

## Webinar Series

### "A Time to Reflect: A Conversation with New Young Audience Presenters"

From Seed to Season: How to Grow as a New Young Audience Presenter

By Joanne Churchill  
Joanne Churchill Arts Consulting  
2023

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## Ontario Presents' Land Acknowledgement!

We honour the past, present and future stewards of the land, and we recognize that we have a shared responsibility for reconciliation and decolonization, as well as stewardship of the natural environment. Ontario Presents also specifically recognizes the legacy of colonization embedded in many aspects of the performing arts sector, including the technologies, structures, and ways of thinking we use every day.

Until recently, many Indigenous communities were legally prevented from practicing their own cultural and artistic traditions, and to this day Indigenous people still have less access to the performing arts both as audiences and artists. Other barriers such as cost and physical accessibility also disproportionately impact Indigenous people. Actively dismantling the colonial approaches embedded in our work and our tools is critical to reconciliation and Indigenous resurgence.

# Where Do You Reside on Ancestral Lands?

I encourage you to go to <https://native-land.ca/> to learn more about the ancestral lands in which we live, and determine how we can be part of a larger conversation about reconciliation and decolonialization.

# I'm Your Host

Good afternoon, I'm your host for today's webinar. My name is **Joanne Churchill** and I currently work as a **Special Projects Consultant** for **Ontario Presents**. I am also the author of "From Seed to Season" and the Project Lead for the New Young Audience Presenter Project. My background is in developing opportunities for children to access the performing arts in communities and schools.

I'm a middle-aged white woman and my pronouns are she/her. I am wearing an olive green shirt with metal feather earrings. I have unruly blonde curls and am wearing dark glasses. My background screen is my home office but it is blurred out a bit to make sure you don't witness the mess of shoes my teenage boys always leave by the front door.

## What's this Webinar all about?

This session is the third webinar in Ontario Presents' **Continuing Learning Series** in support of the digital document "[From Seed to Season: How to Grow as a New Young Audience Presenter.](#)" The document was written to support [new](#) and [emerging presenters](#) in rural, remote and underserved communities to achieve their vision of connecting artists with children and youth in their community. This e-document is part of a larger project, called the New Young Audience Presenter Project, that aims to support the ongoing sustainability of young audience presenting.

This final webinar will be an opportunity to discuss with [3 participants of this project](#) as they reflect on their presenting journey to date. Each of our guests will have a unique viewpoint as they are all approaching their presenting process differently - with different backgrounds, experiences and goals.

# More about the New Young Audience Presenter Project

The [New Young Audience Presenter Project](#) is intended to support and uplift new young audience presenters as they navigate the various elements and benchmarks of developing arts opportunities for children and youth in their communities. The project offers [personalized consultations](#), [professional development and other resources](#) that are tailor made to address the specific needs and challenges of each participant.

It's not a project that offers one type of support for all, rather it's crafted to be highly responsive to the respective needs and challenges of its participants, their audience and their community. The participants of this project fundamentally understand that creating a presenting series propels the cultural development of children in their community and helps to develop creative leaders for our future.

# Today's Topics and Format

Today we will be having an casual but informative **chat with 3 project participants** that I have had the pleasure of working with since last fall. We will be discussing the following:

- 1) Their **successes and challenges** as they begin their respective presenting journeys.
- 2) Their biggest **“take-away” or “a-ha moment”** from participating in this project to date.
- 3) What they **need to propel** their team/organization/initiative to the next level.

We will start the webinar with a conversation with each of our guests followed by an opportunity for the viewers to ask questions at the end of the full discussion.

# Welcome Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall, Walkerton

I'd like to welcome our first guest, [Robin Zettel](#), who is the Chair of the Music Committee for the Victoria Jubilee Hall in Walkerton. Her organization is not new to presenting but definitely new to presenting for young audiences.

Robin, thank you for your participation today and would you be able to share a little about yourself and why you have begun this presenting journey.



