

Aspire Christian Theatre

Production Manual



WELCOME

We are so excited that you have joined our Aspire family in putting on this production. We will be working together over 10 weeks to put on a professional production that we and our students can be proud of. We aim to provide our students with quality training and experience through working with our artistic team in rehearsal to help students in learning the skills they need for their role as well as to help them to see how their unique personalities and talents are valued as a member of our cast.

Whom do I contact with questions?

Each show we have is managed by a show coordinator. The coordinator works with the artistic team during rehearsals each week to get to know your student(s) and meet their needs. The coordinator is happy to help you with any questions you may have.

Preparing to Audition

Auditions can be an exciting and sometimes anxious time for students, but it is also a time for them to grow and learn how to handle stress of typical auditions in the theatre world in a supportive and low stakes environment that will help them to handle audition time if they choose to pursue higher level theater in their futures. Auditions for Aspire are usually closed and contain the artistic team and a few other kids that have signed up for the same time slot.

Students are expected to introduce themselves to the team at the beginning of the audition by stating their name, age, song they are singing, what musical or movie the song is from, and if they are auditioning for a specific role in particular. Please help your student to practice rehearsing these details to present so they go in feeling the most confident.

Students are also expected to prepare a 1 minute song that is NOT from the show they are auditioning for. (Artistic team members want to see your child's creativity in choosing a song that reminds them of a character they are trying out for as well

Page | 3

as seeing their character, voice tone and quality so have your child choose a song that they know and are comfortable with so they can have fun with it during auditions.) Students are expected to use the karaoke or instrumental version of their song during the audition to see if they can follow along with background music. You can find this type on Apple music, Amazon music, or on Youtube when searching instrumental or karaoke version.

Tip: The song does not have to be started at the beginning, you can choose a middle or ending section of the song, but please try to keep the song to as close to one minute as you can as the artistic team has many auditions to get through and we want to respect their time.

Monologues are often used by directors to see if students can memorize a small section of lines and to see a small snippet of the students acting. If a director chooses to have monologues memorized, they will have Aspire send them out to parents via email within a week or so of auditions, so keep an eye on your emails once you have signed up for an audition slot and filled out your audition form.

Lastly, students may be asked to watch and mimic a small section of choreography during their audition slot. So while students should dress to impress, please consider having them wear or bring clothes to auditions that they can move around in easily for a dance portion.

Preparing to be Involved

Any student between the ages of 8 and 18 is encouraged to audition for our current production. Children from all backgrounds and levels of experience in theatre are encouraged to participate and we at Aspire try to create opportunities for all kids to shine on stage at their current ability level while also fostering a growth mindset and teaching them skills that will help them to continue to excel.

Family Expectations

In order for our shows to be beautiful and professional performances it is necessary for 1 adult sponsor from each family to be involved in one of our offered committees.

- The adult sponsor is required to work on 1 pre-show and 1 show week committee.
- In order for the production to run smoothly for the kids, the adult sponsor is required to work in all but one of the shows. The show that you plan to see, you must reserve tickets to and communicate with your committee chair so that coverage can be planned. Each person in the production is needed and essential to the overall show. Each role is essential to make the show great.
- Attendance at the 3 parent meetings is required. If you have any conflicts please email the coordinator in advance as the meetings contain vital information for the production.
- Participation in Super Saturday (move in day), and Strike. (Strike=Move-Out Day).
- Provide snacks and packed meals for your student during rehearsals, tech week, and shows.
- Provide appropriate undergarments, footwear, and stage make up for your student. All boys will be asked to obtain a white t-shirt and black shorts to wear under their costumes and all girls will be asked to wear a tan camisole or leotard and black shorts under their costumes as well to aid in quick changes that may need to happen backstage during the tech week and shows. Guidance will be provided during the first few weeks of rehearsals on which make-up and footwear is needed and opportunities for borrowing shorts, camisoles, and footwear for shows will be sent out with the information.

Student Commitment

- Attendance at all rehearsals, auditions and callbacks, unless indicated as conflicts on the schedule commitment form.
- Attendance at all performances of the production with the exception of illness.
- Being responsive to and respectful of our teachers and staff and memorizing lines, songs and dances as directed by the teachers and staff for the performances.
- Completing assigned weekly clean up responsibilities before leaving a rehearsal or performance.

Diversity of Aspire

Aspire Christian Theatre is committed to creating an environment that is inclusive and welcoming of all people of differing abilities, religious affiliations, and backgrounds. Our staff and artistic team is dedicated to providing a safe, encouraging, and sensitive environment where students can grow in skills, confidence, and friendship.

