



ESCAPE Theatre Parent Guide

We hope that by reading this Guide, you will have a good idea of what to expect your next 4 months! Feel free to call the office to speak with Elizabeth or talk with our Parent Liaisons in the lobby. You could also speak with a Board Member, or an ESCAPE Advisory Committee member. We are happy to answer questions.

***Our Mission** is to give youth and teens an opportunity to develop skills in singing, dancing, and acting while developing self-esteem, discipline, creativity and teamwork in an environment that is positive, supportive, and most importantly....FUN!*

Office phone- 661-299-5264

Office phone hours: Mon.-Friday from 10 am- 2 pm (*office is not located at the studio*)

ESCAPE email address: Email Elizabeth at- Bursix@sbcglobal.net

ESCAPE Studio address:

26639 Valley Center Drive, Suite 109, Santa Clarita, CA 91351

Directors: Kyle and Elizabeth Burson

ESCAPE Staff: Barry Kemper, Leesa Veluzat, Cristin Denlea, Kim Pickup, Cissi Larsson, Helen Macri

Parent Liaisons in lobby: Luci Tubbs, Moki Duncan

ESCAPE Board of Directors: Don Pittman, Lisa Shea, Karen Carroll, Dorothy Ng, Don Condra, Bruce Powell, Melinda Cate, Lisa Maloney, Joe Gieson, Elizabeth Burson

ESCAPE Advisory Committee members are frequently available in the lobby and at parent meetings if you have any questions. They are usually wearing a **name badge**.

Reading the Monday morning emails – This is the key to all things in ESCAPE. Monday morning email provides all the details you need for the week. This tells you any pertinent details for rehearsals, items that are due, fun events during the week, costume info, and other important reminders. **Read it, read it all, and save it to refer to during the week.** The email will take you 2-3 minutes to read every Monday morning.

Valet drop-off & Park to pick-up – To ensure the safety of all our actors and parents, please follow this plan. To drop off your child, proceed clockwise around the building and drop your child off at the front door. Then they can safely get out of the car on “their right side”, and walk right in our front door. At pick-up, please enter the same direction (clockwise), **park your car in our back parking lot, and walk to the roll up door at the back of the studio (Studio B)** to get your child. For everyone’s safety, there are no drive-by pick-ups under any circumstances. You can exit out either way, as the next rehearsal should be starting, and most drop-offs should be done.

Parking – Please be aware that some of the surrounding businesses may be open during ESCAPE rehearsals. **Please DO NOT park directly in front of their businesses** or block their back-doors, as we want to be good neighbors. We have 60 plus parking spots by ESCAPE, and are not supposed to park directly in front of the other businesses, but we can also **utilize the “middle space”**, in the front, near the dirt lot. When we have special events at the studio (fundraisers, ticket sales, etc.), please park in the **dirt lot** (on the right as you enter the driveway) so that we can accommodate all of the cars and not annoy our neighbors. We must be especially aware of the Real Estate Management Company, and not park on that side, or by their front door.

Punctuality is the key for your child – Please be on time, and drop your child off a few minutes early in the lobby. They can say “*hello to friends*” or YOU could ask any questions at the front desk. We have 320 performers in our show and punctuality keeps everything running smoothly. We only have 50-70 minutes every Monday with the kids, and teach new things each week. During Production Week, please plan on arriving 5-10 minutes early at the theatre. The call time means that we want the kids “**on the stage and ready to go**”, not getting signed in, and running to the stage at the last minute.

Rehearsal days- ESCAPE rehearses every Monday evening with ALL of our kids.

A Group- 5:40- 6:30 **B Group-** 6:35- 7:30

C group- 7:35- 8:30 **D group-** 8:35– 9:45

We also work with our Lead roles every Wed. evening. Some leads have to come EVERY Wed. evening, and some leads will come once or twice a month. Be sure to call the office to ask about the commitment involved, before you audition for a lead role, if you have another Wed. evening commitment.