## Robin Zettel: Introduction

- I acknowledge the traditional territories of the Anishinabek Nation: The People of the Three Fires known as the Ojibwe, Odawa and Pottawatomie Nations. And to further give thanks to the Saugeen First Nation and the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, now known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation as the traditional keepers of this land.
- I am a volunteer. A mom of 4 young children. I am a musician.
- I am the Chairperson of the Jubilee Arts and Music Committee at the Victoria Jubilee Hall.
- The VJH is a 126 year-old heritage building, a volunteer-run, nonprofit organization.
- Historically, has always had performances on stage for community
- Programming for young audience is a new endeavor in order to meet the needs of the community.

## Questions #1: Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall

Robin has been part of the New YA Presenter Project since the fall and is working towards programming for the 2025-2026 season. Considering that you are in the early development stage of your presenting journey, can you share with the viewers what you consider your **biggest success** and **how you were able to achieve that success**.



Image description: The Victoria Jubilee Hall heritage building in Walkerton, Ontario. A prominent red sign with the venue's name and upcoming shows is in the forefront.

# Answer #1: Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall

## SUCSESSES:

- **Taking the initiative to do something new:**
  - Having the hard discussions
  - Making the decision to expand programming for younger audiences
- **Using the e-document “From Seed to Season”**
  - Understanding organizational values
  - Connecting organizational values to the values of the community
  - Building community relationships
  - Teamwork

# Links to Learning: Resources available in “From Seed to Season”

- **Organizational values:**
  - See CHAPTER 2 - [Defining Your Values as a Presenter \(page 10\)](#)
    - Encourages presenters to determine their values and reflect on how those values will affect future decisions (ie. programming, outreach, marketing etc.)
- **Community values:**
  - See CHAPTER 2 - [Understanding Your Community \(page 12\)](#)
    - Encourages presenters to research who’s in their community and their wants and needs
- **Teamwork:**
  - See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 1: Building a Supportive Team \(page 28\)](#)
    - Provides resources on volunteerism, recruitment, engagement and more

## Question #2: Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall

Starting a presenting series for young audiences in a small community where none had existed before is a significant undertaking for any individual or team, can you share some of the **challenges you have experienced** since you have started this journey?



Image Description: The heritage Victoria Jubilee Hall in Walkerton, Ontario on a bright sunny day with a gazebo and Canadian flag pole on the front property.

## Answer #2: Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall

### CHALLENGES:

- **Building a new audience base that is:**
  - Younger
  - Representative of a wider range of people and demographics
  - Family oriented and not school system based
- **Changing the mindset of organization's leadership by:**
  - Training leadership and volunteers to accept a new mindset and to accept the reality of having a younger audience base
  - Acknowledging that young audience performances take place at different types of the day and during different times of the year

# Links to Learning: Resources available in “From Seed to Season”

- **Building a new audience base:**
  - See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 3: Building Audiences Now and for the Future](#) (page 37)
    - Provides strategies to identify, connect and impact new audiences and encourages presenters to involve their communities’ voice in future decisions.
- **Changing the mindset of organization’s leadership:**
  - See CHAPTER 1 - [Valuing the Impact of Arts on Children and Youth](#) (page 5)
    - Provides research on how the arts can nurture the cultural development of children and help build arts audiences for the future.
  - See CHAPTER 4 - [The Uniqueness of Presenting for Young Audience](#) (page 44)
    - Lists how performances for young audiences can be radically different than their adult counterparts.

## Question #3: Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall

Robin and I have been connecting almost every month since last fall. We've chatted about all sorts of topics and resources, and have worked through portions of the the e-document "From Seed to Season." So, Robin, is there **one main "take-away" or "a-ha!" moment** from your participation in the New YA Presenter Project that you could share with our viewers.



Image Description: The interior of the 300 seat Victoria Jubilee Hall looking from the stage into the audience. The main floor seats are red and the second floor balcony has gold and green seats.



