

## Neurological Differences

- » Executive Function
- » Sensory Processing
- » Social Emotional Regulation

## Executive Functioning

- » Set Goals
- » Plan
- » Sequence
- » Prioritize
- » Organize
- » Initiate
- » Inhibit
- » Pace
- » Shift
- » Self-monitor
- » Emotional Control
- » Complete

## Sensory Differences

- » Receive sensory information and process it differently
- » Hyper or Hypo-sensitive (seeker or avoider)
- » Can trigger significant reactions or withdrawal
- » Can have a great deal of trouble focusing due to unmet sensory needs

## Social / Emotional Regulation Difficulties

- » Impulsivity
- » Difficulty anticipating consequences of own behavior
- » Trouble "filtering" responses
- » Difficulty keeping body in check

## Individuals with neurological differences. . .

- » Can have limited but intense interests
- » May not do well in sports
- » Often have difficulty with organization
- » Often have self-esteem issues
- » Can have rote memory skills
- » May have untapped talents

## Theory of Mind Impairment

- » Difficulty predicting others' behavior
- » Difficulty in explaining own behavior.
- » Difficulty understanding emotions
- » Difficulty understanding the perspective of others
- » Lack of understanding of social interaction

## Social Impact of Theory of Mind Impairment

- » Difficulty with 'appropriate' emotional responsiveness
- » Difficulties with conversational interactions
- » Inaccurate reading of contextual and/or non-verbal cues
- » Difficulty sustaining peer interactions
- » Disproportionate focus on own interests

## Why Theatre?

- » Recreational activity
- » Conducive to teaching social cues and interpretation
- » *Interacting* is an integral part of *acting*
- » It's fun!
- » It's not called Social Skills!!

## Components of being an audience

- » Reading body language
- » Reading facial expressions
- » Interpreting vocal tone, volume
- » Understanding the content and context of the situation

## Components of being an actor

- » Using appropriate body language
- » Using appropriate facial expression
- » Modulating vocal tone and volume
- » Portraying meaning and context

## BIG 3

- » Body Language
- » Facial Expression
- » Vocal Tone and Modulation

## Rules of Acting

- » Never hurt another actor
  - Physically
  - Feelings
- » Listen to the director

## "The Power"

- » Pass clap around circle in one direction
- » The person who has "the power" gets to change direction
- » Eventually multiple people have "the power"

## Skills in "The Power"

- » Works on focus and attention
- » Must pick up body cues for where the clap is going
- » Promotes the ability to "shift"
- » Repetition increases the ability to shift quickly



## Bamboozle

- » Circle or line
- » Director gives a feeling word to actor
- » Actors use body language, facial expression, vocal tone to express emotion
- » Say BAMBOOZLE using that emotion

### Skills in Bamboozle

- » Begin to work on the "BIG 3"
- » Can scaffold easily to levels of actor
- » Build confidence



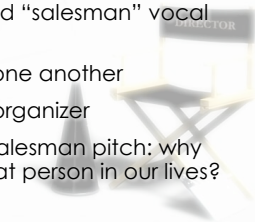
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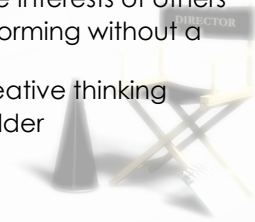
## "Sell Your Partner"

- » Demonstrate or have actor demonstrate how a "used car salesman" might sell a common object
- » Model exaggerated "salesman" vocal qualities
- » Partners interview one another
- » Partners: graphic organizer
- » Partners practice salesman pitch: why should WE want that person in our lives?



## Skills in "Sell Your Partner"

- » Getting to know peers
- » Recognizing the interests of others
- » Risk taking-performing without a script
- » Encourages creative thinking
- » Self esteem builder



## “Flexible Phrases”

- » Assign partners in the group
- » Give each pair receives a common phrase
- » Pairs decide on 2 or more ways to say that phrase to bring different meaning to the phrase.

