

"OBD Kids was a wonderful experience and I looked forward to it all week. I was with the people I enjoy, doing what I love to do. I wouldn't want to spend my weekends any other way..."

*Marlee Jones
OBD Kids cast member - 2007-2009*

WHAT IS THE OFF BROADWAY KIDS MUSICAL THEATRE TROUPE (OBD KIDS)?

The OBD Kids is our award-winning musical theatre competition troupe. It is designed for serious-minded "triple threat" performers who are committed to working hard and delivering an amazing performance. The OBD Kids work weekly on a production that will be held in our black box theatre, then they pack up and head to Disney World to compete at the National Performing Arts Festival. They also perform at various fairs, churches, parades, and local festivals throughout the season.

WHAT ARE THE PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS?

Students must excel in dance, voice and acting and be between the ages of 8 – 18. They must be *mature*, reliable, respectful, and take direction well. A special hour-long "Actors Intensive" class is required for OBD Kids, and for your convenience is offered right before their weekly rehearsals.

WHAT IS A TYPICAL OBD KID LIKE?

The OBD Kids are known for their professionalism and enthusiasm towards anything theatre-related. They are dedicated to the Troupe as a whole and to further developing their skills as individuals. They are terrific students with a strong desire to excel, in fact most are in the state's gifted and talented program at their respective schools. This is not a requirement of course, but a testament to the level of quality Kids that are a part of our Troupe ... a terrific group that you'll be proud to have your child involved with.

HOW MANY KIDS DO YOU CAST?

We typically cast between 12 – 25 Kids depending on the show.

HOW LONG IS THE SEASON?

It is an 8 month experience; Auditions are held in early August followed by a parent/cast member meeting. Next is a kick-off event to get the Kids acquainted; then rehearsals begin in September and continue until the Disney trip and final performance in February.

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?

The OBD Kids rehearse an average of 4-6 hours per week, primarily on weekends. In addition, an "Actor's Intensive" class is required and will be held immediately prior to rehearsal. A weekly dance class (of their choice - at Off Broadway) is also requested.

WHEN ARE REHEARSALS?

Rehearsals are typically held on Saturdays for 3-4 hours. Some shows require weekly Sunday rehearsals as well. Beginning in January, rehearsals are also held on Sundays and a few weeknights in addition to Saturdays in preparation for competition.

WHAT IS THIS YEAR'S SHOW?

We believe kids should know the show prior to Troupe auditions, and are very excited to announce Disney's "MULAN" as our competition show for 2011-2012.

HOW MANY REHEARSALS CAN THEY MISS?

NEW! In order to stress the importance of rehearsals, attendance will be taken and after the 4th absence the actor must meet with the directors to discuss downgrading the parts/solos assigned. This attendance policy will allow those who attend regularly to be rewarded. An absence consists of anything that requires the actor to miss a rehearsal, including a pre-excused conflict or sickness. 2 tardies of 15 minutes or longer = 1 absence. You may NOT miss any scheduled performances; no exceptions. *WHY ARE REHEARSALS MANDATORY?* Each week we add new elements to the show in choreography, blocking and/or vocals. We even have certain days set aside for outside directors and professionals to come in and teach. If one Kid misses a rehearsal, it puts the whole Troupe behind. In order to properly build the show and form a bond among the cast, we need every Kid at every rehearsal.

DO THEY REHEARSE OVER SCHOOL HOLIDAYS?

Rehearsals are often held at the beginnings and endings of school breaks. For example, if school is out for winter break on a Friday we may have rehearsal that Saturday and/or Sunday. We may also have rehearsal on the Saturday and/or Sunday prior to school starting back up. Rehearsals may also be held on weekends where the holiday falls on a Monday or Friday, such as President's Day weekend, MLK and Columbus Day. The OBD Kids season is finished before Spring Break.

CAN MY CHILD BE IN OTHER PRODUCTIONS?

