



CHILDREN'S THEATRE



Participation Expectations

Overview:

All-of-us Express Children's Theatre is NOT just about the acting! This is also a great place for the youth participant who never wants to be on stage. Some youth find they have a talent for sewing or designing costumes, some like to build things and create fabulous sets for our productions. All-of-us Express offers that and more.

Fairness, equality and cooperation are encouraged at All-of-us Express – among many other things. The youth of this organization come from different cities, backgrounds, races and religions. Everyone is accepted and they all work together. Every youth is given the same opportunities (as long as guidelines are followed). Any youth that is cast in a role for this show must serve on a crew for the next – equal opportunity, again.

What to expect if your child participates in this production

The Audition Process

Youth who are invited to “callbacks” are those whom the director(s) need another look at. Please do not feel discouraged if you are not invited to callbacks! This does not mean you won't get a part. This simply means the director has seen what they needed from you.

Everyone that participates in the audition process will get a letter thanking them for being part of this experience. They will be offered a role or crew position, depending on what is right for this show. If a crew selection was not made on the audition form, we will ask them to please reconsider at this time. We want to give everyone the opportunity to work with All-of-us Express in some capacity.

The Rehearsal Process

Once rehearsals begin, youth participants can expect to be here 2-3 times each week depending on the role or crew for which they have been chosen. These weeknight rehearsals are 6:30-8:30pm for about six weeks, at which time we get to “Tech Week” with rehearsals 6:00-9:30pm all week. There will be more information about this in the **Tech Week** letter that will be sent home a couple of weeks before Tech Week. We typically do 6 performances over 2 weekends (10 if at Riverwalk). For our Fall and Spring productions, an extra day of performances is offered for school groups only. This means youth participants will have to miss a day of school.

Participants have made a commitment and taken on a responsibility! They have agreed to be part of this production and we expect them to take this very seriously! It is their job to make sure that any questions, problems or concerns that may come up are communicated to their director or crew leader as soon as possible.

The Cast and Crew Mailing

Packets will be sent in the mail following auditions for parents and participants to read over together very thoroughly. It will contain the welcome letter, an emergency form and fee sheet to fill out and be returned at 1st Read.

It is important for us to be able to reach parents or a representative and to know of any health concerns youth participants may have. The completed fee and fees are due at 1st Read. These fees are for Cast/Crew participation which covers the cost of script, costume fittings (if applicable), and artistic/technical training. *Scholarships* can be applied for. Applications are available upon request. **If mandatory fees are not paid by the due date, parents risk having their youth pulled from the production.**

Please take notice on the fee sheet that there are different prices for members and non-members. While membership is not required for participation, there are benefits attached, with discounts at the family level. Anyone can become a member at anytime throughout the year – our benefit year runs from September 1-August 31.

First Read

In the letter parents & participants will be directed to attend *1st Read*. This is the participant's first opportunity to meet the rest of the cast, crewmembers and crew heads. It is also the time for parents to meet the people involved with the production, ask questions, take a look around and meet other parents. This is a very important meeting and one parent/guardian of each youth is required to attend.

At this meeting we will also discuss ways that parents can become more involved with the production and the organization itself. Like many community non-profit organizations, we rely heavily on volunteers to make the magic happen. There are many jobs that are necessary to make sure a production gets from start to finish in the smoothest, timeliest, least expensive manner possible. There are a variety of small and large jobs (see list below) that need to be completed.

Volunteer Parent Jobs

Books & Concessions

We always have a table for selling books and sell concessions. We need several people per show to help in these areas for each performance.

Costume Helper

This is for anyone, not just people who know how to sew, though we need them, too. Sometimes the Costumer simply needs another adult to be watchful and keep their eyes and ears open. While you are doing that, there is usually some simple work with which you can help.

Flyer Day Leader

Everyone is asked to take a packet of flyers to post at various locations around the Lansing/East Lansing area. You sit at a table, passing out packets of flyers, listing who took them out and where they plan to post them. You will need to remind people to ask the owner/manager of all businesses before posting.

