

PARAMOUNT
THEATRE

Social Story

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WHAT IS A SOCIAL STORY?

A social story is a tool that helps individuals better understand the world around them so they can plan for a positive experience, especially if they are going to a place that is unknown to them. Social stories help individuals know what to expect by walking them through an experience. They can be very helpful for anyone anticipating their first theatrical experience. Social stories are often used by individuals on the autism spectrum, children with sensory needs or those with other support needs.

This resource is also helpful for parents, caretakers and teachers who want to share it with a child or group of children to help them get a mental picture of what their experience will be like and what is expected of them in the theater.

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Contact the Paramount Theatre Box Office at 630.896.6666, or learn more online at ParamountAurora.com.

NEED ACCOMMODATIONS?

Email info@paramountarts.com about any accommodations you may need.



I am going to see a show at the Paramount Theatre! This is what the theatre looks like in the daytime. Paramount Theatre is in downtown Aurora, Illinois.



When I enter the theater, there will be staff members scanning tickets. I may have to wait in line to get my ticket scanned. When it is my turn, I will show my ticket to the staff members, and they will scan it. I may hear a beep from their scanner.



Friendly staff members in the theater can help me if I have any questions or problems. Staff will be wearing gold name tags.

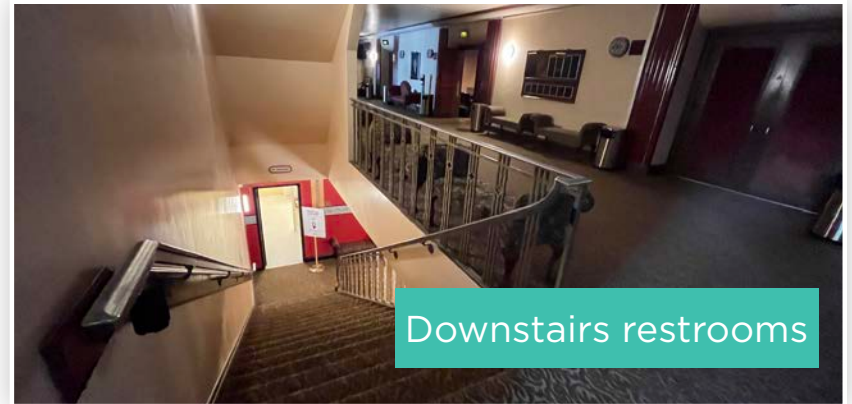


The coat check is located close to the Box Office. At the Coat Check, staff can take my coat. I may need to wait in line. I will give my coat to staff, and they will give me a number tag. I will keep this tag with me until after the show. When I return to the Coat Check, I will wait in line again. When it is my turn, I'll give the tag back to staff, who will then bring me my coat. The Coat Check also has booster seats, noise-canceling headphones, assisted listening devices, and two wheelchairs for emergencies. I'll also return any equipment I borrowed.



On the main floor and second floor there is concessions stand that serves beverages and snacks. Before the show and during intermission (a short audience break during the show), I can buy a beverage and a snack. I will wait patiently in line until it is my turn to order.

