



The drug education charity



## Northern Ireland Schools Tour **I LOVE YOU, MUM – I PROMISE I WON'T DIE**

On tour from 24th February - 7th March 2025

A verbatim play by Mark Wheeler



### Information for Teachers

#### What is it?

*I Love You, Mum – I Promise I Won't Die* is a powerful piece of verbatim theatre, written by acclaimed playwright Mark Wheeler. It tells the story of Daniel Spargo-Mabbs who tragically died at the age of 16 from an overdose of MDMA in 2014, charting what happened to Dan, the decisions he made, and how it affected his family and friends – from tragedy to redemption – and all told in their own words.

The full-length play, published by Bloomsbury in February 2017, has been a GCSE Drama set text in England Wales since 2022. A shorter theatre-in-education (TIE) version, specially adapted by the playwright, has now been performed almost 600 times since 2017 in schools and colleges across England and Scotland to more than 123,000 students.

This will be our first tour of Northern Ireland schools, **for two weeks from 24<sup>th</sup> February to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2025**, with a new TIE production by **Ever Unique Productions**, an educational theatre company based in Ballymena and Coleraine. This tour has been planned in partnership with Sandra Larmour, the mother of Jeni Larmour from Co Armagh, who tragically lost her life to ketamine on her first day at Newcastle University in 2020. Funding is mainly being provided by fundraising undertaken by the [Larchfield Estate Christmas Fair 2024](#), with additional donations and sponsorship being sought.

#### What will the students learn?

We aim to leave no student in doubt that they always have a choice about the decisions they make and that the risks associated with illegal substance misuse are incredibly high. They will learn key facts that will help them make informed decisions and important strategies to put their decisions into practice in a pressured situation.

#### About the DSM Foundation

The Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation is a drug education charity founded in 2014 by Fiona and Tim Spargo-Mabbs in response to the death of their 16 year old son Daniel after an accidental overdose of MDMA (ecstasy). The DSM Foundation aims to support young people to make safer choices and reduce harm, through increasing their understanding of the effects and risks of drugs and alcohol, and works with students from Years 7 to 14, and any adults in their lives, from parents and teachers through to police officers and street pastors. We currently work with more than 750 schools across England and Scotland, and this will be our first work in Northern Ireland. See [the website](#) for more information the drug education programme.

#### About Ever Unique Productions

Ever Unique Productions is an educational theatre company based in Ballymena and Coleraine. They help people build their confidence and resilience through the power of theatre and film. They work with the community to promote education through performances and workshops. They believe we can provide a safe place for young people to

learn new skills, to nourish their journey of discovery and then create unique pieces of theatre and film. Founded by industry professionals Hannah Reilly and Martina McAfee, they are committed to providing young people with the confidence and creativity to grow into well-rounded young adults. In 2023 Ever Unique Productions' youth theatre groups performed 'I Love You, Mum' in Ballymena and Coleraine. See [the website](#) for more information.

## Practical considerations

### Parking

- We require a safe parking space on the school premises, as close to the performance space as possible to allow for quick get-in/get-out of our stage set.
- The team will travel in one large van-style vehicle.

### Performance Times

- The performance is c.45-mins, followed by a drug education workshop of 30-mins.
- The team will arrive ideally one hour prior to performance start, to allow time for entry, set-up and preparation before students are allowed into the space and will require at least 20 minutes to pack-up after the performance. Support from staff will be required if access to the space is restricted during unloading and reloading, for example if students are on break and the set must be moved among the students down corridors etc.
- Please try to have the audience arrive 5 minutes before the start time, ideally without coats/bags.
- For a morning performance we ask for a start time no earlier than 9:30 to give adequate travel time for the theatre company.

### Named contact

- We require a named contact who will meet the team at reception and escort them to the performance area.
- The named contact will be able to make the team aware of the school environment and access to facilities such as toilets etc.

### Safeguarding

- It is **required** that a member of school staff remain with the team at all times when students are present.
- All team members will have an up-to-date Access NI check prior to delivery date; sight of team members' Access NI Reports can be made available on request.
- Team members will perform and conduct themselves to high professional standards and in line with the theatre company's Safeguarding Policy (available on request).

### Preparing for the play

We want to ensure that the students and school benefit as much as possible from the play. As a Trauma Informed education provider, the DSM Foundation can offer some ideas to help you prepare. Whilst watching 'I Love You, Mum – I Promise I Won't Die' will be beneficial to most, the story of Dan's death could trigger powerful emotions and trauma in some who may have been exposed to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). The children and staff involved may need extra pastoral support before, during and after the sessions. Please use the checklist in the booking form to ensure students and staff are prepared for the play.

### The team – who you will expect to meet

- 4 x professional actors (2 x female, 2 x male).
- On occasion, the team may be accompanied by a member of Ever Unique's production team.
- All team names will be listed on the DSM Foundation booking form

### Performance space

- Minimum performance space of 6m wide x 4m deep please (there may be some flexibility around this floor area).
- We require access to at least 2 x double power sockets.
- The theatre company will bring all equipment to stage the performance.
- If we are performing in a space with theatre lighting, we would ask that there is a 'cool wash' generated on the performance area.

### Audience set-up

- The performance is adaptable to any audience set-up **with the exception of** in-the-round. School halls, if possible are best set up in traditional (face on) theatre style, or thrust, with seating placed face on and to both sides.
- The performance ideally should take place on the same floor level as the seating, but can easily be performed on a school hall stage.
- The production can also be performed in school theatres/studios.

### Audience numbers

- A max. of 200 students for any one performance.

### Insurance

- Ever Unique has public liability insurance (£10m) and employers' liability insurance. A copy of our insurance cover is available on request.

### Copyright, photography, recording

- Due to licencing restrictions the performance cannot be photographed, or video recorded under any circumstances.
- The theatre company may take photographs or video of a delivery. Any use of this media will be for internal purposes only. However, if we wish to use it for marketing purposes (company website, social media channels etc) prior permission will be sought by the company from the school with the necessary permissions sought from parents/guardians.

### Post-delivery resources

- The DSM Foundation can also offer a full range of resources and support for students, staff and parents. To hear more, please email [play@dsmfoundation.org.uk](mailto:play@dsmfoundation.org.uk)

**If you have any questions prior to your delivery day, please get in touch.**

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