

# Rainbow Youth Theatre Family Handbook

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Rainbow Youth Theatre! This booklet is designed to tell you everything you will need to know so you and your children can have a positive experience as participants in a RYT production. As a non-profit society, we like to think we are entering into a partnership with you and your children. As such, every partnership has two sides, so this booklet explains what you can expect from us and what we expect from you and your children.

If there is something we have neglected to cover, please don't hesitate to ask. One of the joys of live theatre is that truly nothing is the same twice. Questions or comments can be sent to us via e-mail at [info@rainbowtheatre.com](mailto:info@rainbowtheatre.com), or via mail at P.O. Box 3527, Courtenay, BC, Canada V9N 6Z8. RYT will respond within a reasonable time frame. Thank you for your interest in RYT!

## ABOUT RAINBOW YOUTH THEATRE (RYT)

Rainbow Youth Theatre is a volunteer-based community theatre group located in the Comox Valley of British Columbia, Canada, and celebrated twenty-five great years in 2013. RYT is registered as a non-profit organization under the Societies Act of BC.

Through the combined effort of its members and volunteers, Rainbow Youth Theatre mounts at least two productions each year. These productions are dramatic or musical in nature and involve large casts with opportunities for actors of all ages and theatrical experience. RYT makes a genuine effort to find a suitable part for every child or youth who auditions for one of its productions.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Rainbow's purpose is to enable children and youth to gain confidence, artistic skill, and friendships through theatre.

## GOALS

1. To promote and offer training in all aspects of the performing arts to all residents of the Comox Valley area, with emphasis on young people.
2. To encourage group experiences where the members can enhance their artistic skills and personal development.
3. To encourage family involvement in the theatre experience, with parents and guardians enjoying the creative environment together with their children

## RAINBOW'S HISTORY

Mike Butler, Dale Burgess, Carol Coulson, and Hans Petersen founded Rainbow in 1988. RYT has been building character on and off the stage for over 25 years. Many RYT alumni have gone on to post-secondary education in the performing arts and continue to perform live theatre to this day.

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## WHO IS INVOLVED IN STAGING A PLAY

Every theatrical production involves a variety of people to make the magic happen. This offers your children an incredible “learn by doing” experience in team work. As part of a team your child will get to experience the life skill of working on a project and meeting a deadline. The best part however, is we are positive and have fun while doing this “work”.

**Producer** – is responsible for the advertising, ticket sales, and all administrative tasks of the production including safety. The term commonly used to describe these responsibilities is front of house.

**Director** – prepares the actors to perform their lines, dance their choreography and sing their songs. The Director often has a Vocal Coach, a Dance Captain, and a Choreographer, to accomplish their vision.

**Stage Manager and Assistants** – Once the production is ready to be performed it is the Stage Manager’s show. The Stage Manager is responsible for “behind the scenes” activities. For example, the Stage Manager cues actors, sound, lighting, and music to happen on time. To make this happen the Stage Manager, who sits in the booth, has Assistant Stage Managers backstage. Sometimes there are two per side as well as runners to make a production run flawlessly.

**Sound and Lighting Technicians** – These technicians ensure the actors can be seen and heard. They are responsible for things like microphones, spotlights, and special effects.

**Hair And Makeup Artists** – These Artists help to visually enhance the actors so the audience can see them and their expressions while on the stage under the spotlights. For safe hygiene practices, we ask each child to bring their own makeup and hair brush/comb. Basic stage makeup is a term that means applying foundation, mascara, blush and often a matte lipstick. The “look” of the character dictates if other makeup is needed.

**Costumers** – These Artists design, sew, paint, glue, and wrangle all costumes to fit with the theme of the play and the Director vision of how it should all look. Our costumes are stored in a storage locker so we can reuse them.

**Set Designers and Builders/Painters** – Under the Director’s vision the set is designed, built, and decorated to create an atmosphere. Whenever possible, RYT tries to use the same set pieces.

**Properties** – Is typically called Props. These artists make what is needed for the play and many people usually bring in other items to put the finishing details on the set for the actors to use.

