



*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Regional Housing Study Seeks Input from Northeast Wisconsin Residents with Autism and Developmental Disabilities and Their Families.

Community survey sessions April–May will help Northeast Wisconsin plan future housing options for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

APPLETON, WISCONSIN — Residents with autism and other intellectual and developmental disabilities, along with their families and caregivers, are being invited to share their housing needs and preferences as part of a new regional study underway in Northeast Wisconsin.

The [Northeast Wisconsin Housing Market Analysis](#), launched by the local initiative [KeysWI](#), will examine housing needs, preferences and barriers for adults with autism and related disabilities across Brown, Outagamie, Winnebago and Calumet counties. The goal is to help community leaders, housing developers and service providers better plan for the growing number of adults with disabilities seeking independent and supportive housing options.

Local organizers say hundreds of families in Northeast Wisconsin are already searching for future housing options.

The study is being conducted by [First Place Global](#), a national nonprofit organization based in Phoenix that specializes in housing and community solutions for individuals with autism and related disabilities. This is the twelfth such housing market analysis in a major U.S. region, and the first in Wisconsin.

The effort comes at a time when the nationwide housing shortage has disproportionately affected people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Autism diagnoses have increased dramatically, from one in 2,500 children thirty years ago to one in 36 today, highlighting the need for communities to plan for a wider range of housing options.

“This study will combine local data with the lived experiences of individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families to better understand housing needs in our region,”

said John Edwards, MD, Co-Founder of KeysWI. “Planning ahead allows communities to move from reacting to housing challenges toward building thoughtful, long-term solutions.”

As part of the project, individuals with autism or intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as parents, siblings, caregivers and other supporters, are invited to participate in education sessions and complete a regional housing survey through [My Housing Voice](#), an outreach effort designed to gather community input.

Free survey sessions will be offered **April 7 through May 16, 2026**, with both in-person and online participation options available. A kickoff session will be held April 7.

More information and registration details are available at myhousingvoice.org

About KeysWI

KeysWI is a Northeast Wisconsin volunteer initiative working to expand housing choices and inclusive community living opportunities for individuals with autism and intellectual or developmental disabilities.

About My Housing Voice

My Housing Voice is a KeysWI initiative that gathers community input through educational sessions and a regional housing survey to inform future housing planning and development. The project supports a regional housing market analysis conducted by [First Place Global](#) and funded by the [Basic Needs Giving Partnership](#), with [CAP Services](#) serving as fiscal agent.

About First Place® AZ

First Place AZ, a charitable 501(c)(3), is advancing innovative residential and community options for adults with autism and other neurodiversity through its vision for fueling a new wave of real estate and community development. First Place–Phoenix, the nonprofit’s flagship property, is an 81,000-square-foot apartment community in the heart of the urban area and recognized by PBS NewsHour as “the most autism-friendly city in the world.” First Place Global leverages this award-winning property to serve as an R&D site, supporting the replication of residential and post-secondary education models, and fostering collaboration among the public, private, philanthropic and nonprofit sectors. Read First Place AZ’s groundbreaking 2020 report, *A Place in the World: Fueling Housing and Community Options for Adults with Autism and Other Neurodiversity*. Learn more at firstplaceglobal.org.