## Answer #3: Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall

### “A-HA” MOMENT:

- Getting the committee to reflect on “why” they want to change programming after 25 years
- Rediscovering the importance of arts and culture for our community
- Understanding the lasting impacts of arts and culture on our community
- Clarifying that the Music Committee wants to be leaders in community that:
  - inspires new audiences
  - fosters creativity
  - creates unique experiences for younger audiences
  - creates opportunities for volunteers and community as a whole

# Links to Learning: Resources available in “From Seed to Season”

- **Understanding the WHY**
  - See CHAPTER 2 - [Defining Your WHY? \(page 10\)](#)
    - Encourages presenters to determine their values and reflect on how those values will affect future decisions
- **Importance of Arts and Culture in Community**
  - See CHAPTER 1 - [How Does Presenting For Young Audiences Contribute to a Community \(page 4\)](#)
    - Describes how YA presenting drives a child’s cultural development, supports local businesses, nurtures a community’s sense of well-being, and build arts audiences for the future.
- **Lasting Impacts of Arts and Culture for Children**
  - See CHAPTER 1 - [Valuing the Impact of Arts on Children and Youth \(page 5\)](#)
    - Provides research on how the arts can nurture the cultural development of children and help build arts audiences for the future.
- **Creating Community Leaders**
  - See CHAPTER 2- [Leadership: If not me? Who will plant the seed? \(page 7\)](#)
    - Provides strategies to build strong leadership practices, leadership competencies, and skill sets

## Question 4: Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall

Considering what you have already been able to establish so far, **what do you need that will propel your team and organization** to the next level in your presenting journey?



Image Description: A darkened photograph of children in a theatre with their backs to the camera looking at an illuminated stage.

# Answer # 4: Robin Zettel, Victoria Jubilee Hall

## PROPELLING THE ORGANIZATION TO THE NEXT LEVEL TAKES:

- **Creating multiple community relationships with:**
  - Local Optimist Club
  - Local government
  - Local community theatre groups
- **Learning from those community relationships to:**
  - Create sustainable audiences
  - Develop volunteer recruitment strategies
  - Recruit volunteers
  - Strategize plans for the future

# Links to Learning: Resources available in “From Seed to Season”

- **Building and Learning from Community Relationships**
  - See CHAPTER 2 - [Understanding Your Community](#) (page 12)
    - Shares some research strategies to help you understand your community and with whom you can develop a further relationship with.
  - See CHAPTER 2 - [Communicating with Your Community by Telling Your Story](#) (page 14)
    - Offers helpful tips on using storytelling to help build relationships with community members.
  - See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 3: Building Audiences Now and for the Future](#) (page 37)
    - Provides strategies to identify, connect and impact new audiences and encourages presenters to involve their communities’ voice in future decisions.

# Welcome Alec Harmer, Mohawk College, Hamilton

I'd like to welcome our next guest, [Alec Harmer](#), who is the Supervisor of Theatre Operations at Mohawk College and has taken on the task of implementing Mohawk College's first ever performing arts education series for elementary students.

Welcome Alec to the webinar, before I start asking my questions would you be able to share with our participants a little about yourself and why you have begun this presenting journey for young audiences.

# Alec Harmer: Introductions

- Thanks to Ontario Presents for making this all happen. It's been an incredible blessing to be on this journey.
- Mohawk College has the McIntyre Performing Arts Centre which is the 2nd largest theatre in Hamilton.
- As part of the process of 'building back better' after Covid, the theatre looked to implement a general programming season and a young audience series was a key element.
- A YA series is important because most start their love of the performing arts, or a career in the performing arts because of a young audience show and were impacted by the experience whether it was a musical on stage or a workshop.
- There is nobody else in Hamilton doing YA programming, so they hope that Mohawk College can step in to fill this gap, build audiences and opportunities for kids.

# Questions #1: Alec Harmer, Mohawk College

While Mohawk College has past presenting experience, can you share with the viewers what you consider your **biggest success** and **how you were able to achieve that success** as you have just finished your **first year of presenting for a student audience**.



Image Description: One of the main buildings at Mohawk College Campus in Hamilton, Ontario with a large freestanding word sign at the entrance of the main doors. The red and orange sign spells MOHAWK and is next to the college's logo.