If your student needs an accommodation or has a concern, please contact the coordinator with any questions or concerns. Any items not covered or mentioned in this manual are subject to Aspire approval. Contact Mike Cannon mike@aspirechristiantheatre.org with questions.

Fees Associated with the Show

Production Fees

Aspire operates on a budget that is based off of the generous contributions of the community and our sponsors and so we have no production fees!! Money that we have raised for the shows helps to pay for the materials used for sets, set dressing, props, costumes, concessions for the show as well as for the venue in which the show is held. This seed money is essential for the show to run and so we work to reduce costs as much as possible and raise funds with fundraisers as well. During each show we hold two types of fundraisers that parents are expected to take part in. These will be announced during our first parent meeting for the show.

****PLEASE NOTE:** Aspire collects a deposit check for 100.00 within the first few weeks of rehearsals in order for your student to take home scripts for any role that has spoken lines in the show. Companies that own the rights to the shows like MTI and Concord often require that scripts are sent back to them at the conclusion of the show and they can charge us for any unreturned scripts. This deposit keeps the cost of any lost scripts from coming back to Aspire and will only be cashed if your child's script is not returned at the conclusion of the last show. Otherwise, the deposit check will be handed back to you by the conclusion of the shows.

Rehearsal Etiquette

In order for rehearsal time to be the most productive and create a wonderful performance experience for your student, there are certain rules of etiquette that must be followed by all students and attendance is imperative to get everything accomplished in ten weeks. **Please have your student read the following section and the attendance policy.**

- In order to allow the students to focus on the direction of the artistic team and for the rehearsal to run without interruption, rehearsals are closed. That means that parents, siblings, extended family, and friends not participating in the show are not allowed to sit in on rehearsals times. This also allows families to be surprised at the show when they get to see how much the children have learned and how the production has come together.
- Come to each rehearsal ready to focus on what the artistic team has planned.
- Be on time for each rehearsal. We have planned to use each rehearsal to its fullest in order to maximize instruction and keep the schedule of the artistic team on track. Please be mindful that even a few minutes late can cause time away from the whole group to catch your child up and ultimately cost the entire group instructional time. We have very few rehearsals to get everything done, so please plan to be 10-15 minutes early for call time in order to avoid this delay.
- Keep your hands to yourself. Rough housing is not allowed.
- No gum chewing. Our rehearsal space is often being lent to us for the day and we do not want to have any gum getting onto the furniture, floors etc. of our gracious hosts, so please do not allow your student to bring gum with them at all.
- Respect each other and your instructors in your words and actions. Good manners and kindness are an expectation at Aspire.
- Rehearsal is not the time to share funny stories or your own observations. Please do that on your break. Rehearsal is the time to learn, and so it is essential that you listen and pay attention to your directors, choreographer and coaches.
- Respect our rehearsal venue. Do not move things unless asked to do so.
- Running is only permitted if it is in the script for you to do so.
- **Pick up after yourself.** Each week a few students will be

assigned to clean up duty at the end of practice, if you are assigned, please complete your duty and if you are not assigned that week please be respectful and do not make more work for others. Pick up your own trash throughout the rehearsal day and before you leave. If you are assigned and not able to stay longer, please let one of the ADs know so that your child can be rescheduled for a day where you can stay behind 15 extra minutes.

- Wear appropriate clothing to rehearsals. Everyone is expected to follow the dress code and wear clothes that can be moved around and dance in also.
- Be a good example to others. Don't correct others or tell them what to do to try and fix their behavior. Do what you need to as a part of the cast and let the directors and staff correct any behavioral issues. Please remember that everyone that is cast is at differing levels of abilities and emotional levels. Often the staff are the only ones to know what these levels are and how to handle them appropriately, so please focus on doing your best at rehearsal and do not worry about others behavior.
- Aspire works hard to limit any downtime as we want to provide intensive training in dance, voice, and acting wherever possible, but if there are moments of downtime for your character during rehearsal, please sit quietly, working on something you brought with you or study your part. Be patient until you are called on.
- Rehearsal breaks are when you can eat. Please eat only in designated areas.
- Always be respectful of others. We Aspire to show the love of Christ by being kind to others of all walks of life and respecting each person's uniqueness at all times. We believe God made everyone and loves ALL of his people and expect our cast to show each other care and respect as Christ would.

