

## The Mission Statement of Missoula Children's Theatre

We live in a highly competitive era. Youngsters are introduced at an early age to the realities of our achievement- and success-oriented society. From academics to athletics to social interaction, children feel pressure to get the best grades, score the most points, have the most friends. The Missoula Children's Theatre strives to use the performing arts, wrapped in a positive, fun environment, as a vehicle to develop the life skills (social skills, communication skills, self-discipline, a strong work ethic, an understanding of the team concept and self-esteem) that children need to answer present and future challenges.

Although MCT tours to major metropolitan centers, most of the communities on the itinerary are isolated, underserved, and/or economically depressed. MCT remains dedicated to providing financially accessible arts experiences to all communities, regardless of size or economic status. Local performing arts programs may be supplemented using our program, but live theatre participation, qualified drama teachers, and educationally sound music programs within the curriculum are often non-existent. MCT caters to these communities by bringing in productions that can be staged in almost any setting.

Show casts include boys and girls in different grades and social groups. We cast quiet kids, kids who do sports and kids who don't do sports, and kids with special needs. Our program embraces at-risk children with tough issues. MCT provides a unique opportunity to learn the lessons of group dynamics while also excelling and distinguishing oneself as an individual.

Yes, MCT provides a top-quality entertainment experience for audience members. Yes, MCT nurtures and challenges the abilities of those rare children with career performance ambitions and potential. Yes, MCT provides a healthy and wholesome ambassadorship for the arts and opens the door to new life experiences and aesthetic pleasures. But, the **primary** goal of MCT – indeed, the organization's mission – is **the development of life skills in children through participation in the performing arts.**