

# **DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER**

Strategic Anti-Racism, Inclusivity, Diversity,  
Equity, Access, and Accountability Action Plan

Note: This PLAN is a working document  
and will be updated as we grow and learn in this important work.  
Last approved by the DCT Board of Trustees on 06/02/2021

## **Anti-Racism/Diversity Statement**

Through the development of transparent organizational systems, processes, and cultures, Dallas Children's Theater will create a welcoming and equitable space for the diversity of people we seek to serve. In building our equitable and inclusive culture, we will actively pursue a diversity of thought and perspective from all stakeholders.

### **Our Pledge**

As an organization focused on children and families, 365 days a year, we know that each one has something amazing to give to the world. As one of the early entry points for many young children to see themselves and others on stage, we take seriously our responsibility to impress positive lifelong inspiration in them. The stories we offer onstage encourage kindness and acceptance, build self-esteem, and teach other important life lessons.

We pledge to do our part to reflect and celebrate diversity and equity in our work, on our staff, and on our stages. We pledge to continue to ensure that all children see themselves on our stage and feel the sense of belonging and empowerment that naturally pours out from these transcendent moments. We also promise to use the power of theater to spark conversations about tough topics such as racism; exchanges that lead to positive communication, action, understanding, and change.

To our parents, we want to be a resource as you search for help in talking to your children about the abundant diversity that exists in our world. Through storytelling, thought-provoking conversation, and collaborating with and engaging people of color, people with diverse gender identities, and people with diverse abilities, Dallas Children's Theater will play an active role in the dismantling of institutional racism and prejudice, and provide a safe and welcoming space for families with children who are neurodiverse. We owe this to the children we serve who are our foundation, and the foundation of our global community.

DCT is committed to the kind of excellence in theater arts programming that challenges and inspires young people – from every race, culture, gender, social class, ability and sexual orientation – to develop their unique creative talents and individual perspectives in order to contribute to a more pluralistic and peaceful world.

### **BLACK LIVES MATTER**

It's a really challenging time to be a child right now.

It is not okay that the world we are handing over to our children is filled with such divisiveness; such blatant discrimination that openly even dares to justify its existence. It has to stop. It must be fixed. We all must be a part of the solution.

To begin the healing process, we must first collectively believe and proclaim, without equivocation, that **Black Lives Matter**. We have failed to openly acknowledge and live

this truth to the detriment of too many Black people for far too long. We mourn the needless and senseless loss of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Botham Jean and so many others. We must come together now to make deliberate and lasting change, so we don't lose countless more precious lives to injustice.

Dallas Children's Theater pledges to do our part to ensure our young Black children and their families have every opportunity to freely discover who they are. The Dallas Children's Theater (DCT) staff comes from many generations, and as storytellers, we have used our stages many times in the last 40 years to talk about heroes like Jackie Robinson, Harriet Tubman, Marian Anderson, Sojourner Truth, and others to EVERYONE in our audiences. From those beautiful historic pieces, to more current stories as *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*, *The Snowy Day and Other Stories*, *Yana Wana's Legend of the Bluebonnet*, *Last Stop on Market Street*, and *Life Doesn't Frighten Me: I Am Fearless Royalty*, it has always been DCT's intent in this work to give parents the tools to talk to their children about shared values, historic wrongs, and the importance of recognizing and celebrating the many beautiful cultures that comprise and contribute to our world.

But as individuals and as an organization, we can do more. We can do better. The contents of this document represent our written pledge to use the power of theater and the public resources we have been given to make the world a better place for diverse races, abilities, and perspectives.

The following goals will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. New goals will be added as needed and others will be updated as necessary. In annual reviews, we should expect to see maintenance of positive achievements at a minimum, or growth where improvements require it.

**Goal #1 - Dallas Children’s Theater will be a leader among the major arts organizations in Texas reflecting a diversified board, staff and audience.**

**Strategy**

Dallas Children’s Theater will make equity, diversity, inclusion and justice a top priority in every aspect of its decision making.

**Tactics**

1. We will maintain and grow a board diversification of a minimum of 30% people of color or more through deliberate board recruitment.
2. We will maintain and grow an audience makeup of 60% people of color or more through production and program selection, target marketing, arts education, diverse producers and artists.
3. We will maintain a full and part time staff makeup of 30% people of color through ensuring diverse candidate pools in staff hiring and casting.
4. We will regularly train staff and board on matters of equity, diversity, inclusion, and justice and create a brave space for affinity discussions.
5. We will create a mechanism for staff/stakeholders to report questionable acts that occur in our spaces and take action.