Yes – we understand that there may be opportunities to be in other shows during your tenure as an OBD Kid.

- If you are auditioning for another show after the OBD Kids season has begun, we ask that you make attendance to our rehearsals and events your priority (see Absence rule, above). Please list our rehearsals on your new show's conflict schedule, and make every effort to stay 100% committed to the Troupe.
- If your child is cast in another show prior to OBD Kids, and the shows' performances and rehearsals conflict, we will do what we can to work around this. Please give us as much detail as you can about the show's schedule during OBD Kids auditions.

WHEN ARE THE PERFORMANCES?

The Kids perform at one or two local fall festivals and fairs in October. They will make their OBD debut at the Holiday show in December; then it's back to the studio to rehearse for the full production which is held in early to mid-February. There are two weekends of shows, with 3 to 4 performances per weekend. Once the performances have concluded, the Kids then begin work on their 20-minute competition piece. Rehearsals are often held twice a week for 3-4 weeks up until the trip to the National Performing Arts Festival at Disney World in Orlando.

WHAT IS THE FINANCIAL COMMITMENT?

There is a participation fee of ~~\$495~~ to be in OBD Kids. [For 2011-2011 we are lowering the participation fee to \\$375.](#)

WHAT DOES THIS FEE PAY FOR?

The participation fee covers the 8 months of instruction from the Director, Musical Director, and Choreographer. It also pays for the rights to perform the show which can be in the range of \$800 - \$3,000. Additionally, the monies go to fund the marketing materials to promote the show such as ads, programs, posters and postcards. It also goes towards the props, scenery, and most of the costumes and their subsequent dry cleaning. As you can see, it is quite expensive to run the Troupe and it is not a big moneymaker for the studio. We do it simply because we love it...

WHEN IS THE PARTICIPATION FEE DUE?

The participation fee is due in full at the first parent/cast member meeting. *NOTE: Because the tuition is immediately used to secure the show's rights and book the directors, this fee is non-refundable.* The required acting intensive class fees are payable on a monthly basis (estimated \$50 per month).

ANY OTHER FEES?

Other than the participation fee, Troupe expenses include the competition trip to the National Performing Arts Festival at Disney World (*see next question*), and the monthly cost of their acting or dance classes at the studio. In addition, the Kids may need spending money for the extra-curricular activities, and they may be asked to purchase a team t-shirt.

WHAT IS THE NATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS FESTIVAL?

Each year the Troupe attends the National Performing Arts Festival at Disney World in Orlando. The NPAF is the only theatre festival where performing groups throughout the country compete in an atmosphere of sharing and learning. Because it is a national competition, the NPAF is open to theatres and schools nationwide. All festivals include a 20-minute performance on stage, a private feedback clinic taught by theater professionals, workshops, and an awards ceremony. We've even had a Q&A session with the main Mouse himself (actually herself)!

OUTLINE OF EVENTS:

- Competitors perform with a 10-minute minimum/20-minute maximum performance. The performance will be critiqued by professional adjudicators. Ratings are based on National Standards.
- Private Feedback Clinics led by top theater professionals
- Specialized Acting Workshops designed to give the students in-depth instruction in a variety of subject matter needed by all performing groups.
- A special Audition Workshop taught by Walt Disney World® Casting Directors.
- Following each day's event and on one free day, participants can attend the Disney World theme parks of their choice.

HOW ARE THEY JUDGED?

Judging is done on a national scale and the teams are actually competing against national scores, not other teams. Therefore, if every group does an amazing job then they each can receive a Superior ranking; the highest score awarded. There is also a Judges' Showcase Award which is given out to only one of the competitors – the winner gets to perform their competition piece on a Disney stage. There are also individual awards given out to those

actors whose performances really captured the attention of the judges. All awards are given out at a special ceremony.

WHAT ARE THE DETAILS OF THE TRIP?

