



## YOUTH TACKLE THE ISSUE OF FOSTER CARE!

**Winnipeg, September 25, 2014** – *Giving Voice* is a powerful, interactive theatrical journey exploring the timely issue of how youth experience the system of CFS. Sarasvati Productions is excited to tour this brand new work created by and about youth in care in collaboration with VOICES: Manitoba's Youth In Care.

*Giving Voice* is a Forum theatre piece developed through workshop sessions with youth and under the guidance of Sarasvati Productions' Artistic Director, Hope McIntyre. The final product follows the journey of two youth as they move through the system. Sally is only eleven when she requests being removed from her family and Josh is apprehended at the same age. Performed in Forum theatre style, it is interactive, allowing the audience a chance to stop the action of the play and step in to try out positive solutions to the problems addressed. The play will explore the issues that youth in foster care have had to deal with, from the stigma of being in care to the challenges of an overwrought system. The play is truly the story of the youth themselves and in Sarasvati Productions' tradition, they worked closely with community groups to realize the work.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with such an important organization," says Artistic Director, Hope McIntyre. "In fact, the idea for *Giving Voice* actually came from youth in the VOICES program who saw our plays *Empty* and *Diss* and wanted to create a play to tell their stories. Our goal is to increase understanding of what kids in care go through." Marie Christian is the Program Coordinator at Voices: Manitoba's Youth in Care Network. "Sarasvati's work is empowering to youth as an avenue to express their creative potential," says Christian. "Projects like *Giving Voice* help tell the stories that are often left untold and as a result allow for positive change."

Statics demonstrate that Manitoba has the highest rate of youth in care in Canada. Unfortunately, First Nations youth are four times more likely to enter into foster care due to abuse and neglect as a result of longstanding, systemic issues. We hope to begin a conversation about the state of Manitoba's foster care system from the perspective of someone who has experienced it.

*Giving Voice* will tour from October 13<sup>th</sup> to November 28<sup>th</sup> to schools in Winnipeg and surrounding areas. In addition there will be a public preview with limited seating at Graffiti Gallery on October 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm at the cost of \$5 and a free public performance as part of the Winnipeg Public Library's teen program on November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 2:30pm. More information is available at [www.sarasvati.ca](http://www.sarasvati.ca) or 204-586-2236.

*About Sarasvati Productions:* Sarasvati Dramatic Theatre Productions and Repertory Inc. (founded in Winnipeg in 2000) seeks to inspire artists and audiences through the use of theatre and to provide a space where artists can develop, showcase their skills and celebrate their creativity.

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