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## CHILDSPLAY NEWS RELEASE

*For immediate release 07/25/08*

Visit [Childsplay's Media Room](#) for photos



### **Childsplay presents the moving story *Getting Near to Baby***

Tempe, AZ – Childsplay, Arizona's professional theatre company for young audiences and families, continues its 2008-2009 season at the Tempe Center for the Arts with ***Getting Near to Baby***, a poignant drama about coping with loss and family values. This page-to-stage adaptation by Y York opens on Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> and runs through Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. There will be a Target Storybook Preview on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm (with discounted tickets available for this show). This production is part of the US Airways Studio Series.

Childsplay Artistic Associate Andrés Alcalá directs *Getting Near to Baby* which features three Childsplay veterans (Katie McFadzen, Dwayne Hartford and Debra K. Stevens) alongside young professional actors (Jannese Davidson and Michelle Cunneen) and, in an unusual step for Childsplay, five children will round out the cast. Local high school

student Kaleena Newman, in her first professional performance, will star as older sister Willa Jo. Caitlyn Andelora and Jessica Webb will alternate the role of Little Sister and Brennan Metcalf and Christopher Moffit will alternate the role of Isaac Fingers.

This will be the regional premiere of the production, which debuted at People's Light & Theatre, Malvern, PA, as part of Imagination Begins with US, the US Airways New Plays Festival for Families. This 18-month festival, encompassing six productions in three US Airways hub cities, will provide more than 30,000 children, parents, and grandparents with the opportunity to experience new and innovative plays of the highest artistic quality. The Festival concept promotes both the creation of new works and the exchange of expertise between the partner theatres.

*Getting Near to Baby* is based on the Newbery Honor book of the same title, written by Audrey Coulumbis and published in 1999. The story is a poignant tale of two sisters sent to live with their aunt after the death of their infant sister. Willa Jo and Little Sister struggle with all of Aunt Patty's rules and expectations. It doesn't help that Little Sister refuses to talk at all. While dealing with loss and adjusting to new circumstances, the family learns to pull together, to laugh together and to appreciate each other in new and unexpected ways. This show is ideal for young people ages seven and up.

***Getting Near to Baby***  
**By Y York**  
**Based on the book by Audrey Coulumbis**

Directed by **Andrés Alcalá**  
Set and Costume Design by **Holly Windingstad**  
Lighting Design by **Tim Monson**  
Wig Design by **Katie Peck**

Dialect Coaching by **Patricia Snoyer Black**

**THE CAST:**

Willa Jo..... **Kaleena Newman**  
Little Sister.....**Caitlin Andelora/Jessica Webb**  
Liz Fingers.....**Jannese Davidson**  
Isaac Fingers.....**Brennan Metcalf /Christopher Moffit**  
Cynthia Wainwright.....**Michelle Cunneen**  
Aunt Patty.....**Katie McFazden**  
Uncle Hob.....**Dwayne Hartford**  
Lucy Wainwright.....**Debra K. Stevens**

**Target Storybook Preview:**

Sunday, October 19<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m. (all tickets discounted at \$12)

**Opening Performance:**

Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m.

**Weekend Schedule:**

Saturdays and Sundays, October 25<sup>th</sup> through November 9<sup>th</sup> 1 and 4 p.m.

**LOCATION:**

Tempe Center for the Arts -- Studio  
700 West Rio Salado Parkway  
Tempe, Arizona 85281  
Box office: 480-350-2822 or online at [www.childsplayaz.org/tca](http://www.childsplayaz.org/tca).

Childsplay also provides educational field trip performances Tuesday through Friday mornings. For more information about Field Trips contact Beth Olson at [bolson@childsplayaz.org](mailto:bolson@childsplayaz.org) or 480-921-5757.

**TICKET INFORMATION:**

Tickets for *Getting Near to Baby* are on sale through Tempe Center for the Arts box office at 480-350-2822 or online at [www.childsplayaz.org/tca](http://www.childsplayaz.org/tca).

**Target Storybook Preview Performance:** \$12 tickets, Sunday, October 19<sup>th</sup> at 4PM

**All other performances:** \$25 Adults; \$20 for students and seniors

**Please note:** Childsplay's administrative offices have moved to the new Sybil B. Harrington Campus for Imagination and Wonder at Mitchell Park (formerly Mitchell School), 900 S. Mitchell Dr., Tempe, Arizona 85281. Main office phone: 480-921-5700.

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Childsplay, Inc. is a nonprofit theatre company of professional, adult artists who perform for and teach young audiences and their families. The mission of Childsplay is "to create theatre so strikingly original in form, content or both, that it instills in young people an enduring awe, love and respect for the medium, thus preserving imagination and wonder, the hallmarks of childhood which are keys to the future." For

Childsplay's 2008-09 Season

information on Childsplay performances, classes or educational presentations please call 480-921-5700 or visit our website at [www.childsplayaz.org](http://www.childsplayaz.org).

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