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# Iowa Students Get “Mad About Money!”

*The Iowa Insurance Division Sponsors Live Performances*

*Teaching Financial Literacy in Middle Schools*

**Minneapolis, MN** (April 15, 2013) – Beginning April 15, thousands of middle school students throughout the state of Iowa will be treated to performances of *Mad About Money II: Pay Yourself First!* This unique and entertaining program – featuring live, educational theatre performances by professional actors – also includes print and Internet curriculum designed to get students to consider good habits around earning, saving and spending money. Sponsored by the Iowa Insurance Division (IID), the program will play in 50 middle schools throughout the state.

*Mad About Money*, produced by The National Theatre for Children (NTC), features two professional actors who play a variety of characters in a 40-minute program for the entire school. Students learn important lessons about their money and buying habits through four comical and informative sketches, including:

* Wages minus deductions equals take home pay
* Saving and investing always have some level of risk involved
* Don’t let advertisers make your decisions
* Financial choices affect your future

While the performance and educational content is completely scripted, the shows are built to incorporate certain moments of improvisation. At the beginning of each scene, actors solicit information from the audience that is then humorously integrated into the show. “The improvisational part of the show is really fun,” says Jolene Schurman of the Iowa Insurance Division. “The actors are able to take those suggestions from the audience and blend them into the action of the show in some really amazing ways. The comedy of the show actually changes every time you see it!”

IID is a committed advocate for financial literacy in the state of Iowa, sponsoring a *Mad About Money* program into Iowa schools for the last six years. Following the performances, students return to their classrooms to complete print activities and digital classroom games that further reinforce the financial literacy concepts from the show. “Live theater is a really exciting and unique teaching platform,” Ms Schurman confirms. “Especially when you combine it with classroom activities and homework assignments. And the sooner students begin learning about managing their money, the better off they are in the long run.”

The *Mad About Money* program and format was the focus of a study conducted by financial literacy researcher Dr. Lewis Mandell. His study provided empirical evidence that NTC-style productions—live educational theatre combined with print and classroom activities – positively influence student attitudes on personal finance. For a copy of Dr. Mandell’s study, please contact NTC.

**About the Iowa Insurance Division (IID)**

The Iowa Insurance Division’s mission is to protect consumers through consumer education and by effectively and efficiently providing a fair, flexible and positive regulatory environment. The IID supervises all insurance business transacted in the state. The insurance commissioner grants permission to companies wishing to sell insurance in Iowa and has general control over all aspects of their business, from the forms they use to the rates they charge. The commissioner also serves as the administrator of the securities act which involves the licensing of brokerage firms and their agents, examining new securities offerings and investigating investment fraud cases: [www.iid.state.ia.us](http://www.iid.state.ia.us)

**About The National Theatre for Children (NTC)**

In 1978, NTC dedicated itself to delivering entertaining and highly educational programs to positively motivate families, students and educators.  We educate young people – and their families – on important and timely curricular subjects including: wise energy use, STEM, financial literacy, health and nutrition and environmental literacy, among others. Originally focused on delivering its programs via live theatre, NTC has added printed curriculum and multiplatform media and developed the art of teaching through educational theatre into a science of its own. NTC has grown to become the largest in-school touring educational theatre company in the world: [www.nationaltheatre.com](http://www.nationaltheatre.com)