

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT AND
SCHOLAR SERVICES

Office of International Programs



FAMILY RESOURCE GUIDE

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

There are a lot of indoor and outdoor activities for families in the Twin Cities. Some of them are free, others require a fee. You might consider the following options:

Parks and recreation

The regional parks system includes 46 regional parks and park reserves, 22 trails and six special recreation areas. Parks are operated by several partnering cities and counties. They work with the Metropolitan Council to acquire and develop parks and trails to protect natural resources and to provide outdoor recreation for public enjoyment. Please visit their website at www.metrocouncil.org/parks/parks.htm

Zoos

There are a number of Zoos in Twin Cities. It may be a perfect opportunity to have fun and learn more about different animals and areas of the world. Good for children of all ages.

Minnesota Zoo

Minnesota Zoo is located in Apple Valley on 500 rolling wooded acres. The Zoo has 3,000 animals representing 400 species from all over the world. For more information visit www.funminnesota.com/zoo.html. The zoo is open October – April: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. everyday
Memorial Day – Labor Day: 9 a.m. – 6p.m.
September and May: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. weekdays; 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. weekends
The Minnesota Zoo is open 363 days a year (closed Thanksgiving Day and December 25).

Admission (subject to change):

Adults (13-64) - \$12

Seniors (65+) - \$ 8.25

Children (3-12) - \$7

2 and under: free

Parking (subject to change):

Car: \$5

Bus: \$10

Motor Coach: \$15

Como Zoo

Como Zoo and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory are open every day of the year. Winter hours (October - March): 10am - 4pm
Summer hours (April - September): 10am - 6pm
During inclement weather, some animals may be off display and some exhibits or gardens may be closed.

Como Zoo and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory are free, but they do ask for help from their visitors. They ask that visitors consider making a

voluntary donation of \$2 for an adult and \$1 for a child to help them care for the plants and animals. They appreciate your support and want you to know that everyone is always welcome whether or not you choose to make a donation. Parking is free. Website: www.comozooconservatory.org/

Water parks

If your children are fond of water slides, tub slides, and have fun in the water, local water parks offer exciting experiences for the whole family. Most of the parks are indoors and are open year round. A fun activity, especially during the long winter months. You may consider the following options:

Grand Rios

Experience the twists and turns of Minnesota's Largest Indoor Water Park! Features include: The Hurricane Plunge, four story water tower featuring body and tube slides, The Big Splash - 500 gallon dumping bucket, Coconut Island play area, 535 feet action lazy river, two private spas, and basketball and sport pool

Hours and pricing is available by downloading the water park admissions calendar, or by calling the water park counter at (763)566-8855. The website is www.grandrios.com/waterparkhome.htm

Jim Lupient Water Park

Minneapolis' newest water park features three large water slides, including a tube slide. Additional features include a log water walk, many interactive spray features, water volleyball, lap swimming lanes, and zero depth entry at one end for accessibility. There is also a new separate spray pool for the younger kids that is completely accessible as well as new colorful shade structures, outside shower towers, concessions, lots of seating, a grassy sun-bathing area and outside lockers.

Call 612-370-4937 about hours and admission. For more information visit www.lupient.com/WaterPark.aspx

Water Park of America

This water park is situated at the Grand Lodge. Call 877-757-5433 for information on packages and reservations. For more information about the water park visit www.waterparkofamerica.com/

The Tropics

Experience the excitement of the Tropics Indoor water park. You, your family and friends will create treasured memories as you speed down the "Shark Attack" waterslide that's out of this world! The water park is open Monday – Friday: 5:45 a.m. – 10 p.m., Saturday : 5:45 a.m. – 8 pm.,

Sunday: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. For more information about the park and admissions, visit www.tropicswaterpark.com

Mall of America

Mall of America is the biggest department store in the USA. Along with shopping it also has a lot of interesting activities that might be very interesting for children. Visit www.mallofamerica.com/ for more information

The park at MOA

This park is the largest indoor family amusement park in the nation. They have rides for all ages, including a Carousel, roller coasters, the speeding and spiraling Timberland Twister. Arcades and other games are available as well. The park is a fun place for the whole family.

Admission: You may walk around the park for free.

Ride prices: Please visit their website

Hours (subject to change): Monday – Thursday: 10 a.m. – 9:30p.m.

Friday – Saturday: 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. and Sunday: 10:30 a. – 7:30 p.m.

