

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DCT HELPS TEENS AND PARENTS TACKLE BULLYING THROUGH AWARD-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT LINDA DAUGHTERY'S PRODUCTION

(DALLAS, TX) – At a time when bullying has become an unfortunate norm, Dallas Children's Theater's latest production will take on the harsh realities and consequences today's teens face in the DCT Academy's Teen Scene Players presentation of *THE SECRET LIFE OF GIRLS*.

From October 6 – 15, 2023, at Dallas Children's Theater's Rosewood Center for Family Arts, *THE SECRET LIFE OF GIRLS* tackles bullying in every form – from open tactics like gossiping and keeping secrets, to using friendship as a weapon – and how they can become the prelude to dangerous behaviors like depression, cutting, and eating disorders. This show takes an unflinching look into the world of meanness and exposes the repercussions those involved face.

With a primarily teen cast, this production highlights pressures from peers and adults, including a competitive coach who only fuels the young girls' intense feelings towards each other. Premiering in 2006, this season's production has been updated for today's teens, with bullying taking place in person and through text messages instead of the chatrooms it featured initially.

"Our teen shows are always updated to be more realistic and address critical issues teens deal with today," said Nancy Schaeffer, director of *THE SECRET LIFE OF GIRLS* and both Artistic Director and Education Director at Dallas Children's Theater. "In this production, bullying can happen to anyone through various methods." Although the subject matter touches on topics like self-harm, eating disorders, and intense bullying, Schaeffer assures teens and parents that it has a powerful message. "We're showing a situation that spirals but ends in a sense of hope." Schaeffer said.

In true DCT tradition, the audience is invited to stay for an engaging and enlightening conversation with local experts after the performance. This post-show dialogue was developed after the 2006 performance at the recommendation of Susan Sugerman, a DCT Teen Advisory Council member, a group of local medical experts specializing in child and family health. Sugerman is president and co-founder of Girls to Women Health and Wellness, a multidisciplinary medical practice in North Dallas dedicated to the physical and emotional needs of girls and young women ages 10-25. This event, called a talkback, provides a unique opportunity for reflection and learning, ensuring that the impact of *THE SECRET LIFE OF*

GIRLS extends beyond the stage, helping teens recognize when they or a friend needs help and how to get it.

"We want them to know that they can go to their parents for help. They don't have to do it alone," said Schaeffer. "No matter what they do, they need to know that their parents will always be there for them and love them. So we use our talkbacks to highlight that and give the families resources they can use."

This production by award-winning playwright Linda Daugherty launched DCT's internationally-praised teen issue series, generating buzz throughout the Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) community, the leading national organization for the professional field of theatre for children and families. Daugherty's plays have been produced nationally and internationally in professional and community theaters, schools and colleges, earning her the 2011 National Award from the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine for her plays dealing with teen issues. Her works include *The Secret Life of Girls* (bullying); *Eat (It's Not About Food)* (eating disorders); *dont u luv me?* (teen dating violence); and *hard 2 spel dad*, written with Mary Rohde Scudday (learning differences). Tickets for THE SECRET LIFE OF GIRLS are available only from Dallas Children's Theater. General tickets are available online at www.dct.org/plays.

TEEN SCENE PLAYERS present...

THE SECRET LIFE OF GIRLS

By Linda Daugherty

Directed by Nancy Schaeffer

Not suitable for children under 12

Content warning: Self-harm (Cutting), Eating Disorders, Intense Bullying

Cast

Abby – Maddison Lopez

Stephanie – Caroline Cooper

Rebecca – Ruby Eckian

Kayla – Hope Medrano

Sutton – Rebekah Quicksall

Anna Marie – Lili Fudge

Chandler – Veronica Fenoglio-Kushera

Sutton's Mom/Coach – Liv Murphy

Abby's Mom – Jessica Colaw

Production Team

Director – Nancy Schaeffer

Scenic/Video Designer – Lauren Wheat

Lighting Designer – CaitLyne Martin

Props Designer – Sally Fiorello

Sound Designer – Marco Salinas

Costume Designer – Raven Lanuza-Brown

Stage Manager – Alaina Galasso

Performance Dates and Times

- Friday, October 6, 7:30 PM – Public Opening
- Saturday, October 7, 1:30 PM
- Sunday, October 8, 1:30 PM
- Friday, October 13, 7:30 PM (Bonus Performance)
- Saturday, October 14, 1:30 PM
- Sunday, October 15, 1:30 PM (ASL Performance) – Public Closing

Ticket Prices: \$15 for single tickets. Call the Box Office for details at 214-740-0051.

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Dallas Children's Theater
 Rosewood Center for Family Arts
 5938 Skillman Street
 Dallas, Texas 75231

About Dallas Children's Theater

Dallas Children's Theater features professional actors performing for an annual audience of 150,000 young people and their families through mainstage productions and an arts-in-education program. As the only major organization in Dallas focusing solely on youth and family theater, DCT builds bridges of understanding between generations and cultures, instilling an early appreciation of literature, art, and the performing arts in tomorrow's artists and patrons.

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