

ON CURRICULUMS FOR AERIAL CLASSES IN YOUTH CIRCUS

Three different examples how to go from basic circus to specialise in aerials

In this session 3 participants explained how they build up their lesson sequence in their circus school and why in this way.

GERMANY

Sonni: if the students want to do aerials they have to start with a basic year in acrobatics. After one year you can specialize. First trapeze and after 2 years trapeze you can start with the silk.

Start with all students of one age group (6 – 9 years) (9 – 12 years) (12 years up) in a group and then specialize. You can specialize in several disciplines.

Q: Do children stop after a year or change all the time?

Sonni: We want them to find out what happens if you stick to one thing.

A class is divided in warming-up, main technical part, creative part and cool down.

At the beginning of the year, make the technique part a bit difficult so they know it is hard work.

After half a year the clowns of the circus come with the idea for the show and they can start working more intense on the end performance.

Q: Why first only trapeze and no silks f.e.?

Sonni: Because you need more strength and you need to be able to think more complex.

Warming-up for every one which is a game warming-up, then more specialized in the groups.

BELGIUM

Isabel: Start with little children and parents, from 6 years old in a multi class. Then you will have 34 participants, 3 teachers and some assistants. The multi class also has a playful way of stretching and strengthening. From 10 years old there can choose how to specialize.

We recently started specialization for aerial and floor acrobatics for 8-year olds. Here they learn all kind of 'families' of movement and we do coordination games.

They learn all kind of movements that are fun to do, while building strength etcetera, that is needed for aerial work; we don't do many tricks yet. Most kids are ready to learn technique afterwards and to learn remember names and figures. This group is growing strong in the level.

The 10+ class it is specialized aerial. Every class has 2 themes: a physical theme and a creative theme, and they learn how you make your act alive.

Only in the last group 16+ they specialize in one equipment : silk or trapeze or chinese pole.

FINLAND

Talvi: in Finland we have a National Curriculum for Art Education, as well as a curriculum for circus. If you as a youth circus follow this, you get funding from the government.

It consists of 500 lessons, like basic studies, and each lesson is 45 minutes.

Overview:

1st year - 3 times a week, 10-11 year olds

2nd year - 4 times a week, 2 times specialized, and 2 times group work, 11 – 12 year olds

3rd year - 2 times for general discipline, 1 time for 1 discipline and 2 group sessions

4th year and 5th year - the same and after a test they get a diploma from the art school

You can continue with the performance group or apply for a circus school.

The school of Talvi has a total 7 years of all the disciplines. Every year has its own theme, building up to a creation.

The last year the participants train two times a week and it is focussed on creation.

After the participants have done 5 years, they start with 2 times a week on their own theme, to find their specialization. They also start performing outside the school and to independently make their own act.