

WEIRD

# DETENTION

Welcome to a World of Magical Realism.



# The Challenge

*We are trapped in a rising tide of bitter vitriol that infects public forums...*



## On social media

15.7% of students (grades 9-12) report being electronically bullied (texting and/or social media).

CDC, 2019

## In our schools

Physical and/or verbal violence reported by 22.2% of students.

Tweens (6-8 grade) reported highest rate of bullying among 12-18 year old group.

Report on Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 2021 (ed.gov)



Suicide rate continue to increase among the young: 35% from 2000 to 2018 then continued rising for young people with the pandemic despite a slight decrease in suicide for those over 35 years of age.

CDC/National Center for Health Statistics, Suicide in the U.S. Declined During the Pandemic (cdc.gov)

In 2019, about 5 percent of students ages 12-18 reported that they had been afraid of attack or harm at school during the school year.

National Center for Educational Statistics

In 2022, there were **50 school shootings** that resulted in injuries or deaths,

Education Week



# Why Conflict Resolution?

Our first preventative strategy [for school shootings] should be to make sure kids are respected, that they feel connected . . .

**That means building kids' skills around conflict resolution, stress management and empathy for their fellow classmates – skills that can help reduce all sorts of unwanted behaviors, including fighting and bullying.**

Dr. Odis Johnson, Exec. Director  
Center for Safe and Healthy Schools  
Johns Hopkins University

# Why Us?

*"I am proud to have worked with this extraordinary and creative group of people! They created shows that combined learning and entertainment in ways that made young and old laugh and learn all at the same time. I know of no better group of creatives to do a show for tweens and families on Conflict Resolution and Compassionate Communication.*

*Cordelia Stone,  
Emmy-winning director PBS and CBS.*

We tried many groups and speakers to reach our students on drug, alcohol and tobacco prevention, and they were, by far, the most effective group delivering a message of positive behavior.

Dr. Ruth Rich,  
Los Angeles Unified School District:

# Who We Are

## Background

We are a group of edutainment professionals who create social change by combining education with entertainment. We emerged during the racial unrest of the 70s to create multicultural theatre with diverse casts who toured the schools and went on to both teach and entertain on PBS. Forged in the turmoil of desegregation, we have now reunited to address the pain of our cultural divisiveness, starting with our youth.

## Values

WEirD Detention is committed to positive social change through education and entertainment. Our primary value is communication. We believe that people who communicate empathically can make better personal connections and are able to build a society wherein differences are respected and conflicts are resolved through communication, not violence.

## Goals

Our goal is to bring the skills of conflict resolution to youth, thereby reducing verbal and physical bullying in order to prevent the deterioration of mental health and the escalation of physical violence.

# Our Solution

A film showing how teens can escape the emotional and verbal violence of our times

In the film three distressed teens are trapped in their home and social situations. Through the use of conflict resolution techniques taught by a magical TRIO OF SINGING DIVAS, they begin to support one another and resolve their conflicts.

Conflict Resolution Process
Acknowledge what other is feeling
Listen to understand
Clarify what the other wants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ask questions</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Repeat back what you heard</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ask for confirmation of your understanding of what is meant</li></ul>
Respond

*Support for practicing the techniques shown in our film*

- conflict resolutions workshops
- interactive gaming apps/study guides
- links to other activities and support groups through our website

# Contact Us

Sedona, AZ  
ProductionOffice@WeirdDetention.com



**Dev Ross**  
Writer, Producer

Award winning writer for Disney, Universal, Amazon, Nickelodeon, and Scholastic. Credits include Land Before Time sequels, Aladdin sequels, Disney Afternoon Darkwing Duck.



**Shondra Jepperson**  
Composer, Songwriter, Producer

Award-winning songwriter, video & studio producer, editor, music designer, Juilliard graduate, concert and musical theater performer.



*WEirD Detention LLC*

*Presents*



# WEirD DETENTION

A Film to Heal Conflict  
.....starting with our youth

A group of young people are standing in a hallway, looking up with expressions of shock and concern. They are positioned behind vertical metal bars, possibly a security checkpoint or a prison. The central figure is a young man with long dark hair, wearing a blue denim jacket over a red plaid shirt, looking upwards with a wide-eyed, open-mouthed expression. To his right, a young woman with short blonde hair, wearing a pink shirt, also looks up with a similar expression. Other young people are visible in the background, all looking in the same upward direction. The hallway has a tiled floor and fluorescent lights on the ceiling.

