

Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas



Prelude, Apprentice, Concert II, Concert I,
Women's Youth and Youth Chorus

Handbook 2011-2012

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ORGANIZATION

The Children’s Chorus of Greater Dallas (CCGD) was founded in 1996. The mission of the Chorus is to provide children with the experience of artistic excellence and artistry through choral singing. The Children’s Chorus creates a spirit of community, reflects the diversity of greater Dallas, and enriches audiences with the best in children’s choral literature.

The Children’s Chorus includes girls and boys with unchanged voices in the fourth through eighth grades. The Women’s Youth Chorus is composed of young women in the ninth through twelfth grades. The Youth Chorus includes young men and women in the ninth through twelfth grades. Members are selected through an audition with the artistic staff. The qualifications are a good voice, a good sense of pitch and a commitment to regular attendance at rehearsals and performances.

We welcome your participation in this important arts endeavor which provides lasting value to our community and our youth.

STAFF

Cynthia Nott, Artistic Director	cynthia@thechildrenschorus.org
Linda Harley, Associate Conductor	linda@thechildrenschorus.org
Terrie Preskitt-Brown, Conductor	terrie@thechildrenschorus.org
Nora Henson, Conductor	nora@thechildrenschorus.org
Kelly Pfaffenberger, Conductor	kelly@thechildrenschorus.org
Terry Harley, Executive Director	terry@thechildrenschorus.org
Emily Ko, Development Director	emily@thechildrenschorus.org
Susan Tomlinson, Chorus Administrator	susan@thechildrenschorus.org
Mary Duncan, Business Administrator	mary@thechildrenschorus.org

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Chorus Office:	(214) 965-0491
Chorus Fax:	(214) 965-0264
Chorus Website:	www.thechildrenschorus.org

CURRICULUM/PHILOSOPHY

Through the rehearsal and performance of distinctive choral literature, the CCGD will give the children the vocal, musical and artistic skills necessary to express themselves in song.

Through skilled, beautiful singing, children will begin a journey of self-discovery as they learn the music, thought and feelings of cultures that span centuries and continents.

During the course of a year, choristers will have the opportunity to learn the music of the major periods of Western Civilization – Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and the 20th Century. Children will explore the folk-based art music of many cultures different from their own.

The children will receive instruction in how musical elements work together. Those elements are melody, rhythm, harmony, timbre, dynamics, form, style, history and performance practice. These musical concepts are taught through the singing, listening, analysis and evaluation of the repertoire.

The children will learn how to use their personal instrument, their bodies and voices, in an expressive, artistic way. In order to sing the varied repertoire, they will be given instruction in classical vocal techniques. In each rehearsal, correct singing posture, vowel shape, breath support, and tone placement will be taught and developed.

Informed performances can transform young singers. Children can experience music through singing with their whole beings. Their relationships to the production of sound into art, of bodies into instruments, transcend the actual notes and words on the page. In singing, they touch the music and the music touches them, for the pure joy of the experience. This experience will enrich all those involved in the process, including the avid concertgoer, the parent and, of course, the child.

We look forward to guiding your child in this adventure.

*REHEARSALS AND PARKING INFORMATION

All rehearsals are held on Monday evenings during the school year. **Prelude** rehearses from 5:30 P.M. – 6:30 P.M. in Blakley Hall at the First Presbyterian Church, 408 Park Avenue. **Apprentice** rehearses from 6:45 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. at St. Paul United Methodist Church, 1816 Routh Street. **Concert II** rehearses from 5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M. at Cathedral Guadalupe, 2215 Ross Avenue. **Concert I** rehearses from 6:45 P.M. – 8:30 P.M. in Blakley Hall at the First Presbyterian Church, 408 Park Avenue. The **Women's Youth Chorus** rehearses from 7:00 P.M.-9:00 P.M. in the Crossroads Room at the First United Methodist Church, 1928 Ross Avenue. The **Youth Chorus** rehearses from 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M. in Wesley Hall at the First United Methodist Church, 1928 Ross Avenue. Please do not arrive more than 15 minutes early unless you plan to stay with your child and please be prompt picking up your child. At the end of rehearsal, each child must wait quietly inside the building until his or her ride arrives.

At First Presbyterian Church: Parents may park for free in the First Presbyterian Church parking garage. The entrance is accessed from Young Street at Park Avenue. Take the elevator to the basement floor. Please do not park in the outside lot.

At Cathedral Guadalupe: Parents may park in the Cathedral parking garage. Please use the Crockett Street elevator to return to street level, walk around the corner to the right, and enter the Cathedral. Parking cost will range from \$2 to \$5, depending on your length of stay. Unaccompanied children are not to use the elevator. Because religious services are often in progress, please ask children to walk quietly in the halls.