Production Week – **This week is Mandatory and always starts on a Saturday, or the Monday before we open the show.** No absences are allowed during Production week. *It is a busy, hectic, full of emotion, tiring, and FUN week!* This is the week that we have all been working towards and waiting for! Please make sure that your youth or

teen is well fed and rested. The hours are long, both for the performers, staff members, and some of the volunteer committees. Your child/teen will have rehearsal 3-4 days that week, before the opening show. All performers will perform in one show per day. If they are a lead role they will perform in extra shows. **Everyone performs in the ensemble.**

Welcome letter & All Possible Dates- Please make sure to read the Welcome letter and All Possible Dates flyers, so you can easily check on important information, dates, parent meetings, costume check nights, fundraising events, master classes, audition preparation dates, and auditions and callbacks. All dates are conveniently given upfront.

Parent Volunteer Committees – ESCAPE depends on the efforts of all our families, so we ask that each family volunteer for ONE committee. With so many performers, it takes an army to keep things running smoothly on-stage, and off. **Committees include:** *Chaperoning the kids, Props, Stage Crew Dads, Spot-Light Dads, Name Badge Committee, Microphone Moms, Security Door-Dads, Tickets, Flowers & Telegrams, Concessions, Soliciting & wrapping Raffle Items, and occasionally Fly-Dads Committee.* **Please find the one that works best with your schedule and skills.** If YOU can't find a committee that works for you, WE will be more than happy to help you find one.

Paperwork requirements – There are 5 forms that need to be turned in **before** the rehearsals begin. You must attend the **"Paperwork night"**, with all of your papers filled out, and ready to turn in. There is a mandatory (liability release form for the Performing Arts Center) that is required by the theatre, and other important forms. The Production Week Agreement/Conflict Date is a very important paper that you have 10 extra days to turn in. Take your time to look over ESCAPE's "All Possible Dates", along with your family calendar, and other important dates/events that you may have. **Please list all Mon/Wed. conflicts. No child/teen can miss more than 3 rehearsals in the 4 month period.** It is not fair to the others, and they will not be prepared with their songs/dances and blocking at show time if they have numerous absences.

Cell phones at the theatre – We do NOT like to see cell phones with the performers OR the parent volunteers. One of the goals of ESCAPE is to *"get our performers to unplug, have human interaction and work together as a team"*. Since we DON'T let the performers have their phones, we ask that our parent volunteers respect the same rules and set a good example. Put the phones away, and UNPLUG. If you need your phone with you for emergency incoming communications, please keep it in your pocket. We understand that other things are happening in all our lives during Production Week, we just ask that when you are at the theatre, you keep your cell phone in the car, bottom of your purse, or pocket if needed. *If you must make a call, please step outside the theatre.* The kids should know the rules, and we appreciate you understanding how important this is as well. Let's ALL stay tuned into the show and the KIDS!

No Video or Audio Recording of the show - There is no recording of any kind during a performance or rehearsal at the theatre. The material is all protected by copyright and the fines to ESCAPE for copyright infringement *would be the end* of our theater

company. There is a \$50,000 fine for doing things outside of the contract with the Royalty companies, and it is not worth it to jeopardize ESCAPE. Please make sure that all members of your group are aware of this copyright law. It is important to know that the performers can see those little red lights from the stage, and get distracted. They will tell the Stage Manager, and someone will come looking for you. Please help us show the performers that we are following the rules and respecting their hard work *This also includes “not recording” with your cell phone during dress rehearsals.*

New Rehearsal Schedules every 4-5 weeks – Keep your eye out for a new monthly schedule, and put it on the fridge, take a picture with your phone, and maybe even have an extra in your car. All rehearsals, other events, costume checks and other important information is found on the schedule. About 2 weeks before show-time, you will receive a *Production Week schedule* that will provide all call times for rehearsals and performances the week that we are at The Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center.