**“What have we done to each other?  
How did we get here? How do we fix it?”**

*– Dr. Mindy, Don't Look Up*



# EXECUTIVE FILM SUMMARY

## WEirD Detention

A 21ST CENTURY *BREAKFAST CLUB* SET IN MAGICAL REALITY

### LOGLINE

A surreal school detention traps *three teens* with nothing in common but the maze of discord that confines them. They avoid, blame, and fight until they discover the way to resolve conflict..

### GENRE

Musical

### WRITTEN BY

Dev Ross (*Aladdin 2: The Return of Jafar*, *The Land Before Time* films, *Balto: Wolf Quest*)

### MUSIC and LYRICS BY

Shondra Jepperson

### LOCATION

TBD Exploring New Mexico, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arizona

### BUDGET

\$ 334.000 with \$ 53,000 In Kind

### FINANACING

To be financed with a combination of funds received through fiscal sponsorships and traditional equity investments.



A group of teenagers are shown from the chest up, looking out from behind vertical metal bars. The central figure is a young man with long brown hair, wearing a blue denim jacket over a red and black plaid shirt and a white t-shirt. He is looking upwards with a concerned expression. To his right, a young woman with short reddish-brown hair, wearing a pink shirt, looks forward with a worried expression. Other teenagers are visible in the background, also looking out from behind the bars. The setting appears to be a prison or a secure facility with a hallway in the background.

**Compassionate and Empathetic.**

**A 21st Century Breakfast Club SET in magical reality**

**In-your-face. Emotional. Poignant.**



# SYNOPSIS

As the film begins, three distressed kids are trapped in detention. They long for connection: to be liked, loved, belong, and to be heard. They just don't know how--yet.

They pass time playing with an antique pin-ball machine stored with other discarded junk at the back of the room, when a TRIO OF MAGICAL SINGERS suddenly emerges from the pinball machine and a booming voice fills the room to accuse the kids.

Kat is a bully.

Jace is an elitist.

Ashti hides her head in the sand.

One by one, the kids are magically pulled into scenes of their transgressions and the TRIO of SINGERS coaches the teens to use the process of conflict resolution to connect with others.

The teens express themselves through their interactions and compelling songs as they resolve their conflicts and find the path to connection.





# ASHTI

Fearful. Anxious. Lacking self-awareness.

Hiding is how she survives.