The Festival is held in February and usually requires the child to be absent for 2 or 3 days of school. (Since the trip is done through Travel Adventures, an educational-based travel company, schools in some counties will excuse the child's absences. We have known this to be the case for our Kids in some Fulton and Cobb county schools. Kids can ask their teachers for the assignments they'd miss and do their schoolwork on the bus.) We leave the studio by chartered bus on a Thursday around noon and arrive in Orlando around 10 pm. We return home to Atlanta on Monday, stopping for lunch midway and arriving in town around 7 pm.

WHAT IS THE COST OF THE TRIP?

The cost of the Orlando trip varies between \$900 - \$1,200 per person. The trip's price changes depending on how MANY attendees we have; the more Kids and parents that go, the less expensive the trip. You should have a good idea of the price at the first cast meeting. One parent is required to chaperone their child on the trip, and your whole family is welcomed to attend if you wish. Travel Adventures handles the arrangements and has a payment schedule to break up payments over a 5 month period beginning in September and ending in January.

WHAT DOES THE TRIP INCLUDE?

It includes all transportation, a bus at the destination to take the Troupe everywhere, a group Tour Guide, two meals per day, and lodging. It also includes the participation fees associated with the Festival and 3 single-day tickets to the Disney World theme parks.

CAN WE DO FUNDRAISING?

Anything you can do to help off-set the price of the trip is welcomed! We are open to fundraising, but ask that a parent be in charge of handling it as we are busy running the Troupe and the studio. If you have any proven fundraising methods, please feel free to bring them up at the parent/cast meeting. The sooner you start raising the money, the better. And you may even do several fundraisers throughout the 8 month span of the Troupe.

WHAT KIND OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ARE THERE?

We plan several events throughout the season for the Kids. Events have included: Corn Maze, Bowling, Mini-Golf, an overnight Lock-In, Pizza Parties, and an Improv Dinner Show in Chattanooga. [For our 2011-2012 Troupe we are considering doing a weekend trip to Pigeon Forge/Gatlinburg for a team bonding rehearsal.](#) These events are designed to bond the Kids and further solidify the Troupe, therefore attendance is mandatory.

DO THEY NEED TO AUDITION EVERY YEAR TO PARTICIPATE?

Yes – The casting process for the show begins at auditions and since the show changes every year we need to see each child audition, regardless if they have been in our cast before.

MY CHILD DID NOT MAKE THE TROUPE; WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST TO IMPROVE HIS/HER CHANCES FOR NEXT YEAR? Off Broadway Dance Theatre offers many unique

ways for kids to become "triple threat" performers. Establish where your child's weakness lies (vocals, dance, acting, etc.) and choose classes to improve and engage them, or ask the Directors to suggest classes based on how the child performed in the audition. We also offer private music and voice instruction and workshops to further produce well-rounded performers.

WHAT IF MY CHILD NEEDS TO DROP OUT OF THE TROUPE?

We ask that you think long and hard about the commitment involved prior to acceptance into the Troupe. We thoughtfully cast the show based upon the Troupe members, giving each member a time to shine. To drop out would require us to have to recast the show and move parts around. Also, as mentioned before, the price of the trip is divided among trip attendees; if one child drops out that means the price of their trip AND their chaperone would need to be absorbed by the remaining cast members; making for some unhappy parents...

IS IT WORTH IT IF MY CHILD IS CAST IN AN ENSEMBLE ROLE?

We pick shows that feature many ensemble parts, not ones where just 2-3 cast members are the "stars" of the show. *(See last page for list of previous shows)* Knowing the time and monetary demands on being in the Troupe, every effort is made to have each cast member featured in some way. The whole cast is on stage for the majority of the show; and every Kid is on stage the entire time at the Orlando competition.

WHAT ABOUT PARENTAL COMMITMENT?

