



AUSTIN The UNSTOPPABLE



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Austin the Unstoppable

A Musical About Learning How to Make Healthy Lifestyle Choices Student Study Guide

PRODUCTION STAFF

Book & Lyrics: Barry Wyner
Music: Daniel Israel
Original Direction: Kevin Del Aguila
Directed by: Jim Jack
Musical Direction: Matt Castle

Set & Sound Design: Christopher Bailey
Costume Design: Esther Arroyo
Orchestrations: Matt Castle &
Frank Galgano
Study Guide: Sue Marinello

Stage Manager: Erica Leigh

THE CAST



Joe Piserchio as Austin



Rachelle Legrand as Deena



Christina Comizio as Kayla



Evan Hart as Dylan, Dr. K
and others

AUSTIN THE UNSTOPPABLE

THE STORY: Reigning “Master of X-Box”, and “Junk Food Junkie,” Austin suddenly faces the long-term consequences of an unhealthy diet and lack of exercise when he learns his mother has been diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes. In partnership with Shaping NJ, George Street Playhouse’s first Educational Touring Theatre musical explores how one family confronts the challenges of obesity by having the courage to make healthy choices together. This fun, upbeat, musical comedy celebrates how positive change can occur with the power of love, hard work and support.

The objective of this production is to engage students in a dialogue about healthy eating habits and exercise, while providing knowledge about obesity, diabetes, and other weight related health concerns. It is our aim, through theatre and music, to encourage students to develop long lasting healthy nutrition and exercise habits.



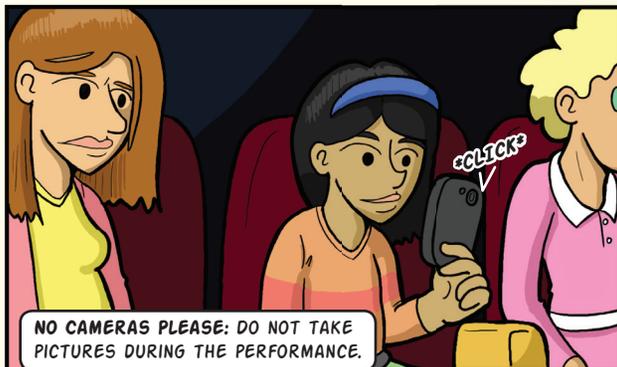
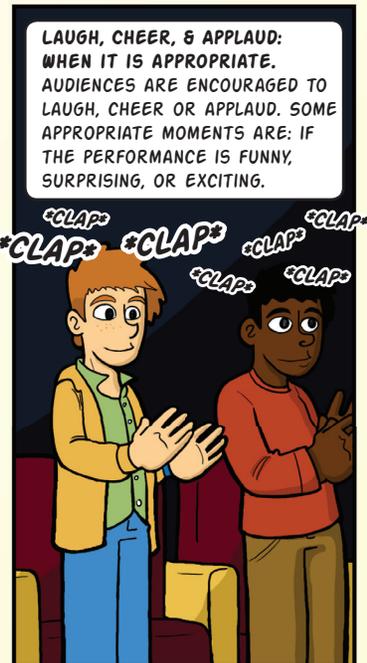
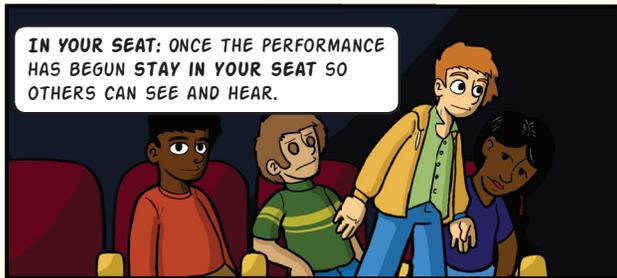
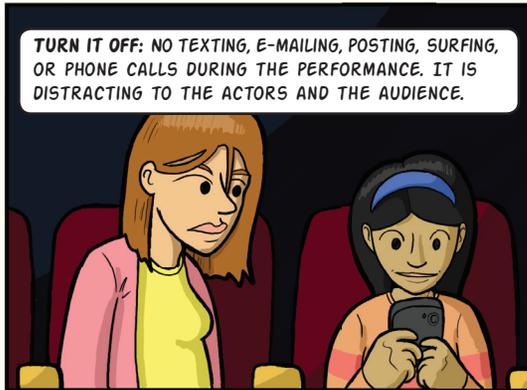
AUSTIN THE UNSTOPPABLE is the first musical commissioned by George Street Playhouse’s Educational Touring Theatre for young audiences. It premiered January 11, 2012 at George Street Playhouse in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The Play's the Thing