## Desirable Looks for ASHTI



Maitreyi Ramakrishnan

*Never Have I Ever*  
*Turning Red*



Iman Vallani

*Ms. Marvel*



Geraldine Viswanathan

*Blockers*  
*Bad Education*



# TRIO OF DIVAS

Desirable Singer- Actors

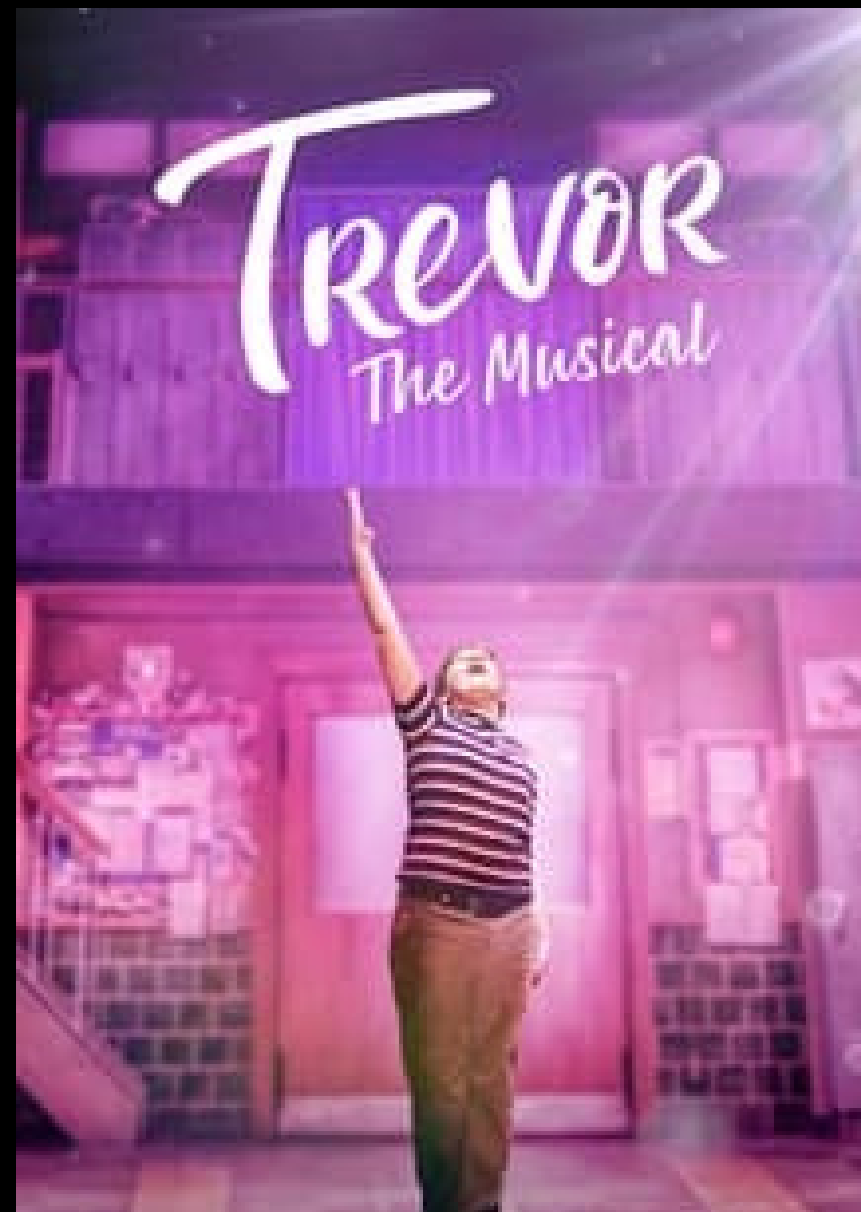




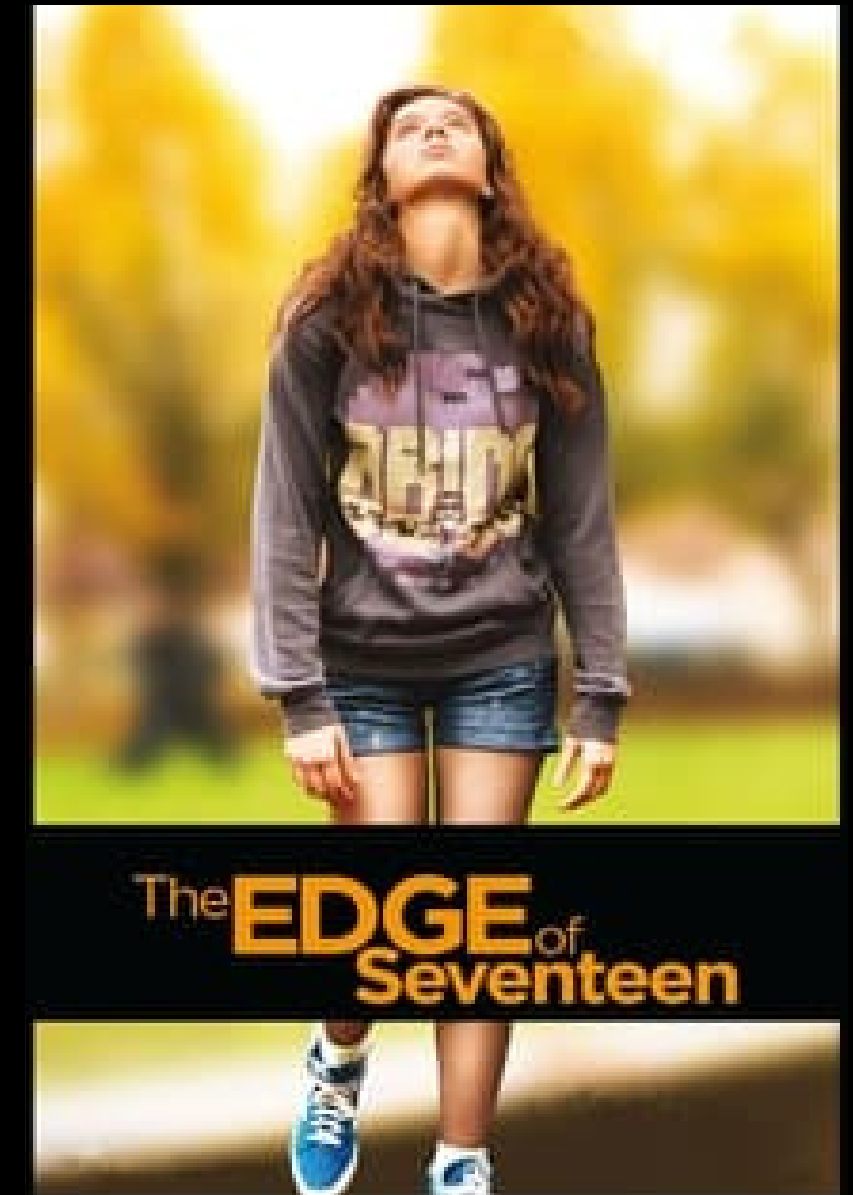
# COMPS AND SIMILAR FILMS



Budget: 2 M  
Worldwide Box Office: 14.5 M  
2018



Film Stage Musical  
Disney +  
2022



Budget: 9 M  
Worldwide Box Office: 19 M  
2016



# WRITER'S STATEMENT

Words have been magical to me ever since I began forming them. I quickly learned that the right words strung together could tell a story and... be used as weapons. Wishing to use them for 'weapons of good,' I got my big break when I was hired to write shows for a professional touring children's theater company. We didn't do iterations of Cinderella, Hansel and Gretel, or any published children's play for that matter, we created our own shows about busing, sexual decision making, the metric system, conserving water, multiculturalism, the Jewish, Hispanic, Asian, and Black Experience, smoking, alcoholism, drug addiction, peer pressure and oh so many more. We were so effective, we ended up recreating many of our theatrical shows for television. The Voyage of the Same-ites, our *Emmy winning* show on PBS, was about aliens coming to earth and encountering human rights. Later, I wrote for Disney, Scholastic, Universal, Mattel and many others. But never was I to come close to my early experience of using words and entertainment to explore important human themes. I missed leaving our audiences with something more than wanting to buy a toy, a sugary cereal, or to tune in next week. I wanted to return to writing