

Esplanade Presents Feed Your Imagination (F.Y.I)



Jun and the Octopus

A theatrical adaptation by The Finger Players
Supported by Singapore Children's Society

FAQ

What age group is this production recommended for?

This production is recommended for audiences between ages 11 – 14 years old.

Why should I bring my students to this production?

Body safety and abuse tend to be difficult and sensitive topics to navigate due to their extremely personal nature. However, it is important to engage with children and youths on these two areas as they are pertinent to the general well-being of the child and his/her socio-emotional development.

Discussions surrounding difficult topics also serve to empower and allow children and youths to acquire important life skills.

Besides educating on issues related to body safety, this production also hopes to extend its aims to other core values and competencies that are essential in a child's development.

Other objectives of the production are:

- To empower young persons to identify their physical and emotional boundaries
- To encourage young persons to build empathy for others who may be struggling with body safety concerns
- To empower young persons to demonstrate emotional resilience when faced with challenges

How would the entire experience be structured?

The entire experience has 2 segments:

30 minutes	Puppetry Performance
60 minutes	Post-show segment (Unpack themes and discussion)

This topic is a sensitive one. How do I know this is suitable for my students?

The performance has been created in consultation with Psychologist Consultant Dr Lin Hong Hui, with the support of Singapore Children's Society (SCS). Utmost care will be taken to ensure that the performance and entire experience is one that is sensitive and trauma-informed.

The focus of the puppetry performance segment is to present a situation so that students can reflect upon and continue discussions during the post-show segment, and even after the show. The performance has also undergone a series of test shows, with audience members from varied demographics, so as to ensure that the performance will be presented in a manner that is careful and considered.

Furthermore, the story will be presented entirely through puppetry. This is so that there is a distance from the characters that are being presented, and to prevent, as best as we can, immediate associations from situations in their lives.

What are some of the precautionary measures to ensure the wellbeing of the students?

During the performance:

- Students who feel uncomfortable can step out to the theatre foyer and a trained facilitator from SCS will be present to provide assistance and support.
- There will also be a separate, enclosed space outside the theatre for anyone who would prefer some privacy. He/she can also choose to speak to a trained facilitator who will be present onsite.

After the performance, there will be a post-show discussion where students will be sensitively facilitated, guided to unpack and navigate the themes and key messages of the story.

A resource kit will also be given to the students, which contains show and topic-related information, as well as helplines.

At the same time, we would highly recommend schools to take the following steps:

- To attend the pre-show briefing for teachers (see more information below)
- To prepare students with pre-show information and resources before they encounter the performance (see more information below)
- To watch the show with the students.

How would the post-show segment be conducted?

Intended outcomes for the post-show segment:

- To equip students with strategies to negotiate difficult emotions
- To provide students with resources / avenues for seeking help and support
- To provide a sense of community and opportunity for peer-to-peer support

The segment will start with a big group discussion to recapitulate key points in the production. This is in order to sieve out some memorable points during the performance that made an impact on the students.

Students will then be split into smaller groups to continue discussing these points and key messages in a more in-depth manner. This segment will be guided by trained facilitators from Singapore Children's Society.

At the end of the post-show discussion segment, students are encouraged to take some time to reflect and jot down and share their thoughts on paper which they can drop it in a box which will be placed outside the theatre.

The facilitators from SCS will be looking through the reflections at the end of every show to look out for any potential disclosures. Any disclosures that may be a cause for concern would be communicated directly to the respective schools for follow-up according to their respective standard operating procedures.

How can I know more about the production prior to the event?

A pre-show briefing will be organised at least two weeks before the event.

The points that will be touched on during the briefing are:

- Rationale of the show and summary of the story
- Structure of the experience
- Findings from test-shows, as well as potential workarounds that have been worked into the experience
- Addressing any other points of concerns from the schools.

We would recommend that this briefing be attended by:

- School teachers who will be accompanying students to the performance
- School teachers who will be conducting follow up discussions in class
- The school's Student Development or Case Management team who will be more involved in students' socio-emotional developmental issues
- School Counsellors

To find out more about the rationale behind the creation of this book, please feel free to check out this link – *Behind the Scenes: The Making of Jun and the Octopus*
<https://youtu.be/75oB6rAEbkl>

How should I prepare my students for the production?

Preparing students before the production may be useful in helping them to be mentally prepared for the theme as well as the discussions after the show. Related discussions, facilitated by the teachers, can begin in the classrooms before the production.

The team is working closely to put together a pre-show kit. Teachers can opt to prepare the students while referencing this kit and can even engage in discussions should they feel confident to do so.

We would also recommend bringing your students to the theatre earlier so that they can slowly acclimatise to the new environment and new people in the space. This would help them feel more comfortable and safer for the entire experience.

Please feel free to check out this link of Minister Sun Xue-Ling reading *Jun and the Octopus* <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=691153731450697>

What happens after the production?

Working together with your school counsellors, teachers are encouraged to continue conversations in classes.

Who can I contact if I have a booking enquiry or other questions about the show?

We are here to answer your questions and address your concerns. If you have further questions, contact:

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ABOUT THE FINGER PLAYERS

The Finger Players is Singapore's leading theatre company, best known for inventively fusing puppetry elements into its visually-arresting productions, and its strong advocacy of puppetry.

Founded in 1999, The Finger Players strives to be a centre of research and development for the creation and performance of puppetry in Singapore.

In 2019, The Finger Players became the first arts collective in Singapore to operate on a rotating artistic director model, with each Artistic Director helming the fort for a stipulated tenure. The Artistic Director is supported by a team of core members who are integral to The Finger Players since its inception.

The company currently operates three branches:

Main Season

The company's annual offering of edgy and original works, that adopts an interdisciplinary approach and

- i) pushes the envelope of puppetry,
- ii) expands the imagination of puppetry,
- iii) with puppetry at the core of its creation.

International Season

The company is one of Singapore's most prolific international touring companies, and has actively been touring its productions since 2000, promoting Singapore's brand of puppetry internationally.

Outreach Season

Using puppetry, the company reaches out to an average of 25,000 students and members of the public annually, through performances and workshops with schools, communities and institutions.

The Finger Players is a non-profit organization with Institution of Public Character (IPC) status, a recipient of the National Arts Council's Major Grant for the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023, and a member of the Singapore Chinese Language Theatre Alliance.

ABOUT SINGAPORE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Singapore Children's Society protects and nurtures children and youth of all races and religions. In 2021, the Society reached out to 19,973 children, youth and families in need. Established in 1952, its services have evolved to meet the changing needs of children.

Today, Children's Society operates more than 10 service centres islandwide, offering services in the four categories of: Vulnerable Children and Youth, Children and Youth Services, Family Services, and Research and Advocacy. Since 2000, they have been running the *KidzLive: I Can Protect Myself* programme, which educates children on body safety skills and sexual abuse prevention.