Underwater Adventure (located on the east side, first level at the Mall of America). Underwater Adventure Aquarium is fun and explores the mystery of the deep blue sea. It's the world's largest underground aquarium. It offers a virtual submarine tour and encounter with over 4,500 sea creatures.

Hours: Monday – Thursday: 9:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Friday – Saturday: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. and Sunday: 10 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Admission: Little kids (2 and under) free, Kids (3-12) \$9.95, and Adults (13+) \$16.95

Lego Land (located on the south side, first level at the Mall of America).

Four stories of LEGO fun await you! See more than 90 full-size LEGO models, including dinosaurs, astronauts and the world's largest animated and interactive LEGO clock tower. You can book your child's party at the LEGO Store and give them the ultimate birthday celebration.

Hours: Mall Hours

Admission: No admission fee.

Dinosaur Walk Museum (located on the north side, third level at the Mall of America). Dinosaur Walk Museum is a prehistoric experience for all ages. The museum features 60 life-sized dinosaurs and several interactive displays. It has two theatres, a fossil dig, a learning center, computer games and much more.

Hours: Mall Hours

Admission: Adults: \$7.95, Children (ages 3-18 and 55+): \$5.95, Ages 2 and under – free

Sightseeing and Tours

Twin Cities Tours

For more information go to www.TwinCitiesTours.com. To register for tours call: 612-240-6048

Two-City Tour

See the best of both Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Attractions include downtown areas, the Mississippi River, Minnehaha Falls, the Victorian-era mansions of Summit Avenue, Saint Paul Cathedral, University of Minnesota, Metrodome, the signature Lakes Area of Minneapolis and more. This tour is great for an overview of the Cities, and covers most of the popular attractions. Tours last three hours.

Hours: open

Dates: all year

Mansion Tour

Tour the two largest old mansions in the Twin Cities: The American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis and the James J. Hill Mansion in Saint Paul. Lunch includes a Swedish tradition Smörgåsbord. The Swedish castle was built in 1904 by Swedish-language newspaper magnate, Swan Turnblad. His friend, James J. Hill, the “Empire Builder,” founded the Great Northern Railroad. Between the two mansions, you will view several others in each city’s most posh turn-of-the-century neighborhoods: Park Avenue in Minneapolis and Summit Avenue in Saint Paul.

Hours: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Dates: all year

Stillwater

Spend a day in Minnesota’s oldest town. Stillwater, an old lumbering town, rests upon the cliffs of the beautiful St. Croix River Valley, like a miniature San Francisco. This tour includes a two-hour paddlewheel boat excursion with buffet lunch. You may wish to take a trolley ride tour past magnificent, Queen Anne-style, “painted lady” homes; enjoy spectacular views of the beautiful St. Croix River Valley and other attractions; or go shopping in the many interesting gift and antique shops.

Hidden Treasures Tour

There are interesting, intriguing and unusual attractions rarely if ever seen on the normal sightseeing tour, but well worthwhile nevertheless. Veteran guides all have their secret places, which they share with only certain people. This is a great tour for locals already familiar with regular area sites, but still eager for discovery and surprise. It is also for the more adventurous visitors who want something a little different than the familiar riding tours. Longtime guide and native Twin Citian, Doug Rosenquist narrates.

The tour lasts 4 hours during the day.

Art Museums

Minnesota Museum of American Art

The MMAA was founded as an art school in 1927. It is the only museum in Twin Cities totally dedicated to American Art. The Museum possesses paintings, works on paper, sculpture, and studio crafts. For more information, visit www.mmaa.org. Admission is free for all visitors.

Minneapolis Institute of the Arts

Houses more than 100,000 objects from diverse cultural traditions spanning 5,000 years of world history. For more information visit www.artsmia.org. Admission is free for all visitors.

Walker Art Center

This museum is one of the five most visited modern art museums in the U.S. For more information visit <http://info.walkerart.org>
Gallery Admission: Adults - \$8, Seniors (65+) - \$6, Student/teen (with ID) - \$5, Free to Walker members and children under 12.

Minneapolis Sculpture Garden

The Minneapolis Sculpture Garden is located on Vineland Place, across from the Walker Art Center. The 11-acre garden is a joint project of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) and the Walker Art Center. It offers visitors an opportunity to enjoy important works of art by leading American and international artists in a setting of plazas, walkways, and plantings. For more information visit <http://garden.walkerart.org/index.wac>. Admission is free for all visitors.

Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum

The Museum is situated on campus at the University of Minnesota. The Museum collection features early 20th century American Artists and a diverse collection of contemporary art. For more information visit www.weisman.umn.edu. Admission is free for all visitors.