shows that left kids thinking and feeling something beyond what they look like or what clothes they put on. Back in my children's theater days we didn't sell toys, video games, or subscriptions. We created one-off shows that kids, teachers, and parents loved. Now, I want to do it again!

Only this time with far more out-reach!

Through "WEirD Detention," our team can combat one of today's most urgent issues: lack of communication. Our mission: to combat rampant meanness, violence, and the lying that is all too prevalent in our society today. To this end, we will produce our film "Weird Detention," an "edu-tainment" piece that models Conflict Resolution and Compassionate Communication via three troubled tweens in a most entertaining and educational way. Once distributed, parents can stream it, kids can watch it on their iphones, and schools can show it on screens. No worries. We won't leave you hanging. Audiences will also be able to access games and materials all to help understand how to effectively communicate with empathy, clarity, and compassion.

Last line here for a hook? (something like - "Let's arm our kids with these tools. The future of our world depends on it.")

- DEV ROSS, WRITER

# SIZZLE





# THE TEAM



**Dev Ross**  
Writer, Producer

*Emmy  
Humanitas Prize  
Action in Children's Television Award*

Award winning writer for Disney, Universal, Amazon, Nickelodeon, and Scholastic. Credits include Land Before Time sequels, Aladdin sequels, Disney Afternoon Darkwing Duck.



# THE TEAM

**Shondra Jepperson**  
Composer, Songwriter, Producer

Award-winning songwriter,  
video producer, editor, digital  
music designer, Juilliard  
graduate, concert and musical  
theater performer.