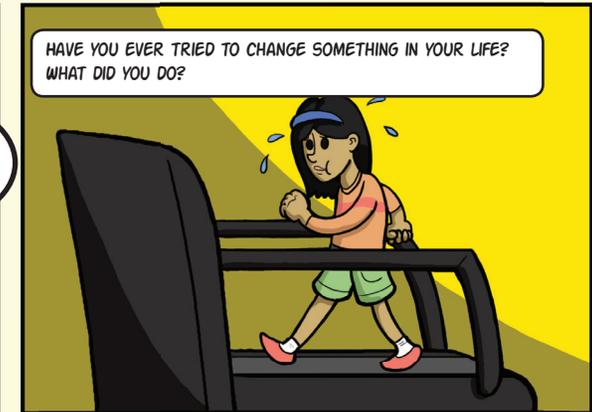
YOUR JOB AS THE AUDIENCE

As a member of the audience, you will have an important role during the live performance you are about to see. Your job is to follow good theatre etiquette (see the definition of Theatre Etiquette below) in order to make the production fun and exciting for both the actors and the rest of the audience.

Theatre Etiquette: The conduct or procedure required to be observed by an audience at a live performance of actors; in other words... **How to Behave.**



WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE THE SHOW



Post Show Activities

5 MIN

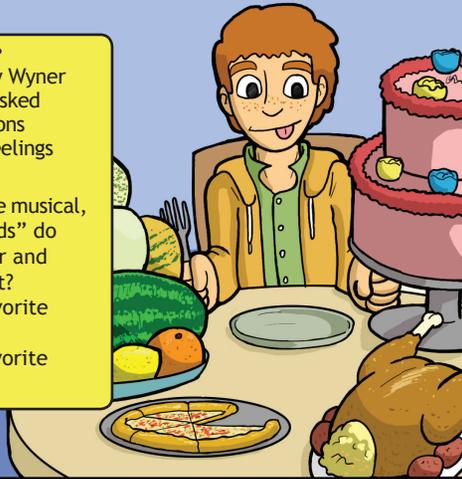
QUICKWRITE & SHARE

A Food Affair: Food means different things to different people, based on family backgrounds and cultures.

1. Describe your favorite meal. Where do you enjoy it? Who cooks it for you?
2. Describe a typical family dinner. How often do you and your family sit down together for a meal?
3. What special foods does your family prepare for holidays or celebrations?

To write *Austin The Unstoppable*, Barry Wyner and Daniel Israel asked themselves questions about their own feelings on food.

1. Judging from the musical, what “junk foods” do you think Wyner and Israel like to eat?
2. What is your favorite junk food?
3. What is your favorite healthy food?

