

Cody Clark Magic

Arts Programming Overview + Teaching Artist(s) Bio

Programming

Elementary School Program Options (K-5th Grades):

Celebrating Your Hard Work - Student Fun Show

- School wide reward for good grades and behavior
- Astonishing magic + age appropriate humor
- Lightly reinforces study skills while keeping it fun

Your Differences Make You Magical - Social/Emotional Dev. Show

- Cody's autism allows him to relate to any student who feels different
- In this assembly, he uses magic to show students why not to bully
- Students will be encouraged to accept differences in themselves and others

Conductor Cody's Magical Railway Adventures - Young Audiences

- Cody's train themed character aimed at Pre-K-2nd grade
- Students go on railway adventures full of discovery and knowledge
- Can be tailored to desired subjects

Middle/High School Program Options (6th-12th Grades):

Celebrating Your Hard Work also offered for Middle/High Schools

A Different Way of Thinking:

- Cody combines magic, comedy, and storytelling to share what living with autism is like for him.
- Students see how autism makes him different, but no less capable
- Most of the show is set in his high school years, allowing students to directly relate to his challenges.

Revealing the Secrets Behind Essential Skills Magi-Talk

- Talk (with tricks to keeps things spicy) which equips students with adulthood skills
- Tips in self, people, and emotional management are shared
- Helps students be ready for college and the workforce

Other Types of Programs (Any grades + all adults):

Basic Magic Class

- Students/program participants learn basic magic with household objects
- These routines are doable, yet challenging, teaching that effort results in great art
- Benefits include increased motor skills from the prop management and scriptwriting/theatre skills from building a presentation

Sensory Friendly Magic Show

- Loud noises, bright lights, and other sensory barriers to seeing performance art are removed before the show....but without removing any of the fun
- Plots are kept simple, direct, yet still magical and astonishing
- Being autistic myself allows me to relate directly to predominately disabled audiences and have a direct idea of how to adjust the show for their enjoyment

Other Info: I serve an average of 60 different clients each year, with some bringing me in multiple times a year. Major markets include libraries, regional elementary schools, small theatres, disability advocacy orgs, corporations, and colleges. I can break down to specific numbers upon request.

Teaching Artist(s) Bios(s)

Cody is a 29-year-old professional magician/autistic self-advocate. He places his magic within real life's magic moments, giving his shows a more personal and relatable touch. He also shares the honest ins and outs of being autistic both in his shows and in his "magi-talks" given to educators, students, and corporations. He hopes to show people that our differences aren't anything to be scared of, but simply different ways of thinking best embraced. His biggest honors are sharing the Louisville Palace stage with magic legend Lance Burton, receiving the Society of American Magicians Rising Star of Magic award, being profiled in the Courier-Journal, and recently being named a Kentucky Colonial for his efforts. Alongside his other artistic efforts, he also programs a bimonthly magic & variety show called Cody & Friends at the newly opened (and Fund funded) Highview Arts Center.

Artistic Content of Programming

I've shared several options above, but the common benefit of all of them is the art of magic plus the theatre, comedy, and storytelling found within my presentations all work together to give people a different way of thinking about the world. I feel magic works particularly well for this because it dares to think differently about the world. When someone's brain is fried because the normal laws of nature were just broken in front of their eyes, it's then easier to encourage them to think differently about other matters such as disability rights, why not to bully, how to be a successful adult, etc. Magic being a predominantly visual performing art allows it to reach a wide range of people from the youngest

kindergarteners to 100 year olds, from Ivy League grads to people usually thought of as "dumb", and even people who don't speak English or like those within my "sensory friendly" audiences. And similar to wrestling, magic has a mass appeal which makes people turned off by "the arts" still feel comfortable attending our kinds of shows.

If I'm able to astonish my audience and then use that astonishment to make them think differently about magic, autism, the arts, and life, I'll feel my programming has been a success.

Educational Content of Programming

It varies depending on the exact option chosen. It ranges from the "Celebrating Your Hard Work" assemblies, which focus on the artistic experience of a magic show with some reinforcement of study skills, the advocacy programs (A Different Way of Thinking & Your Differences Make You Magical) which share the honest ins and outs of living with a disability, how that relates to the students own differences, and why our differences are what make us magical - and therefore why not to bully, and special programs like Conductor Cody, which features real railroading history & science and my basic magic classes which teach basic magic effects along with the artistic development skills needed to create a good presentation. Aside from learning how magic is artistic in its own right, most of my programs seek to build social/emotional skills, life skills, and self-acceptance using my experiences with autism as my primary source.

Process for hiring, training, and evaluating performance/effectiveness.

I've been practicing magic for 17 years and counting. I learn new routines and get feedback via the Louisville Magic Club, J&B Magic Shop in New Albany, my connections with Fund friends such as Highview Arts Center and the former Slant Culture Theatre Festival, and how interconnected the magic and arts communities are in general. In short, I've got plenty of friends helping me be an effective artist. On the clients side of things, my assistant April and I try our best to effectively communicate with our clients and we send Google feedback forms post show to hear our clients honest feedback. Thankfully it's been predominantly positive, but we do sincerely utilize any critiques received. And I'm always looking to grow and develop as a performer.

How are participants of all backgrounds and abilities included in programming?

Aside from PACS and movie theatres offering sensory friendly showtimes, I'm one of the few small scale

performing artists offering a sensory friendly performance option. This allows me to meet moderate to severely disabled audiences where they are at and give them an arts experience tailored for their needs.

Although my school assemblies come from the perspective of being autistic, I have learned over time how to relate it broadly to the experiences of anyone made to feel different because of who they are. I show people why not to bully - because our differences make us cool! Although budgets do get in the way sometimes, I don't make any assumptions about schools/libraries in certain parts of town when sending my outreach because I don't want to put any barriers on my end against people of underserved

backgrounds being able to see my show. My hope is that being part of this program would remove the budget barrier to this goal.

How do we engage teachers and community center staff before, during, and after programming?

I treat everyone like the CEO because someday, I might be right! I'm a people person, so I enjoy getting to know everyone before and after my presentations, hearing what they need, what they like, and what the current concerns in the education field are. Having a twin sister and brother-in-law both be JCPS teachers also helps here. And in my one hour presentation package, I include both a post-show Q&A and a curriculum sheet. These allow teachers to start and continue conversations well beyond my visit.

How do we engage participants in the creative and learning process?

One of magic's best qualities is built-in on-stage participation. Not many major art forms have built in roles for audience members to contribute to the success of the performance piece. But magic does! So I always feature audience participation opportunities in my presentations. In my one hour presentation package, the post show Q&A allows students and staff to learn about magic, autism, the creative process, being a young adult, or anything else they want to ask about. And in programs like the basic magic class, students will gain an understanding that magic's not just the trick - that it involves a lot of theatre, writing, and storytelling skills too.