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VARIETY KC'S ANNUAL REQUEST-A-THON TO FUND DISTRIBUTION OF OVER 2,400 ESSENTIAL SENSORY BAGS TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACROSS THE KC METRO AREA

Sept. 19th, 2023, Kansas City, MO - Variety KC and KC 102.1 FM are teaming up for the third annual Request-A-Thon on Tuesday, September 26th, broadcasting live from 6 am to 6 pm. To celebrate the launch of Variety KC's new Variety Hero Campaign, KC 102.1 listeners are invited to support the funding and distribution of sensory bags to over 480 public schools in the Kansas City metro area.

Variety KC provides essential equipment to children with special needs, including sensory bags, mobility devices, communication tools, and medical equipment. This school year, with an increasing number of requests from school administrators, teachers, and parents, Variety KC aims to distribute sensory bags to all public schools in the KC metro area. According to research, 5 to 15% of school-aged children have some form of sensory issue, in addition to the 1 in 6 students with a disability.

"Early in the summer, we have had an outpouring of requests from various people who understand the importance of having these bags in schools," said Marc Harrell, Chief Inclusion Officer of Variety KC.

Children with special needs may experience sensory overload, which occurs when their brain becomes overwhelmed by stimuli in their environment, such as sights, smells, and sounds. This can be a very stressful experience, often leading to emotional outbursts. Variety KC's Sensory Bags are designed to help in these situations. The portable bags contain items that reduce overstimulation and help children respond to stressful events in a more efficient way.

The Sensory Bags include noise-canceling headphones, multiple fidget toys, sunglasses to reduce visual stimulation, and a durable weighted blanket. These items are specially selected to help reduce sensory overload and improve a child's ability to cope with stress. Variety KC provides these essential bags to children with a variety of special needs, including those with sensory processing issues, autism, and other disabilities. By providing these essential tools to children in need, Variety KC is helping them to thrive and succeed in school and in life.

“Sending our child to public school was one of the scariest days of my life, but knowing she will have the tools she needs to have the extra support is very comforting. In the Variety KC sensory bags are headphones that help her in the gym when it is loud and over stimulating. These allow our child to be with her peers at all school assemblies,” said one Variety KC parent. “Another item in the bag are weighted blankets. When our child was younger, she wore a compression vest to help regulate her. Now in school the weighted blanket is used during times the students are seated on the floor to help her want to stay with her peers at circle time. These bags are essential for not only my daughter with Down Syndrome but also a lot of her peers that also have sensory needs.”

To make a donation or become a Variety Hero, visit www.VarietyKC.org or check out Variety KC's Facebook page on the day of the event for the link.

The Request-a-Thon will be held at Steel City Media at 4045 Mill Street, Kansas City, MO, 64111.

About Variety KC

Variety Children’s Charity empowers children with special needs and disabilities, in the Greater Kansas City region, by providing access to vital medical equipment for mobility, sensory, communication, safety, therapies, and more. Variety KC requests funds to underwrite the direct costs of these services. Grants and donations we receive will increase the number of families we can serve, continuing our history of positive impact while helping us to expand our coverage offerings to more and more families. All monies raised for Variety KC stays in the Greater Kansas City area. Variety’s inclusive mission provides essential mobility equipment and opportunities for children with cognitive and physical disabilities.

