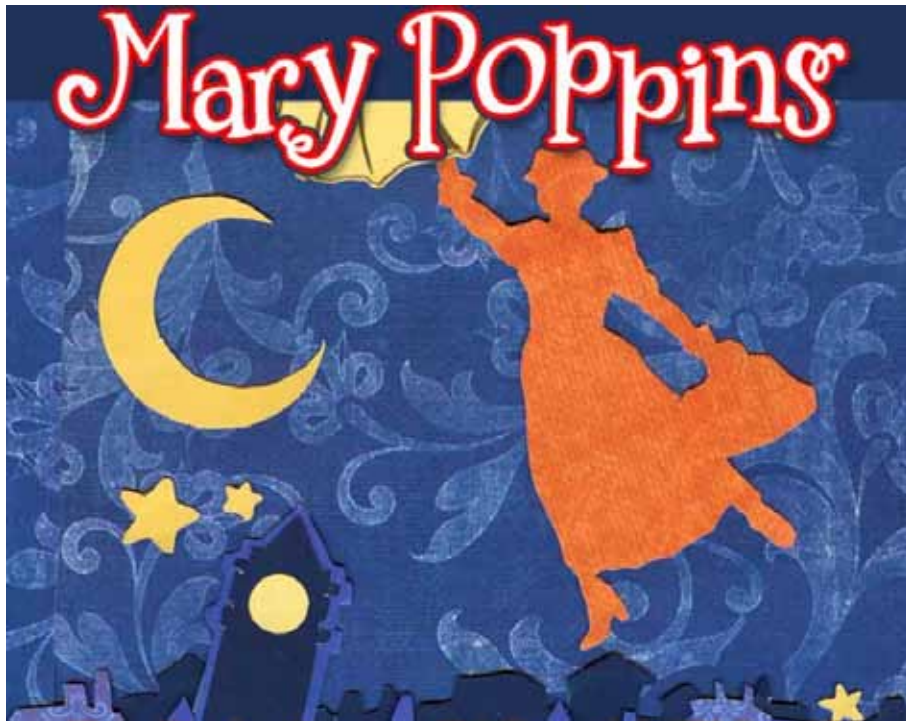


**Get ready to see
Mary Poppins
a musical at Wheelock Family Theatre**



A guide to help families
prepare children on the autism spectrum*
for a visit to
Wheelock Family Theatre

A publication of the
Wheelock Family Theatre
Access and Inclusion Program

***PLEASE NOTE:**

Social stories were originally developed for children on the autism spectrum, but we have found that they are helpful for preparing any child who is very young or has never been to the theatre before. Wheelock Family Theatre offers a generic social story, as well as a customized one, like this, for each of our productions. We hope you will find them helpful!

I am going to see a play called **Mary Poppins** at Wheelock Family Theatre. In a play, people on stage tell a story — right in front of us! These people are called **actors**.



To tell the story, the actors talk and wear special clothes called costumes.



Sometimes the actors sing and dance too.



This play is about a magical nanny named **Mary Poppins**. It is based on a series of books by P.L. Travers.



Parts of the play also come from a Disney movie based on the books.

If I have seen this movie, I might know some of the songs in the play.

Mary Poppins takes place in 1910 in London, England. All the characters speak with English accents.



When I sit down in the theatre, I will see **the set**. A set is an imaginary place built on the stage, to show where the story happens.

The set for this play looks like a pop-up storybook. The background is the skyline of London in 1910. There is also a tall lamppost and a tree.



Sometimes, actors will move extra set pieces onto the stage. This will help me know that the story has moved to a different place.

In some scenes they add two gates and some bushes. This lets me know we are in a park.



In another scene, actors bring in a kitchen. It looks like this.



Parts of the kitchen will break apart during the play.



It will look like Mary Poppins is putting them back together with magic.



In real life, people behind the set will use gears and levers and springs to make the magic happen.

Other surprising and magical things happen in the play too.

Mary Poppins and her friend Bert fly through the air.



To do this, Mary and Bert wear harnesses attached to cables. The cables lift them up and move them through the air above the stage.



I will know that the play is about to start when the lights in the room get darker and the lights on the stage get brighter.

The audience will get very quiet.

It is important that I try to be quiet during the show, so I can hear everything.

In the story, Mary Poppins comes to take care of two naughty children named Jane and Michael Banks.

This is Lily. On some days, she plays Jane.



This is Eowyn. On some days, she plays Jane.



This is Asher. On some days, he plays Michael.



This is Cam. On some days he plays Michael.



This is Lisa. She is the actor who plays Mary Poppins.



This is what she looks like in her costume.



This is Dan. He is the actor who plays Mary's friend Bert.



This is what he looks like in his costume.



This is Laura.



She plays
Jane and
Michael's
mother,
Winifred
Banks.



This is Andrew.



He plays
Jane and
Michael's
father,
George
Banks.



This is Shana.



She is the actor who plays Miss Andrew.

Miss Andrew was Mr. Banks' nanny when he was a little boy. She is not very nice.

Sometimes, characters, like Mr. Banks and Miss Andrew are mean or angry or sad.



But this is OK.

They are just actors *pretending* to be mean or angry or sad.

Even though I might be scared,

I know that these actors are nice
people and they will not hurt me.

If I am scared, I
can cover my ears or
close my eyes.



I can hug or hold hands
with my mom or dad

or with someone else
who came with me to the
theatre.



If I need to take a break, I can go into the lobby,



or go to a quiet, cozy space nearby.



If I need something to hold onto, I can ask the usher for a squishy toy.



There is a lot of music and singing and dancing in this show.



At the end of a scene or a song, some people will clap.
Clapping tells the actors that I liked their performance.



If I want to clap, I can.

I don't have to clap if I don't want to.

If anything is too loud, I can
always cover my ears.



I can hug or hold hands with my
mom or dad or with someone else
who came with me to the theatre.

If I need to take a break, I can go
into the lobby,



or go to a quiet, cozy
space nearby.





If I need something to hold onto, I
can play with a squishy toy.

In the middle of the play, we will have a break.
The break is called Intermission.

During Intermission, lots of people will get up
from their seats, and go back to the lobby.



I can go to the lobby if I want to.
I can also stay in my seat or go
to the quiet, cozy space.



I can ask for a snack. I can eat my snack in the lobby or outdoors.



But there is no eating or drinking inside the theatre.

I can ask to use the bathroom if I need to.



If I am thirsty, I can ask to use the water fountain.



After Intermission, everyone will come back to the theatre and sit down in their seats again.



It will get darker and quieter, just like
at the beginning of the play.

It is important that I
try to be quiet, so I
can hear everything.



The actors will come back on stage to
finish telling the story.



At the very end of
the play, all of the
actors will come out
on stage and bow.



This is called a
curtain call.

People will clap a lot, so
the actors will know how
much they liked the play.



Sometimes people will
stand up and clap.
If I want to clap, I

can. If I want to
stand up, I can.

I do not have to
stand up or clap if I
don't want to.

When the play is
over, we will go
back to the lobby.

It might be
crowded.



I will take deep breaths and be patient as we move through the crowd.

After this I will leave Wheelock
Family Theatre.



Going to the theatre is very exciting!



I hope I will have a great time
when I go to see
Mary Poppins!

This social story is a publication of the
Wheelock Family Theatre
Access and Inclusion Program.
We hope you found it helpful!

