



## **YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS FOR CHANGE 2014-2015: What is Family?** **Theme and Style Guide**

We are looking for plays that deal with the following questions:

What makes a family?

Why is family important?

We are also looking for plays that are ...

**Appropriate** - We welcome plays that address serious family issues, but they must be appropriate for middle-school audiences to read, see and perform. We are not looking for profanity or offensive material.

**Socially Aware** – We are hoping that young playwrights can address questions of how society can and should adapt to a wider variety of evolving and changing family structures, and how those structures can work as effective and loving families.

**Creative** - Although we want play scripts that deal honestly with the subject of families, they do not have to be realistic in style. Plays could feature animals or fantasy creatures as characters, for instance, and could be set in worlds other than our own.

### **Some subjects your play might explore:**

Adoptive parents

Blended families, where two or more households come together to form a single family

Families living with mental and physical challenges

Different cultures or languages within a family

Foster families

Gay and lesbian parents

Grandparents raising kids

Growing up in religious communities

Growing up without a home

Multiracial families

Single parents

Teen parents

### **Should I write about my own family?**

It is up to you. We all have families, and many of the world's great plays are based on a playwright's experiences with her or his own family. Most playwrights, however, use real-life experiences as inspiration for their plays, rather than trying to re-create exactly what happened. Playwrights also try to see the story from the point of view of all their characters. This is especially important in plays about families, where the relationships between the characters are often very complicated.