We ask that you support your child throughout their tenure by making sure they arrive to rehearsal on time. You are welcome to carpool with other families, of course, but we ask that you do not commit to the Troupe with the intention of relying on others to bring your child. Parents may be asked to help as volunteers with items such as ticket sales/box office, concession sales, backstage management, make-up/hair, costumes, props, scenery or other elements pertaining to the show.

WITH SO MUCH TIME COMMITMENT, WHY WOULD MY CHILD WANT TO PARTICIPATE?

Most of our Troupe members eat, sleep and breathe musical theatre and cannot wait until the next rehearsal. All of this hard work pays off in terms of a lifelong camaraderie and incredible bond among cast members, an exciting full production in our black box theatre, and the thrill of competing with other theatre teams across the United States.

IS OBD KIDS RIGHT FOR MY FAMILY?

If your child or family is heavily involved in other weekend activities such as travel ball, sports, or Boy/Girl Scouts, or you go out of town often on weekends or holidays, or your child has a job requiring them to work on Saturday mornings or afternoons, then OBD Kids is probably not right for you. In those cases we would recommend that you try the Off Broadway Children's Theatre (OBCT) which does 3 to 4 shows per year - each with a rehearsal block of about 8 weeks. Our Children's Theatre is another great way to experience the joys of musical theatre but in a shorter span of time.

However, if your family is willing to fully commit to the Troupe, then you are all in for a wonderful ride! It's an incredible journey that you and your child will enjoy for a lifetime.

THE OFF BROADWAY KIDS MUSICAL THEATRE TROUPE

Director/Producer Christian Mayer; Choreographer Shannon Mayer; Musical Director Ike Webster; Musical Director Paul Tate; Musical Director Alisa Kay Sloan

2010 & 2011 - ALADDIN

Superior rating; Winner of the Judges' Award for Outstanding Performance at the National Performing Arts Festival in Walt Disney World; Selected to perform "Friend Like Me" at Disney Downtown's Waterside stage; Award Winner "Best Costumes" (Jennifer Crowder), "Outstanding Performance by an Actor/Actress" (Barrett Crowder, Anu Romesh, Owen Smith), "Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble Player" (Alexandra Langlais). Invited to perform at the International Heritage Festival at the Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre.

2009 & 2010 - SEUSSICAL

Superior rating; Winner of the Judges' Showcase award at the National Performing Arts Festival in Walt Disney World; Individual awards for Outstanding Performance (Ali Holliday, Owen Smith, Alex Sherwin, Barrett Crowder)

2008 & 2009 - ONCE ON THIS ISLAND

Superior rating; Winner of the Judges' Showcase award at the National Performing Arts Festival in Walt Disney World; Individual awards for Outstanding Performance (Ali Holliday, Dani Majors, Mason Lewis)

2007 & 2008 - CHILDREN OF EDEN

Superior rating at the National Performing Arts Festival in New York City; individual awards for Outstanding Performance (Kimberly Maxwell, Chase Crandell, Lauren Friday, Dani Majors)

2006 & 2007 - GODSPELL

Winner of best musical performance at the Junior Theatre Festival, Superstar awards (Chase Crandell, Olivia Medley); Winner of the Judges award at the National Performing Arts Festival in Walt Disney World; individual award winners for Outstanding Performance (Chase Crandell and Olivia Medley)

2005 & 2006 - ALADDIN

Winner of best ensemble of the day at the National Performing Arts Festival in New York City; individual award winner for Outstanding Performance (Jennifer McQueen)

2004 & 2005 - THE MUSIC MAN

Winner of the Platinum Award at the Junior Theatre Festival, individual award winner (Robby Glade), Superior ranking and winner of the National Performing Arts Festival in Walt Disney World; individual awards for Outstanding Performance (Olivia Medley and Megan Fitzgerald)

2003 & 2004 - GODSPELL

Winner of individual award, Junior Theatre Festival (Robby Glade)

2002 & 2003 - GUYS AND DOLLS

Winner of the Platinum Award at the Junior Theatre Festival