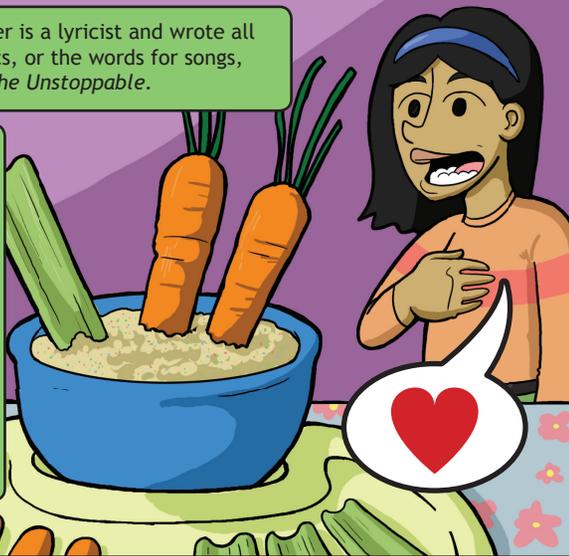


20 MIN

BECOME A LYRICIST!

Barry Wyner is a lyricist and wrote all of the lyrics, or the words for songs, in *Austin the Unstoppable*.

1. Write a “love” song for your favorite healthy snack. You might also want to write a “break-up” song for your favorite “junk food.”
TIP: Remember, the lyrics of songs look like poems when written on the page. They can rhyme, but don’t have to.
2. Create a vocal composition, or melody, to set your lyrics to music.
3. Perform your songs for others.



THE SOURCE OF LIFE

30 MIN

People cannot live without food. In the United States, a very small percentage of the population grows food. Research and write about one part of the food journey. Here are some ideas for topics.

1. What is the difference between organic, free range, and agri-business farming practices to grow chickens? You may also choose a different raw food source, such as beef, pork, and fish.
2. Why can you purchase strawberries 365 days a year?
3. How has transportation changed the way we eat?
4. Where are the farmers’ markets in your area? What is the value of a farmers’ market? Are farmers’ markets beneficial?



30 MIN

IT'S NOT A DOG'S LIFE

"WOULD YOU GET YOUR DOG UP IN THE MORNING FOR A CUP OF COFFEE AND A DOUGHNUT?"

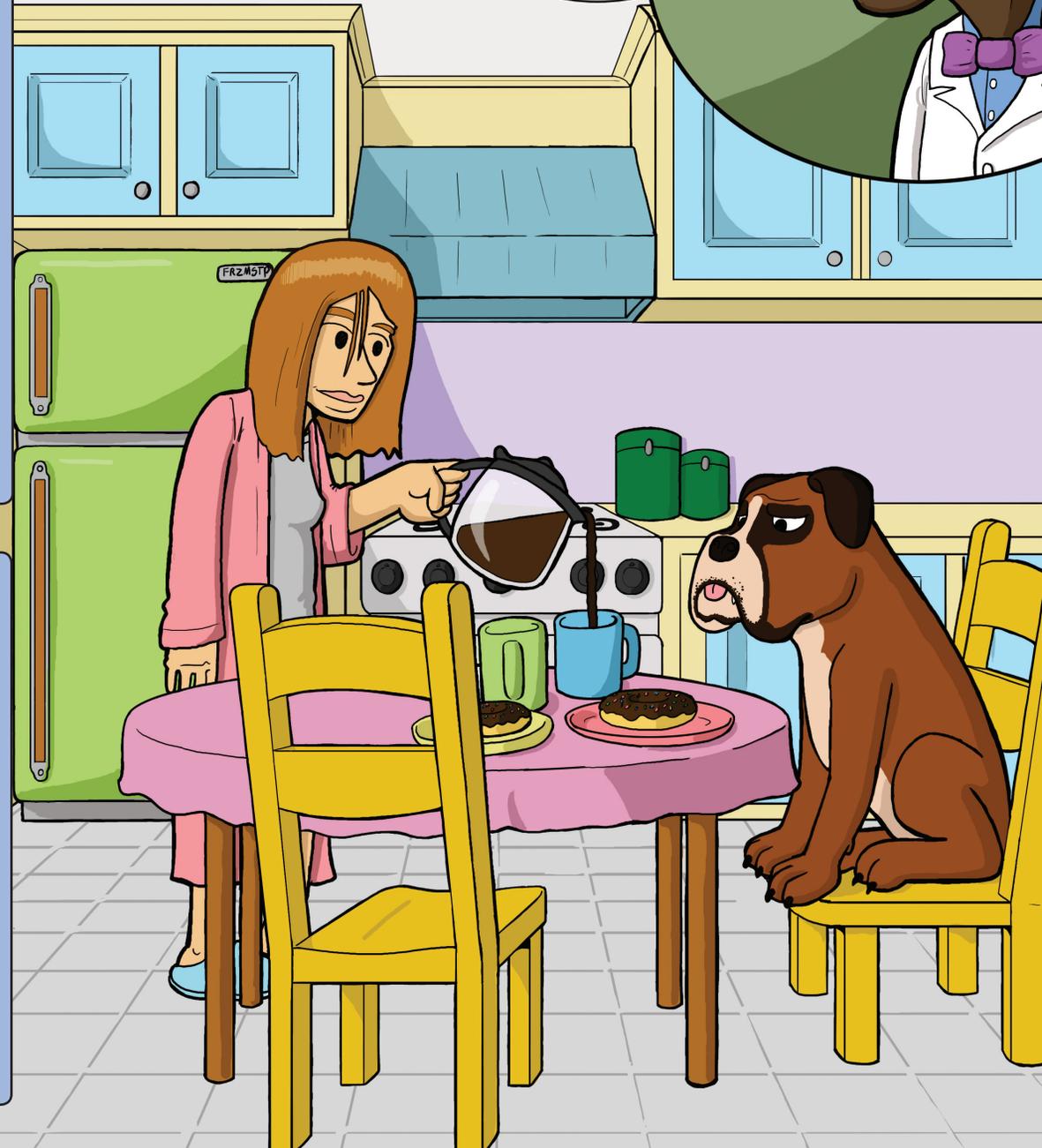
-JACK LALANNE, HEALTH AND FITNESS PIONEER AND MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER.

