

BEHIND THE SCENES: ACT TWO



Info and tips for families of cast members in an ECT main stage production

For more information, see [Behind the Scenes, Act 1](#) at ectshows.com.

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PLANNING

Communication Is Key!

PARENT PRIMARY CONTACTS

Production Coordinators - pc@ectshows.com

Natalie Tyrrell • Vikki Ortiz • Jana Bendik (630) 639-9856

COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS

Weekly PC Emails • Website Member Page

ECT GENERAL INFO

Ectshows.com • Subscribe bit.ly/ectnews • [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ectshows) @ectshows • Instagram @ect_shows

To do:

- ☐ Check the cast member page on the website and emails frequently.
- ☐ Check email close to rehearsal meeting time in case of last-minute changes.
- ☐ Be available by phone during rehearsals. Your child will text or call if they are dismissed early or if rehearsal runs late. If your child does not have a phone, they will have access to the Cast Sitter's or PC's phone.
- ☐ Email or text PCs about absences/late arrivals. Call if you need to reach PCs within one hour of the start of rehearsal.
- ☐ Comcast users: please provide an alternate email address due to technical issues.
- ☐ Log into the Members only section of the website to access choreography videos and music rehearsal tracks using passcode: FALL2026

Weekly Rehearsals - MTW 6pm to 9pm

Cast members must commit to and expect to be at every rehearsal for the entire rehearsal. However, ECT and directors want to use everyone's time wisely and do not want cast members waiting around at rehearsals when not needed. Therefore, not every cast member will be called for every rehearsal or need to stay for the entire rehearsal. Every Sunday or sooner, cast call times for the week are emailed to cast families and posted on the cast page of the website. If additional rehearsals are needed, cast families will be notified ASAP.

PLEASE NOTE: Attendance at the last two days of the last two weeks of regular rehearsals is mandatory! (Monday - Wednesday, October 12-14) **Please note we will not be holding rehearsal on Monday, September 6th but we will be holding rehearsal Monday, October 12th.** We are still at ECT HQ but are usually running rehearsals of the show in its entirety with the Crew and key Props, Sets and Costume chairs or parents in attendance to help understand the flow of the show.

Cast members must rehearse on their own at home, too. Musical tracks, videos and other materials will be posted on ECT members page and shared out via email.

To dos:

- ☐ Plan for your child to be at every rehearsal for the entire time.
- ☐ Check your email/cast page of the website for weekly call times.
- ☐ Encourage your child to rehearse at home.
- ☐ Encourage your child to check the cast page of the website for tracks, videos, etc.
- ☐ Utilize Members only section of website to practice choreography and music

- ☐ Help your child be prepared for Soft Memorization deadline September 28 and Off Book deadline October 5

Please do not drop children off more than 5 minutes before rehearsal. Volunteers and professionals are busy preparing for rehearsal and not able to supervise additional children. Children of board members and cast sitters may enter early as they will arrive early with their parents to prepare for the arrival of the rest of the cast. If you arrive early, please wait with your children in the car until 5 minutes prior to their call time.

Sitzprobe (sing-thru) and Tech Rehearsals

Typically, on the Sunday before our shows is when our volunteer parents load our sets, props and costumes into the theater. This year, our Sitzprobe is on Sunday, October 18, in the afternoon from 12-6 p.m. and will take place at the performance venue. The cast will sing the entire show with our full pit live orchestra the first time. Attendance for the Sitzprobe is mandatory for all cast members. Tech rehearsal will begin after the sitzprobe is complete.

Tech rehearsals typically begin the week prior to the performances and take place at the performance venue. During these rehearsals, the cast and directors incorporate sets, costumes, and props into the performance, work with the pit orchestra, adjust blocking and choreography for the venue's stage, and rehearse with mics, lights, and other tech. Because of all of the work that must be done in the short time that we have access to the performance venue, **cast members may not miss Sitzprobe or tech rehearsals.**

Weekday tech rehearsals begin as early as 5:00 pm and end as late as 10 pm. To help cast members be as rested as possible, we do our best to keep rehearsals as short as possible. Please read our [Tips for Tech Week](#) for a great overview and how to support your actor.

Additional Events

It's not all about rehearsing! You'll receive information about the following events soon:

- Preview sing. The cast gets their first chance to perform a few songs from the show.
- Cast party. For cast and crew only! This party typically happens right after the final show.
- For parent volunteers-only: Post-show happy hour held 2+ weeks after the show.

See the rehearsal schedule on the website for dates, times, and locations. Please note: any other impromptu get-togethers of cast members are not supervised by ECT board members.

POLICIES

Behavior

The ECT community is made up of welcoming, respectful people. According to many ECT alumni, ECT is the place they first felt they truly belonged. To maintain this welcoming environment, we expect all cast members to treat each other, our directors, our volunteers, and our space with respect. Following rules and directions also helps us achieve the best possible production with limited time as we use every minute of our cast's and directors' time productively. We will notify parents if cast members are repeatedly disruptive or cause damage to our rehearsal spaces. This

type of behavior can lead to dismissal from the cast.