# Answer #1: Alec Harmer, Mohawk College

## SUCSESSES:

- An unexpected success came with the first performance that sold to approximately 1800 students and staff over 2 performances
- It was fantastic to hear the theatre come alive with the giggles, screams and cheers of hundreds of 4 to 6 year olds as they experienced a show on stage.
- Building on this year's success, we have planned 3 shows and 6 performances for next season 2024-2025
- Receiving feedback from teachers and making connections with educators helps to build momentum for future presentations
- Positive success from this year fuel hope that building and expansion is a possibility

## Question #2: Alec Harmer, Mohawk College

Understanding that building an education series is very different than your regular presenting engagements in your performing arts centre, can you **share some of the challenges you experienced** this past season?



Image Description: Five yellow school buses lined up side by side waiting for students to leave a theatre after a performance.

# Answer #2: Alec Harmer, Mohawk College

## CHALLENGES:

- **Ticket selling and marketing for general audience v.s school audiences**
  - We naively thought that traditional marketing and communication strategies would work for student audiences. Instead, we learned that it's about reaching out and making **individual connections** and **individual relationships** with teachers and educators.
  - Reaching teachers is difficult. We sent all the traditional methods like emails, phone calls, physical mailers. Once the individual connection with the teacher was made it became easier.
  -
- **Understanding the nuances of student ticket prices and additional costs:**
  - We realized in addition to the single ticket prices there is also the bussing costs, substitute teacher coverage etc... that made a single ticket price more expensive.
  - We are now looking into sponsorships to cover expenses for priority neighbourhoods.

# Links to Learning: Resources available in “From Seed to Season”

While the resources in the e-document don't pertain to the unique elements of presenting for school audiences in particular, the following resources may be of interest:

- **Marketing**

- See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 7: Marketing \(page 52\)](#)
  - Encourages presenters to plan ahead for their marketing needs, use storytelling as a marketing and promotional tool, and explore the various tactics to share marketing content.

- **Ticketing**

- See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 6: Ticketing \(page 49\)](#)
  - Explores the various types of tickets to sell, how to sell them, when to start selling, and how much they might need to cost.

- **Budgeting**

- See CHAPTER 2 - [Strategy 2: Budgeting \(page 32\)](#)
  - Provides a simple budget template. Indicates that all presenters need more than ticket sale revenue to cover all performance expenses.

## Question #3: Alec Harmer, Mohawk College

We have been working together for some time now and I think it's safe to say that you've been very invested in learning as much as you possibly can, is there one **main “take-away” or “a-ha!” moment** from your participation in the New YA Presenter Project that you could share with our viewers.

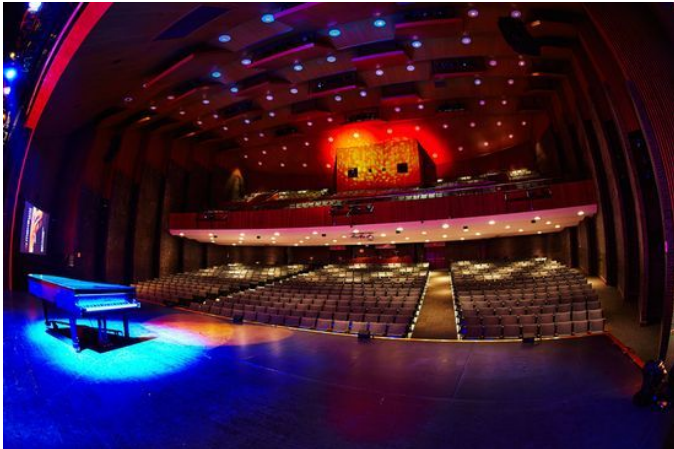


Image Description: An interior view of the 2,000 seat McIntyre Performing Arts Centre, Mohawk College from the stage looking into the audience. There is an illuminated piano on the stage and the main floor and balcony seating is dramatically lit with soft lighting.