The Most Important Meal of the Day: What did you have this morning for breakfast? It's hard to imagine a pet owner feeding a dog caffeine and sugar for breakfast. What do you think Jack LaLanne thought of coffee & doughnuts as breakfast for people?

Breakfast is considered by most nutritional experts to be the most important meal of the day. It prepares your body and mind for the tasks ahead. Yet, how many of us start the day with food covered in sugar? Jack LaLanne, often regarded as "the father of fitness", lived to be 96-years-old. During his career, he developed fitness and nutrition techniques, invented fitness and nutrition machines, and brought health and fitness to the forefront of popular culture through television. In the quote above LaLanne described his views on nutrition. As a boy, he was a sugarholic—absolutely addicted to sugar. But when he was fourteen, he learned how damaging sugar is to the body and quit using sugar for the rest of his life.

1. Write down what you ate for breakfast for the past three days. What did you eat? Check the label: how much processed sugar was added to your food? How did it make you feel?
2. How did your breakfast prepare you to be successful? What nutrition did it supply your body?
3. Dylan sings, "The human body is like a car, give it gas and you'll go far." How far will the breakfast fuel you are giving your body take you?
4. Parents, doctors and health experts talk about how sugar is bad for you. But why? Research why sugar can be damaging to your body. Write a paragraph describing why too much sugar is bad for you.
5. Rethink breakfast: What healthy choices could you eat for breakfast that would prepare you for a successful day and life?

THIS YEAR, AUSTIN'S WEIGHT GREW MUCH MORE THAN HIS HEIGHT. IF THAT CONTINUES, HE COULD BECOME OVERWEIGHT, OBESE... AND EVEN SICK.

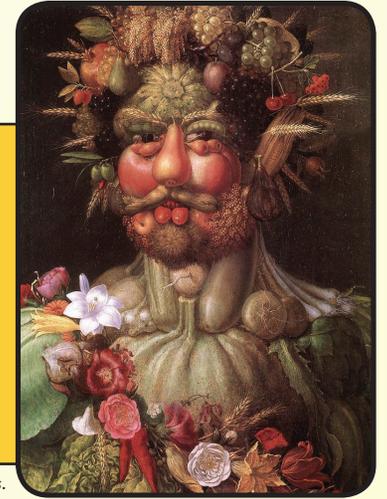


40 MIN

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT!