Attendance Policies – PLEASE READ

Rehearsal Attendance Policy

Cast members are required to be present and on time for all rehearsals. Arrive 15 minutes early if possible. Roll is taken at all rehearsals. You will have the opportunity on your audition form to notify the Artistic Team about any planned absences/conflicts. You are permitted to have up to 2 conflicts. Permitting more than 2 conflicts is left up to the discretion of the Artistic Team. Conflicts will likely NOT be permitted for Super Saturday, Tech Week or Shows as it is imperative that each child be in their role for the whole cast to run the show through properly.

***Note: A cast member needing to leave early is still considered an absence and so it needs to be planned ahead and noted on the audition form.

If you have an emergency, and will be late or will miss a rehearsal or performance, you must Facebook message or CALL one of the ADs. Any non-emergency concerns can be emailed.

Illness Policy

In order to keep the cast free of illness as a whole and maximize rehearsal time, please keep your student home if he or she is sick or contagious with fever, strep throat, conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), Chicken Pox, flu, rash or a cold with excessive sneezing or coughing. Please make sure your student is free of contagious illness for 24 hours before returning to rehearsals.

If your student needs to miss a rehearsal due to illness, they must have an excused absence. Email one of the ADs the day prior, or as soon as possible, to be excused.

If your student becomes ill during rehearsal and is unable to

continue participating, they must immediately notify the staff, so that we can call you to come and get them. This will be considered an excused absence.

Show Week

Super Saturday: This is the Saturday before the performance when we move everything into our venue and have the opportunity to allow the students to rehearse there. While the students are rehearsing during this Saturday, the sponsors of the students are expected to join in with their committees to help in this exciting process.

Tech Week

Tech week is the week leading up to our first performance, when the students are able to put all that they have learned over the ten weeks together. They are able to use the stage space for blocking scenes and preparing for their opening night! This happens over 4 nights and often is a slow process and takes a lot of focus and listening from the students in order to work out any kinks that need to be fixed before they perform in front of an audience. It requires a lot of energy and patience from everyone involved, but in the end it will prove to be a wonderful learning experience in patience and flexibility for our students. The tech week usually has long hours having call times anywhere from 4 pm- 9 pm each night so be sure to stay hydrated and rest as much as possible during this week.

Show Reminders

- Always arrive 10 minutes prior to cast call
- When possible, arrive to your call time with hair and makeup complete.
- Wear appropriate required undergarments for costumes.
- Students should bring water and snacks that will not be

messy or cause damage to your costume.

- No chocolate, soda, or gum. Depending on our specific cast per show, **Nut products may be prohibited if allergies are present.**
- Students are required to participate in clean up duties assigned to particular students after the "Meet & Greet" at the close of each performance night. Students should check the callboard and signs posted each afternoon to see if they are on clean up and are to have the coordinator check that their job is complete before checking out for the evening. It is imperative that we keep the venue clean as we are borrowing the space from very gracious hosts and we are so grateful for their participation in our show.

Backstage Etiquette

- Stay way back in the wings. If you can see the audience, they can see you.
- Remain quiet backstage as the microphones can pick up even slight noise and the audience can then hear you.
- Be respectful of everyone. This includes, but is not limited to the artistic team, parents, leaders, custodians, and patrons. Remember that when you are in an Aspire show, you represent aspire and it is our goal to be kind and respectful of all people.
- Do not distract other cast members.
- Keep your hands to yourself at all times.
- Do not touch any prop or set piece that you are not supposed to. "If it's not your prop, don't touch it"
- No food or drink is permitted backstage, these items must be kept in the greenroom space.
- No electronics of any kind backstage or in the green room. These items emit light that can be distracting in the darkness of backstage and also stand out to the audience. They can

also be a distraction to our cast members and can cause late or missed cues.

- Once your microphone has been attached, DO NOT touch it. These devices are very expensive and are often borrowed from other groups and companies so they must be treated with the utmost respect.
- Listen to the artistic team and crew. They have the best interest of you and the show at heart and so please be aware of them and listen to their direction. If a student is being disrespectful or not listening to the artistic team or show coordinator, the concern will be brought to the attention of the parent and if the behavior continues the student can be removed from the show at the discretion of the artistic team in order to preserve the integrity of the show.

Strike

Strike takes place immediately following the closing performance and is required by all. Strike is when we pull together to clean up and leave our venues better than when we started.

- Set team members and Ninjas will be responsible for directing the breakdown and removal of the sets, loading the truck, and returning the sets to the warehouse, but grab a drill, a board, or a box of nails and ask how you can help.
- Props will be responsible for collecting their props, packing them neatly, and loading them on the truck for delivery to the warehouse.
- Costumes will be responsible to pack up all costume bags and return them to the costume shop.
- Make-up and Hair will be responsible to pack up all supplies and return to the warehouse.
- Bake sale and concessions will be responsible to inventory left over food/drinks, pack up, and return to storage for the next show.

