

THE KAPIWAY DIGEST · WHO AI NAMES FOR FAMILY FUN: 20 US CITIES

Parents asked ChatGPT where to take the kids. 6% of the places it named were local family centers.

On a rainy day, that share nearly triples, to 17%. The answers lean on pages a local business can get onto, starting with the city's tourism site. How we know: we asked ChatGPT two questions, twice each, in 20 US cities, through its API with web search on October 21, 2026. That's 80 answers.

What we found

1 Rain changes the answer.

6% vs 17% local centers: kids vs rainy day

Of 701 places ChatGPT named for kids' activities, 42 were local family entertainment centers (6%). Ask for "fun indoor things to do when it's raining" and local family entertainment centers rise to 17% of the places named (88 of 511), with at least one named in all 20 cities. That's the question where a local business can win.

2 The city's tourism website is what ChatGPT reads most.

64 of 80 answers cited the city's tourism site

The official visitor bureau site was cited in 64 of 80 answers, in 18 of 20 cities, and tourism sites made up about half of all citations. Tripadvisor was cited in 4 of the 80 answers, Facebook in none. If a business isn't on its city's tourism site, it's missing from the page AI leans on most.

3 The answer moves.

70% of places were named again on a second ask

Only 70% of the places named in one run were named again in the second. Big attractions held their spot (77% repeated); local businesses and chains rotated in and out (57% and 49%).

One real answer: Myrtle Beach

"what are some fun things to do with kids in myrtle beach?"

Myrtle Beach has tons of fun things to do with kids!

Top 10 Fun Things to Do With Kids

1. Ripley's Aquarium
2. WonderWorks (Upside-Down House)
3. Savannah's Playground (FREE!)
4. Alligator Adventure
5. Family Kingdom Amusement Park
6. Broadway Grand Prix
7. EdVenture Children's Museum
8. Myrtle Beach State Park
9. Brookgreen Gardens
10. Stars and Strikes

...

Best Rainy-Day Activities

- Ripley's Aquarium
- WonderWorks
- EdVenture Children's Museum
- Sky Zone Trampoline Park
- Stars and Strikes
- Indoor arcades

Asked October 21, 2026. ChatGPT through its API, with web search, located in Myrtle Beach.

Emoji and some lines left out. Every word shown is ChatGPT's.

Pages it cited: two Visit Myrtle Beach pages (one is its kids list) and edventure.org.

Missing: Fun Warehouse. It's a local spot with roller skating, laser tag and arcade games. The same day, ChatGPT named it fifth in both of its rainy-day answers for Myrtle Beach. It's on Visit Myrtle Beach's rainy-day list. It isn't on the kids list this answer cited, and it wasn't in either kids' answer. Even the answer's own rainy-day list above skipped it. (We checked both pages on October 22.)

Who's winning, and what they did

Four local businesses ChatGPT named in both runs. We read the pages it cited and their own websites on October 22, 2026. Here's what they have that most others don't.

Dezerland Park, Orlando

Named in all 4 Orlando answers, and first in both rainy-day answers.

Visit Orlando's indoor attractions page, which ChatGPT cited in 3 of the 4 answers, calls it "the largest option by far" and lists go-karts, axe throwing and "the biggest pinball palace in Florida, ... all under one roof." Its own site's title is "Florida's Largest Indoor Attraction!" Google's AI Overview for the rainy-day question named it too.

Knuckleheads, Wisconsin Dells

Named in all 4 Wisconsin Dells answers, and first in both rainy-day answers.

It's a featured attraction on Dells.com's attractions page, which ChatGPT cited in 3 of the 4 answers. A local rainy-day guide that ChatGPT also cited names it. Its own site says what it is in one line: an "80,000 square foot indoor entertainment facility."

Scene75, Columbus

Named in all 4 Columbus answers, and third in both rainy-day answers.

The Columbus tourism pages ChatGPT cited don't list it. A local family guide it cited does: "Scene75 is the nuclear option for a rained-out birthday." Its own homepage says the rainy-day part out loud: "Rain or shine, it's go time" and "weather-proof activities under one roof."

Pigeon Forge Snow, Pigeon Forge

Named in all 4 Pigeon Forge answers, and second in both rainy-day answers.

Pigeon Forge's official tourism site names it on its rainy-day page ("year-round indoor snow tubing") and on its best indoor attractions page. ChatGPT cited one of those two pages in both rainy-day answers. Its own site's title says what it is: "Indoor Snow Tubing Year-Round," and its homepage adds "It's always 67° inside."