# Answer #3: Alec Harmer, Mohawk College

## 'A-HA' MOMENT:

- **School programming is relationship oriented rather than transactional.**
  - It's about creating relationships with teachers and principals. Creating relationships helps to build trust of teachers to know that the programming is curriculum related.
  - The goal of this relationship building is to get to the point where a teacher doesn't need to know what the show is, rather they simply trust you, and therefore they will trust that the show will be awesome for their students.
  - Getting to that stage and that level of trust is the super goal, but it will take years to develop those connections so you need to play the 'long game' and not expect too much too soon.
  - For example, our second show didn't sell as many tickets as our first one, but we had 5 schools attend for the first time and because of their positive experience they all intend to return for a future performance.

## Question #4: Alec Harmer, Mohawk College

My last question looks to the future. In your opinion, **what do you need that will propel Mohawk College to the next level in your presenting journey?**



Image Description: A darkened photograph of children in a theatre with their backs to the camera looking at an illuminated stage.

# Answer #4: Alec Harmer, Mohawk College

## WHAT I NEED TO PROPEL MOHAWK COLLEGE TO THE NEXT LEVEL IS:

- **Creation of advocates in the education community**
  - Having teachers/principals who can advocate for your organization to their colleagues so that it's not all on Mohawk College to share information on programming.
  - I want to get to a point where the teachers are going out and extolling the virtues of Mohawk College and our programming.
  - I want to create an army of people that love theatre and that are passionate about having their students experience it.
  - We know that we can't do it alone, we need champions in the education community to help us get to the next level.



# Welcome Fran Côté, Iroquois Falls Arts Council

I'd like to welcome our last guest, Fran Côté, who is the Chair of the Iroquois Falls Arts Council. She has taken on the task of revitalizing a performing arts series for children in her community that has been lapsed for many decades.

Welcome Fran to the webinar, please tell us a little about yourself and why you have begun this presenting journey for young audiences.

# Fran Côté: Introductions

- I became Chair of the Iroquois Falls Arts Council in 2019.
- It was incorporated in 1988 and it's main focus at that time was to fund and develop a 385-seat auditorium in the local high school.
- During the 1990s, the Arts Council created a performance series for children called the Jack & Jill Parade as well as a series for adults in both English and in French to reflect our bilingual community. Unfortunately, the Council became dormant for many years until 2019.
- The Arts Council was re-established in 2019 with the goal of reviving the performance series for children. One of our board members is a child who grew up with the Jack & Jill Parade.
- A community survey indicated that the community wanted the Arts Council to make better use of the auditorium, so we knew that the community wanted us to utilize the auditorium and we wanted to revive the Jack & Jill Parade, so we had our WHY right from the start!

# Fran Côté: Introductions

- During the process of trying to find out about different performances to bring to Iroquois Falls, we stumbled upon a newsletter from SPARC Réseau (Supporting Performing Arts in Rural and Remote Communities).
- Began participating in the conference calls through SPARC and was connected to the NTYA (Northern Theatre for Young Audience) Network hosted by Ontario Presents and was connected to other presenters in northwestern and northeastern Ontario.
- Began to learn about presenting, block booking, pitches and how the various groups decided on performance options for their communities.
- Decided to take my time, read the e-document, learn how the presenting system works and audit the 2024-2025 programming season starting in September of 2023 and finishing in March 2024 and then participate in the presenting cycle for the 2025-2026 season starting Fall 2024.

# Questions #1: Fran Côté , Iroquois Falls Arts Council

Like Robin in Walkerton, you aim to launch a full presenting series for the 2025-2026 season, considering that you are indeed in the beginning stages of creating a series, can you share with the viewers what you consider your **biggest success** and **how you were able to achieve that success**.



Image Description: The logo for the Iroquois Falls Arts Council. Logo has a central image of an umbrella in red, orange, yellow, light and dark green with the words Iroquois Falls and Arts Council along the umbrella arm. The words The Umbrella for the Arts is under the handle of the umbrella.