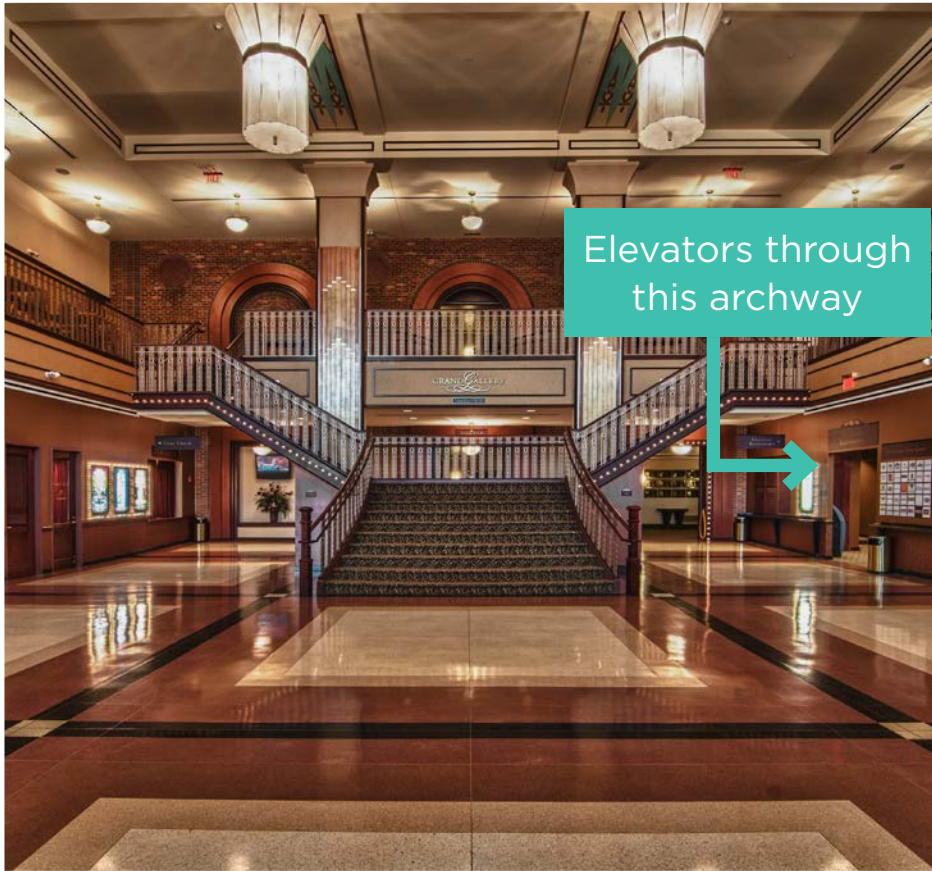
My snack must be eaten in the lobby. Food is not allowed inside the theater. I can take a drink with me into the theater and place it in a cupholder in front of my seat.



There are restrooms on all three levels of the theatre. There is an 'Everyone' restroom on the downstairs level that is available for everyone to use, including me! This restroom is at the bottom of the stairs and has three toilet stalls.

If I must use the restroom during the show, I will be careful and quiet exiting my seat and row.

Sometimes people in my row will stand up to let me exit, and sometimes they will remain seated. Either way, I will step lightly and try not to block their view for long.



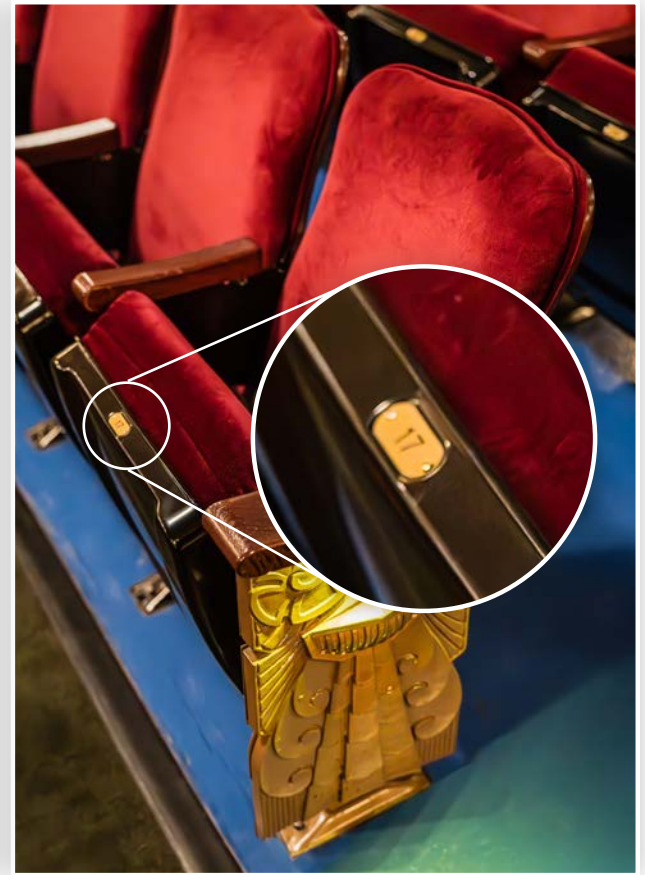
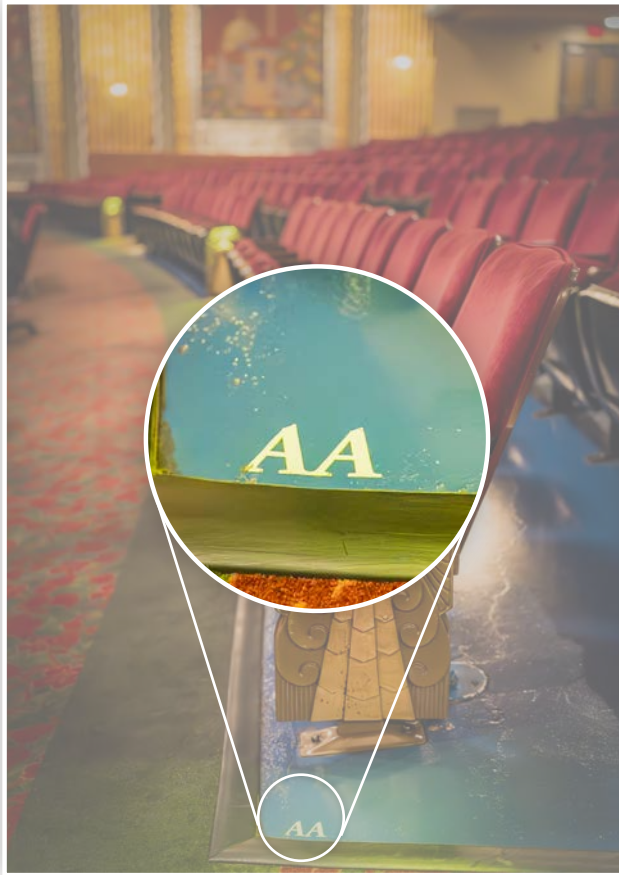
To get to the second floor I can take the large staircase in the center of the lobby or use the elevator by the restrooms.