At St. Paul United Methodist Church: Parents may park for free in the lot between the church and Woodall Rogers Freeway if the blue parking pass is placed on the car dashboard. **There will be no carpool line.** Parents must park to walk your child into and pick up from the Fellowship Hall. Turn into the parking lot from Routh Street and enter the building on Routh Street.

At First United Methodist Church: Free parking is available during rehearsals in the public lot at Harwood and Ross after 6:00 p.m. if the bright orange parking pass is placed on the car dashboard. Please use the San Jacinto Street ramp entrance to the church. Children may be dropped off and picked up at the San Jacinto Street ramp doors. **Please do not park in the First United Methodist Church parking lot.** Parents and siblings who choose to wait at FUMC during the rehearsal are welcome to observe the rehearsal or wait in the Texas Room behind Wesley Hall.

Choristers are to arrive at rehearsal in comfortable, appropriate attire ready to sing. Prior to rehearsal, choristers should have had a light snack or meal. Upon arrival, they are to use the restroom, get water, and throw away any gum or candy. **There is no food or drink allowed in any rehearsal room.** Each chorister will pick up his/her folder and a pencil, and find his/her assigned seat. Choristers then wait quietly for the rehearsal to begin. They are expected to remain for the entire rehearsal. If a chorister has a personal need, he/she should quietly approach a rehearsal chaperone.

Children are NOT permitted to walk between FPC, St. Paul UMC, FUMC and the Cathedral without adult supervision, and CCGD will not be held legally responsible for any who do.

***Please review this section with your child.**

***SUPERVISION OF CHORISTERS**

The children come under CCGD supervision only when they enter the rehearsal room. We will do everything we can to make drop off and pick up as smooth as possible, but there is no substitute for parents ensuring that children arrive at the rehearsal room safely and on time.

Whenever and wherever CCGD gathers, the choristers are under the supervision of the Artistic Staff, assisted by parents who volunteer as chaperones. In as much as the Chorus rehearses and performs in public places, the Chorus instructs the choristers in the concept of 'Director Dependence'. The children are expected to respond appropriately and immediately to all direction from the Artistic Staff, whether given in person or through the chaperones who are acting under the direction of the Artistic Staff. In addition to the Artistic Staff, the Chorus is committed to providing the appropriate number of chaperones at each rehearsal and performance. While Director Dependence is most often an artistic issue, it can at times be a safety issue. Parents are expected to discuss and reinforce the concept of Director Dependence with their child. Children in noncompliance will be asked to leave the Chorus.

***Please review this section with your child.**

***REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE

Singers must attend ALL rehearsals in order to fully learn the music being taught. However, we understand that unavoidable circumstances do arise. There are two kinds of absences: Regular and Music. We ask that you notify Susan in the chorus office, preferably by email (susan@thechildrenschorus.org), if your child is going to be absent for any reason.

Regular Absences

A singer can be absent **3 times each semester** for illness, too much homework, car trouble, spring break, nausea, bad traffic, bad weather, TAKS testing, vacation, “forgot”, Fair Day, you name it. These are called “regular” absences.

These “regular” absences are tracked as follows:

One (1) absence for missing a **Monday** night rehearsal

One and one half (1.5) absences for missing a **Saturday** rehearsal (applies to Concert I, Concert II and Apprentice)

Two (2) tardies count as one absence

Choristers are considered tardy if:

Arriving 10 minutes after the rehearsal start time; or

Leaving rehearsal more than 10 minutes early

Penalties for Excessive “Regular” Absences

After three “regular” absences, a letter will be sent from Ms. Nott, the Artistic Director. After the fourth “regular” absence, the chorister may be dismissed from the chorus. There are no refunds for tuition.

Music Absences

CCGD encourages all choristers to participate in their school music and religious choir programs.

Absences for **graded school music** (school choir, school band or school orchestra) or religious choir are considered “Music” absences and will not count toward the three “regular” absences. **However, you must let CCGD know at least four weeks in advance of a school music or religious choir absence.**

Penalties for Excessive “Music” Absences

This is handled on a case-by-case basis. On occasion, there may come a point when your child simply is not in enough rehearsals to participate fully. The Artistic Director will call you and discuss dismissal. There are no refunds for tuition.

School Musicals

If you choose or are required to participate in your school’s musical theatre production, this must be coordinated in advance with Ms. Nott, the Artistic Director:

1. Let the school musical conductor know of your Monday night commitment with CCGD. This discussion should occur *well in advance* of the first musical rehearsal. Many musical directors accept a “conflict sheet” at the time of the musical audition for the student’s regularly scheduled activities. They will work with you!

2. Once you have discussed your CCGD commitment with the school musical director, email Ms. Nott, the Artistic Director (cynthia@thechildrenschorus.org) to discuss a compromise between CCGD and the school, including in the email all dates you foresee being absent from CCGD rehearsal.

