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The National Theatre for Children Launches *Lights On For Louie* in 11 States – Largest Ever Opening for the In-School Performance

Minneapolis, Minn. – September 27, 2006 – The National Theatre for Children, Inc. (NTC), the largest in-school touring theater group in the country, announced today that for the 2006-07 school year, it has launched *Lights On For Louie* with six troupes in more than 1,200 schools across 11 states – the farthest-reaching opening in the show's 16+ year history.

Lights On For Louie, sponsored by Ohio-based American Electric Power (AEP), is an educational play aimed at elementary school students to teach them how to use electricity safely. The show is based on the hugely popular Louie the Lightning Bug character licensed by Moore Syndication and seen on Saturday morning TV commercials for children.

“Through our customized scheduling and touring process, NTC is able to reach every student in a complicated service territory like AEP's, which covers parts of 11 states. We are the only touring theater company in America which can do that,” states Ward Eames, NTC founder and President.

“We consistently hear wonderful things from teachers and field staff about National Theatre for Children's live Louie performances that confirm our crucial electrical safety messages are being heard and retained by students,” states Mary K. Walsh, AEP's Community Relations Manager. “NTC has proven to be an excellent partner – creative, responsive and highly professional.”

Independent studies of NTC in-school performances have shown that 99 percent of educators believe that the use of live theater increases students' capacity to retain key messages. “It's wonderful to hear the children discussing everything they learned. The program was truly meaningful to them,” declares elementary teacher Patti Jo Wright of Pettus Elementary School in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Lights On For Louie features a two-person cast portraying the characters Louie the Lightning Bug, The Dragonfly, Conductor Glen and Sparky the Wonder Bug. Throughout the 25-minute interactive performance, Sparky and Conductor Glen search for Louie, who goes missing after Sparky arrives at Louie's secret “hedge” quarters only

to discover that all the lights are out. Together, Sparky and Glen learn what electricity is, how it is used and how to be careful around it. Armed with this information, Sparky confronts The Dragonfly, who is Louie's former school chum turned archenemy, to set him straight. But, Louie is still missing, so Sparky and the audience of school children set out to find him.

During the 2006-07 school year, *Lights On For Louie* will be seen by more than 450,000 students in over 1,200 schools throughout Texas, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. The school program includes the performance; Internet and take-home activities; and classroom curriculum that meets the states' education standards in science, social studies, language arts and performance art interpretation.

"NTC performances are an evidence-based medium to promote important information in a fun, attention-getting and positive manner," Eames concludes. "Long-term retention is achieved by classroom follow-up that occurs through our multi-platform approach, which starts with the in-school show and extends into the home."

For more information about NTC and its programs, including *Lights On For Louie*, visit www.nationaltheatre.com or call 1-800-858-3999.

About The National Theatre for Children

Founded in 1978, The National Theatre for Children, Inc. (known at that time as Small Change Original Theatre, Inc.) is dedicated to educating young people on important and timely curricular subjects by offering educational live theater in our nation's schools. Based in Minneapolis, Minn., NTC has developed the art of teaching through live theater into an evidence-based science of its own. NTC has pioneered extremely successful programs in health, science, social studies, reading and math. Each year, dozens of troupes perform live educational theater programs in front of millions of students, in thousands of schools, nationwide.

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