Behind the center staircase is a big piece of fabric material hanging with the show's artwork on it. This is called a "step and repeat." I can have my photo taken in front of it as a memory of my trip to Paramount Theatre. There may be a line, but I will wait patiently until my turn for the photo to be taken.



Before the show is about to begin and during intermission, I will hear an announcement and see the lobby lights dim. This lets me know that the show will start soon, and I should locate my seat inside the theatre.



When I enter the theatre, I will see many seats. I will walk to the seat number printed on my ticket. My ticket will list an Aisle number, a row letter and seat number. For example, Aisle 3 , Row AA, Seat 17. Aisle numbers are listed above each aisle door entrance. Row numbers are listed on the ground at the end of each row, and seat numbers are listed on top of each seat cushion. When I show my ticket to ushers and staff, they will help me find my seat.



Once at my seat, I'll notice that the seat cushions will fold down. My seat will also go back up if I stand up. I can place my things under my seat. In front of my seat there will be a cup-holder to place a drink.



If I have seats that are in the balcony, I can make my way to the second floor from the stairs or the elevator.



I will contact the Box Office before going to the show if I need an accommodation.

Wheelchair accessible seats are available for use and will be marked with an accessibility icon.



Space for motorized chairs or scooters is found in Row W at the back of the Orchestra section. I will ask a staff member if I need help finding the accessibility area.



The orchestra will be under the stage

Under the stage is a special room for the orchestra called the orchestra pit. The conductor will be on a platform so they can see the stage while they lead the musicians. I may see the conductor moving their arms to the music during the show.



In the middle of the theatre seating area, I will see the sound board. The sound board controls the sound effects from a computer. I will hear the sound effects over the speakers. The sound board operator will have small lights on during the show. They use the lights to see the buttons they need to use during the show. I can look at the sound board, but I should not touch the sound board.



When the performance is ready to begin, I will see lights in the theater dim. An announcement will introduce the show. People may cheer in excitement to see the show. I will see lights dimmed to dark. I may hear clapping after a song to let the actors know they did a good job. I can clap along with everyone if I want to.



I may hear music and singing during the show. I may see people dancing during the show. I will see actors dressed up in different costumes. The actors use music, singing, dancing, and costumes to tell a story. Some shows may have puppets. I can use my imagination with these puppets, which are controlled by real people. Sometimes, real animals are trained to act on stage and may also be in the show.