History Museums

The American Swedish Institute

The American Swedish Institute is a historic house/museum offering a variety of programs designed to celebrate Swedish culture. The Turnblad mansion, which houses the Institute, is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is the only castle in the Twin Cities. For more information, visit www.americanswedishinst.org/general.htm
Admission: \$6 for adults, \$5 ages 62 and above, \$4 ages 6-18. Children

under six are admitted free when accompanied by an adult. Admission is free the first Wednesday of each month. Admission is free for members of the American Swedish Institute.

Hennepin History Museum

The Hennepin History Museum is the county historical society of Minnesota's most populous county. It offers superb exhibits, a historic mansion setting, and collections of priceless scholarly value. For more information visit www.hhmuseum.org/mu/mu.htm

Admission: Adults - \$4, Kids & Seniors - \$1, Members - free

Minnesota Transportation Museum

The Museum presents vintage trains, trolleys, buses and boats.

For more information, to schedule a tour, or to reserve the roundhouse for your group party call: 651-228-0263 ext 3105 or visit the website at www.hhmuseum.org/mu/mu.htm

Minnesota History Center Museum

At this museum you can explore Minnesota's past through exhibits that feature large-scale objects, hands-on experiences and multimedia presentations. For more information about the museum and holiday hours visit www.mnhs.org/historycenter/index.htm

Admission: \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors and college students, and \$4 for children ages 6 to 17. Free for children age 5 and under and MHS members.

Mill City Museum

An attraction for all ages, Mill City Museum chronicles the flour milling industry that dominated world flour production for roughly a half-century and fueled the growth of Minneapolis, recognized across the nation and around the world as "Mill City." Built within the ruins of a National Historic Landmark — the Washburn A Mill — the museum provides a multi-sensory, interactive journey. The story of flour milling — and its impact on Minneapolis, the nation and the world — comes to life through the eight-story Flour Tower and other hands-on exhibits. For more information visit www.millcitymuseum.org

Admission: MHS Members - free, Adults (ages 18-64) - \$8, Seniors (ages 65 and up) - \$6, College Students with ID - \$6, Students (ages 6-17) - \$4 Children (ages 5 and under) - free

Ramsey County Historical Society

The Ramsey County Historical Society is the officially-recognized historical agency of Ramsey County. The RCHS Exhibit gallery is located in the North Lobby of the Landmark Center. They are open to viewing by the

public during Landmark's building hours. For more information, visit www.rchs.com/. Admission is free for all visitors.

Additional museums

Bakken Museum

The library collection includes approximately 11,000 books, bound journals, and manuscripts. The focus is on the historical role of electricity and magnetism in the life sciences and medicine. The library is open by appointment, 9 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

The artifact collection includes approximately 2500 objects. The artifacts may be viewed by appointment, 9 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Thursday. For more information about exhibits visit www.thebakken.org/exhibits/exhibits.htm

Minnesota Children's Museum

Minnesota Children's Museum is a fun place for children to come play and learn. It's where kids can touch, climb, splash, crawl, push, pull, and press it all! Children ages 6 months through 10 years and their adult guests can explore six galleries packed with extraordinary hands-on adventures. For more information visit www.mcm.org/

Admission: Ages 1 - 101: \$7.95, Members: free

Science Museum of Minnesota

Science Museum has and incredible collections including archaeology and ethnology; mammalogy, entomology, and ornithology; vertebrate and invertebrate paleontology; and river and stream ecology and watershed biology. The collection includes 1.75 million artifacts and specimens. For hours and ticket information visit www.smm.org/

Amusement parks

Valley Fair

Valley Fair is the largest amusement park in the upper Midwest, with more than 75 rides and attractions, there's definitely something for everyone to enjoy. For thrill seekers, there's the all-new Xtreme Swing, a 100-foot air-launched thrill ride that takes riders up to 125 feet in the air while reaching speeds of up to 60 mph! You can also get your heart pumping on six thrilling roller coasters including Wild Thing with its intense 200-foot drop or Steel Venom's 450-degree spiraling corkscrew. Or blast up or plunge down 27 stories on Power Tower. For wet and wild thrills, head over to Whitewater Country Water park, included with the price of admission. For an exciting family adventure, visit KidWorks featuring the Foam Ball Factory, Rockin' Tug and the musical group The Squiggles.

Admission Rates: Please visit www.valleyfair.com for rate information.

