

## GET INVOLVED WITH YOUTH THEATRE: YOUNG PEOPLE

### Your Youth Theatre Journey

In deciding if youth theatre is for you, you need to know what you can expect. Here is a breakdown of the journey you might expect to go on in youth theatre. All youth theatres vary however, so check with your local group what specific experiences are on offer there.

This description charts the journey starting from aged 12 years. You can join youth theatre at different ages. Your personal journey might differ from the one detailed here.

#### 12–16 Years

- You will take part in regular drama workshops in your local youth theatre with other young people your own age. You will explore your creativity in group games and exercises and begin to learn a range of drama skills.
- You will also have the chance to take part in theatre performances. The nature of the performances varies between youth theatres. Some youth theatres have their own performance venue while others rent a theatre space. Some youth theatres devise their own productions while others use existing scripts. It may be that your early performance experiences are a showcase of work or a one-act play. You will then proceed to full length productions. Some youth theatres offer members the opportunity to get involved in other aspects of performance such as stage management, costume, make-up or set design.
- At this stage you may also start to have the chance to participate in extra activities outside your regular workshops such as travelling with your group to participate in the [National Festival of Youth Theatres](#) in the summer, go on theatre trips, or, in some cases, go on international exchanges and meet other young people from Europe.

#### 16 Years+

- At this point you may move into a senior group in your youth theatre. Regular drama workshops will continue to form the core of your youth theatre experience but at a more advanced level that will respond to the needs of your age group.
- Theatre productions and the other activities listed above will also continue to be part of your youth theatre experience.
- As a youth theatre member aged 16+ you can start to represent your local group in national youth drama activities run by Youth Theatre Ireland. These include programmes like [Young Critics](#) and the [National Youth Theatre](#)

## 18 Years+

- Some people stay in youth theatre well into their twenties and where this is possible all the activities mentioned above remain part of the experience.
- You may begin to take on a leadership role in your youth theatre with the support of the existing adult leaders. This could include assisting to run workshop activities, directing productions, or volunteering to supervise excursions.
- You might also avail of drama facilitation and leadership training through Youth Theatre Ireland's training programmes such as Leading On.
- You could also volunteer with an organisation abroad through the [European Voluntary Service programme](#) and experience what it is like to work with young people through drama in another country.
- After you leave youth theatre you might, like many youth theatre alumni, decide to pursue theatre training at third level education.
- You might also, as many more alumni have, go into a wide range of professions and life experiences not directly related to drama. In this case you will carry the confidence, creativity, and social skills that you gain from youth theatre with you, not to mention a life- long love and appreciation of theatre and the arts.

**I have since stepped away from drama to pursue a dream to be a successful entrepreneur and I will be launching my own business at the age of 21. The confidence Youth Theatre Ireland instilled in me has given me the opportunity to do what I always dreamed of.**

—Past NYT participant and youth theatre alumnus