“Fun”raisers – ESCAPE is a non-profit organization. ***The cost of registration & ticket sales alone does not cover all of the costs for this kind of a production:*** Theatre rental, orchestra, costumes, sets, props, the rights to produce the show (royalties), staff, studio rent, two warehouses, and more. We are dependent on the generosity of our sponsors, grants, families, and Fun-Raisers! There may be dine-out nights at Panda Express, Ice skating event, Kona Ice, Krispy Kreme, In-n-Out Burger, or other events over the course of the next four months. We invite you to join us, and enjoy the opportunity to get to know other families involved over dinner or dessert. We also appreciate any financial support, as every cent does count! If your place of employment does **“matching gifts”** or **“volunteer hours”** we hope you will consider, and call the office for more information.

Mandatory Parent Meetings – These are not optional, and are critical to the success of the production. **There will be TWO short meetings** over the course of the 4 months. Each meeting will be less than 15 minutes, and scheduled so that you can conveniently attend when you drop off OR pick up your child. There are three choices of times, in case you have a lot going on that night. You can see costume examples, decide what committee you want to work on, learn details about Production Week, and MUCH MORE! Please make the time to attend the two mandatory Parent meetings this season

Costumes –Many costumes that ESCAPE provides are already included in your Registration fee. Approximately \$50+ goes towards the costumes that “ESCAPE provides” for SHREK. YOU are responsible for other items such as shoes, undergarments, and a few other costume requirements for Villager costumes. ESCAPE will also provide costumes for Lead Roles, which is an additional cost of \$25-75. An **Ensemble Costume Sheet** will be sent home the second week of rehearsals detailing the costume requirements for each age group. Items can be found in your closets, the local *Thrift Stores, Target, Walmart, JC Penney’s, Skin Tite or A Chorus Line(shoes)*. Please start gathering items early to avoid the stress of last minute shopping. Feel free

to ask our two Costume Designers, other “Veteran Parents” or our Advisory committee members for guidance and ideas.

Tickets- Our Tickets go on sale 6 weeks before show-time. Please take note of that date on your “All possible dates” calendar, so you are prepared that evening. We will sell 3000 seats the first night, and they will go on sale to the public the following morning. We highly recommend that you get tickets for your immediate family, grandparents, and maybe your best friend on the “first night of sales”. Adult tickets are \$22 and seniors, children and students are \$18.

\$10 Cast-member tickets- Cast-members will have an opportunity to purchase a ticket for only \$10, so that they can SEE the show that they were in, and learn and grow from seeing the final product. *Watching the full production after 4 months of rehearsal, with so many amazing kids, beautiful costumes, large sets, and a full orchestra is a gift.* Some lead roles will not get a “\$10 Cast-member ticket”, as they will have the opportunity to perform in ALL shows, and get to experience the stage twice as much.

Splitting the cast- Due to the large amount of youth and teens that participate, we split our cast into two separate groups and call them the **Red cast and Blue cast**. Each cast performs in 4-5 shows, and will have one show per day. Be sure to check which cast your child is in, so that you will purchase your tickets for the correct shows. Ensemble and Lead Cast Performance schedules are posted about 7 weeks before showtime.

Auditions & Callbacks for Lead roles: All of our students who register are assured a role in the ensemble and are also given an opportunity to audition for a lead role, if they are interested. The ensemble is what holds our group together and makes the BIG production numbers so amazing! If your child is interested in auditioning for a lead role, they need to attend the “Audition Prep Night”. We will teach them any songs, dances, or acting scenes needed for Auditions. Our staff members will videotape anything important, and post videos on our website. You must be a member of the website to view the videos, so please request to become a member ASAP. After Audition preparation, the following Wed. evening is Auditions, and then the following week will be Callbacks. We like to take a few weeks to get to know ALL of the kids during the audition process, and we encourage them to audition for lead roles. It is a good experience for the kids to learn what auditions are all about.

***ESCAPE’s curriculum is designed to teach youth and teens about being a part of an “ensemble”, where everyone is equally important, and part of a team. There is no “I” in the word TEAM. The long lasting friendships and family involvement is what makes ESCAPE what it is today. We want the kids to discover new talents, improve their singing and dancing skills, and have FUN while learning about musical theatre.*

Thank you for Escaping with us!