Laundry Helper

You will need to be available after the final show to either take laundry home or to a dry cleaner, if necessary. The Costumer will provide care instructions.

Party Crew Leader

With assistance from your crew, plan the party, do any decoration, arrange for food and drinks for the cast and crew and clean up following the party.

Popcorn Patrons

The generosity of this group of people helps cover the cost of concessions for the production and enables us to continue to offer this benefit at shows, making this a money-maker instead of a risk. We ask that you contribute at least \$15 to help underwrite the cost of the concessions.

Set Transportation Driver (*Riverwalk productions only*)

Set transportation means renting and driving a truck for load-in and load-out. This usually is done by one person. Load-in is usually the Sunday prior to tech week. Load-out is immediately following the final show. Reserve the truck for both dates two or three weeks ahead of time. We usually need at least a 16-foot truck; check with the Sets Supervisor or Artistic Director to be certain.

Usher Crew Leader

Responsible for calling the crew and assigning them to specific performances, making sure there is adequate coverage for each. The crew leader and other adult helpers must coordinate their availability so there is an adult at every show.

Rules and Procedures

Our rules and procedures are designed to keep everyone safe, while allowing the freedom to have a good time. We're very serious about this!

- Do not wear sandals or open-toed shoes in the office and rehearsal space or at the theater. Also, shoes with wheels must remain in 'wheel-locked' position while in rehearsal space and are never allowed in the theater.
- No running! (Unless it is called for in the script and instructed by the director.)
- No gum; anywhere, ever!
- No food or drinks in any of the crew or rehearsal areas. Youth may bring food to eat before an activity, but it must be consumed in the cafe area. Allow time to finish eating before the activities begin!
- Laser pointers are absolutely prohibited and will be confiscated, as will anything else judged to be unsafe.
- **Cell phones must be turned off before rehearsals begin and remain off until the end of rehearsal.** They are also not to be used without permission during these times. **Cell phone cameras are also not to be used without permission!**
- Youth may not go outside or leave the building without being signed out by their responsible party.
- There is a sign-in/sign-out sheet for all cast and crew. Youth *must* sign in upon arrival and the adult providing transportation must sign them out before they will be allowed to leave!
- Photos or videos may be taken at the final dress rehearsal, but **no flash photographs are allowed during rehearsals or performance.** This is a safety issue! A startled or blinded performer could walk off the stage or into a wall. Most digital cameras can take usable photos (without flash) of most portions of a show. Photo CD's are available for \$20, which contains many images taken with professional equipment which can be printed on a home computer or taken to a photo lab.
- **Food and drink are not allowed in the auditorium or the classrooms.** There is an intermission for each performance during which popcorn and punch are sold to the audience. Performers and crews on duty are not allowed to drink anything except water (in a sealed bottle with a straw) at the theater. Performers in costume may not drink even water without assistance from the Costume Crew. Even water can stain or ruin a costume.

About Tech Week

Tech week is when we move the production to the theater and begin rehearsing on the performance stage. Monday is a technical rehearsal, when blocking and lights are worked out. Tuesday is first dress, when performers do their first run in full makeup and costume. Wednesday is another tech rehearsal, usually two complete runs. Thursday is final dress, as much like opening night as possible. The cast and crew photo is taken on this night. Expect these rehearsals to run from 6:00 until 9:30/9:45pm. Cast and running crew members receive a detailed *Tech Week Letter* prior to Tech Week. This letter contains all the detailed times and information needed to plan out the week.

Performers must arrive at the theater for dress and tech rehearsals as well as performances no later than their designated time (call), with their hair fixed as directed, and wearing no jewelry or cosmetics, including watches and fingernail polish! They must bring or wear their makeup shirts, bring makeup remover and tissues, and leave valuables at home.

Youth participants of all ages, whether cast or crew **need to wear deodorant** and performers need to bring deodorant to use before getting into costume. The costumes are usually **NOT** washed until all performances are complete!