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PRESS RELEASE

Parents Magazine Rates MCM One of 10 Best Children's Museums in the U.S.

MADISON, Wis. (Monday, February 7, 2011) — Madison Children's Museum (MCM) has earned a spot in a *Parents Magazine* ranking of the 10 best children's museums in the U.S. The feature article with the rankings was posted to the *Parents* website today.

Parents writer Karen Cicero began the selection process by surveying the leading children's museums that belong to the Association of Children's Museums, then focused specifically on museums that have a lot to offer kids under age 3. Madison was selected based on several criteria: creative educational exhibits, special programs and events, healthy lunch spots, nursing areas, family restrooms, and stroller parking. Local moms who live near each of the 10 best museums were contacted for insider tips as well.

The article (<http://www.parents.com/fun/vacation/us-destinations/10-best-childrens-museums-2011/>) specifically highlighted MCM's environmental friendliness and its four-season green rooftop.

"Receiving this distinction from a trusted source such as *Parents* underscores our reputation nationally and validates that what we do here serves as a model for all children's museums," said Ruth Shelly, executive director of Madison Children's Museum. "It's such an honor to earn national recognition for our efforts to be sustainable and emphasize the importance of using local products and people in creating the new museum. We hope those who haven't visited us yet will come see what a truly amazing facility we've built with our community."

Although the museum already is attracting visitors from outside the Madison area, it is expected the *Parents* rating will provide a boost to MCM as a regional destination for family fun.

"Madison is one of our country's greatest places to live and growing in popularity as a destination," said Deb Archer, president/CEO of the Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau. "The new Madison Children's Museum is now one of this destination's premier attractions and is positioned to become a prominent attraction in the region."

MCM has been named to magazines' best children's museums lists two other times in the last 10 years. A 2007 issue of *Grand* magazine, geared toward grandparents, ranked MCM in the top 20 children's museums in the nation; and in 2002, *Child* magazine selected MCM in its rankings of the top 10 children's museums in the U.S.

Today's article also named the following children's museums to the 10 best list: Children's Museum of Houston, Houston; Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Indianapolis; Please Touch

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Children’s Museum, Philadelphia; Boston Children’s Museum, Boston; Kohl Children’s Museum, Glenview, Ill.; Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh; Children’s Museum of Phoenix, Phoenix; National Museum of Play, Rochester, N.Y.; and Minnesota Children’s Museum, St. Paul.

Madison Children’s Museum moved into its new, permanent home in August 2010 after spending many years in a rented space on State Street. The new facility offers triple the public square footage of the previous location, including a Rooftop Ramble, first-class Art Studio, historic 1830s Log Cabin, and Bean Sprouts café. Other exhibit areas include Possible-opolis, where arts and science intersect to create one-of-a-kind experiences such as the Hodgepodge Mahal climber and the Wayback Machine’s retrotechnology; the Wilderrest, an all-natural global village for ages 5 and under, with play huts, a water play area, and a horizontal climbing wall; and a free Community Concourse, where those stopping in for a short time can enjoy ball runs, gear boards, an interactive water exhibit, and a Squashed House under the stairs. For more about MCM, including a fact sheet and detailed exhibit descriptions, please visit <http://www.madisonchildrensmuseum.org/about-mcm/newsroom/>.

Madison Children’s Museum: Madison Children’s Museum (MCM) is an award-winning organization which fosters family and community connections, and provides a place where every child can learn through play in an interactive environment. MCM’s hands-on exhibits and programs celebrate and encourage children’s imaginations and the power of play as the cornerstone of learning.

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