We have all heard the term “you are what you eat,” and we know from our studies on nutrition that what we eat affects our ability to think, as well as move. When Austin’s mother and sister went shopping for BBQ sauce, they discovered that some of the ingredients on grocery store shelves were not healthy.

Taking the idea that “we are what we eat” to the next level, an artist named Giuseppe Arcimboldo began painting real individuals by representing their features with food. For example, he used peaches for cheeks or a pear for a nose. Sometimes he used fruits and vegetables to depict the subjects of his paintings, other times he used meats. Almost always he incorporated other elements as well. Arcimboldo’s food paintings were so unique in sixteenth century Europe that he became famous



Vertumnus, (the Roman god of gardens, orchards, and seasonal change.) by Giuseppe Arcimboldo. c. 1590-1, Photo Credit: Google Images.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT!

Using food images from magazines or the internet make a food collage portrait of yourself! If you cannot find all the images you want, draw or paint some foods like Giuseppe Arcimboldo would have done. You can find more of Giuseppe Arcimboldo’s paintings at Google Images.

Before you begin, answer the following questions about Arcimboldo’s portraits. The questions may help you to focus on the food collages you want to make.

1. When you look at Giuseppe Arcimboldo’s paintings, what do you notice first?
2. How do the paintings make you feel?
3. Why do you think he chose to make them look like food?

Now, make a collage portrait of yourself as food. Use the foods that you have eaten in the past day to guide you.

1. What can you tell about yourself from looking at the portrait?
2. If you think about what you want to accomplish in your life, what changes would you make to your collage so you can fulfill your dreams?

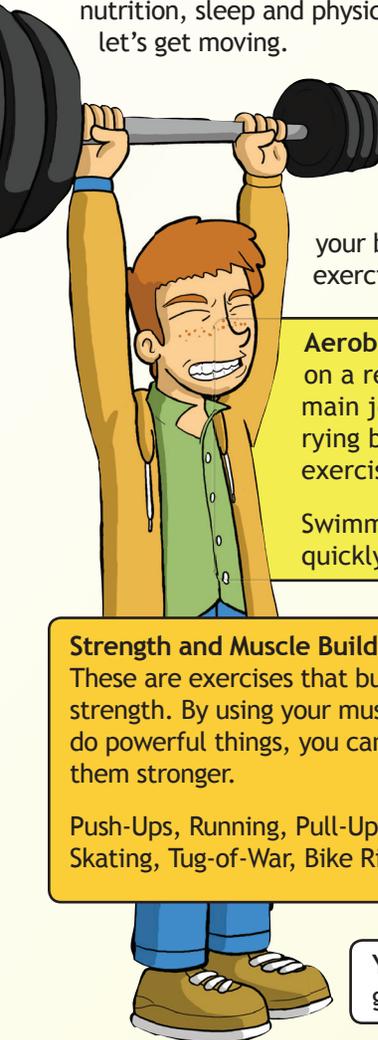


Be Unstoppable!

ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON MOVEMENT AND PHYSICAL WELLNESS

Life is like a scale. Calories consumed should be roughly equal to those used, lots of activity should be followed by rest, and stress should be offset by relaxation. Exercise and good nutrition can help you maintain a balanced life.

Let's Get Moving: Fitness is your general state of well being. It is a measure of the body's ability to work effectively and efficiently. Fitness is a combination of proper nutrition, sleep and physical exercise. Before we learn about how to stay fit, let's get moving.

