

# PORCH LIGHT STUDENT AGREEMENT

*Last Updated: Wednesday, February 3, 2010*

Thank you for choosing Porch Light. The following policies and procedures apply to all Studio classes, Academy programs, and workshops. This document should be read in its entirety before registering yourself or your child.

## **REGISTRATIONS**

**Registration Process:** All registrations are available for online submission. Paper (mail-in) forms are available in our season brochure upon request. Registrations may also be made in person at the studio during normal business hours or by phone at 201.857.3520. Students/parents will be notified via email after their registration has been confirmed.

**Deadlines/Late Fees:** Deadlines are listed on our website and most promotional materials. Space may be limited, so we encourage you to register early. Late fees may be assessed on certain programs.

## **STUDIO CLASSES**

**Fees & Memberships:** Effective, February 3, 2010, all studio programs (*excludes semi-private and private instruction*) will be session-based. Studio sessions usually run 6 to 8 weeks with a specific start and end date. Students may join no later than the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of any program.

## **REFUNDS**

**Academy Programs:** Refunds may only be given prior to the day of auditions. Once your child has auditioned, no refunds (partial or otherwise) are granted. In the event the child becomes severely injured and cannot perform in the production, a pro-rated refund will be considered based upon the number of days your child attended the program. This decision is the sole decision of the Artistic Director and will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

**Studio Classes:** No refunds are given for single classes or our 10-class cards. Please review our monthly membership policies for information about cancellation and refunds. Studio registrations are valid for the current season only.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Scholarships are available to deserving students under the age of 18 who demonstrate special financial need as well as exceptional leadership abilities. For more information on scholarships, please feel free to contact Ryan Pifer at (201) 857-3520 or email [info@porchlightproductions.org](mailto:info@porchlightproductions.org).

## **WEB/PUBLICITY POLICY**

Photos and videos of all performances, rehearsals and any other production-related event are the sole rights and property of Porch Light Productions. Photos and videos may be used for publicity purposes (print, web and media). Names of children under the age of 18 will not be used on any of our advertising or our website (excludes secure areas and will only be given to the press (newspaper/magazines) upon parent/guardian consent.

## **AGREEMENT**

Upon registering yourself/your child, you hereby assume all risks and hazards incidental to participation in Porch Light Productions' workshops, classes, special events, rehearsals, performances and any other function held by Porch Light Productions. You hereby waive, release, absolve, indemnify and agree to hold harmless the organizers, sponsors, supervisors, directors and persons involved in the activities for any claim arising out of an injury to yourself or your child, whether the result of negligence or for any other cause.

# Academy Programs Only

## **AUDITIONS** *(excludes Rock Academy)*

Auditions are an essential part to the theatre process. It allows directors a chance to assess a student's experience level. It is similar to when a classroom teacher administers a reading test to determine with which book level the students should start. This process provides the best possible situation for the student to grow and ultimately succeed.

That said, auditions are still a difficult process to undergo, especially for our younger performers. This is why we take every opportunity to talk to the students about what auditioning means and how to emotionally cope with the outcome. **As a parent, the best thing you can do is talk to your child before the audition.** Going into a new program, your child will most likely have a role in mind that they would like to play. While it is important to encourage children to go for what they want, it is equally important to teach them how to handle a situation if it does not turn out as they had hoped.

Below is a list of Frequently Asked Questions you can refer to if your child should come to you upset after the audition.

### ***Q: Why didn't I get the part I wanted? I practiced so much for it.***

**A:** There could be several reasons why you didn't get the part you wanted. Maybe the directors wanted to stretch you as a performer and have you try a role that you would never see yourself in. Maybe you are the type of actor who can easily play multiple roles and would better serve the production this way. Whatever the reason may be, it is important to know that reason was definitely NOT because you weren't "talented" or "good" enough. The ability to work hard for something is a quality in itself to be proud of.

### ***Q: Why didn't I get a speaking role or any lines to say?***

**A:** Unfortunately, there is only a certain amount of speaking roles per show. Yet each character is essential to the story, whether or not they have lines. Just think of a Broadway show (*Lion King, Hairspray, Wicked*, etc.) and how much different it would be if there wasn't a chorus. It would be a different show entirely and not nearly as fun or exciting to watch.

### ***Q: If I don't have any lines, what will I be doing on stage?***

**A:** Everything! There are many songs to be sung and dances to be learned. Our productions often incorporate some sort of video feature that the students can take part in as well. Overall, what they see in the script is not always what ends up on stage. We are constantly making edits and changes. Often times we add lines, songs, characters, scenes, etc. so there is usually always something new to do. It is always important to remind your children of the joys of theatre! It is so much more than just saying lines.

### ***Q: Why did someone younger than me get a larger role?***

**A:** First, it is important to remember the old saying, "There are no small parts, just small actors." This means, it is not the size of your role but what you do with the time you have on the stage. Secondly, every student who auditions is looked at as exactly the same. They all start with a blank slate. This is the reason we give the students the same materials to prepare for the audition. From there, it is up to them what they do with the materials they are given. It simply wouldn't be fair to not give a role to someone who deserved it just because they were younger, especially if they prepared for the audition and the older student did not.

### ***Q: It seems like the same kids get the leads all of the time... why?***

**A:** While it may seem this way at times, it is important to not compare yourself to others. Remember, there are many reasons why certain students are cast in certain roles. Just like we trust teachers to put us on the correct reading level, it is also important to trust that the directors are putting you in a role that will lead to your success and growth as a performer. Concentrate on what you need to do and don't be afraid to ask questions about how you can do more to enhance your own performance.

