

Natick Drama Workshop--Mentor Program

- One of our strongest themes at NDW is “Teamwork”
(Together Everyone Achieves More)

At the first rehearsal, the importance of teamwork is explained: It is impossible to produce a show without it. It is my hope that when the kids are not at NDW, they are all good friends who always get along. I do know that can't always be the reality, but while they are at NDW, they must respect each other and work well together.. Perhaps a more realistic hope is that what they learn at NDW will filter into their everyday lives and they will respect others and work together well with others in any situation.

- The Mentor Program was created by the staff several years ago. We feel it is a program that benefits all the children participating in NDW.
- Depending on enrollment numbers, the kids are divided into groups of approximately 6-8;each group has members in each grade, 5-8.
- 8th graders, many of whom have been in NDW since 5th grade, are the designated leaders. They bring theater experience and an understanding of how NDW works. Our goal is for the 8th graders to be strong, positive role models and to lead by example. 7th graders will naturally rise to the occasion want to set good examples. As that “trickles down”, we have a cast of actors who respect each other and the program. Consequently, they will work together to achieve common goals.
- The mentor groups will spend some time together at each rehearsal; theater games and group tasks allow them to learn to work as a team. It's a time to bond, not by age but “like a family”. I love hearing a 5th or 6th grader talk excitedly about seeing a 7th or 8th grader from NDW at school and having that older student make the younger student feel special.
- Younger castmates and / or those new to NDW have a comfort zone within the smaller mentor groups which leads them to feel more at ease working with the cast as a whole. This is, of course, important, as we spend a great deal of time working all together rehearsing. They get encouragement, advice and support from their mentors that, hopefully, reinforces what they are getting from the staff. While I make it very clear that each child should feel completely comfortable coming to me or another staff member with any question, concern or problem, it's also important for them to have specific castmates to whom they can turn.

•NDW is a wonderful program and I am proud to be a part of it. I know we give the children an education in theater, an opportunity to perform. and a fun, positive environment in which to do it. However, it's the children, each one individually and the group as a whole who make this program as special as it is.

- If you have any questions about our mentor program, or anything else, please do not hesitate to talk to me at rehearsals or contact me (contact info below). Thank you for giving me the opportunity to work with your children. .

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