**Audience at Mainstage (Public and Student Matinee) Productions-**

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
% African American/Black	19.4	19.2	25.0	18.2	18.7
% Asian American	2.4	3.3	1.2	2.0	2.1
% Hispanic/Latinx	44.1	42.4	61.1	47.8	40.2
% Middle Eastern/North African	1.2	1.4	0.2	0.6	1.6
% Native American	0.0	.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
% Multiracial	1.4	2.5	1.2	1.9	1.8
% Other	0.2	.1	0.0	0.3	0.0
% White, non-Latinx	31.4	31.0	11.2	29.1	35.5

## Participants in EDUCATIONAL Events/Programs-

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
% African American/Black	11.3	10.0	15.2	11.1	9.6
% Asian American	5.4	5.1	5.5	5.9	5.8
% Hispanic/Latinx	28.5	32.0	29.6	26.3	23.5
% Middle Eastern/North African	1.6	1.1	1.4	0.2	0.8
% Native American	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0
% Multiracial	0.8	1.1	0.4	1.7	0.4
% Other	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
% White, non-Latinx	52.3	50.6	47.6	54.7	59.8

## Board of Trustees

	2021			2022			2023			2024		
	F	M	% of Total	F	M	% of Total	F	M	% of Total	F	M	% of Total
# African American/Black	2	1	8	3	1	10	2	2	11	5	2	18
# Asian American	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
# Hispanic/Latinx	5	3	21	5	0	13	5	0	17	6	1	18
# Middle Eastern/North African	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0		1	3
# Native American	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
# Multiracial	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
# Other	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
# White, non-Latinx	18	10	72	19	11	77	16	10	72	16	7	58

## Full and Part Time (Actors and Teaching Artists) Staff-

	2021			2022			2023			2024			
	F	M	% of Total	F	M	% of Total	F	M	% of Total	F	M	NB	% of Total
# African American/Black	3	2	11	8	3	13	7	3	13.2	5	2	1	11
# Asian American	0	0		2	1	4	1	0	1.3				
# Hispanic/Latinx	2	2	9	4	7	13	4	4	10.5	3	5		11
# Middle Eastern/North African	0	0		0	0		0	0	0				
# Native American	0	0		1	1	2	2	0	2.6	1			1
# Multiracial	1	0	2	1	2	4	2	2	5.3	1	2		4
# Other	0	0		0	0		0	0	0	1	1		3
# White, non-Latinx	17	19	78	31	23	64	29	22	67.1	30	22		70

## EDIJ Trainings/Discussions/Opportunities-

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Board	5	5	2	0
Staff	14	5	3	0
#incidents reported	new	0	0	0
#incidents reviewed	new	0	0	0
#BIPOC only group meetings	1	0	0	0

## Goal #2 - Dallas Children's Theater will be a major entry point to the arts in the Metroplex for families of color.

### Strategy

Dallas Children's Theater will develop programming and marketing strategies that provide opportunities for new audiences to experience us, both as creators and as consumers.

### Tactics

1. We will feature regular works about people of color and make artists of color the leaders in their development and presentation.
2. We will carve out performance times that are specifically marketed to new audiences of color.
3. We will create a brave space for ongoing conversations around social justice as well as mentor and support a group of young people known as Youth Ambassadors.
4. We will ensure **all** marketing efforts communicate a spirit of inclusiveness.
5. We will be responsive to suggestions and ideas for improvement.

	2021	2022	2023	2024
# Culturally-specific productions	4	1	1	2
# Culturally-specific performances	364	12	26	62
# BIPOC-led productions	4	2	5	2
# Social justice gatherings	11	10	6	0
# Youth Ambassadors*	11	11	11	N/A
% Marketing messages/ads reflecting diversity	100	100	100	100

\*Program currently on pause.

**Goal #3 - Dallas Children’s Theater will build equal relationships with diverse artistic partners for the purpose of producing mindful and meaningful productions and other arts education offerings and building trust.**

**Strategy**

Dallas Children’s Theater will plan seasons in advance to allow sufficient time to cultivate target partnerships.

**Tactics**

1. We will deliberately seek out diverse theater companies for creative partnerships.
2. We will offer rehearsal and performance space to diverse theater companies.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
# Culturally-specific projects in development	3	5	2	2	0
# Culturally-specific partnerships	0	2	1	1	1
# Diverse theater companies/groups hosted	3	0	1	2	2

**Goal #4 - Dallas Children’s Theater will be a recognized leader in the community of families who have sensory sensitivities as part of their makeup.**

**Strategy**

Dallas Children’s Theater will maintain and grow its offerings of programming for children with sensory sensitivities.

**Tactics**

1. We will regularly communicate to audiences, funders and families about the work we are doing in this space.
2. We will be a source on ongoing source of entertainment for children with sensory sensitivities.
3. We will provide an ASL interpreter for every mainstage production.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
#Mentions, counseling connects, etc.	72	58	20	25	30
# Sensory-friendly performances	7	7	4	5	6
# Sensory-friendly classes	45	27	23	22	16
# People served	3,401	331	556	752	746
# ASL performances	5	0	3	6	5

**Notes:**

1. DCT’s fiscal year is from September to August. Each year’s data is a reflection of that timeframe.

2. 19-20 and 20-21 numbers have been greatly impacted by the shutdown of many of DCT's in-person activities due to COVID.