



Allen MacInnis
Artistic Director

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Accessibility Statement (as of January 1st, 2012)

Young People's Theatre (YPT) endeavours to be accessible to all patrons. We believe that everyone should have equal access to employment as well as to our productions and programs, and that our diverse community should be reflected in all that we do. The limitations imposed upon us by budget constraints and building design mean we cannot provide all the services we would like at this time, however we are working on methods to better serve patrons with all manner of disabilities and special needs.

When booking tickets and registering for Drama School or other YPT programs please provide us with detailed information on any special needs your party may have so that we can ensure you have a safe and enjoyable experience at the theatre.

Patrons with wheelchairs or other mobility devices, please note: performances in our Mainstage can accommodate up to eight patrons with wheelchairs and our smaller Studio space, accessible by elevator, can accommodate a maximum of three.

Procedure

YPT will ensure we are identifying and removing barriers to access for people with disabilities by:

- Encouraging people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to improve access to YPT's services and activities.
- Enabling people with disabilities to access our activities and utilize our services by offering assistive devices and measures whenever possible.
- Communicating with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
- Allowing people with disabilities to bring their guide dog or service animal with them to areas of the premises that are open to the public.
- Permitting access for people with disabilities to have a support person accompany them and ensuring that they have access to their support person while on our premises.
- Training staff and volunteers about key principles and accessibility strategies and tools (i.e. Accessibility workshop and Accessibility Booklet).
- Providing notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access our services are temporarily disrupted.
- Establishing a process for people to provide feedback on how activities or services are delivered and explaining how YPT will respond to any feedback and what action will be taken. It is the responsibility of every staff member to be attentive to the concerns of patrons, their families, teachers, students and visitors and to resolve concerns related to accessibility. There are a number of strategies that are available to those individuals to provide feedback regarding accessibility.

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Principles of Customer Service

Dignity: Refers to policies, procedures and practices that treat a person with a disability as valued and as deserving of effective and full service as any other person. They do not treat people with disabilities as an afterthought or force them to accept lesser service, quality or convenience. Service delivery needs to take into account how people with disabilities can effectively access and use services and show respect for these methods.

Independence: In some instances, independence means freedom from control or influence of others' freedom to make your own choices. In other situations, it may mean the freedom to do things in your own way. People who may move or speak more slowly should not be denied an opportunity to participate in a program or service because of this factor.

Integration: Integrated services are those services that allow people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other clients. Integration means that policies, practices and procedures are designed to be accessible to everyone including people with disabilities. Sometimes integration does not serve the needs of all people with disabilities. In these cases, it is necessary to use alternate measures to provide programs or services. Alternate measures are ways of serving people that are not completely integrated into the regular business activities of the organization, for example, email.

Equal Opportunity: Equal opportunity means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others. In the case of services, it means that people with disabilities have the same opportunity to benefit from the way we provide services as others. They should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain service. They should also not have to accept lesser quality or more inconvenience.

Disruptions in Service

YPT will notify our patrons and community members in a timely manner of any planned service disruptions that affect access to our facilities or services (i.e. elevators, etc.). In the event of an unexpected disruption of service, YPT will provide notice as soon as possible. During the disruption, we will make every reasonable effort to provide alternative accommodations that take into consideration the needs of the individual.

Notifying the Public of a Service Disruption

We will take the following steps to communicate any disruptions to YPT's facilities or services.

- Issue is discovered and the YPT Accessibility Committee is notified as well as the Production Manager, Managing Director and Director of Finance & Operations.
- If the issue cannot be resolved by staff, arrangements are made for appropriate repair work to be conducted.
- Staff are notified of the estimated amount of the time it will take to fix the issue.
- Notice of service disruption is posted at the site of the disruption.
- If the disruption is in a critical location (i.e. entrance ways, elevators), notices are posted in a visible location in the main traffic areas.
- In the case of a disruption that requires people to make alternate arrangements before coming to the theatre (disruption to accessible entrances, elevators, etc.), notice will also be provided on our web site.
- Updates to the notice of disruption will be made as needed and posted accordingly.
- Once the issue is resolved and/or repair completed, notice of disruption signs will be removed.

Notice of disruption will include the following information:

- The nature of the disruption in service
- The reason for disruption
- The expected duration of the disruption
- A description of alternatives to service, if available
- A contact number for more information

Patron Concerns

We consider the resolution of patron concerns to be an important component of YPT's service. We consider it the responsibility of every YPT staff member to be attentive to the concerns of all patrons, and to resolve concerns in a timely manner as soon as they are identified.

- Matters of concern should be referred to the YPT Accessibility Committee as soon as they are identified. Patrons may submit matters of concern to the YPT Accessibility Committee in writing, in person or via e-mail at online@youngpeoplestheatre.ca.
- Written or verbal follow-up and demonstration of corrective action, if appropriate, is required for all concerns. This response will come from the YPT Accessibility Committee.
- Monthly reports and trending information are prepared and compiled by the YPT Accessibility Committee on a quarterly basis or more frequently if deemed appropriate.

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All concerns are responded to in a timely manner, appropriate to the magnitude of the problem. The following are suggested timelines for investigation and response to concerns:

- Calls placed are returned within 24 business hours.
- Letters of acknowledgement are sent out within 48 hours of receipt of written correspondence.
- An uncomplicated issue should be responded to within 3-5 business days of receipt of the concern.
- The investigation of a more complex case should be completed and a response offered within 4 weeks of receipt of the concern.

Please visit the YPT website or call for a recorded message of the theatres regular business hours. After hours, concerns can be left on the YPT voice mail or by e-mail as indicated above.

Patron-Owned Electrical Equipment

YPT encourages the use of personal assistive devices whenever necessary or possible in order to improve access to YPT programs and services.

Use of Power Mobility Devices

YPT encourages the use of personal assistive devices whenever necessary or possible to improve access to YPT programs and services.

Service Animals

YPT acknowledges the vital relationship and dependency which exists between a person with disabilities and their service animal. YPT staff and volunteers will ensure that they make all reasonable efforts to accommodate persons with disabilities and their service animals.

Service animals are used by people with many different kinds of disabilities. Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who are blind, hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety.

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. Support persons will be charged our staff rate of \$10 for tickets to our performances. There will be no charge to support persons attending any of our learning or drama programs.

Patrons

Patrons with disabilities are requested to inform YPT staff at the time of booking an activity or program at the Theatre, or as early as possible, of the need for their service animal to stay with them during their visit to the theatre.

When YPT has been notified staff must consider the following:

- The wellbeing of the patron.
- The wellbeing of the service animal.
- The patron's and service animal's previous experience with theatre.
- Implications for patrons sharing space in the vicinity of the service animal.
- Implications for staff and volunteers.

The service animal will be allowed to remain with the patron when the following conditions are adhered to:

- The patron should assume full responsibility for the care and behaviour of the service animal at all times. The patron may delegate this responsibility to family or friends if necessary.
- At no time will YPT staff assume responsibility for meeting the service animal's needs for exercise, nutrition, elimination, etc
- Front of House Staff are required to notify departments (e.g. Production, Education & Participation) in advance when a patron will be accompanied by a service animal.