



TAKE A CHILD TO THE  
**THEATRE**

**MARCH 20**

So they can see, hear,  
feel, think and imagine



## World theatre day

*Take a child to theatre, today !*

**20 March 2019**



"Everything is theatre. It's hard to explain. I wouldn't try to explain it to someone who didn't understand, I would just take them, show them, and they could see for themselves."

Joyee, 8 years old

"If you don't take kids to the theatre, then theatre will stop. Theatre shows lives and hearts and souls in actions. If I was taking a child to the theatre, a little child, I wouldn't explain or tell them anything on the way. They would watch it and then they would explain it to me."

Jojo, 11 years old

## Toolkit

**Contact us!**

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## Introduction



**ASSITEJ world day of theatre for children** is an ASSITEJ campaign, promoted and celebrated through the message **“Take a child to the theatre, today”**.

This focus enables national centres, individual members, companies, arts organisations, academics, teachers, artists, practitioners and others interested in theatre for young audiences to connect with the idea of world day and ‘make the case’ for children’s entitlement to theatre and the arts.

All ASSITEJ members are invited to promote special world day messages written every year, share the ASSITEJ film and consider additional activity, large or small. Each year ASSITEJ centres around the globe deliver activities ranging from conferences, performances, workshops and special media events. This tool-kit aims to help you plan for world day 2019 which happens on March 20th.

## Activity

The message **“Take a child to the theatre, today”** can be promoted as a message and as a call to action, it can promote regional activity and theatre events and by linking to other information, illustrate **why** it is important to take a child to the theatre.

**World Day is a global campaign.** ASSITEJ has more than 80 national centres as well as professional networks with affiliates across 100 countries, which means there is unlimited possibility for profile, visibility and advocacy.

## Campaign for cultural decision makers

From 2019 on, ASSITEJ has decided to address all those who can provide support, or advocate for local TYA practitioners, at the occasion of WDT.

A personal letter will be addressed by the President of ASSITEJ, encouraging the recipients to develop awareness of the importance of performing arts for the young persons in their country or community, and to meet the artists and other professionals who produce and disseminate TYA performances.

ASSITEJ invites you to contribute to this campaign, by sharing information about potential supporters to the cause, by filling in this form : <https://goo.gl/forms/Owa8DvA6rJtQbEi62>

## International Co-operation

**World Performance Week** is a concept initiated by ASSITEJ, in collaboration with other international associations involved with different art forms related to live performance, which celebrate their World Days between March 20th and March 27th.

We invite you to build partnerships with these associations in your own country and to participate in World Performance Week where this is possible.

The week includes March 20th, ASSITEJ World Day of theatre for children and young people (and the campaign “Take a child to the theatre”), March 21st, UNIMA’s World Puppetry Day, and March 27th, ITI’s World Theatre Day, which is also celebrated by other associations, such as IATC, IDEA, AITA/IATA and others. Use the unifying logo, as well as the ASSITEJ logo and the Take a Child to the Theatre Today logo, if you wish to promote the week.





By uniting the activities of these international associations, while retaining the individual character of each day, we hope to strengthen key messages around cultural entitlement connected to the March campaigns, promoting the transformative power of the performing arts for children and adults world wide, and supporting one another to reach our goals.

Download the World Performance Week logo [HERE](#).

At the occasion of the World Day of Theatre (March 27th), the International Theatre Institute (ITI), publishes a message from an artist. 2019's ITI message, written by Carlos Celdrán (Cuba), can be read [HERE](#).

## World day 2019 Tools

### 1) Take a child to the theatre today logo



These are available to download from the ASSITEJ website, in English, French Portuguese and Spanish

World Day of Theatre 2018 logo has been designed by Signature Design, a graphic studio based in Cape Town, South Africa

[Download the logo on our website HERE](#)

### 2) World day message

Since 2001, each year there has been a world day message written by a different theatre-related personality or advocate. This has included Peter Brook, Augusto Boal, Suzanne Osten, Suzanne Lebeau, Michael Morpurgo, Malala Yousafzai, Jenny Sealey, Francisco Hinojosa among others. There is also a new message each year from the president of ASSITEJ:

[Read the messages on our website here](#)

These messages should be shared with all members via each national centre or network. The messages can be promoted on websites, read at events, published, shared on social media, discussed, referred to in press releases and used in any way that will promote the global campaign.

For 2019, the world day messages are written by **Yvette Hardie, and the children Joyee and Jojo, from the [House of Muchness](#), in Brunswick, Australia.**



## Message from Yvette Hardie



Yvette Hardie is  
the president of ASSITEJ

Picture courtesy of Sarafina Magazine

“ Our world is riven through with division and divisiveness. Around us on every side are leaders and strategies seeking to turn people against one another, on the basis of race, language, culture, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, loyalty to an idea, belonging or not belonging... Almost every aspect of our humanity has been used by someone to bring greater division and to build higher walls of suspicion and hatred. As a result, we seem to have turned our backs on Ubuntu, the African philosophy that says “I am because you are” and “a person is a person through relationships with other people.”