Do this week

1. **Check if you're on your city's tourism things-to-do lists.** **5 minutes** Look for two lists: things to do with kids, and things to do when it rains. ChatGPT cited the city's tourism site in 64 of 80 answers. If you're not on both lists, ask your visitor bureau how to get listed.
2. **Add a rainy-day page to your site.** **About an hour** Say it in plain words: you're indoors, what there is to do, which ages it suits, how long a visit takes, and your hours. Scene75's homepage says "rain or shine." Knuckleheads' says "indoor entertainment facility."
3. **Ask ChatGPT the rainy-day question for your city twice.** **10 minutes** Type "what are some fun indoor things to do in [your city] when it's raining?" Then ask again in a new chat. Only 70% of places came back on our second ask, so one check can mislead. Write down who it names and which pages it cites.
4. **Get onto the pages it cites.** **30 minutes** Open each page from step 3. If you're not on one, write to whoever runs it and ask to be added. Scene75 and Knuckleheads were both on local guides that ChatGPT cited, not only on the tourism site.

City by city

Top three places ChatGPT named for each question (places named in both runs first), and the site it cited most.

City	"Fun things to do with kids"	"Fun indoor things to do when it's raining"	Most cited source
Orlando, FL	Crayola Experience, Orlando Science Center, SEA LIFE Aquarium	Dezerland Park, Andretti Indoor Karting & Games, WonderWorks	visitorlando.com
Dezerland Park was named in all 4 answers, and first in both rainy-day answers.			
Myrtle Beach, SC	Ripley's Aquarium, WonderWorks, Savannah's Playground	WonderWorks, Dave & Buster's, 810 Billiards & Bowling	visitmyrtlebeach.com
Fun Warehouse and 810 Billiards & Bowling were named in both rainy-day answers, but in neither kids' answer.			
Branson, MO	Silver Dollar City, WonderWorks, Aquarium at the Boardwalk	WonderWorks, Fritz's Adventure, Beyond the Lens!	explorebranson.com
No national chain was named. 8 different local centers were named for a rainy day.			
Pigeon Forge, TN	Dollywood, The Island in Pigeon Forge, WonderWorks	WonderWorks, Pigeon Forge Snow, The Escape Game	mypigeonforge.com
Pigeon Forge Snow was named in all 4 answers.			
Wisconsin Dells, WI	Great Wolf Lodge, Kalahari, Wilderness Resort	Knuckleheads, Kalahari, Wizard Quest	wisdells.com
Knuckleheads was named in all 4 answers, and first in both rainy-day answers.			
Las Vegas, NV	Adventuredome, Shark Reef Aquarium, High Roller Observation Wheel	AREA15, Pinball Hall of Fame, Shark Reef Aquarium	visitlasvegas.com
Pinball Hall of Fame was named in all 4 answers.			
Dallas, TX	Perot Museum of Nature and Science, LEGOLAND Discovery Center, Play Street Museum	Meow Wolf, Activate Games, Dallas Museum of Art	visitdallas.com
For a rainy day, 5 national chains were named and 1 local center, Cidercade, in one run only.			
Houston, TX	Houston Zoo, Hermann Park, Houston Museum of Natural Science	Meow Wolf, Cidercade, Houston Museum of Natural Science	visithoustontexas.com
No local center in either kids' answer. Cidercade was named second in both rainy-day answers.			
Atlanta, GA	Zoo Atlanta, Georgia Aquarium, Atlanta Botanical Garden	Your 3rd Spot, Splatter Studio, High Museum of Art	discoveratlanta.com
No local center in either kids' answer. Andretti Indoor Karting & Games, a national chain, was named in both.			
Phoenix, AZ	Phoenix Zoo, Desert Botanical Garden, Papago Park	Mavrix, iFLY Indoor Skydiving, Museum of Illusions	visitphoenix.com
Mavrix was named first in both rainy-day answers.			
San Antonio, TX	Yanaguana Garden, Japanese Tea Garden, Brackenridge Park	Hopscotch, Andretti Indoor Karting & Games, PINSTACK	visitsanantonio.com
Every citation in all 4 answers went to visitsanantonio.com. No local center in either kids' answer.			
Nashville, TN	Nashville Zoo, Cheekwood Estate & Gardens, Centennial Park	Pins Mechanical Co., Game Terminal, The Escape Game	nashvilletourism.org
No local center in either kids' answer. Game Terminal was named in both rainy-day answers.			