Dates: May 13, 2006 to October 29, 2006

Minnesota State Fair

Minnesota State Fair is the biggest fair in Minnesota taking place late August through Labor Day weekend every year. The Fair has a lot of attractions that may be interesting for the whole family. The State Fair is committed to providing equal access and a pleasant experience for all its guests. Services provided include assistive listening devices, sign language interpreters, accessible seating at all entertainment venues and curb cuts throughout the fairgrounds. For more information about dates, hours, admission, directions, other attractions, phone numbers visit www.mn-statefair.org/

The Fair offers:

Animal Barns: this is an opportunity to see Dairy Cattle, Sheep, Swine, Chickens, Ducks, Turkeys, and Geese.

Judging Animals: Some animals will be shown and judged throughout the twelve days of the fair. The types of animals on the grounds are changed throughout the twelve days of the fair, so be sure to check the dates and times carefully.

Daily Parades: The State Fair Mall Parade features the high school marching band competition and follows a 14-block route beginning and ending south of Como Avenue. Included in the parade are floats, animal and specialty units and visiting royalty from festivals throughout the state.

Warner Coliseum Horse Shows: Featured at all paid horse shows are the Imperial Knights; an exciting show with games on horseback, jousting, horseback sword fighting and top of the line hand-to-hand combat with a variety of Medieval weapons.

State Fair Amateur Talent Contest: The contest begins with auditions held at the fairgrounds in late July and early August. Acts selected during the audition process compete in the semifinals on the Bandshell stage during the first 10 days of the fair. First place winners of each individual semifinal competition progress to the finals held on Sept. 3 in the Grandstand.

Milk Run: The annual 5k run begins and ends on the fairgrounds. The course winds its way through the St. Paul campus of the University of Minnesota and the St. Anthony Park neighborhood. Runners who participated in the past two year's Milk Run automatically receive an entry form.

Midway and Kidway Rides: Ride and game tickets are available in the Mighty Midway and Kidway.

Lakes and Fun on the Water

If you like water, beaches and activities in the open air, Twin Cities have a lot of possibilities to meet your desires. Visit www.minneapolisparks.org to learn more about Lakes and recreation in Twin Cities area.

Public Libraries

If your children like books and you love to read to them you can visit Twin Cities Public Libraries where you can borrow books for free. They not only offer a wonderful collection of books, but also have different activities for children and provide various services that might be interesting for people of all ages.

Minneapolis Public Library

Central Location:

3000 Nicollet Mall

Minneapolis, MN, 55401

Phone # 612-630-6000

Hours: Monday 10:00 – 8:00, Tuesday 10:00 – 6:00, Wednesday 10:00 – 6:00, Thursday 10:00- 8:00, Friday 10:00 – 5:00, Saturday 10:00 – 5:00

For information about other locations, hours, library catalogs, services visit the following site: www.mpls.lib.mn.us

For St Paul Public Libraries visit www.stpaul.lib.mn.us

For Anoka County libraries visit www.anoka.lib.mn.us

For Dakota County Library System visit www.co.dakota.mn.us/library

For Hennepin County Public Library visit www.hennepin.lib.mn.us

For Ramsey County Library visit www.ramsey.lib.mn.us

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Below are different organizations that offer volunteer opportunities. Please visit each website for more information.

Minnesota International Center: www.micglobe.org

For Minnesotans and international students and visitors, Minnesota International Center (MIC) offers numerous opportunities for face-to-face meetings and educational exchanges. MIC has volunteers who serve as dinner hosts, escorts / drivers, Great Decisions group leaders, interns, speakers, programmers, and event and office volunteers. One unique program offered by MIC is the International Classroom Connection (ICC), which matches Minnesota elementary and secondary classrooms with international people to learn first-hand about other cultures. It's a great opportunity for international students, scholars, and their spouses to

both share their culture and observe and discuss aspects of U.S. culture with Minnesota students.

Hands On Twin Cities: www.handsontwincities.org

Hands On Twin Cities links volunteers with volunteer opportunities. On their website, you can search for volunteer opportunities based on your interest area.

The Center for Victims of Torture: www.cvt.org

Every year, 300 volunteers donate their time to the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT). Some spend an hour or two on a community service project; others make a weekly commitment that becomes an important part of their own lives. Most importantly, volunteers form the basis of a healing community – one where torture survivors feel welcomed and protected. Torture survivors know that people in our community care about their healing process enough to become personally involved. Whatever your talents, you can be part of an effort that makes hope and healing possible.