LITTLE MERMAID Sensory Friendly performance FAQ's:

Date: Wednesday, June 26 at 4:00 pm: for ages 4 and beyond!
Tickets: Prices range from $34 - $89

WHAT: A **SENSORY FRIENDLY PERFORMANCE** is one where the theatre environment is altered to cater to those children with **Autism** and other **Sensory Processing** difficulties or **Developmental or Cognitive Disabilities**. This unique presentation is designed in cooperation with **Autism NJ** and **The Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center at Rutgers University.**

WHY: Local parents asked us to provide a performance where they could bring their child without the stress and worry that their active and/or vocal child is disrupting others. Several Broadway and movie theatres now hold Sensory Friendly performances, and restaurants and hotels are also making accommodation for families with autistic children. There are few opportunities for these families to have comfortable outings such as coming to our show.

Q & A:

Q: ***Will there be mostly families with autistic kids?***

A: This performance is open to anyone who would like to attend, but we do expect a large turnout of families in the autism community.

Q: ***Will the show on stage be any different from other performances that are not Sensory Friendly?***

A: There may be minimal changes to the show to lower loud sound effects or tone down intense moments, but to most in the audience, with or without autism, the show will not be discernibly different from other performances.

Q: ***Will it be noisy during the show?***

A: It's possible....we expect there will be more than the usual ambient sounds from the audience, although our experience has been that most children remain engaged in the show quite well.

Q: ***Will the theater staff at the show that day be familiar with autism?***

A: Yes, for our bigger and longer shows like The Little Mermaid, Paper Mill works with a special group of autism experts and experienced teachers who will be on site to help keep children engaged and promote a positive experience. The group is called **Autism Friendly Spaces: (*www.autismfriendlyspaces.com*).** Our ushers and concessions workers have experience with this audience and are very welcoming.

Q: ***What other accommodations will there be? How is it different from other performances at Paper Mill?***

A: The special accommodations are:

- **Lights remain on, but low dimmed, inside the theater**
- **Slightly lower volume & consistent sound levels, elimination of loud sound effects.**
- **Kids free to talk and leave their seat under parental supervision**
- **Show runs about 2:30 minutes, which includes an 20 minute intermission** *(will let our about 6:30 pm)*
- **"Chill Out" space provided** *(BO staff: This is an area for kids whose parent may want to remove them from the theater to calm down a bit ☺)*
- **Family bathrooms** *(may use any bathrooms on premises, regardless of gender)*
- **BYO snacks & drinks** *(may bring their own into the theater and lobbies – Concessions will also be open for business)*
- **Online resource materials:** *sequenced picture book can be downloaded on www.PaperMill.org.*
- **"Meet Your Seat!"** FREE Open House on Tuesday, June 25th from 3pm – 6pm, expressly for children to visit the theatre space before the show to become familiar with the space and grounds and to ease their transition to a new space. ***(no reservation required)***

Q: ***Will there be more Sensory Friendly performance like this?***

A: Yes we also include some sensory friendly performances in our Saturday morning Children's Theater series. **There is one scheduled for** April 20 called "Happily Ever After: A Cinderella Tale." This show is shorter – just 60 minutes – and the tickets are less expensive, between $12-$20. We will add you to the mail list to receive our notices about future Sensory Friendly performances.