City	"Fun things to do with kids"	"Fun indoor things to do when it's raining"	Most cited source
Denver, CO	Children's Museum of Denver, Denver Museum of Nature & Science, Meow Wolf	Meow Wolf, Punch Bowl Social, Denver Museum of Nature & Science	visitdenver.com
No local center in either kids' answer. Three were named for a rainy day, each in one run only.			
Charlotte, NC	Discovery Place Science, Discovery Place Kids, ImaginOn	Puttery, Pins Mechanical Co., Super Abari Game Bar	axios.com
ChatGPT never cited Charlotte's tourism site. Super Abari Game Bar and Victory Lane Karting were named in both rainy-day answers.			
Tampa, FL	ZooTampa at Lowry Park, The Florida Aquarium, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay	iFLY Indoor Skydiving, Tampa Museum of Art, The Florida Aquarium	visittampabay.com
No local center in either kids' answer. A different local center opened each rainy-day answer: GameTime, then Elev8 Fun.			
Chicago, IL	Navy Pier, Chicago Children's Museum, Maggie Daley Park	Emporium Arcade Bar, Flight Club, Punch Bowl Social	choosechicago.com
No local center in either kids' answer. Emporium Arcade Bar was named first in both rainy-day answers.			
Columbus, OH	Columbus Zoo & Aquarium, COSI, Franklin Park Conservatory	Otherworld, Pins Mechanical Co., Scene75	experiencecolumbus.com
Scene75 was named in all 4 answers.			
Indianapolis, IN	The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Indiana State Museum, Urban Air Adventure Park	Pins Mechanical Co., Atomic Bowl, Newfields	visitindy.com
No local center in either kids' answer. Atomic Bowl was named second in both rainy-day answers.			
Kansas City, MO	Kansas City Zoo & Aquarium, Science City, LEGOLAND Discovery Center	Puttery, Topgolf, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art	visitkc.com
For a rainy day, 9 national chains were named and 4 local centers, none in both runs.			
Virginia Beach, VA	Mount Trashmore Park, Grommet Island Park, First Landing State Park	Apex Entertainment, iFLY Indoor Skydiving, Beachside Social	visitvirginiabeach.com
Motor World was named in both kids' answers. No local center was named in both rainy-day answers.			

More findings

4 Big attractions get named first.

11 of 40 answers opened with one

Big attractions (zoos, aquariums, museums, theme parks) were 361 of the 701 places named for kids' activities, about half. No local family entertainment center was named first in any kids' answer. For a rainy day, 11 of 40 answers opened with one, including Dezerland Park in Orlando and Knuckleheads in Wisconsin Dells, first in both runs.

5 In big cities, national chains take the local spot.

11 of 20 cities had Urban Air in the kids' answer

Urban Air was named for kids' activities in 11 of the 20 cities. In 7 metros (Houston, Atlanta, San Antonio, Nashville, Denver, Tampa and Indianapolis), ChatGPT named a national chain and no local family entertainment center in either run.

6 Google's AI Overviews pick different local businesses.

15 of 19 of Google's local picks were never named by ChatGPT

Of 19 local family entertainment centers named in Google's AI Overviews, 15 were never named by ChatGPT for the same city and question. Google's overviews cited Facebook in 11 of 13 answers and Instagram in 6; ChatGPT cited neither once.

7 Tourist towns are friendlier to local businesses.

20% vs 7% local centers: tourist towns vs big metros

In Orlando, Myrtle Beach, Branson, Pigeon Forge, Wisconsin Dells and Las Vegas, local family entertainment centers were 20% of the places named, against 7% in the big metros. In Branson, no national chain was named at all.

See who AI names for your business.

Free, just type your website.

kapiway.com

How we did it

- Run on October 21, 2026.
- Questions, typed the way a person types them: "what are some fun things to do with kids in {city}?" and "what are some fun indoor things to do in {city} when it's raining?"
- ChatGPT (model "chat-latest" through OpenAI's API, with web search, located in each city), each question asked twice per city: 80 answers.
- Google AI Overviews through a search data provider (DataForSEO), located in each city: 13 of 40 searches showed an overview, 8 searches failed.
- Place names taken from each answer in order. Generic activities ("bowling", "escape rooms") were not counted as places.
- Each place sorted by hand into big attraction, national chain (operating in 3 or more states), local family entertainment center, or other (parks, malls, restaurants). Edge calls are listed in our notes.
- We read the pages ChatGPT cited for the four winners, the Myrtle Beach answer, and the winners' own websites on October 22, 2026. Pages change, so they may differ from what ChatGPT read the day before.
- Answers change from one ask to the next; these are a snapshot, not a ranking.

Next month: a new industry

In early November we'll do the same for a different kind of local business: real customer questions, asked to ChatGPT twice, and who it names and why. Subscribe and it comes to your inbox.