



Who benefits from Madison Children's Museum?

A whole lot of people!



218,975

guests visited the museum— nearly a 5% increase over last year

7,961

guests celebrated in the museum during one of **56 museum rentals**, including weddings, parties, and business gatherings



5,299

guests attended **203 birthday parties** in the museum (the average age of a birthday kid is 4.6 years, so that's nearly 1,000 candles)

35,987

visits were made to the museum through our free or reduced-price **Access for Everyone** programs



7,920

community members participated in **21 outreach events** we conducted in the Greater Madison area



11,742

schoolchildren, chaperones, and other participants played during **286 visits** from schools and other groups

2,986

grown-ups came to our **8 Adult Swim** events



2,055

6,454

families enjoyed **museum memberships**—an increase of 9% over last year

babies became members through our **First-Time Parent Membership** program



Sensory-Friendly Museum Time

As part of a broader initiative to welcome children and families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and/or other sensory challenges, the museum began offering free admission Sensory Friendly Museum Time. Over the past year, we welcomed approximately 500 guests to eight such events.

With the help of a coalition of over 30 stakeholders, we created sensory-friendly experiences, provided staff training, increased resources and tools, and gathered feedback from attendees. We learned that many families used our Sensory-Friendly Museum Times to try new activities and exhibits. This allowed them to come back during general admission hours with a greater level of predictability and comfort in their overall museum experience.

We continue to make improvements and look for more ways to make the museum accessible and welcoming to all.

Zip, Zap, Zoom

In the spring of 2018, we transformed one of our ordinary stairwells into an extraordinary journey through language and sound. In *Zip, Zap, Zoom*, kids scale a five-story, spiral climbing sculpture amidst the whimsical sounds and visions of onomatopoeia words. Two local artists created the nature-inspired metalwork to encourage exploration.

Zip, Zap, Zoom is one of eight public stairwell installations in the museum and other community spaces around Madison, created as part of our Design to Move initiative. The goal is to foster healthy behavior through interactive art and design. *Zip, Zap, Zoom*, and its sister stairway in the museum, *Stair Trek: Core to Cosmos*, make taking the stairs the most fun and engaging way to travel through the museum, while encouraging healthy movement along the way.

Design to Move was made possible by a generous grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.





2,000 Happy Babies and Counting!

Scientists, teachers, and pediatricians agree: the first years of a child's life are critical for brain development, critical thinking, and learning skills. Madison Children's Museum is a nurturing place for babies, offering safe spaces rich in texture, color, and shape, staffed by experts in child development, who design programs to support both babies and caregivers—yet new parents are often unfamiliar with the opportunities the museum provides.

In 2017 we launched a groundbreaking initiative to encourage new parents to visit the museum early and often. The **First-Time Parent Membership** program provides a free membership for a baby and two adults. From birth to eighteen months old, the family benefits from unlimited, free visits to the museum.

Several community partners joined us to share our vision and provide critical support, especially for multi-lingual advertising and childhood health expertise:

Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin, UnityPoint Health – Meriter, the Oscar Rennebohm Foundation, and Old National Bank Foundation.

To welcome these newest, youngest members we added new events and expanded existing programs for babies and their parents:

- **Early Explorers Playgroup** provides a weekly time for parents to let little ones play and practice social skills. Attendees come from diverse backgrounds and neighborhoods, and many strong friendships have been forged among adults.
- **Experts at Play** invites pediatric-focused healthcare practitioners to join our playgroups and answer parents' health questions in an informal atmosphere.
- Drop-in programs, including **Baby Doll Bath Time, Magnetic Mayhem, Mess Monsters, and Wiggle and Jump** explore compassion, build motor skills, and support the exploratory practices that babies naturally utilize.
- Our annual **Baby's First Halloween** event was expanded to accommodate the influx of First-Time Parent Member families.
- **Baby Party** and **Baby Date Night**, our newest after-hours events, allow parents to play in the museum with their babies and let loose with other parents.

It's been really great coming to the museum on a regular basis, meeting lots of parents, and seeing how the museum is a great intersection of not only this part of Madison, but Madison as a whole.

—Keith, First-Time Parent Member and father of Clea

The First-Time Parent Membership program is succeeding beyond our hopes and expectations. Within days of launching, we surpassed our goal of enrolling 500 families—and more than 2,000 families joined in the first year. Enrollment is just one measure of success; frequent attendance by many of these new families resulted in nearly 9,500 visits. Parents in the program see the value, often choosing to renew as paying members when their babies age out of the free membership program. Enrollment of new families continues to be strong, as parents tell their newly expecting friends and providers such as pediatric dentists, hospitals, and community centers refer new families.