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1. Do 10 jumping jacks
 2. Do 10 push-ups
 3. Do 10 side stretches

There are three types of exercise which help to keep your body functioning efficiently and effectively. Those exercise types are:

Aerobic: When you give your heart this kind of workout on a regular basis, your heart will get even better at its main job – delivering oxygen (in the form of oxygen-carrying blood cells) to all parts of your body. Some aerobic exercises are:

Swimming, Soccer, Basketball, Biking, Jogging (or walking quickly), Jumping Rope

Strength and Muscle Building:

These are exercises that build strength. By using your muscles to do powerful things, you can make them stronger.

Push-Ups, Running, Pull-Ups, Inline Skating, Tug-of-War, Bike Riding

Flexibility: Being flexible is having “full range of motion,” which means you can move your arms and legs freely without feeling tightness or pain.

Tumbling and Gymnastics; Dancing; Yoga, Martial Arts, Simple Stretches (such as touching your toes)

You Also Need Sleep: You must rest in order to grow, concentrate, and perform.

Create Your Own Unstoppable Dance!

Using the opening song from the show, create The Unstoppable! The Unstoppable is an energetic, active dance routine set to *Unstoppable*. You and your friends can invent an imaginative set of movements that will get your heart rate pumping and exercise major muscles in the body. Every Unstoppable must have these three elements:

Flashy Handshake or Fistbump, Bold Super Hero Pose(s), 5 Unstoppable Jumps

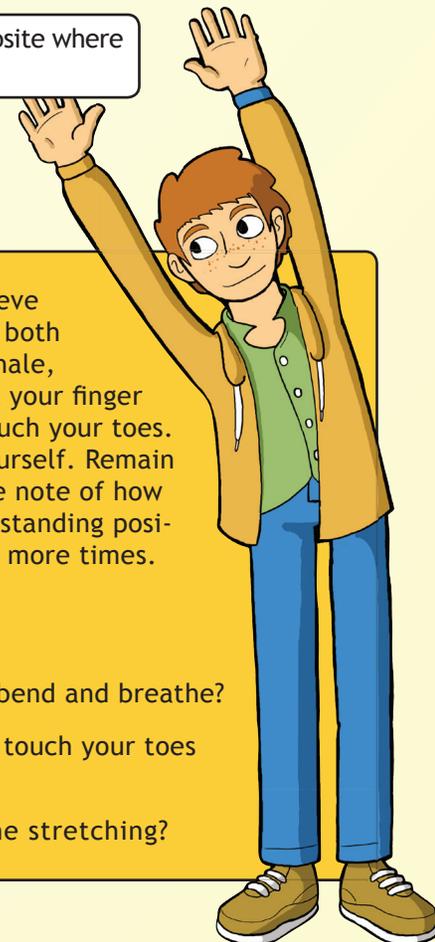
Video your Unstoppable and submit it to our website where it can go head to head with other Unstoppables!

Cool Down: Bend & Breathe

DO: Taking a few minutes to breathe can relieve stress and help you concentrate. Stand with both feet firmly planted on the ground. As you inhale, raise your arms above your head. Look up at your finger tips. As you exhale, slowly bend over and touch your toes. Stretch as low as you can, but don't hurt yourself. Remain there, breathing slowly, for 10 seconds. Take note of how far you are able to bend. Slowly return to a standing position as you inhale. Do the entire sequence 4 more times.

THINK:

1. What type of exercise is this?
2. How do you feel after taking the time to bend and breathe?
3. What did you notice about your ability to touch your toes after your first sequence?
4. In what part of your body do you feel the stretching?



Meet the Creators

Q & A WITH BARRY WYNER, WRITER OF AUSTIN THE UNSTOPPABLE

Q: What was the original inspiration for Austin the Unstoppable? What drew you to this topic?

A: George Street Playhouse asked if I'd like to write a children's musical on wellness and nutrition, and I thought, "What a great idea!" I knew it would be challenging to make that topic fun, but hopefully we succeeded. I got the inspiration for the story from a YouTube video about a real boy named Austin.

Q: How did you work together as collaborators (with Dan Israel)? What was your process?