If you choose to participate in a theatre production outside your school, a compromise may be possible, but you must discuss this in advance with Ms. Nott. Participation in community musical theatre productions must not conflict with CCGD rehearsals and performances. Any absence will be considered a “regular” absence, not a “music” absence.

PERFORMANCE ATTENDANCE

Performance attendance is different from rehearsal attendance.

All performances listed on the CCGD calendar handed out in August are **mandatory**. In August, if you find you have a conflict with a performance, call the Artistic Director, Ms. Nott at 214-965-0491 IMMEDIATELY.

PLEASE DO NOT ACCEPT A ROLE IN ANY MUSICAL OR DRAMATIC PRODUCTION THAT WILL CONFLICT WITH A CCGD PERFORMANCE!

There is room for compromise, but you must be present at CCGD rehearsals and performances in order to participate fully.

***Please review this section with your child.**

RESIGNATION

Families not intending to complete a season for any reason are expected to confer personally with the Artistic Director.

***CONCERT ATTIRE**

All children should arrive at each performance in complete concert attire, ready to sing. Failure to wear specified concert attire may prevent a chorister from participating in the concert.

CHILDREN'S CHORUSES

GIRLS' FORMAL ATTIRE:

Black and white CCGD concert dress

Black opaque tights or knee-highs (must come to the knee, not ankle; no black socks)

Black leather ballet slippers (Bedroom shoes that resemble ballet slippers are not acceptable.)

Hair must be secured away from face and shoulders with discrete black or invisible clips. If hair is longer than shoulder length, it must be secured in a pony tail.

NO make-up, nail polish, jewelry – NO EXCEPTIONS

NO sports bras - Please take care in choosing your singer's bra or camisole, if needed. Sports bras are not acceptable. They cross in the back and can be seen from the stage. White or beige undergarments are best. Red, black, bright orange, etc. are hard to hide!

Please dry clean or wash and press your outfit before each major performance. If you are singing several times in a short period of time, please make sure to hang up the dress and press, if needed.

BOYS' FORMAL ATTIRE:

Tuxedo shirt (white button, not black studs), tuxedo pants

Black bow tie and black cummerbund

Black socks

Black dress shoes – NO athletic shoes

NO jewelry or makeup is to be worn.

Hair must be clean and secured away from the face, using only black or discreet clips, if necessary.

Hair longer than shoulder length must be secured in a pony tail.

We suggest that boys not wear an undershirt because it is too hot. However, this is a personal choice.

Please dry clean or wash and press your outfit before each major performance.

Infractions will be addressed on a case by case basis. The Artistic Director reserves the right to exclude any chorister from a performance.

In the fall an “outfit check day” will be scheduled during one of the regular rehearsals.

CASUAL ATTIRE FOR ALL CHORUSES

All Concert I and any touring choristers are required to purchase a black CCGD polo shirt. These will be worn with blue jeans and athletic shoes.

WOMEN'S YOUTH AND YOUTH CHORUS

WOMEN'S FORMAL ATTIRE:

Women's Youth Chorus/Youth Chorus black concert dress

Black Panty Hose or knee-highs

Black Ballet Slippers

Hair must be clean and secured away from the face, using only black or discreet clips, if necessary.

Small stud earrings and small watch are appropriate; NO bracelets or necklaces.

NO facial piercing or tongue studs.

Please dry clean or wash and press your outfit before each major performance. If you are singing several times in a short period of time, please make sure to hang up the dress and press, if needed.

YOUTH CHORUS

MEN'S FORMAL ATTIRE:

White pointed “wing tip” collar tuxedo shirt, tuxedo pants and jacket

Black bow tie and black cummerbund

Black dress shoes (no athletic shoes)

Black socks

Hair must be clean and secured away from the face, using only black or discreet clips, if necessary.

Only a watch is appropriate; NO bracelets or necklaces.

NO facial piercing or tongue studs.

Please dry clean or wash and press your outfit before each major performance.

***Please review this section with your child.**

***PERFORMANCES**

CCGD is a professional performing organization. Performances require the very best in conduct, appearance, and musicianship. Performance standards will be clearly communicated to choristers during rehearsals, and choristers are expected to adhere to those standards. Final written instructions are provided at the last rehearsal prior to each performance in the 'HotSheets', which are printed on hot pink paper.

***Please review this section with your child.**

TICKET SALES

A ticket is required to attend most Chorus performances. Tickets for CCGD concerts at the Meyerson Symphony Center are available online through our website, www.thechildrenschorus.org. Ticket information for other concerts is distributed through HotSheets and is always available on our website.

TUITION

Tuition is due in full on or before August 8, 2011. An additional fee will be assessed for late tuition payment. Tuition is payable by cash, check or credit card. CCGD accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover. Tuition is non-refundable. If tuition is not paid in full by the first rehearsal, your child will not be admitted to rehearsal. An additional \$50 fee will be charged for late payment. Information on need-based tuition assistance is available upon request.

