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## **Washington Students Become ‘Mad About Money’ with Financial Literacy Theatrical Program**

### *DFI Sponsors Statewide Tour to Help Kids Understand Personal Finance*

**SEATTLE, Wash. (April 30, 2007)** – The words “budgeting,” “investing” and “credit” will be the new buzz words throughout Seattle this spring as *Mad About Money*, a live, in-school theater show, comes to area schools. Sponsored by the Washington Department of Financial Institutions (DFI), performers with the National Theatre for Children, Inc. (NTC) will teach middle-school students about the principles of saving and spending with its unique mixture of personal finance and humor. The show’s Seattle area debut will take place on Monday, April 30.

“We are pleased to support such a fun and innovative financial-education program. It is critical that smart spending habits start early,” said Scott Kinney, DFI director of communications and president of the Jump\$tart Washington Coalition. “In a survey administered by the Jump\$tart Coalition, 65 percent of high-school seniors, on average, failed a test that determined their knowledge of personal-finance basics. *Mad About Money* unites improv comedy with proven education techniques to help students understand the basics of personal finance – an education that will serve them well throughout their lives.”

“Financial literacy is unacceptably low in this country,” adds Lewis Mandell, Ph.D., professor of finance and managerial economics at the State University of New York-Buffalo. “Having evaluated the impact of NTC’s financial-literacy programs on students’ attitudes toward managing their finances, we know that shows like *Mad About Money* are an effective way to improve their knowledge about saving and budgeting.”

*Mad About Money* will tour 60 middle schools in the greater Seattle/Tacoma area in May, and NTC troupes will also present the program at schools in Olympia, Vancouver, Yakima and

Spokane. The show features professional actors who play a wide variety of colorful characters in four sketches. While watching a dad teach his son the difference between “needs” and “wants,” or an unsuspecting car buyer learn about credit from a smooth-talking salesman, students learn to prioritize how their money is spent, the importance of developing a savings habit and ways to invest for the future.

Beyond the in-school performances, *Mad About Money* program components include educational workbooks in Spanish and English, take-home activities, Internet exercises, handy guidebooks, curricular aids for teachers, and a rigorous testing method for measuring program results. Visit <http://www.nationaltheatre.com/madaboutmoney.htm> to view *Mad About Money* video excerpts.

*Mad About Money* was developed by NTC, the largest in-school touring company in America, with Lightbulb Press, a highly regarded developer and publisher of financial literacy guides, financial educational Web sites for adults and children, and teacher support materials. NTC delivered more than 7,000 in-school performances in 2006 and is trusted by educators for its unique formula of live theatrical interaction and sound educational technique. Studies by independent researchers have shown that 99 percent of educators believe that the use of live theater increases students’ capacity to learn and retain key messages, and that 92 percent of NTC’s workbooks and other take-home activities are used by students at home with their parents.

For more information about NTC and *Mad About Money*, visit [www.nationaltheatre.com](http://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, 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. For more information, visit the NTC Web site at [www.nationaltheatre.com](http://www.nationaltheatre.com).

### **About Washington State Department of Financial Institutions**

The Washington State Department of Financial Institutions regulates a variety of financial service providers such as banks, credit unions, mortgage brokers, consumer loan companies, payday lenders, and securities brokers and dealers. The department has received numerous

awards for its outreach programs designed to promote financial literacy and protect consumers from financial fraud. For more information, visit [www.dfi.wa.gov](http://www.dfi.wa.gov).

### **About Lightbulb Press**

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### **Editor's note:**

*The media are welcome to attend any of the Seattle area performances, running from April 30 to May XX. Please contact Katie Griep at 612-341-0082 ext. 202 or [kmgriep@nationaltheatre.com](mailto:kmgriep@nationaltheatre.com) if you'd like to attend.*

*Interviews with representatives from the Washington Department of Financial Institutions, National Theatre for Children, teachers and students are available on site or by calling Maccabee Group at 612-337-0087.*

*Mad About Money B-roll video and still shots are available by calling Maccabee Group at 612-337-0087.*