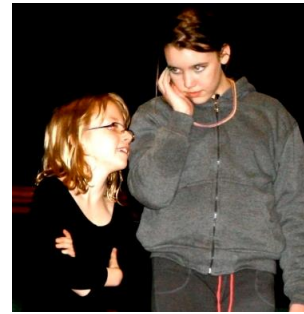


Theater of Possibility

Empowering neurodiverse youth through acting and improv



Winter-Spring 2024 - Come explore the possibilities!

Are you a budding writer, aspiring actor or closeted comedian? Do you like to invent characters or stories? Would you like to follow your imagination to see where it might lead? Perhaps meet some friends along the way? Theater of Possibility ("TOP") **helps young people be themselves** more fully and authentically, and give voice to their ideas and dreams.

Through acting, improvisation, and play-creation, we shape powerful emotions and ideas into **moving, profound and funny works of theater!**

- Imaginative, playful and non-didactic
- Theater activities designed to highlight relationship skills, collaboration and leadership
- Many different ways to shine. Do you express yourself best verbally, through writing, music or art, by solving problems, or by giving hugs? Whether you're an introverted dreamer, an extroverted class clown or somewhere in the middle, your talents will be appreciated!
- Culminates in an interactive performance of ensemble-created original short plays



- Who:** TOP is an inclusion program, serving youth with Asperger's, autism, or other learning differences, as well as typically-developing peers. Participants must be able to participate independently in structured group activities or come with an adult aide
- When:** **Ages 9-14: Saturdays, 9-10:20 AM, Feb 24-May 18** (no class 4/6). Last class, on May 18, goes till Noon for showcase.
Ages 15-adult: Saturdays, 10:30-Noon, Feb 24 - June 1 (no class 4/6). May 18 meets 12:30-2, and June 1 meets 10:30-2 for showcase.
- Where:** **University Heights Center**, 5031 University Way NE, Seattle, 98105
- Fee:** \$450 (younger) /\$525 (older); sibling discount, partial scholarships & pay-what-you-can available
- How:** For registration/information contact Lauren at **(206) 321-4923** or Lauren@LaurenMarshall.com.

Theater of Possibility is a contracted DSHS/DDA Community Settings Respite Care Provider. Also, need-based tuition assistance for families with autism may be available through Ben's Fund, info@bensfund.org

Rehearsal for living

The real triumph for me was watching Alex. Thought you'd like to know that he has had an INTENSE fear of speaking or even appearing in front of other people. When he was stage manager in high school he would even refuse to be acknowledged on stage at the end of a performance. I cried through his entire performance. He even improvised—pure magic! - Jonibeth Whitney, mother of a 20-year-old TOP actor

[My son's] mental rigidity has given way to flexibility and a new found ability to function within a group. His self-esteem is soaring and the class has become an anchor for life. He marveled aloud that "Lauren could bring together such different kinds of kids and have us get along so well."
- Susan Moffitt, mother of a 17-year-old TOP actor

Lauren became a teacher I could trust and be open with. She could really change things around for me because we were in a small group. Lauren scribed for me because I could not handwrite as fast as the rest of the class. She made sure that everybody else stopped and listened to my ideas even though I was not yelling or crying about them and my voice is very soft so my words do not always come out right. - Becca Zions, 15-year-old TOP actor

My daughter is the NT sibling. Her brother is HFA. It was a great experience for her. Besides just being fun, it gave her the chance to see how other kids with different abilities are (and how they feel about situations in life) instead of only having her little brother as a reference. - Barbara El Naby, mother of a 12-year-old TOP actor

TOP is one of those rare opportunities for kids, like mine, who aren't quite typical, but aren't quite disabled. It's great for them to be with peers. Lauren understands and appreciates their quirky uniqueness.
- Maya Richardson, mother of TOP actors, ages 7 and 10



Lauren Goldman Marshall (founding director and lead teacher) has worked as a Seattle playwright and theater director for three decades. She served at the helm of Seattle Public Theater for five years before stepping down to start a family in 2001. Her plays and musicals have been produced nationally, and include *Abraham's Land* (Kirkland Performance Center), *Fixing Einstein* (workshopped at the 5th Avenue Theatre), an award-winning adaptation of *The Misanthrope* (Artists Repertory Theatre), and the hit Seattle revue *Waiter, There's a Slug in My Latté* (Cabaret de Paris). She has degrees from Stanford (BA, JD) and NYU (MFA).

Founded in 2010, Theater of Possibility uses techniques adapted from Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed, whose methods are used around the world for social activism, community-building, therapy and education.

TOP is excited to announce the video release of its acclaimed June 2023 production of ***Love Letters—A Truly Short Epistolary Romance***, by **Sofia Ghassaei** and other songwriters. Two autistic nonspeakers fall in love via email, only to struggle with sensory realities when they meet in person, in this professionally-produced musical by and about autistic nonspeakers. "This is truly pathbreaking and a must watch for everyone," writes Swarit Gopalan, age 11. Watch it on [YouTube @theaterofpossibility](https://www.youtube.com/@theaterofpossibility).



TOP also offers Saturday classes for ages 13+ at Bellevue Youth Theatre. Contact Lauren or BYT for more info.



Theater of Possibility has four times been supported by a Youth Arts Award from the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture. TOP is a member of the [University Heights Center](https://www.uheights.org/) Theatre Alliance. See also <http://www.laurenmarshall.com/TheaterOfPossibility.htm>