM-themed games and toys; special Autism Access evening events for families of children with ASD; and games and toys designed for children with ASD in the Kids Store.

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Please Touch Museum® at Memorial Hall, Fairmount Park is dedicated to enriching the lives of children by providing learning opportunities through play. Recognized locally and nationally as one of the best children's museums, Please Touch is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Admission is \$15 for adults and children age one and over. Children under one are free. For more information, please call 215-581-3181, or visit our web site at www.pleasetouchmuseum.org.

Variety-the Children's Charity of Greater Philadelphia has been serving children and youth with physical and developmental disabilities since 1935. Variety's mission is to build independence and self-confidence in children and youth with disabilities by engaging them in recreational, social and educational enrichment activities, while connecting families to resources.

Tent 13 (the Philadelphia chapter) is part of an international charity that helps children with special needs around the world. Variety currently provides day and overnight programming at our Camp & Development Center in Montgomery County, after-school programs in Philadelphia and Delaware, parent support and teen groups at our Autism Resource Center and several special events throughout the Delaware Valley through our Variety at Play program. For more information please call 215-735-0803, or visit www.varietyphila.org.