

## 2019 Golden Teddy Awards — Out + About

*Every year, ParentMap readers vote on their favorite places to play, learn, shop and dine around the Puget Sound in ParentMap's annual [Golden Teddy Awards](#). Read on for the winners and finalists in the Out + About category.*

Our area is jam-packed with family-friendly outings, from kid-focused museums to perfect pools and a plethora of weekend escapes. Whether you're looking for ideas to fuel your next big adventure or you just need to get out of the house for a couple of hours, you'll find your fun among these reader favorites. — [Gemma Alexander](#)

### Out + About categories include:

- [Awesome Animal Attraction](#)
- [Can't-Miss Holiday Seasonal Event](#)
- [Fabulous Family Farm or U-Pick](#)
- [Kid-Friendly Museum](#)
- [Live Family Entertainment](#)
- [Local Family Escape](#)
- [Party-Ready Birthday Bash Spot](#)
- [Rainy-Day Refuge](#)
- [Splash-Worthy Pool or Water Park](#)
- [Tourist-In-Your-Own-Town Attraction](#)

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## Winner: Woodland Park Zoo

Year after year, award-winning [Woodland Park Zoo](#) earns voters' adoration. Last year, we closely followed the adventures of baby red pandas online until they graduated to the viewable habitat, and this year, we welcomed a baby giraffe. Observe more than 1,000 animals populating the spacious, naturalistic exhibits, which have earned Woodland Park Zoo accreditation by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA) — a status that fewer than 10 percent of American zoos achieve.

## Finalists

One reader says, “You can get up close and personal to some of the animals” at [Cougar Mountain Zoo](#) in Issaquah; another describes it as “a small zoo with a wonderful mission” to increase the understanding and appreciation of the earth’s wildlife and the role of humanity in nature.

An AZA fully accredited animal attraction, [Northwest Trek Wildlife Park](#), located near the Paradise entrance of Mount Rainier National Park, offers guests an amazing animal experience: Take a tram ride through the park for close-up views of native species, such as bison, elk and bighorn sheep.

Our readers know that Tacoma’s [Point Defiance Zoo & Aquarium](#) (also AZA-accredited) offers “the most to see” with awesome viewing of animals in both water and land habitats. Guests love PDZA’s special programs and year-round appeal.

For close-up views of gorgeous sea creatures, our readers can’t get enough of the AZA-accredited [Seattle Aquarium](#). Kids and adults alike love the interactive exhibit of Puget Sound tide pools, immersive underwater dome, and combination of indoor and outdoor viewing areas.

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## Winner: WildLights at Woodland Park Zoo

Viewing [WildLights](#) at Woodland Park Zoo is a favorite holiday tradition for ParentMap readers, who voted it the winner again this year. This annual lights extravaganza is certain to create lifelong holiday memories. Everyone loves the wild animals and exotic destination scenes, which are illuminated by more than 700,000 LED lights. Guests warm up around fire pits, have indoor snowball fights at Snowmazium, take night rides on the carousel and visit select indoor exhibits that are home to nocturnal animals, such as sloths and fruit bats.

## Finalists

Set against the beautiful backdrop of Bellevue Botanical Garden, [Garden d'Lights](#) features more than a half million sparkling lights formed into whimsical shapes of plants, flowers, birds, animals and cascading waterfalls.

[Snowflake Lane](#), The Bellevue Collection's holiday show, is another favorite, with free nightly performances featuring giant snowflakes, live holiday music, toy soldiers, girls with tambourines and live toy drummers on stilts.

Swansons Nursery's [Reindeer Festival](#) in North Seattle features its namesake reindeer, as well as a camel, a model train set and other magical holiday décor. Greet Santa and enjoy the convenient on-site café with an indoor koi pond while picking out your holiday greenery.

There are many productions of "The Nutcracker" staged around the Puget Sound region each year, but the one by [Emerald Ballet Theatre](#) in Northshore, which features a combination of its own students and guest dancers from professional companies, is the one readers rave about.