Attendance

The children work as a cohesive team, and the absence of one person can prevent the entire group from achieving their rehearsal goals. ONLY **THREE ABSENCES** ARE ALLOWED. THE TWO REHEARSALS, ALL TECH REHEARSALS, AND ALL SHOWS ARE MANDATORY.

- All absences must be excused in advance by the production coordinators.
 - Please be sure to check your calendars for school performing arts concerts - absences for these do count as one of your three permitted absences.
- Illnesses do not count as absences.
- An unacceptable conflict includes a regular, repeating event, like a class or sports practice every Monday or a weekly tutoring session.
- Known conflicts not communicated prior to casting will be treated as unexcused absences.
- Repeated absences due to illness may, unfortunately, also lead to role reduction or dismissal, at the director's and the ECT Board's discretion.
- We understand that special circumstances arise that may require more than 3 excused absences. If a conflict comes up after casting, discuss with the production coordinators.

Due to the impact on the entire cast and to be consistent with this policy with all cast members, an absence (other than those due to illness or mandatory school events) without prior approval from ECT can mean dismissal from the cast. No refunds will be offered.

Tardiness

Arriving on time shows respect to castmates and directors and eliminates disrupted rehearsal time. Rehearsals are scheduled as efficiently as possible for both the directors and cast. Late arrivals delay a tight timeframe and impact the quality of the children's final performance.

All cast members must arrive at rehearsal 5 minutes before start time. For example, arrive at 5:55 pm for a 6 pm rehearsal. Doors open 10 minutes before rehearsal starts.

First tardy: cast member receives a warning

Second tardy: ECT meets with parent/guardian to discuss solutions

All attempts are made to avoid cast dismissal, but, due to the impact on the entire cast, repeated tardiness can result in dismissal from the cast.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Elmhurst Children's Theatre is run by volunteers. Parents/Guardians of our cast members are an integral part of each production. Without parents/guardians, our shows cannot happen!

As you know from registration forms, the website, and emails, parents/guardians of cast members commit to volunteering when accepting a role for their child. Volunteer commitment includes:

1. Committee participation from one parent (and both parents are welcome to volunteer!), which typically includes working backstage during 1 or 2 shows and 1-3 tech rehearsals

2. Cast sitting during one rehearsal at HQ
3. Post-show venue clean-up for one show plus breakdown and clean-up after the last show.

As noted on all of our communications, **for the safety of all involved and per ECT's insurance policies, children who are not part of the cast (including siblings) may not attend rehearsals or accompany parents during volunteer activities.**

Committees

Parents/Guardians participate on one production committee: sets, props, costumes, or marketing. With everyone's participation, no single person should be overloaded with duties. Every little bit helps! Sharing theater experiences with your child, their peers and parents of their peers is a highlight of ECT participation for adults. See our [Committee Descriptions](#).

You will be asked to rank your committee preferences on your parent contract form and note experience in particular areas (sewing, painting, building, crafts, marketing, etc). The number of parents on each committee varies based on the director's vision for each particular production. We attempt to honor committee requests, but preferences cannot be guaranteed.

Committee members are typically asked to help backstage during 1 to 2 shows. All parent volunteers are able to enjoy at least two shows from the audience.

After the show, committee members are expected to help return any costumes, props, and sets items back to ECT Headquarters. Some costume items may need to be cleaned. Committee parents are expected to return and organize costumes/props/sets in the ECT storage areas so it is functional for the next production.

We depend on all parents and guardians to fulfill their committee duties so that no one family is overwhelmed and so that we can put on the best possible show for the cast. Parents who are not fulfilling their volunteer committee duties will meet with the Producer and President to discuss potential solutions and impact on future show participation.

Committee members are reimbursed for show expenditures. Before incurring costs, ask your chair for approval and for our tax-exempt letter. Submit reimbursement form **with receipts** to treasurer@ectshows.com within two weeks of the last show.

Cast Sitting

It's like babysitting the cast! Parents/Guardians help out at one rehearsal per production. At least one Production Coordinator will be present at each rehearsal to oversee the entire session and assist the director. In case one of our cast members needs some individual attention, has an emergency or the PCs need to assist the directors, we rely on having a cast parent at each rehearsal for additional support.

Cast sitters need to arrive ten minutes before rehearsal begins and stay until the last cast member is picked up and rehearsal venue clean-up is complete. If a conflict arises for the day

you are scheduled to cast sit, please reach out to other parents to find someone to switch days with. Then, please inform one of the Production Coordinators of the change.