# Answer #1: Fran Côté , Iroquois Falls Arts Council

## SUCSESSES:

- **Being flexible and seizing opportunities as they arise:**
  - We did not follow the original plan of waiting until Fall 2024 to begin participating in the presenting cycle for the 2025-2026 season.
  - Instead seized the opportunity to bring a YA performance of Mistatim (by Red Sky Performance) to 3 communities (Iroquois Falls, Cochrane and Matheson) for 5 school shows in April 2024.
  - Flexibility was enabled because Red Sky Performance had funding that significantly reduced the cost of the performance. It became an opportunity not to be passed over.
  - We also seized the opportunity to book Pop Pop (by Carousel Players) a performance for Early Years children and have applied for special funding front he OAC to cover performance expenses for a show in October 2024.

## Host: Comments about Fran's Successes

Thank you Fran. Despite your initial intention of going slow, you have been doing a little bit of programming for both 2024 and 2025 (in advance of your planned full presenting for the 2025-2026 season) as a kind of 'proof of concept.'

Fran has been dabbling in programming, with a little bit of shows here and there, to kind of whet the appetite for the community. This allows the community to see what can happen through the Arts Council, in the schools and in the Early Years centres.

This will become a great opportunity for the Arts Council to build community interest in their presenting series when it comes to its fullness in 2025-2026. This process also helps to build audiences as well. Congratulations Fran.

## Question #2: Fran Côté , Iroquois Falls Arts Council

Understanding that you are still in the development stages of presenting for your community, can you **share some of the challenges you've experienced** thus far?



Image Description: An outdoor welcome sign made out of wooden fence slats and supported by thick grey stone pillars. Sign reads Iroquois Falls, Welcome - Bienvenue.

# Answer #2: Fran Côté , Iroquois Falls Arts Council

## CHALLENGES:

- **Identifying and recruiting volunteers:**
  - Our biggest challenge is finding volunteers in our small community. I understand that I've got to build a team but many of the potential volunteers that I approach feel that the volunteer commitment will be too much work.
- **Cost of performances, touring and busing expenses:**
  - Mistatim's success was due to Red Sky receiving funding to reduce costs to schools. Otherwise ticket costs would not cover all of our performance expenses.
  - Busing students from their schools to a central auditorium was cost prohibitive due to rising transportation costs and lack of bus drivers.
- **Timeline of grant applications:**
  - Quickly learned the presenting cycle that starts in the fall and ends in early winter coincides with grant deadlines in February.



# Links to Learning: Resources available in “From Seed to Season”

- **Volunteers**

- See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 1: Building a Supportive Team \(page 28\)](#)
  - Provides resources on volunteerism, recruitment, engagement and more

- **Expenses**

- See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 2: Building a Budget \(page 32\)](#)
  - Provides a simple budget template. Indicates that all presenters need more than ticket sales revenue to cover all performance expenses.

- **Grant Applications**

- See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 2: Government Grants and Charitable Foundations \(page 34\)](#) and [Grant Writing \(page 35\)](#)
  - Offers a non-exhaustive list of government funders and charitable foundations
  - Provides resources on how to write a successful grant application

## Question #3: Fran Côté , Iroquois Falls Arts Council

Fran you've been very invested as a new presenter these past few months, is there any one **main “take-away” or “a-ha!” moment** from your participation in this project that you could share with our viewers.



Image Description: Iroquois Falls High School, home of the 385 seat Marie and Dr. Michael Boyle Community Auditorium where future young audience performances will take place.

# Answer #3: Fran Côté , Iroquois Falls Arts Council

## ‘A-HA MOMENT:’

- **The importance of **team-building**:**
  - Presenting can't be a man show. You must have different people working together to share the load and to become more sustainable.
- **The need to establish **community relationships**:**
  - In order to build audiences, recruit volunteers and promote an upcoming series go out into the community where children and their families live, play and learn.
- **The importance of **planning** and being prepared:**
  - Not jumping in without a plan. Taking your time to learn. Reading the e-document. Leaning on other presenting colleagues. Participating in block booking.
- **Key to successful **programming**:**
  - The importance coming prepared to block booking meetings and watching full show videos prior to booking to ensure suitability, quality off work, technical compatibility etc.