How can we work to undo this great wrong we are doing to our children and indeed, to ourselves?

Children need to be able to enjoy moments in community where they are reminded of what we share, and where they are able to appreciate the multiple realities of what it means to be human. They need spaces in which to explore new ways of thinking that challenge these divisive narratives, in which they feel empathy for those most unlike themselves. They need concrete experiences of communion in community to remind them of the joy and beauty that the world has to offer.

ASSITEJ believes that theatre provides multiple doorways into feeling a greater sense of connectedness with others, and – importantly – with ourselves.

Recently The New Victory Theater in New York released the results of a five year study into the benefits of theatre for children and young people. One of the key unexpected findings was that exposure to the theatre gave these children greater hope for the future. These results were contrasted with a control group, where those who were not exposed to theatre performances and workshops over the same period, experienced a diminishing sense of their future possibilities in terms of study and work opportunities.

Why is hope so important? Hope creates positive energy which translates into self-assurance, willpower, resilience and finally into concrete actions to make a difference in one’s own life and in the lives of others. Every child needs to have hope.

So let us all commit to taking a child or young person to the theatre today and to rallying the support necessary their personal or social circumstances. And for those of us working in the profession, let us commit to providing quality experiences that will make the difference in how the younger generation perceives the world – for the sake of both today and tomorrow. //





## Message from Joyee



Joyee, 8 years old

“ Everything is connected to theatre. I was born in a place where theatre was very special. In India.

And even though I was in an orphanage, I knew theatre was important there. My mum is part of theatre. I’m part of theatre. I do House of Muchness which is a type of theatre - we put on shows. Stuff like that. Every child has the right to do fun things. Like House of Muchness. I do Bollywood too because it goes with where I came from.

Everything is theatre. It’s hard to explain. I wouldn’t try to explain it to someone who didn’t understand, I would just take them, show them, and they could see for themselves.

Theatre is you. Whatever you do is theatre. Everything around you is theatre. You are theatre. All your body works together like a theatre. To make one big show. And that show is your life.

Without theatre, there would be no imagination. Everyone wouldn’t be able to be themselves. Without stories, everyone would be bored all the time. A bit gloomy – they wouldn’t really feel very nice. It would be like on the moon. No one could actually communicate with each other because of the big hats.

If you have no imagination, well, the only thing to fix that is theatre. It makes you learn things. It can teach you about love. How it looks in different ways. And how different people who might not know if they can love each other, well, they can. If it’s a really powerful story, it can actually change us. Theatre is special and good and beautiful. And we have to have all the feelings – if a show makes us feel sad, then it can also make us feel hopeful – that a good thing can happen after. And most of the time it does. ”

## Message from Jojo



Jojo, 11 years old

“ I’m 11 and I’m dyslexic. I’m a person who swears a bit. I like people who understand me, as me. I want to be a part of something. I’m a person who wants to change the world. I’m in the Children’s Party which is about children and ideas and politics in a theatre show. I might start to change the world that way.

Theatre is important because it shows stories. Stories show generations and generations of people what’s going on. Where they’ve come from, why they’re here, and how they’re here. Things we need to know. Then we can understand people and their ways.

My first show was actually a music festival in Adelaide when I was in my Mum’s belly. The first theatre show I remember was an opera. Because Roger’s cousin is an opera singer. Roger was my grandfather.

I love theatre where you have to use your imagination, your own imagination which is different from everyone else’s. Because the things



Joyee and Jojo attend the House of Muchness, in Brunswick (Australia) :

*"An environment where young people can belong to a collective and build social relatedness, artistic expression and find their creative kin."*

<https://www.houseofmuchness.com/>

in the show are hard to see or aren't there, you have to imagine them. You make them up. And then you can see them really well. But people might have a different story or pictures in their head compared to what's in my head.

If you don't take kids to the theatre, then theatre will stop. Theatre shows lives and hearts and souls in actions. If I was taking a child to the theatre, a little child, I wouldn't explain or tell them anything on the way. They would watch it and then they would explain it to me.

If I was told I couldn't see any more theatre, it would make me sad, it would make me angry.

If I hadn't seen some of the things I've seen in the theatre, I wouldn't be me.

And I like me. //

## World Day Video



For 2019 the World Day video has been created by ASSITEJ South Korea

Members are invited to create their own short videos and digital media using the languages of their country or region. ASSITEJ will then share these with the rest of the Membership.