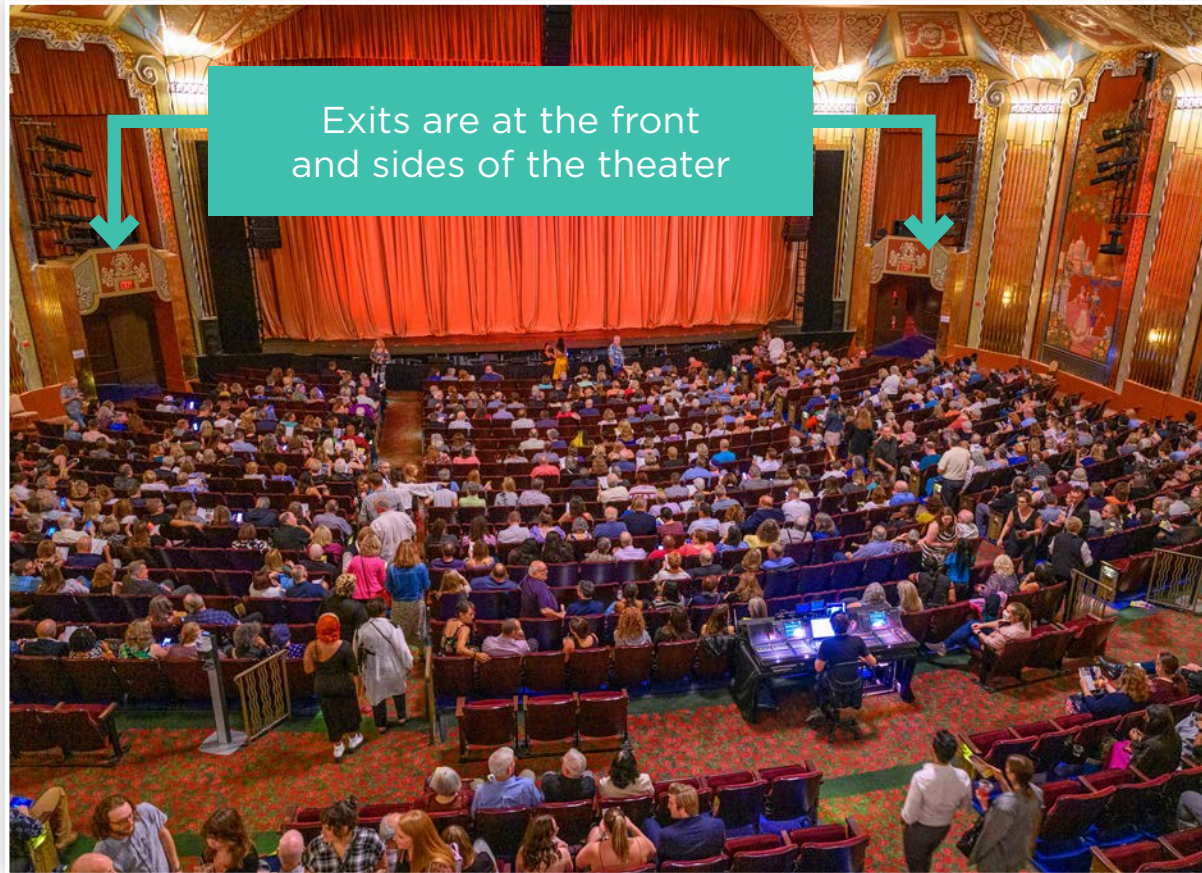
During the show, I might see lights change color or I might hear sounds get louder or quieter. The people on the stage are always safe during light changes or sound changes and from the things that happen to them in the story. I know that some sounds and lights may be loud and bright, but they will not hurt me. It is exciting to watch, but I should remain seated and enjoy the show.



A fog machine can be used for a special moment happening on stage. The fog is safe and will not hurt me or the actors.



All of these lights, sounds and costumes help create a magical play, but if any lights or sounds are too much for me, I can take a break or a rest in the lobby. I can ask a staff member for a quiet room or space to regulate my feelings. My parent or guardian can call the theatre before the show to learn more about what the special effects will be during the show!



If there is an emergency, I should remain calm. I will follow the directions that are made over the speakers which will tell me where to go. Emergency exits are located to the front and to the sides of the theater. Exit signs are lit up for the entire show.



Part way through the show, there is a 15-minute intermission. An intermission is a short break halfway through the show. I can go to the restroom and get a snack or drink at that time. There will be a line for concessions and the bathroom, so I will wait in line until it is my turn.



At the end of the show, the audience will clap for the actors to show their appreciation. This means they have done a great job! Actors will come out together on stage to take a bow. They will wave “Goodbye” at the audience. As part of the audience, I may stand and clap at the end to let the actors know we really enjoyed their performance.



After the curtain closes, there will be a line to leave the theatre. I will be patient and wait my turn to join the line. The lobbies will be crowded. People may be discussing the show. I will remain calm and move around people. If I want to, I can talk to my family and friends about what parts of the show I enjoyed most. When we're ready to leave, I can exit the theater through the same set of doors I came through when I entered.



That's it! I went to the theater. I saw a show and let my imagination grow. I hope I can go to another show soon.



Enjoy the show!

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