## Skills in “Flexible Phrases”

- » Collaboration with partner
- » Interpreting a phrase-multiple word meanings, etc.
- » Using the BIG 3

## Two Phrases

- » One person is the “pivot person” - controls the scene
- » Two actors on the sides are each given two phrases - that's all they can say
- » Suggestion of a workplace is elicited from the audience

## Skills in Two phrases

- » Multiple meanings of words and phrases
- » Using “Big Three”
- » **Acting** and **reacting** to another person
- » Increasing flexibility

## Scenes from a Hat

- » Pair given a common scenario with a minor conflict
- » Actors create dialogue on the spot, **reacting** to one another
- » Must come to some resolution/ending

## Skills in “Scenes From A Hat”

- » Working with a partner
- » Being attentive to partner
- » Using verbal and non-verbal communication
- » REACTING to verbal AND non-verbal communication of partner
- » Analyzing outcomes of communication

## “Blah Blah”

- » More abstract version of “Scenes from a Hat”
- » Pair given a common scenario with conflict
- » Only verbalization allowed is “Blah, Blah”
- » Two characters have “Blah Blah” conversation about conflict
- » Must come to some resolution/ending

## Skills in “Blah Blah”

- » **Portray** meaning without words, with non-verbals
- » **Read** meaning without words, with non-verbals
- » Conflict resolution
- » Reinforce concept that one person's action causes a reaction

## Infomercial

- » Start with “Props” game
- » Build up to this game gradually
- » Use 4 or 5 props
- » Team of 3 or 4 actors
- » Work together to improv selling group of props as a kit, for example:

## Skills in Infomercial

- » Creative thinking
- » Teamwork
- » Flexibility
- » Reciprocity
- » ‘Closing’ statements

## “Taxi Driver”

- » Four chairs set up-2 front and 2 back
- » Three actors start in car
- » New person comes up to car as “driver” with a specific persona
- » Other members in car must emulate that same persona
- » Director yells “switch” and actors rotate and new driver comes in with new persona

## Comments about “Taxi Driver”

- » Rehearse rotation scheme before playing
- » Brainstorm different characters before playing
- » Difficult for some actors especially those who are less confident to come up with a character
- » Option to choose from brainstorming list

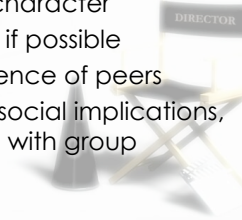
## Skills in "Taxi Driver"

- » Motor planning
- » Attending to fellow actors and emulating a persona
- » "Shifting"- quickly
- » Creative thinking
- » Increasing confidence so that one is willing to 'take a risk'



## Partner Scenes

- » Scene from everyday life
- » Understand meaning of dialogue and develop a character
- » Memorize scene if possible
- » Perform for audience of peers
- » Discuss context, social implications, language usage with group



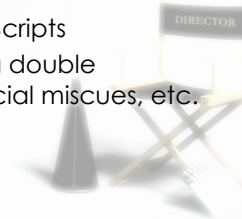
## Skills in small group scenes

- » Taking direction from director
- » Learning basic stage movement, blocking
- » Taking the perspective of the character
- » Thinking about the perspective of the audience



## Larger Group Scenes

- » Short Skits with entire group of actors
- » "Punch line "Scripts
- » Scripts utilizing double meanings, social miscues, etc.



## Skills in larger group scenes

- » Working as a cohesive group, picking up cues, entrances, etc.
- » Collaboration & cooperation
- » Examining language constructs- double meanings, idioms, etc.
- » Just plain fun!



## The Final Word

### **Theatre can offer youngsters:**

- » Opportunity to develop a leisure time activity that they enjoy
- » Build Self-esteem
- » Make friends
- » Work on social and pragmatic issues
- » Have fun!!!

What more could we ask?!