- Green room will be responsible to make sure the space is cleaned up, lost and found items are collected, and all students are checked out as parents finish.
- Raffles, and House committees will be asked to assist the tech tear down and move out when they are done striking their tables and supplies.

We are a team and strike is no exception to this. We are expected to all be of help to clean up and unload the sets, props etc. after the show. Anyone who can return to unload the truck at our storage place after the strike at the venue will be greatly appreciated also. Many hands keeps work lighter for everyone and keeps there from being a few individuals burdened with unloading until late hours of the night of the closing show. Please join in and help as putting things away in a timely and organized manner is helpful for the next show also.

Cast Party

The cast party is when we celebrate! All family members are invited and cast awards will be given during the party. As the event draws nearer, more information will be forthcoming as to the date, place, and time.

REQUIRED FOR ADULT VOLUNTEERS

Please print out, read, and keep for your reference the CODE OF CONDUCT document below. Then sign, date, and return this signature page to you Coordinator at the first parent meeting.



Staff, Teacher, and Volunteer Code of Conduct

** Please print off two (2) copies of this Code of Conduct. We ask that each Staff, teacher, and volunteer sign our Code of Conduct one time per season. Once you have read and signed, please hand the signed document to the show coordinator.

Mission

Aspire Christian Theatre develops character and creativity in kids of all ages through quality instruction in the performing arts and technical skills. We ASPIRE to reflect the character of Christ, embracing all people, and bring communities together through service and the arts.

Staff, teachers, and Volunteers agree to the below behaviors for the safety of all ACT participants.

1. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall portray a positive role model for youth by responding with and maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity towards others.
2. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall treat all children and adults equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, national origin, disability, gender, identity, or orientation.
3. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall use positive techniques of guidance including redirection, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, or criticism.
4. Physical restraint is only administered in a prescribed manner and must be reported to the show coordinator who will document the incident in writing and discuss with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s).
5. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall respect children's and adults' rights not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable (including non-sexual touching) and their right to say no. Children and adults are never to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
6. Staff, teachers, and volunteers must never be alone with a single child or that cannot be observed by others. Adults should not accompany a child alone into a restroom. Outside of Aspire activities, Aspire staff, teachers, and volunteers are discouraged from being alone with children they met at Aspire.
7. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall appear clean, neat, and appropriately attired.
8. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, cannabis, or illegal substances while at an Aspire related function is prohibited.
9. Smoking, vaping, or using tobacco in the presence of children or parents while at an Aspire related function is prohibited.

10. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of sexual harassment is prohibited.
11. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall not bring or discuss inappropriate material (i.e. sexually suggestive or explicit, violent, obscene, or of political nature) at any Aspire activity.
12. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall maintain appropriate content and images on any and all social media and will not post photos of children without parental or guardian permission.
13. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, staff, or patrons.
14. Staff, teachers, and volunteers shall not date an Aspire student enrolled in the session in which you teach or volunteer.
15. Any and all convictions of a crime (other than minor traffic violations) are to be reported to the Board president and Artistic Directors for evaluation of eligibility for continued participation. Background checks will be conducted for all volunteers that will be in direct contact with the children.

Child Abuse and Suicide Threat Reporting Guidelines

Staff, Teachers, and Volunteers agree to the below reporting guidelines for the safety of all Aspire participants.

1. Staff, teachers, and volunteers will immediately report suspicion of physical abuse to the show coordinator or camp chair. Signs of abuse may include bumps, cuts, bruises, burns, etc. which seem abnormal and not part of the typical child experiences.
2. Staff, teachers, and volunteers will immediately report suspicion of sexual abuse to the coordinator or camp chair. Signs of abuse may include difficulty walking, under attention or touching of private areas, reluctance to be left in the presence of an individual, age-inappropriate familiarity with sexual matters, or inappropriate acting out of sexual conduct.
3. Staff, teachers, and volunteers will immediately report suspicion of Mental Health Concerns such as self-harm or suicidal thoughts. Signs of self-harm may include wearing long pants or sleeves even in hot weather, retreating from friendship groups, or fresh cuts or burns. Signs of suicidal thoughts include mood shifts, withdrawn behavior, acting recklessly, or idealizing stories of suicide.

Staff, teachers, and volunteers agree to report any violations of this Code of Conduct to the show coordinator or class chair. Any violation of this Code of Conduct may result in termination.

Printed Name

Signature

Date