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## Winner: Remlinger Farms

[Remlinger Farms](#) in Carnation wins again this year. Remlinger is part amusement park, part produce paradise and *all* fun. Kids can pick berries in the U-pick berry fields and interact with bunnies and goats at the petting zoo. If it all gets too bucolic, get your thrills at the Family Fun Park, with choices ranging from a mini roller coaster to a canoe float ride. In the fall, don't miss Remlinger's Fall Harvest Pumpkin Festival.

## Finalists

[Biringer Farm](#) in Arlington is a Northwest favorite for supplying strawberry shortcake at festivals. But it's also a top U-pick choice for ParentMap readers who know that strawberries you pick yourself are the best, especially when paired with mazes and games at the farm's annual Strawberry Fest in June.

A real family working farm, [Bob's Corn & Pumpkin Farm](#) in Snohomish offers a challenging 10-acre corn maze and a 40-acre pumpkin patch every fall. People in the know also rent one of the farm's 18 fire pits for a night of family fun, knowing that staff builds and maintains the fire for you!

Hugging the banks of the lovely Snohomish River, [The Farm at Swan's Trail](#) is fun for the whole family. Guests enjoy apple picking, a 50-acre pumpkin patch, a corn maze, a petting farm, wagon rides, Farmer Ben's famous Four Little Pigs Show and an on-site breakfast on weekends.

Another well-loved family farm is [Jubilee Farm](#) in Carnation. It doesn't have a U-pick option, but this organic operation offers a diverse selection of fresh produce and grass-fed and pastured meat. It has a year-round CSA and leads school-group tours three times per year.

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## Winner: Pacific Science Center

It's no surprise that [Pacific Science Center](#) at Seattle Center has swept this category for several years running. Readers with kids of any age can find something to do and learn about: laser dome shows, dinosaurs, the butterfly house, hands-on fun at the Tinker Tank, the outdoor waterwheel, crazy-real IMAX 3-D movies and so much more. Added to these year-round features are world-class special exhibits. The museum has hosted China's terra-cotta warriors and treasures from ancient Egypt. This year, learn about endangered species and the science of smell.

## Finalists

The [Hands On Children's Museum](#) in Olympia stimulates curiosity, creativity and learning through fun interactive exhibits and programs with all-ages appeal. One reader confesses, "Honestly, my husband has just as much fun as the kiddo!"

[Imagine Children's Museum](#) in Everett is a hidden pearl beloved by in-the-know readers. Beyond its fun interactive exhibits, there's a large rooftop outdoor space, an art studio and programs ranging from I-engineers to Cartoon Corner. (Trouble-free parking is a perk for parents.)

Voters adore Bainbridge Island's KiDiMu – [Kids Discovery Museum](#), a hands-on environment with eclectic attractions, from the Waldorf-inspired Totally Tot space to the Science and Literacy Hall, the Pirate Tree House, an outdoor play area and more!

Tucked in the heart of downtown Bellevue, [KidsQuest Children's Museum](#) is a fantastic place where learning feels a whole lot like play. Highlights include an exciting climbing sculpture adjacent to the museum entrance, a fun outdoor space, hands-on studios for building and making art, and new STEM programs.

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## Winner: Seattle Children's Theatre

[Seattle Children's Theatre](#) at Seattle Center takes the top spot again this year. The award-winning theater is one of the 20 largest regional theaters (for all ages) in the country, and voters like how it empowers young people to make new discoveries about the world around them. Look forward to next season's lineup, which includes "Black Beauty," "Corduroy," "Snow White" and other productions.

## Finalists

Luckily for indie rock fans, two of the top national acts are local. Finalists [Caspar Babypants](#) (aka Chris Ballew, the lead singer of The Presidents of the United States of America) and feel-good, up-tempo band [The Not-Its!](#) are frequent favorites for live shows that the whole family can enjoy.

Presented at five venues in the Seattle area, [StoryBook Theater's](#) 55-minute musicals are a hit with kids (ages 3–10) who love catchy songs and clever stories. Sensory-friendly performances are a draw for neurodiverse children, but everyone can appreciate, as one parent put it, "fun music and great reworking of traditional stories to promote positive values."

