



FY22 SSDS COVID-19 Policies

Metro Theater Company (MTC) will be returning to schools this fall by presenting our interactive and immersive program *Say Something, Do Something*. The play will perform publicly for limited performances and tour schools from October 4th to December 3rd, 2021 on a booking basis. Scheduled performances may be cancelled or subject to change based on force majeure or health of the artists.

MTC is an award-winning professional theater for youth and family audiences with extensive education and community programs. It is the only professional theater for young people in St. Louis with national and international acclaim, providing a platform to inspire shared reflection, empower youth and foster stronger communities. Since 1973, MTC has served over two million young people and audiences of all ages.

In preparation for these performances, MTC has carefully reviewed Missouri ArtSafe guidance, is committed to the Missouri ArtSafe pledge, and will enact all of their universal measures as well as those laid out by the individual venues we visit. MTC recently performed an outdoor production of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show/La Oruga Muy Hambirenta Espectáculo* at the Kirkwood Performing Arts Center with full MOArtSafe certification and much applause for its adherence to safety measures. MTC has certified their Production Stage Manager and School Bookings & Audience Services Manager as COVID Compliance Officers to make certain that we are mitigating the risk of contracting COVID-19 for both our artists and audiences. MTC and affiliated artists have also reviewed documents from the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, the KAF Green Light Manual, and Actors Equity Association. Along with these national and local leaders, MTC is committed to the safety and comfort of both audiences and theatre artists alike.

REHEARSAL POLICY

The scheduled show is a five-person interactive theatre piece that runs approximately one hour with no intermission. MTC manages its own rehearsal space at 3311 Washington Avenue in Grand Center. Rehearsals will be held in this space on September 22nd through October 4th. There is a large rehearsal room with ample space for social distancing, measuring approximately 2,900 square feet. MTC will ensure all air filters in the building meet MERV 13 guidelines. MTC will provide contact free hand sanitization stations at the rehearsal space. High touch surfaces will be wiped down with an EPA approved disinfectant. When possible, MTC will assign props and other objects to individual performers or technical staff to avoid potential crossover contamination. When props must be shared between individuals, gentle disinfectants will be used to guarantee the safety of both performers and props.

Rehearsals will involve the following personnel at every rehearsal: Director – John Wolbers, Production Stage Manager – Jimmy Bernatowicz, four actors – Alicen Kramer-Moser, Kentrell Jamison, Carl Overly Jr, and Chrissie Watkins, one facilitator – Tyler White, and MTC’s Education Department – Karen Bain and Gen Zoufal. All artists and staff involved with the production will be fully vaccinated and masked. Individuals entering the building and rehearsal space will complete a daily [Health Questionnaire](#) (see hyperlink for details). MTC will abide by recommended COVID testing guidelines for artists and personnel from the City of St. Louis. Actors and Staff will remain masked during rehearsals and performances.

Key additional personnel will periodically attend rehearsals in the space to familiarize themselves with the show and their duties. These include MTC Staff and playwright Jason J. Little, all of whom are fully vaccinated and will be masked. At most, no more than 15 people (including actors and additional personnel) will be in the rehearsal room at the same time. All personnel, regardless of their frequency in the rehearsal space, are experienced professionals, will complete the daily Health Questionnaire, and view the Missouri ArtSafe Training Video.

PREPARING FOR ENTERING SCHOOLS

MTC will move into schools starting on October 4th. The week before a scheduled performance, the Production Stage Manager will be contacting the schools that MTC will visit to confirm arrival, load-in, and space details, including the schools' COVID-19 policies. When visiting a school, MTC Staff and the *Say Something, Do Something* team will adhere to rules set out by MTC and any additional rules a school may have.

