

Spending fundraising dollars wisely with KidSafe



No handsome prince saves the day in this play. Here Janice Peters as Princess Jamie and Tricia Myles Dutcher as the town crier have a little chat with Doodleberry the Dragon about friendship, self esteem and personal achievement. Photo by: Kid-Safe Productions

Lynn McLachlan, KidSafe-

These days, every school's parent council faces the same dilemma: How do you stretch limited fundraising dollars to support the curriculum, promote children's well-being, and provide entertainment? While every school comes up with its own solutions, many primary schools across Ontario are discovering Kid-Safe Productions: a local edu-tainment company that offers a smart choice for their fundraising budgets.

Kid-Safe Productions was founded in 2000 by Tricia

Myles Dutcher, an experienced entertainer with a background in musical theatre. After working for many years in children's social services, she returned to performance after her son was born, deciding to use her unique skills to promote children's well-being. Her first play, called "Bugs, Bubbles and Blobs," helped kids stay safe by defining personal boundaries. Then, after talking to teachers, she knew what her next project should be. "Again and again, schools asked us for an anti-bullying show," Dutcher remembers. "And as

a parent, I was very concerned about this issue."

Continuing to reach out to children through the medium of musical plays, Dutcher enlisted the help of playwright and actor Jen Radomsky, who co-wrote Kid-Safe's next production, "Stop, That's Bullying!" and now collaborates with Dutcher on each new show. Kid-Safe also relies on a supportive team of consultants including social workers, teachers and principals, therapists, psychologists, and other therapeutic specialists. The experts agree that, when it comes to bringing a message home to

children, live music and drama have more impact than videos or other recorded media. Kid-Safe Productions also provides a resource guide for teachers with each play, and a colouring book for every student.

Recently, Kid-Safe consulted with internationally-recognized parenting expert Barbara Coloroso, who strongly supported the "Stop, That's Bullying" message and the way it's presented. "The arts allow you to step outside yourself and take on a different role," said Coloroso. "Fiction can work so well by teaching a lesson without being preachy and the kids walk away and remember it too."

Today, "Stop, That's Bullying!" has been presented at more than 100 schools across Ontario, with more performances to come. Children, educators, and parents have enthusiastically endorsed the "Stop, That's Bullying" message, which encourages children to act as advocates for their peers instead of choosing to be passive bystanders.

"Our kids talked about it for weeks afterwards and they got the message!" says Richard Laliberte, a school principal in the Ottawa region. "This play is an absolute must for any school wanting to deal with bullying head-on!"

Kid-Safe has recently added a new program to its repertoire to promote the development of

children's self-esteem. "Amazing You Can Be" is energetic and fun, and immediately popular with children and teachers alike. Grade four teacher S. Shiffito writes, "I most enjoyed seeing the important messages of helping, kindness, forgiveness, learning, and more."

"Even though we deal with serious subjects, we believe that entertainment value is number one," says Dutcher. "We put on shows that kids really enjoy at a price schools can afford."

Competitively priced, Kid-Safe Productions' shows represent excellent value with individual costs from as low as \$2.00 per child lower than the price of a movie and with no transportation costs. Kid-Safe Productions is curriculum-based edu-tainment delivered to your door. They also offer fundraising solutions. At this time, most Kid-Safe performances take place in the GTA; however, bookings can be arranged anywhere in Ontario.

"We feel that Kid-Safe Productions is making a real and meaningful difference in the lives of young people," says Joyann Callender of Kids Help Phone, Ontario Division. It's a message echoed through the gymnasiums of more and more Ontario schools.

For more information, please visit the Kid-Safe Productions Web site at www.kidsafeproductions.com.



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Call before November 10th to make your fall or winter booking and get 10% off! Be sure to mention this ad.

"The messages Kid-Safe's bringing for children are really important and they bring them in such a delightful and entertaining way."
Toronto Area Principal

"It may be cloaked in sequins & spangles, but kids get the message!"
Toronto Star

AVAILABLE IN GTA AND ONTARIO. CALL 416.809.KIDS TO SEE WHEN WE CAN COME TO YOUR AREA. VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO - WWW.KIDSAFEPRODUCTIONS.COM

We Care About Kids!

All Kid-Safe Employees carry valid OESC identification.



How safe are your schools?

Janice Barker, WSIB

Whether it's a summer job or a co-op placement, many students are vulnerable to the dangers lurking in the workplace. For many young people, a co-op placement represents their first work opportunity so their thoughts may be focused on the opportunity rather than on the potential hazards.

Many young people lack experience in the workplace and don't want to appear incompetent or incapable of performing a task, so they are hesitant to ask for information or raise concerns about safety. In 2003, more than 13,500 young workers in Ontario were injured seriously enough to lose time from work. Nine of them lost their lives; dozens more suffered amputations, broken bones, concussions, strains, and sprains.

To ensure a safe co-op experience, parents and teachers should determine that students have a solid understanding of their duties

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