

Today you saw *Eric and Elliot* by Dwayne Hartford
performed by Childsplay

THE CAST

Mother/Daisy. Kristin Hailstone
ElliotD. Scott Withers
EricNoah Todd
Mr. WilloughbyJon Gentry
Miss HaddenKatie McFadzen

To contact anyone in the cast,
email info@childsplayaz.org
or send mail to PO Box 517 Tempe, AZ 85280

About Depression...

About *1 in 20* teens get seriously depressed each year. Sure, everybody feels sad now and then BUT if you or someone you know shows one or more of the following signs, **then the problem may be DEPRESSION**
~frequent sadness, tearfulness, crying
~inability to enjoy previously favorite activities
~low self esteem and guilt
~increased irritability, anger, or hostility
~difficulty with relationships, social isolation
~frequent complaints of physical illnesses; low energy
~frequent absences from or poor performance in school
~a major change in eating and/or sleeping patterns
~use or abuse of alcohol and/or drugs

If you are concerned about depression in yourself or a friend, TALK TO SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP.

There are many people who you can talk to:

- ~a psychologist or psychiatrist
- ~your school counselor
- ~your parents, or a trusted family member or adult
- ~your family doctor
- ~your faith-based professional

Remember: depression can affect people of any age, race, ethnic, or economic group

Depression & Suicide Internet Links:

- www.mhaarizona.org
~Mental Health Association of Arizona
- www.nmha.org
~National Mental Health Association
- www.yellowribbon.org
~Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program
- www.withonevoice.com/new/facts.html
~some startling facts and stats on suicide
- <http://kidshealth.org>
~you can get info on depression here

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About Suicide...

Be Aware of the Warning Signs:

A suicidal person may:

- ✦ Talk about committing suicide
- ✦ Withdraw from friends and/or social activities
- ✦ Be preoccupied with death and dying
- ✦ Have a recent severe loss
- ✦ Experience drastic changes in behavior
- ✦ Lose interest in hobbies, work, school, etc.
- ✦ Prepare for death by making out a will
- ✦ Give away prized possessions
- ✦ Have attempted suicide before
- ✦ Take unnecessary risks
- ✦ Lose interest in personal appearance
- ✦ Increase their use of alcohol and drugs

How You Can Help if a Friend Talks of Suicide:

Listen: Let your friend tell you about their situation and feelings. Don't give advice or try to find a simple solution. Really listen to what they are trying to tell you.

Be Honest: If your friend's words or actions scare you, say so. Your discussion will not encourage your friend to go through with their plan. Let your friend know you care.

Share Feelings: At times everyone has felt sad, hurt, or depressed. You know what it feels like. Let your friend know that they are not alone and that you care.

Get Help: If you keep this secret you could lose your friend forever. Try to get them to talk to an adult they trust. If they won't, talk to someone yourself.

Resources/Important Phone Numbers:

Teen Lifeline (24hr. suicide prevention hot-line; peer counselors from 3-9pm): 602-248-TEEN (8336)

Impact's 24 hr. Crisis Hotline: 480-784-1500

Impact (Counseling Services): 480-784-1514

Mental Health Association of AZ:

480-994-4407; 800-MHA-9277

ValueOptions Crisis Line: 602-222-9444

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

***If you or someone you know is suicidal, call these numbers. A counselor can help determine the best course of action OR call 911**

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Preview Guide for Teachers and Parents to Childsplay's Production of **ERIC AND ELLIOT**

We hope you find this guide helpful in preparing your students for an interesting and educational theatrical experience. Included you'll find things to talk about before and after seeing the performance, as well as resource materials.

The Story...

Eric and Elliot is the story of a family struggling with the aftermath of suicide. The mother has spiraled into a severe depression, while the younger of two brothers, Eric, is in a state of complete denial. Elliot, the older brother, takes Eric on a journey toward healing. Along the way, the boys meet three whimsical characters that demonstrate a range of unsuccessful ways of dealing with the past, present and future. Finally, the brothers arrive at the realization that healing comes through facing the past and, in this instance, the tragic day when hope was lost. The play ends with Elliot encouraging Eric not to let go of the hope in his heart, and to seek help for their mother.

About Theater Etiquette...

Since this may be the first live theater experience for some of your students, please take a moment to discuss appropriate audience behavior. Sometimes when confronted with serious issues audience members may feel uncomfortable and react in a way that would be looked upon as inappropriate (laughter, comments, etc.). Since theater is live, the actors can see and hear the audience just like the audience can see and hear the actors. Please encourage students to be respectful of the fact that this is serious subject matter and a challenging piece for the actors to perform.