# Links to Learning: Resources available in “From Seed to Season”

- **Team-building**
  - See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 1: Building a Supportive Team \(page 28\)](#)
    - Provides resources on volunteerism, recruitment, engagement and more.
- **Community relationships**
  - See CHAPTER 2 - [Understanding Your Community \(page 12\)](#)
    - Shares research strategies to help you understand your community.
  - See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 3: Building Audiences Now and for the Future \(page 37\)](#)
    - Provides strategies to identify, connect and impact new audiences and encourages presenters to involve their communities’ voice in future decisions.
- **Planning**
  - See CHAPTER 3 - [The Art of Planning: Creating a Roadmap for Presenting \(page 23\)](#)
    - Encourages presenters to devise their own strategies and action plans for their future.
- **Programming**
  - See CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 5: Programming and Curatorial Decision Making \(page 44\)](#)
    - Illustrates the uniqueness of YA audiences, where to find performers, & how to evaluate shows.

## Question #4: Fran Côté , Iroquois Falls Arts Council

My last question looks to the future. In your opinion, **what do you need that will propel** your presenting journey to the next level?



Image Description: A darkened photograph of children in a theatre with their backs to the camera looking at an illuminated stage.

## Answer #4: Fran Côté , Iroquois Falls Arts Council

### WHAT I NEED TO PROPEL MY PRESENTING JOURNEY IS:

- Good programming choices when we select shows for our 2025-2026 season
- Finding amazing volunteers that will help us move forward
- Garnering continued funding from OAC and other granting agencies

# Question and Answer Time

**QUESTION - Fran:** How do you get 4-6 year olds in the theatre and keep them still? And can you explain the ratio of kids to teachers at that age?

**ANSWER- Alec:** The ratio is quite high, maybe 6:1 (depending on the individual school board policies). Fortunately, we (Mohawk College) has lots of seats so we can giveaway a lot of teacher tickets.

**QUESTION - Fran:** We are thinking of bringing in a show for Early Years, preschoolers and JKs but were advised not to put them in a large auditorium but rather in a smaller space. Does that sound right?

**ANSWER - Alec:** Sometimes it's a scale thing. If the show can accommodate only 50 kids you then need to find a venue that fits that audience without overwhelming it. We also found that show length is critical. For very young children the show length is often under 45 minutes. You need to select work that is specific to your age group and make sure it is designed for that age group to ensure that it's engaging for them.

# Question and Answer Time

## Host - Joanne:

- When you're working with an Early Years audience, it's all about the **right programming for the right audience**. The show will have a different tone and a different tenor because it's curated for, crafted and produced for a very young audience.
  - See "From Seed to Season" CHAPTER 4 - [STRATEGY 5: Programming and Curatorial Decision Making \(page 44\)](#)
- The **venue needs to address** how to deal with a non-adult audience. Presenters need to train technical staff, front of house staff, and volunteers how to accommodate a younger audience with differing needs like bathroom breaks, reduced sound etc..
  - See "From Seed to Season" CHAPTER 4 - [Strategy 4: The Venue \(Page 40\)](#)
- An **overall mindset change needs to occur**. Presenters must acknowledge the difference and value a younger audience. Children are going to have different experiences with the shows and different expectations, and you (as a presenter) have to meet them halfway and make sure that their performing arts experience is a great experience for them whichever age and abilities they're coming to the theater with.
  - See "From Seed to Season" CHAPTER 1 - [Valuing the Impact of Arts on Children and Youth \(Page 5\)](#)



# Appreciation and Thank Yous!

A sincere thank you to our guests [Robin Zettel](#), [Alec Harmer](#) and [Fran Cote](#), for sharing their unique experiences and insight as they take on the task of bringing performing arts for children to their communities. I would also like to thank [The Department of Canadian Heritage](#) for their financial support.

I welcome any questions you might have and if you know of any volunteer groups/teams/organizations in your community who might also be interested in becoming a presenter, please share this information or have them contact me at [joannechurchill2@gmail.com](mailto:joannechurchill2@gmail.com). Additionally, I encourage you to go to the Ontario Presents website to access the e-document "[From Seed to Season](#)" and browse the other [essential presenting resources](#) on the site.

# ONTARIOPRESENTS

ONTARIO PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTING NETWORK  
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# Thank you!

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