



## Sensory Friendly Basics For Presenters

### What does sensory friendly performance mean?

A sensory friendly performance means reducing stimulation challenges presented by traditional entertainment for individuals with special needs. It also means offering advanced knowledge and resources to audience members and creating a judgement free space for to experience live performance.

### Why is this important?

Sensory Friendly Performance has been spreading across the entertainment world spearheading the inclusion of families who have been isolated from the power of the theatrical experience and community. Presenting organizations, artists, and communities can partnering in creating a safe, welcoming, relaxed and non-judgemental environment where audiences can feel at ease from the moment they purchase a ticket, to the front doors of the theater, to the stage, and on their way home.

Welcoming people with sensory integration needs and families with energetic young children and others who find more structured public spaces challenging changes lives. Being welcomed, relaxed, encouraged and entertained in community is the fundamental core of why live performance exists. Performing arts centers creating welcoming environments in which kids and their families can emote, jump up and dance around, come and go as they please, take breaks if they like, and build confidence through being included in experiencing the arts provides formerly isolated people with the basic human need of inclusion. These performances are also an opportunity for those who do not have sensory differences to experience being a part of this unique community.

### What are examples of accommodations?

- Lights remain on at a low level in the theater during performance
- Gradual light changes on stage
- Gradual sound changes and lower overall sound level
- No strobe lighting or lighting focused on the audience
- Resource materials to prepare for their visit
- Freedom for audience to talk and leave their seats during the performance
- Quiet areas within the theater
- Space in the theater for movement and standing
- Limited crowds

## How do we start?

Reach out to your community for partnership and help. Great resources are:

- Other Presenters
- Marketers
- Artists and agents
- Community groups
- Government entities
- Schools
- Specialists

## Get it in writing:

Robust pre-performance support materials and your marketing team's messaging help craft and launch wonderful "relaxed performances". Preparation and repetition are helpful for audience members, staff, and volunteers.

## Audience:

- Tip Sheet
- Social narrative
- Check lists

## In house:

- Tech rider specs
- Volunteer handouts (and pre-show meeting)
- Board/sponsor updates help keep all involved comfortable and relaxed.

Materials are often provided by the artist/artist's management and can be treated as templates and used again.

## More questions?

## Contact:

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