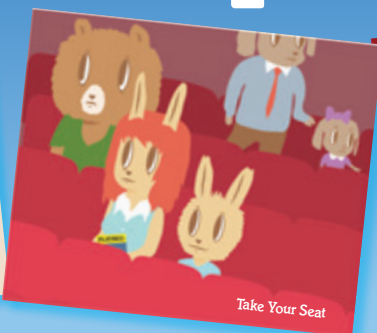


Before the Show, Let's Get Ready to Go!



A Kid-Friendly Theater Guide for New Audiences.

Going to the theater for the first time can be an exciting experience, but for some, it can be overwhelming. To help make theater-going a more inclusive and enjoyable experience for everyone, the **All Kids Included** program of Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs has created a very special pre-show guide called, **"Going to the Show."** Written in easy-to-understand language and accompanied by delightful illustrations of friendly animals, **Going to the Show** helps parents, teachers and caregivers explain what to expect when going to a live theater performance. To view **Going to the Show** online visit www.miamidadearts.org. To request free printed copies or classroom posters, please call **305.375.4634**.





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As part of its "All Kids Included – Accessible Arts Experiences for Kids" initiative, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs created "[Going to the Show](#)" in 2012, a free online resource, printed guide, and classroom poster designed to help prepare new audiences for a live performing arts experience. The guide was created using Universal Design principals and is intended to teach children with and without disabilities what to expect when "[Going to the Show](#)."

Depicted in comic book style with easy-to-understand language and accompanied by delightful "anime-like" illustrations of friendly animals, "[Going to the Show](#)" explains what to expect when attending a live theater, dance or musical performance. The story highlights key events that audiences are likely to encounter at the theater, such as unfamiliar people, waiting in line, a darkened auditorium, and unexpected or loud sounds. The guide also includes an introduction with brief instructions on how readers can personalize the story with additional dialogue and descriptions in order to create their own version of "[Going to the Show](#)."

The idea for creating "[Going to the Show](#)" specifically to assist children with Sensory Processing Disorders and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), was based on the best practices of using Social Stories™ (thegraycenter.org/social-stories) and visual/picture schedules to assist children with autism. These stories are commonly used to teach children and individuals with autism social skills for everyday situations. The story is a simple description of a typical situation written from the individual's perspective, and which can be used in a variety of situations. For example, the stories can help the individual prepare for upcoming changes in routine (often extremely stressful for individuals with autism), or learn appropriate social interactions for unfamiliar situations that they encounter. The intent is that the child rehearses the story ahead of time with an adult. Then, when the situation occurs, the child can use the story to help guide his or her behavior. Picture schedules utilize visual images presented in sequential order (for example: first, then, next, last) to assist children with sequencing tasks, as well as preparing for and transitioning from one activity to another. As with using a social story, visual/picture schedules help prepare a child in a step-by-step manner for what to expect in a given situation.

Individuals and organizations working with children are encouraged to request printed copies or classroom posters by calling the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs at (305) 375-4634. To view "[Going to the Show](#)" online individuals can visit the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs website at www.miamidadearts.org and click on the "[Going to the Show](#)" icon.



"Going to the Show" was developed by the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs as part of its "All Kids Included - Accessible Arts Experiences for Kids" (AKI) program. AKI is an initiative of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs, made possible with the support of the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, and in part through grant funding provided by The Children's Trust. The Children's Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County by making strategic investments in their future.