## **AUDITION OUTLINE**

This section will explain in detail how we hold auditions. It discusses protocol as well as expectations. It will give both parents and students an idea of what we look for at an audition and why.

**Audition Materials:** Each audition varies depending on the type of production it is. Upon registration, the directors will email you the materials necessary for that specific audition. Below is a list of what we look for at an audition:

- **Effort:** Above all, this matters most. The directors want to see you try your best. You should always want to try your best so this is a perfect opportunity to simply go for it. Don't hold anything back! However, if you are feeling a little nervous it is OK to say so. The directors will always give you as much time as you need to show them what you have prepared.
- **Preparation:** This is definitely important. It shows the directors that you are serious about making this commitment and that you want to do well. It also shows the directors that you are someone who has learned the importance of being prepared, and therefore can handle a role with greater responsibility.
- **Positive Attitude:** Hopefully this is something that everyone strives to possess. However, there have been times when a student will come in with a negative attitude, thinking they don't have to try as hard as everyone else. These attitudes are obviously not what we are trying to promote. Theatre is about creating something together, so teamwork is key. Knowing your lines is only half the battle. Performing with enthusiasm and working well with others is essential to your success as a performer.
- **Technique:** When you are performing the audition information, we are looking to see what you can do with it. How different can you make it? How can you stand out from everyone else? Once you decide what you are going to do, it is important to make sure you concentrate on your voice and body expression. You should speak/sing loudly and clearly and your body movement should be large and expressive. Prepare your audition as if you are already performing on the stage.
- **Fun:** Yes! Fun! We want you to enjoy yourself and let your joy of performing be expressed in your audition. Don't put so much stress on yourself and just let the process happen naturally. Don't forget to smile too... it goes a long way!

## **TECHNICAL CREW**

If you or your child is interested in our performance programs, but is not ready to get on stage, technical crew opportunities may be available. If interested, please contact Ryan Pifher at 201.857.3520 or email [info@porchlightproductions.org](mailto:info@porchlightproductions.org).

## **REHEARSALS**

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend every rehearsal on time unless they have submitted conflicts in advance via written notice or on the conflicts portion of the online registration. Students who come late to a rehearsal are required to bring a note with the reasons why. If a student is sick and cannot attend rehearsal, the parent/guardian should email or call the directors as early as possible. If the student should become ill during a rehearsal, the directors will contact the parents/guardians to pick up the child.

**Picture Day:** Attendance on this day is very important. We are only able to reserve one day to take all cast pictures of the performers in their costumes. Please make sure your child is present on that day as there will be no retakes. No exceptions. We will make every effort to schedule pictures around conflicts, provided those dates were submitted in advance as stated above.

**Behavior:** Students are expected to show respect for directors, students, equipment and our facility. Our goal is to create a safe environment where everyone is encouraged to explore and create freely. Parents will be called if there is a serious problem with a student's behavior. At the beginning of each program, students will be informed of the house rules, including, but not limited, appropriate use of props, sets, dressing rooms, instruments, etc. Student/parents may be held responsible for damages to equipment or facilities resulting from negligence or disregard of house rules.

## **PERFORMANCES**

Each of our Academy programs culminate with final performances showcasing the students' newly acquired abilities. Children are required to arrive early to the theatre to get into costume and make-up (*if applicable*). Parents/guardians will not be permitted to stay in the building after drop off. Theatre doors will open approximately 30 minutes prior to show time. No one is permitted backstage or in the dressing room unless authorized by the directors. Messages or deliveries should be given to a director to pass on to the child. Taking pictures and videotaping our performances is strictly prohibited, unless otherwise noted.

### **Rules/Regulations for ALL performances:**

- All children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult.
- Porch Light and its staff are not responsible for children left unattended before, during or after the production.
- All children must be seated in a chair throughout the entire performance. Sitting on the floor is not allowed.
- There will be no saving seats prior to the opening of the doors.

Tickets for Academy productions can usually be purchased online at the Porch Light website, at the door on the night of the show, by phone at 201.857.3520, or in advance at the theatre during normal business hours. Seating is first-come, first-serve and space is limited. We STRONGLY encourage you to purchase tickets in advance. Sold out shows will be posted online.

## **COSTUMES**

We supply all major costume requirements. Major costume pieces will include everything the performer needs for the performance with the exception of the following items: jeans, pants, shorts, t-shirts, socks, sneakers, shoes, undergarments or any other item that the child may already own. If the child does not own an item on the list above, they may be asked to purchase it separately. We will always try to make alternative suggestions so that there are no additional costs.

All costume pieces purchased are the sole property of Porch Light Productions. It is the child's responsibility to collect all personal items after the last performance. Directors will hold on to all items left behind for one week after the performance. After one week has passed, all items not collected will be donated to charity. Porch Light Productions and its staff are not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

## **ADVERTISING & MERCHANDISE**

Advertising opportunities may be available for families and businesses that would like to help support our productions. Please contact us or visit our website for more information. Parents and friends may have the opportunity to purchase program-related merchandise such as t-shirts, cast photos, DVDs, etc. These items are available on the night of the performance.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

We are always looking for interested adults and families who would like to volunteer to help with our productions. Volunteers are a very important and essential role in the success of our performances. We are especially interested in high school or college students who are looking to learn more about the production process. Below is a list of ways you can assist us:

We have opportunities for: Costumes (sewing, creating), Set Design (painting, carpentry), Sales (merchandise tables) Videography (filming performances), Musicians (to play in our pit band), Hair and Make-up, Technical Crew

Please contact us if there is another way you would like to volunteer that isn't listed above. Not all positions listed above will be required for all productions. Please inquire within for details.

We look forward to working with you! Thank you!