A: We discussed the plot framework with each other, and also with Jim Jack (Director of Education and Outreach at GSP). Once it was agreed upon, I would write the scenes and lyrics. Dan formed musical ideas based on the lyrics I sent him. Then, we would work in the same room and flesh out the song from his musical ideas. Often, I would alter lyrics to fit melody ideas that Dan had. It was very back-and-forth. When we were in rehearsal, I made many changes to the plot and dialogue based on suggestions from the director and the actors.

Q: What do you want the impact of Austin the Unstoppable to be?

A: I strongly hope that this musical inspires young people to form healthy habits. Kids are dreamers, and they each have the potential to become the next Steve Jobs, Stephen Curry, Ben Folds, etc. But only if they are healthy enough to make those dreams come true. You can't neglect your health and expect anything else good to happen. Lifestyle habits and eating habits directly affect the course of a person's life, for better or worse, so I hope this musical helps kids make good choices.

Q: What inspires you as an artist?

A: I see a lot of beauty and emotion in life, and I've always loved musicals because they heighten those things. Musicals are like a SUPER emotional, glorified version of life, and I find that so cool. I think art is a good way to make people think, or to inspire them, or sometimes just to entertain them so they forget their problems (for) a while. There's no greater feeling than watching a group of people-- strangers you have never met-- laugh or cry from something that you wrote. I only want to make art that has a positive effect on people, and I certainly hope Austin lives up to that mission.

Q: What advice or thoughts do you have to share with an aspiring musical theatre actor, writer or composer?

A: Obviously we all know it is a tough business. The real world does not care whether or not you get to express yourself for a living. BUT, it is important to remember that all the great artists you look up to began as nobodies. And if it could happen to them, why can't it happen to YOU? I think the key is to build plenty of other sources of

meaning and happiness into your life. That way, if the art thing doesn't work out, you will be just fine. If a person has a dream in the arts, I think it is important to make some attempt at pursuing it, because otherwise, you'll always be wondering "What if?" So I say: Go for it!

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE CREATIVE STAFF

BARRY WYNER (Book and Lyrics): Barry Wyner has received the Kleban Prize, the Jerry Bock Award, the Richard Rodgers Award, and an IRNE nomination for best new play. His musical CALVIN BERGER has had full productions at Gloucester Stage Co., Barrington Stage Co., and George Street Playhouse (directed by 2-time Tony winner Kathleen Marshall). One of his songs was published in the BMI Workshop Songbook and recorded by TV star Neil Patrick Harris.

*People struggle with changes all the time...
I like the challenge of taking a topic some people might say is dry...
and make that funny and heartfelt and an entertaining
journey for the characters.*

- Barry Wyner, writer, AUSTIN THE UNSTOPPABLE

DANIEL ISRAEL (Composer): Daniel Israel is a member of the advanced BMI Lehman Engle Musical Theatre Workshop, and recipient of the 2010 BMI Harrington Award for Creative Achievement in Musical Theatre. His other new musical in development, THE DIRTY HIPPIE JAM BAND PROJECT, has been featured in various showcases throughout New York City. He graduated from the University of Rochester, Magna Cum Laude with High Honors.

KEVIN DEL AGULIA (Director): has been staging Lincoln Center Theater's annual CELEBRATION OF STUDENT SONGS since 2008, and helmed the world premieres of the new musicals SEE ROCK CITY AND OTHER DESTINATIONS, POOLBOY, and Kirsten Childs' FUNKED UP FAIRY TALES for William Finn's musical theater lab at Barrington Stage in Massachusetts. His direction of the Off-Broadway production, IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE, at the Lucille Lortel theater, received such acclaim that he was hired to direct its sequel, IF YOU GIVE A PIG A PANCAKE.

*Hmm... What am I eating? What are my nutritional habits?
Do I play too many video games? Do I sit around too much?
Should I be exercising more? Should I be eating differently?*

- Kevin Del Aguila, director, AUSTIN THE UNSTOPPABLE, hopes audience members will ask themselves these questions when they see this musical.