

Hello Spotlight Family,

We have some BIG exciting news to share with you!

As most of you know, Spotlight Youth Theater began as an affiliate of Christian Youth Theater (CYT), an organization founded in 1981, in San Diego by Paul & Sheryl Russell. Starting with a Disney Spectacular Tour group, 21 performers grew to 100 students in the first session of classes, and the first full scale production of Little House on the Prairie. Families started coming from all over the Chicagoland area to participate. One by one, new areas were planted and CYT Chicago grew.

In May of 2012, the Board of Directors decided that to better serve the students and families of our organization, the license agreement with CYT would not be renewed, and instead, we would forge out on our own as Spotlight Youth Theater. For the next five years, Spotlight continued to provide the same great programming our families knew and loved.

Which brings us to today, our 20th year of youth theater. After much consideration, research, discussion, and prayer, always desiring what's best for the families we serve, the Board of Directors voted unanimously to affiliate with CYT once again!

Here are some of the reasons we've decided to return:

1. Since 2012, the reasons to separate from CYT have been resolved, and the National program has increased in its provisions to its affiliates.
2. As an affiliate, we join a national network of affiliates who offer support and common values in programming and connection. We will have access to help and suggestions of other CYT affiliates and be able to share what we've learned in our 20 years of ministry.
3. Our Leaders will be invited to a biannual national conference, receiving training and support by CYT Inc.
4. Our Improv teams will be invited to compete against other affiliate teams at Improvathon every summer in San Diego. They'll get to know students from other states and share a retreat type experience where they'll discover CYT is the same all around the country – one BIG family.
- 5.. HYPE teams will be invited to a national conference to share ideas about the awesome things God, and they are doing in their areas.
6. Most importantly, by standing united in value, faith and purpose, we become stronger, and our influence multiplies.

Questions:

Will our programming change?

No, not at all. Because we didn't change our program when we became Spotlight, we anticipate a smooth transition back to CYT.

How will our patrons find us?

We will identify as CYT Chicago, with the added tagline, “Formerly Spotlight Youth Theater” for a time. Our web address will be cychicago.org, and those who try to access via our spotlight.org web address will be redirected to our site. We will also focus our marketing efforts on getting our name back out there.

Are we returning to CYT because Spotlight isn’t doing well?

No. Spotlight has continued to grow in number and stability in the past five years. We had more students cast in shows this past session than in any other Spring session.

We are so excited about our reconciliation and decision to affiliate once again with the excellence CYT represents. We are proud of our staff for their business savvy, artistic excellence, marketing reach, and customer care which has kept Spotlight on top! We are thankful for every student, teacher, director, camp counselor, AC, and dedicated parent volunteer, without whom, we’d be unable to do what we do. And above all, we are thankful to our Lord Jesus Christ, who lights our path, and blesses us abundantly.

Our prayer is that you will embrace our parent company, CYT, once again and make this transition home with us. This is the verse that’s been on our heart: How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity! Psalm 133:1

We’re proud of how far we’ve come, and we look forward in joyful anticipation of what’s ahead. May we continue to bring glory to His Holy name.

In Christ,
Spotlight Youth Theater Board of Directors