For 2019 the World Day video has been created by ASSITEJ South Korea. This will be promoted on the ASSITEJ Website and through social media. We urge you to watch and share the video.

[Watch the video HERE](#)

## Social Media

By using social media (twitter, Facebook, vine, Instagram etc), individuals can promote the message 'Take A Child to the Theatre Today' and link this to the ASSITEJ site and other platforms (YouTube), which will host the media mentioned above.

A campaign around SMS (texts) could also be created to promote the message. Please use the hashtag #takeachildtothetheatre.



Some countries use the campaign as a rallying call to ask for donations to ensure that children and young people who otherwise wouldn't have access to theatre get an opportunity to do so on this day.

The ASSITEJ Facebook page exists as a communication tool which Facebook friends can link to and also post on, which admins can then share through the ASSITEJ newsfeed. We want all our members to keep us updated about what they are doing for the campaign. <https://www.facebook.com/ASSITEJ.International>

## Press Releases

Where possible, individuals, organizations and institutions should connect to local and national media through a press release. This could then be connected to activity within each region and be used to endorse theatre activity for young audiences.

In addition, interviews, testimonials and statements from VIPs, artists, politicians, as well as cultural decision makers, child specialists could be a good way to promote the message and establish why it is important to take children to the theatre.

Download the press release in Word format (and adapt it to your local language) : [HERE](#)

## ASSITEJ Fundraising campaign

Some countries use the campaign as a rallying call to ask for donations to ensure that children and young people who otherwise wouldn't have access to theatre get an opportunity to do so on this day.

Last year ASSITEJ Italy raised 1000 euros for the campaign, through asking audiences to add a small donation to their ticket price. These monies were collected and then donated to the Tamasha Festival in Pakistan, to aid audience access to this event. The determination for the funding was made by ASSITEJ Executive Committee. Should you wish to contribute in this way, please [contact the Secretary-General of ASSITEJ](#).

We hope that as many members as possible will get behind the campaign for 2019 so that we can make as big an impact as possible which supports the rights of children and young people to engage with theatre.

## Other events and activities

National Centre's promote World Day in different ways around the world with some Centre's running workshops, performances and special events, which are widely acknowledged.

Here are some possible activities and events which could be created to promote World Day by National Centre's and organisations:

- Award events/ceremonies highlighting good practice and special achievements in the field of theatre for young audiences



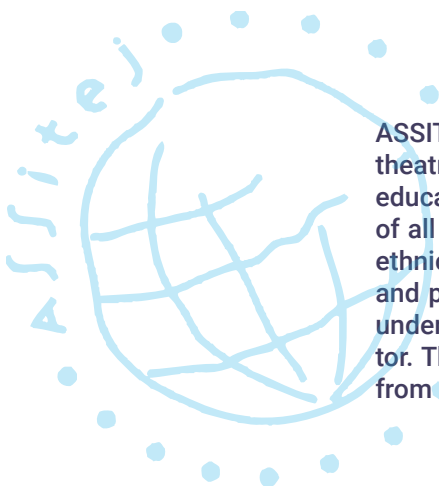
- Conferences, forums, round tables, seminars or workshop events which focus on a particular theme
- Performances including street theatre, script readings, dance performances, monologues.
- Festivals of performances
- Distribution of flyers/ printed materials with the message Take a Child to the Theatre Today - connected to schools or theatres.
- Other advertising opportunities potentially supported by sponsors
- Film projects linking with schools and universities where students can engage with the World Day campaign
- Drama activity/workshop in schools and theatres
- Special Fundraisers or gala occasions to raise funds to ensure that children and young people get access to the theatre.

It is important to note that the 'Take a Child to the Theatre Today' campaign can be linked to events which are already happening.

We hope that as many members as possible will get behind the campaign for 2019 so that we can make as big an impact as possible which supports the rights of children to engage with theatre.

Please share whatever you do with the International office at [sg@assitej-international.org](mailto:sg@assitej-international.org), so that we are able to report on the activities of the world. Links to any photographic or video documentation should be sent to [sg@assitej-international.org](mailto:sg@assitej-international.org)

**We hope you enjoy your World Day celebrations!**



ASSITEJ unites theatres, organisations and individuals throughout the world who make theatre for children and young people. ASSITEJ is dedicated to the artistic, cultural and educational rights of children and young people across the globe and advocates on behalf of all children regardless of nationality, cultural identity, ability, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion. ASSITEJ brings people together so that they can share knowledge and practice within the field of theatre for children and young people in order to deepen understandings, develop practice, create new opportunities and strengthen the global sector. The members of Assitej are National centers, Professional Networks, and individuals from around 100 countries across the world.