



Missoula Children's Theatre

Questions and Answers for Parents

How will my child benefit from this experience?

The primary goal of Missoula Children's Theatre (MCT) is the development of life skills in children through participation in the performing arts. Within each MCT cast, children are equal; the disabled become able; the shy experiment with bravery; the slow are rehearsed to perfection; and the gifted become part of the whole. The lesson they learn is that all of them are necessary for the show to go on. Few arenas exist where responsibility is taught and learned so clearly. MCT provides a unique opportunity to learn the lessons of group dynamics while excelling as an individual – a lesson from art that carries into life. MCT strives to use participation in the performing arts as a vehicle to develop life skills including social skills, communication skills, self-discipline, a strong work ethic, an understanding of the team concept and self-esteem.

How many children can be in the cast?

All of the shows are written to incorporate an age range of 50-60 school age children.

What are the ages that can participate?

We invite children going into 1st grade to 10th grade to participate.

How much does it cost to participate?

The fee for the week is \$75 per child. This cost helps the Mesquite Arts Council to be able to continue to bring the Missoula Children's Theatre back each summer.

How long are the auditions?

The auditions last two full hours. Each child who attends the audition will need to be present for the entire two hours.

Should the students prepare anything for auditions?

The group audition is a 2-hour process at which all children who are interested in being cast must attend for the entire time. No preparation is needed. The team of actor/directors will guide the children through the audition process with easy to follow instructions on basic movement, lines and song. At the end of the two-hour audition, the cast will be announced, and each cast member will receive a rehearsal schedule for the week. The rehearsals are a total of 4 ½ hours each day, two 2-hour sessions with a short snack break in-between. Although not all cast members are needed at every session, those auditioning must have a clear schedule for the entire week, and if selected, be able to attend all rehearsals required for their role.

My child cannot make auditions-can they still be in the show?

If a child is not able to audition, unfortunately, they will not be able to participate in the show. The 2-hour audition is the time when the team is able to assess the abilities of the children auditioning, which in turn helps them to cast the child in the role that is just right for them.

When are rehearsals conducted?

The rehearsal schedule will be from 1:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. Monday through Friday of production week. Rehearsals are 4 ½ hours each day and consist of two 2-hour blocks of time with a 15 minute snack break between the two sessions for those cast members involved in both sessions. It is important to note that not all cast members are involved in every rehearsal session. Each child's schedule for the week is dependent on the role in which they are cast.

Who will be visiting our community?

A team of two adult, professional Actor/Directors will be visiting Mesquite for the week. These individuals are typically college graduates with training in either education, theatre, musical theatre or a combination. During their week-long residencies, MCT Tour Actor/Directors serve as ambassadors for the arts; especially the theatre. They have the joy of directing and performing as well as the adventure of travel. Simply put, they have the opportunity and the privilege to change the lives of thousands of young people by carrying our MCT's Mission.

Do you teams have background checks?

Yes! With more than 37 years of touring internationally, visiting nearly 1,300 communities and working with 65,000 children annually, MCT takes their hiring practices very seriously. Each individual on the touring staff goes through an arduous process of interviews, reference checks, criminal background checks and fingerprinting-both background checks and fingerprinting are completed by a nationally recognized company.

How long are the shows?

Each show is approximately 60-70 minutes in length-there is no intermission.

How much are tickets to the show?

Both performances are free!

What if my child isn't cast in the show?

The quality of experience that MCT wants each child to receive is one of the main reasons for limiting the number of children that can be in the show. While Mesquite has never not casted all children, there is always a possibility that the number of children that audition might be very high. With only one week and two directors, there just is not enough time and manpower to accommodate such a situation.

Auditions are a subjective process and do not always seem fair. With many students auditioning for a limited number of roles, the decisions of the Tour Actor/Directors are not easy. This is admittedly the most difficult aspect of their job. How one reacts to disappointment is a tremendous test of character. Children will look to you as an example of how to react. Compliment them for their efforts and for taking a risk auditioning for the show.

What happens if my child gets sick during the week?

We understand that illness may occur during the week and the Tour Team will try their best to accommodate a missed rehearsal due to an illness. However, due to the short timeframe the cast has to prepare for the performance, if your child is out for more than one day it may not be possible for them to still participate in the role that they were cast.

How much are the show t-shirts?

The tour team will be selling show t-shirts during the week and the cost is \$15.00.

Do I need to provide a snack for my child each day?

The Mesquite Arts Center does provide a selection of snacks for the children each day, but if your child has any special dietary restrictions or needs, we recommend sending them with their own snack for each snack break.