ERIC AND ELLIOT

By Dwayne Hartford

Directed by
Anthony Runfola

Scenic Design by
Jeffrey Lemire

Costume Design by
D. Daniel Hollingshead

Sound Design by
Anthony Runfola

THE CAST

Mother/Daisy. Kristin Hailstone
Elliot D. Scott Withers
Eric Noah Todd
Mr. Willoughby Jon Gentry
Miss Hadden Katie McFadzen

Spring, 2006

The production is supported in part by:

Arizona Commission on the Arts
Bashas' Markets
City of Tempe/Tempe Municipal Arts
Commission
Tempe Diablos
Wells Fargo



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



✓ **SUICIDE IS A PERMANENT SOLUTION TO A TEMPORARY PROBLEM**

ERIC & ELLIOT BOOKLIST

Prepared with the help of Tim Wadham, Youth Services
Coordinator for the Maricopa County Library District



Fiction about suicide and depression:

St. Michael's Scales by Neil O. Connelly
Darkness Before Dawn by Sharon M. Draper
Fat Kid Rules the World by K. L. Going
Things Left Unsaid: A Novel in Poems by Stephanie Hemphill
Damage by A. M. Jenkins
Drowning Anna by Sue Mayfield
The Cloud Chamber by Joyce Maynard
Aimee by Mary Beth Miller
Shizuko's Daughter by Kyoko Mori
Under the Wolf, Under the Dog by Adam Rapp
Tribes by Arthur G. Slade
Inside Out by Terry Trueman

Non-fiction about suicide and depression:

The Silent Cry: Teen Suicide and Self-Destructive Behavior by Joan Esherick
Depression by Faye Zucker

All materials are available through your local library. Check it out!

Things to Talk About Before the Show...

Talking about SUICIDE does not cause SUICIDE! When you talk about SUICIDE with teens it gives them resources that can help them or help others make choices other than SUICIDE.

Some Facts About Suicide:

- ✓ Arizona ranks first in the nation for teens who complete suicide with guns
- ✓ Each year since 1985, Arizona has ranked in the top 10 states for teens who have completed suicide and currently ranks ninth
- ✓ In Arizona suicide is consistently one of the three leading causes of death among youth (19 years of age and younger)
- ✓ The American Association of Suicidology estimates there are 25 suicide attempts for every completion
- ✓ Every suicide intimately affects at least six other people
- ✓ 90% of the people who commit suicide suffer from a mental disorder
- ✓ Geographic and socio-economic diversity, growth, changes, immigration, loneliness and depression are risk factors for suicide
- ✓ Male teens complete suicide at a 5 to 1 ratio to female teens, but females attempt suicide more often than males
- ✓ In Arizona during 1999, the highest mortality rate was among Native Americans, followed by the white, non-Hispanic group
- ✓ A previous suicide attempt greatly increases the risk of a young male eventually committing suicide

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- + Lose interest in hobbies, work, school, etc.
- + Prepare for death by making out a will and final arrangements
- + Give away prized possessions
- + Have attempted suicide before
- + Take unnecessary risks
- + Lose interest in personal appearance
- + Increase their use of alcohol and drugs

Links Between Depression and Suicide:

- * Major depression is the psychiatric diagnosis most commonly associated with suicide.
- * About 2/3 of people who complete suicide had a depressive disorder at the time of their deaths.
- * The risk of suicide amongst people with depression is approximately 30 times that of the general population.
- * Suicide is particularly likely during early stages of a depressive episode, which is why early intervention should be encouraged.
- * People who drink alcohol or take drugs in addition to being depressed are at a greater risk for suicide.

Things To Talk About After the Show...

The Mental Health Association of Arizona (MHA) will be on hand to answer questions after the show. Childsplay and MHA have enjoyed a close working relationship since the development phase of this production in 2001. MHA does suicide prevention education for Arizona schools, community

groups and others—sharing the message that depression is a real, common and treatable illness. For more information on youth depression—including depression screening opportunities and mental health resources in your community, contact MHA's Information and Referral line at 480-994-4407, ext. 13. If you're living with depression, it's not your fault. Don't be afraid to talk to someone. Reach out—get help.

The performance will be followed by a discussion with the actors and a representative of the Mental Health Association of Arizona about depression and what to do if you or someone you know needs help. **PLEASE ALLOW AT LEAST 20 MINUTES FOR THE DISCUSSION** as it allows students to process the information and if necessary, ask for help.

Depression & Suicide Questionnaire:

Are you...

- irritable or quick to anger?
- often sad?
- unable to concentrate?
- having difficulty making decisions?
- receiving failing grades?
- feeling helpless or hopeless; asking "why bother?"
- isolated or withdrawn?
- quick to make threats?
- violent toward yourself or others?
- suffering from eating disorders (lack of appetite, overeating)?
- suffering from sleep disorders (insomnia or oversleeping)?
- having recurring thoughts of death or suicide?

If you answered yes to 5 or more of the questions and symptoms continue for 2 weeks, **GET HELP!** If you notice these symptoms in a friend or relative, **GET HELP!** Don't ignore the signs!

Internet Links:

- www.mhaarizona.org
~Mental Health Association of Arizona
- www.nmha.org
~National Mental Health Association
- www.aacap.org
~American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists and includes dozens of great Facts for Families
- www.yellowribbon.org
~Yellow Ribbon International Suicide Prevention Program
- www.psycom.net/depression.central.suicide.html
~Links to MANY articles about teen suicide and depression
- www.withonevoice.com/new/facts.html
~Some startling facts and stats on suicide

Community Resources/Important Phone Numbers:

- Mental Health Association of AZ:**
480-994-4407; 800-MHA-9277 (outside Maricopa County)
- ValueOptions:** 602-914-5800, 800-564-5465
- ValueOptions Crisis Line:** 602-222-9444
- Impact** (Counseling Services): 480-784-1514
- Teen Lifeline** (24hr. suicide prevention hot-line; peer counselors from 3-9pm): 602-248-TEEN (8336)
- Impact's 24 hr. Crisis Hotline:** 480-784-1500
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Hopeline Network**
1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)

***If a student is suicidal, call these numbers. A counselor can help determine the best course of action OR call 911**