Cast sitters help keep cast members quiet and on task and assist with clean-up and pick-up procedures. Check in with your Production Coordinators to see how you can be most helpful. This is a hands-on job, but there may also be some down time, or multiple hands-on-deck for the evening. Please bring a book or other quiet activity that you can easily put down again when you are needed. However, please don't plan to watch movies or otherwise need headphones, since we need for you to be alert as to when you're needed. Even this great group of kids sometimes need to be reminded to stay focused, especially with limited rehearsal time. It is a great way to get a sneak peek behind creating the show!

Clean Up & Breakdown

Each family is assigned to help clean up the auditorium and general venue space after one of the first three shows. After the final Sunday performance, at least one member from each family is required to stay and help break down the set, clean up the auditorium, manage the cast/crew party, transport items to our storage facility, and other tasks. Assignments will be distributed prior to or during tech week.

IT'S SHOWTIME!

Spreading the Word

Please help us spread the word about the show! Follow ECT on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and [subscribe](#) to email blasts. Share show dates and information with friends, family, teachers, and more via email or social media. Sharing social media posts on your personal accounts as well as on local group pages has proven to be an effective way to reach local families. If your parent-teacher organization has a social media page and allows sharing, please share show posts.

If you know any ECT alumni, encourage them to [register](#) with our ECT alumni network.

Costumes & Make-Up

The director works with the costume committee to determine costumes and makeup for each actor. ECT has collected many costumes over the years and provides most costume pieces for cast members. Please do not purchase costume pieces for your child unless requested by your costume parent.

Cast members are provided with a costume basket with a detailed list of all costume pieces and accessories (and sometimes small personal props). Cast members must bring their costume basket to all dress rehearsals and performances.

Cast members/Cast families:

- Provide base layer (shorts, tank top/cami) for modesty during costume changes.
- Provide dance or performance shoes and costume appropriate socks or tights.
- Provide stage make-up as directed by costume parents.

- Are responsible for all items within their costume basket. They should check every night to ensure no pieces are missing. Do not leave within reach of siblings or pets.
- Dry clean costumes before returning, if requested.

Make-up and hair accessories/hats must not be shared.

Program Kudos

Each family will have the opportunity to place a complimentary congratulatory message in the program. Information regarding this will be emailed as we get closer to the show.

Stage Crew

ECT often welcomes volunteer middle school and high school students to help out behind the scenes with Stage Crew and Tech Crew. Typically, these students attend 1 rehearsal the final week of regular rehearsals and are involved during the Sunday load in, Sunday evening “dry tech” or Cue to Cue rehearsal, all the tech rehearsals with the cast, performances, clean up and the cast/crew party. Stage and tech crew needs for this production are still being determined. Email our Producer at producer@ectshows.com for more information.

Show Tickets

Each family will receive a promo code for 1 complimentary ticket to the show. Additional tickets can be purchased online or at the door. We are planning to sell reserved seating which will open 1-2 weeks before the show. Please be sure you are aware of your backstage responsibilities before purchasing tickets.

For groups of 10 or more (Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Preschool Groups, Camp Groups, Church Youth Groups, PTA Events, Birthday Parties, etc), ECT offers perks that may include priority seating, early ticket sales, free raffle tickets, or custom perks, like meeting an actor. Group sales perks are not the same for every show and vary depending on the venue, show, directors, and cast. Contact us at secretary@ectshows.com for group sales.

MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED AND HELP

Advertising

Do you own or work for a business that would be willing to purchase an ad in our program? Advertising is one of our most effective fundraisers. Please contact us marketing@ectshows.com for more information.

The ECT Board

ECT was founded in 1937 in our community and is run by an all volunteer board. Board members must be parents of children eligible to participate in ECT productions.

The ECT Board hires professional directors, music directors, and choreographers who cast and produce the show. The ECT Board also manages classes, productions and rehearsals; creates

costumes, props, and sets; markets the organization and shows; manages our HQ, organizes funding and performance venues; and more.

The ten board positions include President, Vice President, Producer, Treasurer, Secretary, Marketing, Production Coordinator (3), and Class Coordinator (2). To learn more about what each role entails, please review our [ECT Board Roles & Responsibilities](#).

Consider being a part of the ECT Board to impact the growth of this quickly-growing organization that benefits many Elmhurst children. Contact Sarah Galarza at president@ectshows.com or Sarah Bedinghaus at vp@ectshows.com to learn more.

Donating Ideas, Time, or Funds

ECT, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, welcomes tax-deductible donations to help fund scholarship, outreach, and experiences to Elmhurst children.

Zelle: pay@ectshows.com

Check: ECT Treasurer, PO Box 64, Elmhurst, IL 60126

ECT is always seeking assistance from our loyal alumni and supportive community. If you'd like to help with fundraising, have ideas for new performance or rehearsal venues, would like to help make costumes or props, or would like to become involved in other ways, please contact us.

Questions

Contact any ECT Board member with questions. Find contact information at ectshows.com.

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