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**THE WONDERFUND PARTNERS WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COMMUNITY,
PROVIDING DCF FOSTER CHILDREN, YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH ENRICHING
EXPERIENCES**

BOSTON, MA (August 28, 2020) – The Wonderfund, a nonprofit established to meet the needs of children served by the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) is expanding its collaboration with the cultural community to provide enriching experiences to foster children and their families, year-round. Museums, science centers, zoos and arts institutions across the state now provide free or low-cost admission, memberships, and curriculum designed to engage and inspire children and youth of all ages.

In February 2020, the Wonderfund launched the *Wonderfund Access Card*, which offers DCF foster families deeply discounted admissions to popular destinations including the Boston Children's Museum, Zoo New England (both the Franklin Park Zoo in Boston and the Stone Zoo in Stoneham), The Storowton Village Museum in West Springfield, the EcoTarium and the Hanover Theatre, both in Worcester, and the Cape Cod Children's Museum in Mashpee.

Two years ago, the Museum of Science, the Wonderfund and DCF unveiled a partnership that gives Massachusetts children and youth in DCF foster care and their foster families free access to the Museum, its programs and exhibits, as well as scholarships for summer classes and career readiness opportunities for teens. Since then, almost 9,000 foster family members have enjoyed no-cost admission to the Museum of Science.

To further encourage interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) the Museum of Science, with support from the Boston Foundation, is now offering DCF foster families *Try It!* kits. These kits were developed by EiE, the curricular division of the Museum of Science, and provide children and families all the materials needed to engage in an engineering design challenge at home. An extension of its award-winning *Engineering is Elementary* curriculum, the *Try It! kits* are available in both English and Spanish.

“Since the COVID-19 outbreak in Massachusetts we have sought new ways to fulfill our mission and expand our scope to reach and serve DCF-engaged children wherever they are,” said Jennifer Nardone, the Wonderfund’s Director of Partnerships. “Theater tickets, museum admission, tours, programs and STEM-focused educational materials are in high demand. Giving foster families easy access to these fun, hands-on experiences and activities at no cost is helping to meet a vital need.”



Research confirms what educators have long believed; visits to cultural institutions are powerful experiences that can inspire the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, encourage creativity, and promote social interactions. “The impact of our partnerships with these generous organizations is real, significant and long lasting,” said Nardone.

About the Wonderfund: Founded in 1998, the Wonderfund is a private, nonprofit, 501(c)3 that exclusively serves children engaged with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF). We provide comfort and dignity to children that have been impacted by trauma, abuse, and neglect by providing emergency aid and transitional necessities directly to children entering foster care as well as access to life-changing enrichment opportunities.