[Xakary the Magician](#) was a hit when he sawed Heidi Klum in half on "America's Got Talent," but his usual venue is kids' birthday parties, where the birthday child is part of the act and every guest learns a magic trick and gets to take home a goodie bag.

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## Winner: Suncadia Resort

A finalist last year, this year's winner, [Suncadia Resort](#) in Cle Elum, gives our readers a luxurious getaway in spectacular natural surroundings. Only a 90-minute drive from Seattle, just off Interstate 90, Suncadia offers accommodations in a 254-room lodge, a pool with thrilling waterslides, a day spa, hiking and biking trails, and many more amenities. Of primary importance to families is the Suncadia Junior Rangers program at CampCadia, where kids ages 4–12 can enjoy educational and exciting activities while parents relax.

## Finalists

[Alderbrook Resort & Spa](#) in Union, a two-hour drive from Seattle, is a Northwest tradition. Whether you stay in the hotel proper or in one of the cozy cottages nearby, Alderbrook lets families enjoy the views and wildlife of the Olympic Peninsula without the inconveniences of roughing it.

You don't have to go far to get away from it all. Converted from Bothell's first junior high school, [McMenamins Anderson School](#) is pure fun, with on-site restaurants, a movie theater, a swimming pool and live all-ages shows.

Last year's winner, [Seabrook](#) is a lovely, walkable beach town on the Pacific Coast that's roughly a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Seattle. Ride bikes on quiet streets and paths, and enjoy the wide-open beach, sports courts, indoor swimming pool, skimboards, pottery painting studio, spa, restaurants and more!

Sleeping [Lady Mountain Resort](#), perched in the Cascade Mountains near Leavenworth, is a distinctive Northwest destination experience. Marrying creature comforts with alpine beauty, the resort offers visitors access to hiking and cross-country skiing trails, an amazing spa, and delicious, sustainably sourced food (much of which is grown in the resort's organic garden) at the Kingfisher Restaurant & Wine Bar.

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## Winner: Funtastic Playtorium

Birthday parties at [Funtastic Playtorium](#) in Bellevue and Lynnwood come with unlimited playtime on the indoor playground before and after the party. Packages cover 14–16 kids, but the facility can accommodate groups of 50 or more if you're planning something really big. Parents rave about the dedicated party hosts, who coordinate everything from setup to passing out cake (not to mention cleanup!), taking pressure off the parents and making birthday parties here “stress-free.”

## Finalists

[Ahoy Kitsap Playland](#) in Bremerton on the Kitsap Peninsula lets families leave the party planning to the professionals. It offers Open Play parties, Night Owl and Rise & Shine PJ parties as well as special rates for end-of-the-year sports parties and nonprofit events.

Painting pottery is a classic birthday option, and party parents have voted [Anecdotes Pottery Studio](#) in Ballard as their favorite pottery studio, whether celebrating the birthday of a pottery artiste or a complete newbie.

Readers know that when you want a bouncy-house party, last year's GT winner [Pump It Up](#) delivers the goods. Go glow-in-the-dark, play laser tag or enjoy bubbles with your bounce to kick up the fun a notch. You can also drop by for open jump time or themed jump events.

[Roaring Mouse Creative Arts Studio](#) celebrates your child's creative spirit as well as their birthday. Art projects for each party are specially selected to match your child's interests, with an adjacent playroom for kids who'd rather do their own thing.



# 2019 Golden Teddy Awards — Out + About

## Winner: Funtastic Playtorium

Bursting into the top spot this year in two categories, [Funtastic Playtorium](#), with locations in Bellevue and Lynnwood, is ParentMap readers' favorite rainy-day refuge. These indoor playgrounds for kids 10 and younger are based on the philosophy that kids deserve active play without restrictions on their movement and thrive on the exercise and social interaction that playtime provides.