The success of the program is getting national attention. Madison Children's Museum is widely recognized as one of the top children's museums in the United States, and this program has added to our reputation as a groundbreaker of innovative programs for early childhood. Children's museums around the country are closely watching our results and preparing to launch their own versions. Museum staff have freely shared information to enthusiastic audiences at conferences, including the Association of Children's Museums, the Association of Science and Technology Centers, and the Wisconsin Alliance of Children's Museums.

As we look ahead, the benefits of sustaining this program are evident—both for individual children and for our community. In the short term, new parents feel supported and Madison becomes a more attractive place for young adults, who continue to grow the local birthrate. And in the long term, these children will build on the foundational skills they gain at the museum to grow up into contributing citizens.

With success comes challenges. The museum's staff and our physical spaces are pressed to welcome the increas-

I'm so thankful that I have been able to have this membership to try out the children's museum. I would never have done it until Toujah was older, so having this program really got me out of the house, got me downtown with my son—interacting with people, learning more things that he never would have the chance to do at home.

—Carolyn, First-Time Parent Member and mother of Toujah

ing numbers of children—as babies and as they grow into using even more of what the museum offers. Continued support is critical, as the positive outcomes are clear. We are committed to securing additional funds to keep this program available, and we hope you will join us to make this valuable investment in the future.



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July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018

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Children's
Museum.**



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Financial Overview & Leadership

July 1, 2017–June 30, 2018

Financial Strength

The museum has four endowment funds through Madison Community Foundation (including the Fund for the Future and the Pleasant Rowland Great Performance Fund). Their combined fair value was \$5,130,602, with resulting distributions of \$214,582.

The museum also holds a Restricted Facility Reserve Fund with an account balance of \$258,301.

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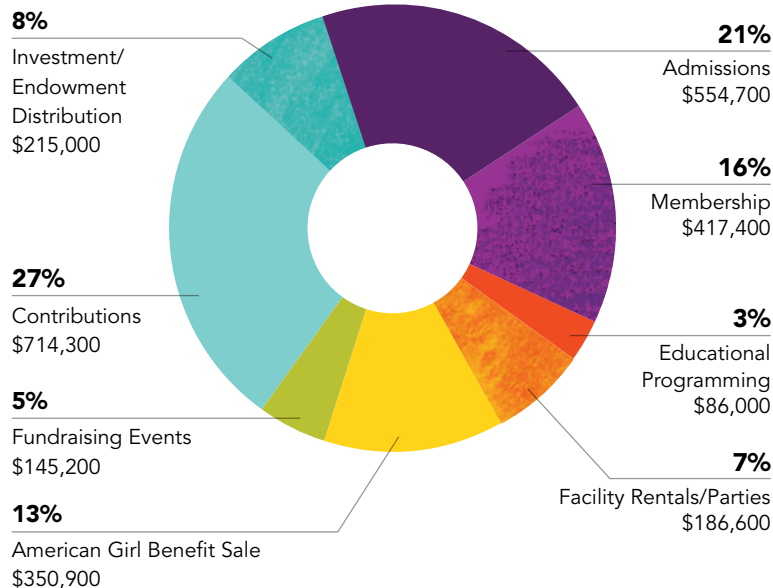
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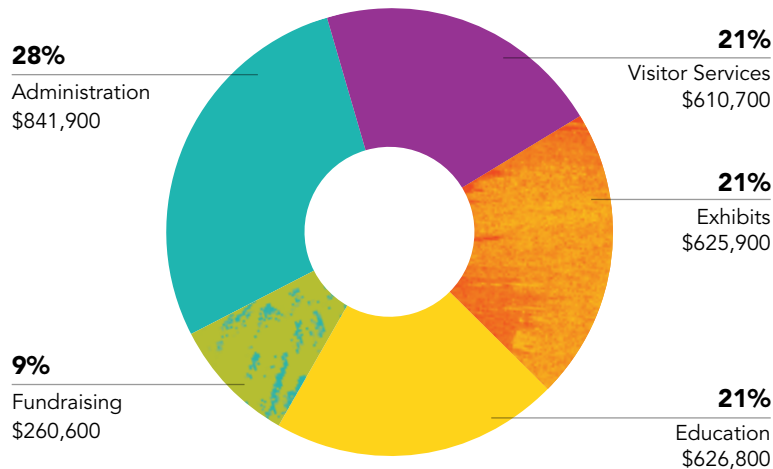
Luke Schultz

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Operating Income: \$2,670,100



Operating Expenses: \$2,965,900



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MadisonChildrensMuseum.org
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