JACE

You're not alone! I'm here!  
I'll stand for you!

Ashti joins them.

ASHTI

Me too!

Kat glares at them.

KAT

You're all a bunch of losers!  
You don't deserve to live! You're  
nothing! Nothing!

ASHTI

Katherine, please.

Kat Grabs Ashti.

KAT

Beg!

JACE

Let her go!

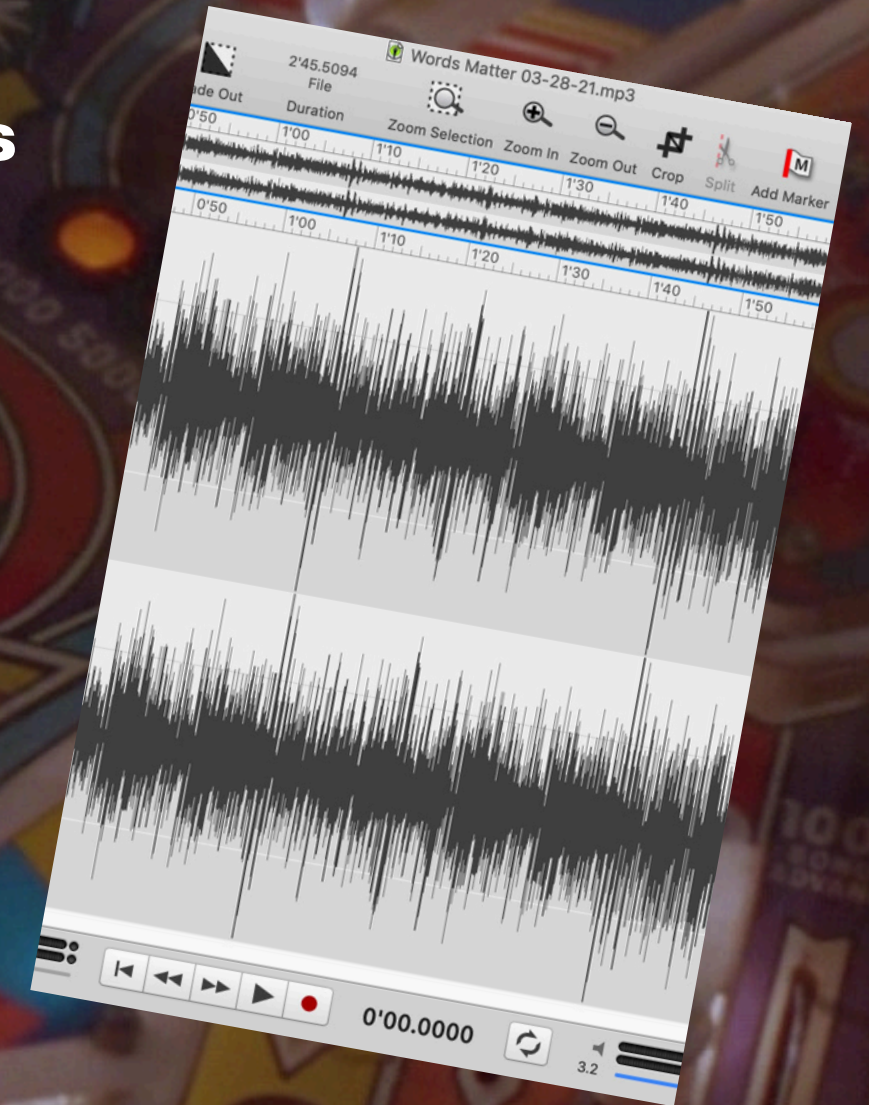
Ashti's afraid but fights to stay present.

ASHTI

Look, right now your anger isn't  
doing anything good for you and  
it's hurting me. Is that what you  
want? Do you really want to hurt  
me?



Script & Songs  
Available  
upon request







Help us turn the tide of bitter  
vitriol that infects  
public forums...  
starting with young adults.

- Vicious verbal & Physical attacks
- Onslaught of school shootings
- Social Media
  - News
  - Politics



**Let's bring the proven  
techniques of Conflict  
Resolution and Civil Discourse  
to our youth.**



# CONTACT

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