**Parent Volunteers** – each family is asked to volunteer their time and talents to help pull the production together. Parent volunteer hours are contributed in a huge variety of areas ranging from set painting, to washing costumes, to braiding hair, to supervising actors.

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## HOW MUCH TIME DOES IT TAKE TO PUT ON A PLAY?

Typically our shows involve rehearsing Monday through Friday for 3-4 hours each day for 3-4 weeks. This timeline depends on how long and involved the play is and on the children participating.

Please note - Near the end of the three or four weeks, there will be a dress rehearsal and three or more performances. These occurrences do not happen during the regular rehearsal times; they are over and above the initial time commitment. Often dress rehearsals add more time to the already scheduled day and performances are on weekends. It may feel a bit chaotic during these final hours but the magic of theatre combined with everyone pitching in guarantees that it all successfully comes together.

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## WHAT ARE PARENT VOLUNTEER HOURS?

At Rainbow Youth Theatre one of our beliefs is that “many hands make light work”. And what we know from 25 years of putting on plays is that when people contribute to a project it makes for a strong sense of community. A sense of community offers numerous benefits to us all.

It is expected that parents or any family members volunteer some of their time and talents to help pull a production together. At the Season Launch there will be descriptions of volunteer jobs and sign-up sheets. We hope that each family volunteers **20 hours** for a production. If you are unable to volunteer, alternatively you can pay a flat fee.

### Sample volunteer jobs:

- Front of house (selling t-shirts, tickets, flowers, concession items)
  - Costuming (sewing hems, washing costumes)
  - Hair and Make-up
  - Set Construction and Dressing (building and painting sets, creating or finding props)
  - Production (marketing, writing articles, distributing posters and tickets)
  - Technical and Back Stage (operating spotlights, assistant stage managers or runners)
  - Music (playing instruments, rehearsing vocals with youth)
  - During Rehearsal (supervising kids, helping the children to keep our space tidy)
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## WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?

Membership fees are required prior to auditions. They are used to cover liability insurance costs. The fees are annual and they are for a family.

Production fees cover the costs of the specific shows, items such as:

- Material for costumes and props
- Director’s honorarium
- Rental of the facilities
- Rental of the storage locker for costumes, props, and sets
- Advertising posters and place cards
- Payment for Royalties which the playwrights receive for RYT to use their scripts and music
- Technical equipment and repairs of sound and lighting equipment

**Rainbow Youth Theatre never turns someone away because of an inability to pay. If this applies to you please speak to our president.**

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## WHAT YOU AND YOUR ACTOR(S) CAN EXPECT FROM A RYT PRODUCTION

- An introduction to theatre both behind and on the stage
- A FUN, safe and supportive environment that does not include formalized instruction
- To feel valued and respected regardless of your role
- To learn some life skills like team work, follow directions in an atmosphere focused on a “learn by doing” approach
- Supervision of your child but please understand it is not a daycare setting
- If there is a concern, please speak to the Producer of the show to resolve the concern

### Hidden Benefits

- Spending time with your children and their friends
- Having FUN
- Gaining a sense of pride that comes from hard work and accomplishment
- Capturing some teachable moments about morals and life lessons as these topics are often explored through theatre
- Being a part of something bigger, part of an inclusive community
- Building self-confidence from completing a project as part of a team and working through an unknown process which has an element of chaos
- Developing social skills as participants learn to stretch their friendship boundaries (make friends outside of school)

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## WHAT WE EXPECT FROM PARENTS and THEIR ACTORS

### Be Ready

- Be on time for pick up and drop off
- Be at all rehearsals and participate to the best of your ability; a child refusing to participate may result in a request that he or she leaves the production
- Bring water and healthy snacks every day
- Volunteer your time and talents
- Bring paper and a pencil to take notes every day
- Have showers and wear deodorant (it not only makes it easier to be around each other but it helps the costumes last longer)

### Be respectful of your fellow actors and the production team

- Speak kindly to each other
- When given a note say thank you and follow the direction
- Do not argue or blame others when given a note of correction