Every week before setting out on tour, all touring artists (the Production Stage Manager, four actors, and facilitator) must provide proof of a negative COVID test each Friday after their last performance. If an artist experiences symptoms for COVID-19, they will be asked to test. At-home COVID tests will be provided to the touring artists by Metro Theater Company. Touring Artists will self-administer their tests and send their results to the Production Stage Manager. If everyone tests negative, MTC will continue the performance schedule as planned. Anyone with an inconclusive or positive test will administer or receive another COVID test of the PCR variety. If the artist tests positive again, MTC will shut down performances for 5 days while the positive individual isolates and the remaining artists quarantine and get tested again for COVID-19. Artists that have not tested positive will complete another test 3-5 days after their exposure. If there are no more positive results within 5 days of the first positive case and artists do not have any symptoms, MTC will make the decision whether or not to continue performances with an understudy. After the infected artist 1) has completed a 10-day of isolation and 2) are fever free for 24 hours without the aid of a fever reducer OR provide two negative COVID tests, MTC will resume performances with that performer. MTC may extend the required isolation to 14 days if the performer has a moderate to severe case. The PSM will work with the Health Questionnaire responses to properly contact trace in the event of positive test results.

A day prior to performances, the Production Stage Manager will contact the school to ask if they have had an outbreak of COVID-19 within the past week and if exposed students/teachers are still in in-person class. If so, MTC will work to reschedule the performance 10 days after the COVID-19 exposure. Alternatively, MTC will ask for exposed individuals to not attend the performance.

The day of a performance, the actors, facilitator, and PSM will drive separately to a school unless the school is over a 30-minute drive from MTC's offices. If this is the case, Metro will offer transportation for actors in the Metro Tour Van if they are comfortable riding as a group. For the facilitator, the PSM will assist them in putting an earpiece-style microphone in an outdoor setting before entering the school. If not possible due to weather, the PSM and facilitator will put on the earpiece microphone in an indoor, well-ventilated area inside the school.

PERFORMANCE POLICY

When attending schools, all artists will wear a N95, KN95, or double-layered, well-fitting cloth mask at all times. Actors, the facilitator, and the PSM will have a copy of their vaccine cards readily available for the school they're visiting. If required, the touring company will fill out any paperwork or forms that the schools require for visitors as well as MTC's health questionnaire.

When setting up, MTC will delineate three zones; one for the performers and the PSM, one for the audience, and one for audience participants or "tagged-in" students:

- The performers' zone will be a minimum of a 20' by 20' playing space, located away from a main entrance of the space. Of this space, three to six feet of space will be reserved as a buffer between the performers' zone and the audience zone. The buffer zone will be marked by traffic cones on the upstage side, and a rope on the downstage side. Only performers, the PSM, and tagged-in students will be allowed in the performers' zone.
- The audience zone will be for students, teachers, and guests attending our performances. All audience members will be fully masked at all times and seated in a socially distance manner per the school's COVID-19 policies. The audience zone will be delineated by the rope marker to the main entrance of the space. Only students, teachers, and audience member guests are allowed in the audience zone.
- The "Tagged-In" zone will be within the performers' zone, but will be constricted by a hula-hoop and be a minimum of 3'-6' from the nearest performer. The PSM will place the area depending on which actor the student decides to tag out and the performers will adjust to being 3'-6' away from the "Tagged-In" zone. The PSM will provide the student with a sanitized, handheld microphone so they can be heard. Once over, the PSM will collect and sanitize the microphone and the hula hoop. No more than one student may be tagged in at a time, and no more than five students will be tagged in per performance. The PSM will record the student's names in case they're needed for contact tracing.

Before and after the performance, the audience will enter and exit out of a designated doorway that is not within the performers' zone. Actors and Facilitator may converse with the students if each party stays in their assigned zones. Once all audience members have exited and strike is complete, the PSM and actors will exit the space. During the performance, actors will not share props or costume pieces unless necessary for story-telling. No props, costume pieces, or any items outside the handheld microphone will be exchanged with students. The PSM will have hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes readily available for the actors involved in a handoff. For clothing or cloth props, the PSM will disinfect the item with a gentle 60/40 spray solution of alcohol and water.

IN CONCLUSION

Once approved, MTC will post all safety measures to their website, and use social media and other channels to spread awareness of these policies for audiences who may attend the show. MTC acknowledges that with the ever-changing public health landscape we may need to add or reduce our safety procedures depending on the current situation. We appreciate your consideration and understand the responsibility we share. MTC's mission is, "Inspired by the intelligence and emotional wisdom of young people, we create professional theater, foster inclusive community, and nurture meaningful learning through the arts." Children and families in our community continue to face extraordinary challenges during the pandemic. It is our sincerest hope to inspire a sense of hope and light amidst the challenges we all face at this unprecedented time.