You may request a payment plan (up to a maximum of three payments). A \$50 administrative fee will be added to your tuition. Your tuition must be paid in full before our winter concert. A \$50 late charge will be assessed for any and all late payments.

NEED-BASED TUITION ASSISTANCE

If you are interested in applying for need-based tuition assistance, please check the box on the Commitment form which you received in this packet. You will be sent the need-based tuition assistance application. **The completed need-based tuition assistance application MUST be submitted no later than August 8, 2011.** Need-based tuition assistance decisions will be completed and notification sent by September 1. If your application is denied, your full tuition payment is due September 19, or you may establish a payment plan as described above. Please note that the music fee for Women's Youth and Youth Chorus is NOT included in tuition assistance.

RETURNED CHECKS

Families will be billed for NSF fees. If a second check is returned for non-sufficient funds, payment will only be accepted by cash, credit card or money order.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and Found items may be claimed in the Chorus office. Choristers are encouraged to bring a minimum of personal belongings to rehearsals and performances. The Chorus is not responsible for choristers' personal belongings.

PARENT ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES

All chorister parents are members of the Parent Association. This extremely active group provides volunteer support for CCGD activities. Parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer their time to fulfill Parent Association responsibilities.

COMMUNICATION

The Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas will communicate with parents and singers in a variety of ways: Hot Sheets (hot pink, always) before each performance or important change, e-mail, and various handouts. These are given out at rehearsals and mailed to absentees. You may also access all of these forms on the Chorus website. If you have questions not answered in this way, please feel free to call or e-mail the Chorus office.

INCLEMENT WEATHER – REHEARSAL CANCELLATION

A decision about whether to cancel rehearsal will be made by 2:00 pm. At that time, an email will be sent to all chorus families, the notice will be posted on the website (www.thechildrenschorus.org), and the outgoing message on the chorus phone will indicate the cancellation.

TOURING POLICY

PURPOSE

The Children's Chorus of Greater Dallas (CCGD) goes on tour to provide the children with experiences that enhance our artistic excellence.

OBJECTIVES

- To enrich the children's musical skills and experiences through participation in music festivals with other excellent choirs from around the world and through singing at unique events and/or venues
- To develop camaraderie among singers, parents and staff
- To learn about the music, history and heritage of other cities, states, and countries

TYPES OF TOURS

Regional Tours

- By bus
- 2 - 4 days
- Early summer
- Generally a single destination
- Built around singing at one or more specific events
- Costs in the \$350 - \$500 range

National Tours

- By plane
- 5 - 8 days
- Early summer
- Could be built around a music festival. May involve a side trip
- Costs in the \$1000 - \$2000 range

International Tours

- By plane
- 8 - 11 days
- Early summer
- Could be built around a music festival. Usually will involve side trip(s)
- Costs in the \$2000 - \$3000 range

TOURING FREQUENCY

Usually, no more than one tour will be taken in any season. There may be years when no tour is taken or when an in-season out-of-town performance is substituted for a summer tour.

WHO TOURS

In general, Concert I, Women's Youth, Youth Chorus and the 7th and 8th graders from Con II will tour.

CHAPERONES

Parent chaperones will be selected by the CCGD staff. Parent chaperones will pay the full tour price and will be expected to oversee a small group of singers throughout the tour. Typically, there will be one parent chaperone for every four to six singers on regional tours and one per six to eight students on national/international tours.

TOUR CONTRACTS

Each tour participant will sign a tour contract at the time he/she signs on to the tour, which will cover payment schedules, behavioral requirements, legal issues and other tour-related items.

TOUR FUNDRAISING

CCGD's intention is to offer fundraisers to help families cover tour expenses. The fundraisers will be run by the Parent Association (PA), whose PA Board position oversees this effort. Chorus staff will provide advisory support, will review and approve fundraising proposals, and will develop and oversee the bookkeeping necessary to maintain the individual family accounts. Each CCGD family has the option of participating in none, some or all of the fundraisers offered. Fundraising suggestions are welcome, but only those approved by CCGD staff will be offered through CCGD.

All families are welcome to participate in the fundraisers from the time they enter CCGD, even if their child is not touring in a given year. In general, a family will have more than one year to build its tour account. When a family leaves CCGD any credit remaining in its account will transfer to CCGD for use at its discretion.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM CCGD

CCGD's intention is to offer need-based financial aid to families that require help in covering tour costs, to the extent that CCGD can afford. In general, those receiving full or partial tuition assistance will be considered first, and those just above the tuition assistance thresholds next. Touring assistance will be provided only when Chorus finances permit and, except in rare cases, only up to one-half of the total tour cost.

STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Staff biographies may be found on our website, www.thechildrenschorus.org.