## Finalists

[Ahoy Kitsap Playland](#) in Bremerton won a boatload of votes for its climbing structures and adjacent café, where adults can relax. Readers love Ahoy for its all-day-play admission policy, positive staff, cleanliness, great play equipment and amazing birthday parties.

Last year's winner, KiDiMu – [Kids Discovery Museum](#) is still a favorite worth the ferry ride to Bainbridge Island. This hands-on children's museum brings sunshine to rainy days. The Waldorf-inspired Totally Tot space provides a calm oasis for younger visitors and their caregivers.

Hands-on museums like [KidsQuest Children's Museum](#) in Bellevue are a natural choice for wet-weather activities, but perhaps it's a little surprising that "water features" are among the reasons this museum makes the short list. It's not just the wet stuff, though. At KidsQuest, "There is something for all ages and bits of history, some Bellevue nostalgia," enthuses one voter.

Offering three levels of fun for the kids and a welcoming environment for the parents (read: beer, wine and coffee selections), [PlayDate SEA](#) is an all-ages hit. Rainy or not, Saturday-night laser tag for kids ages 6 and older beats sitting on the couch at home!

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## Winner: Mountlake Terrace Pool

Families around the Puget Sound area love the [Mountlake Terrace Pool](#). The youngest of swimmers can't get enough of the large, beach-like swimming area, the fun lazy river and the wonderful opportunity to practice swim moves in an area so shallow that most kids can touch the bottom with their feet. Older kids will enjoy water basketball hoops and diving boards, and everybody appreciates the warm, 88-degree Fahrenheit water.

## Finalists

Last year's winner, the [Lynnwood Recreation Center](#) has room for every type of swimmer. Spray features, a lazy river and a sensational waterslide are hits with kids. Parents love the hot tub within watching distance of the pool, the warm-water therapy pool for quiet time and a lap pool for serious teen swimmers.

Tucked just off Interstate 5 in North Seattle, the [Northacres Park spray park](#) is a voter favorite that feels like a hidden gem. The beautiful tree canopy keeps everyone cool, and beyond the fantastic spray park, there's a divided playground for younger and older kids.

Home to the region's only FlowRider surf-simulation machine, [Snohomish Aquatic Center](#) is a reader favorite once again. This 52,000-square-foot swim center also features an epic waterslide for older kids, a lap pool and a lazy river.

Warm indoor pools are a must in our region, but nothing beats a day at a seasonal outdoor water park. [Wild Waves Theme & Water Park](#) in Federal Way is an irreplaceable part of a Pacific Northwest childhood.

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## Winner: Pike Place Market

Tourists and residents alike understand that [Pike Place Market](#) is a city within the city, with something for every age. Old favorites — like [Golden Age Collectables](#) comics store and the Market Theater Gum Wall — are as much of a draw as the market's stunning new section, MarketFront, which affords amazing views of Mount Rainier and the Seattle waterfront.

## Finalists

Fine art can be a hard sell to kids, but the Museum of Pop Culture, aka [MoPop](#), is all about things kids already care about. Learn about pop stars, video games and filmmaking in an interactive environment that celebrates creative expression as a life-changing force, even when it also generates branded merchandise.

Built to host the 1962 World's Fair, the nearly 60-year-old [Seattle Center](#) had it a bit rough in its middle age. But in recent years it has been transformed into a cultural center that draws families from all over to enjoy on-site museums, theaters, festivals and one of the region's best playgrounds.

Last year, our readers were looking forward to the big reveal of the [Space Needle](#) renovation. The updated revolving restaurant and floor-to-ceiling glass viewing experience on the observation deck's exterior perimeter clearly met expectations, because readers have voted the Space Needle a favorite tourist-in-my-own-town attraction again this year.

Few things are as iconic as a family outing to watch baseball. ParentMap readers say [T-Mobile Park](#) is a “great place to watch baseball!” So, buy some peanuts and Cracker Jack, and enjoy the views of Seattle's downtown skyline, the sunset over the Sound and, of course, some Seattle Mariners game action.