Q. What is a sensory-friendly performance?

A. Sensory-friendly concerts are designed for all families with children or adults diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder or sensory sensitivities. While the performance remains the same, there are modifications made in the hall to allow more audience movement, the staff and musicians are trained to accommodate the needs of this population to create a judgment-free zone!

Q. When and where are these performances taking place?

A. The sensory-friendly performance will take place at Symphony Hall: 301 Massachusetts Ave, Boston MA 02115

Sensory Friendly Performance Dates/Times For the 2019-20 Season:
Holiday Pops, December 7th at 10:00am
BSO Concert for Very Young People, February 1st at 10:30am
BSO Family Concert, March 14th at 12:00pm

Q. How can I get tickets?

A. Ticket sales are available online by clicking on the specific sensory-friendly performance underneath Tickets and Events. You may also purchase tickets in person at the box office or by calling SymphonyCharge at (617) 266-1200 during box office hours.

Q. Who should attend this performance?

A. Sensory-friendly concerts are designed for all families with children or adults diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, sensory sensitivities, or other developmental, cognitive and physical disabilities. If an individual has been unable to attend a concert at Symphony Hall because of their special needs, then this is perfect for them. We promise a welcoming, fun experience for the entire family. Whereas other public performances might frown upon a lot of movement or loud reactions, we will embrace and prepare for it! An adult must accompany all children. We encourage caretakers and family members of people with special needs to attend.

Q. Can people without autism or cognitive and physical disabilities attend this performance?

A. This performance is designed for people with sensory-input challenges and their families. The caliber of the performance onstage will remain the same, but there will be slight modifications in the hall. The lights in the audience will be raised slightly, allowing for more movement. We expect that many individuals with autism and developmental disabilities will be vocal during the performance. BSO or Boston Pops patrons without autism or cognitive and physical disabilities may want to attend an alternate performance in order to leave room for this special population and their families to enjoy a comfortable, judgment-free experience.

Q. What changes will you be making to the production and script?

A. The music performed onstage will remain the same, but some of the technical elements will be softened to accommodate sensitive ears and eyes. Lights in the audience will be up (but dimmed) for the entire show to allow safe movement in and out of the hall. Abrupt and loud sound effects will
be set at comfortable levels or warned with a flag signal from the stage. There will be a live feed of the concert in one of our support rooms for those who need a quiet moment, but still want to listen to the concert. We also are disabling the automatic flushing function on our toilets in all restrooms.

Q. My family member/client with autism has difficulty with transitions. How can I prep them for this new experience?

A. Please refer to our social guide on our website. We encourage families and caretakers to read the guide and prepare for the whole experience, from beginning to end. Also, Symphony Hall provides tours of the space. If you would like to visit before coming to a performance, please click here for more information.

Q. Can I bring fidget toys, headphones, or other items that help my child/family member stay calm?

A. Of course! We encourage you to bring any items that might make the experience more comfortable and enjoyable.

Q. My family member/client is in a wheelchair. Can you accommodate us?

A. Yes, Symphony Hall has wheelchair accessible seating. Please inform the box office of any mobility issues when purchasing tickets.

Q. Where can I park?

A. Please click here for information about parking at Symphony Hall.

Q. My family member/client is deaf or hard-of-hearing. Will there be ASL interpreters at this performance?

A. If there is a need and request for one, we will certainly consider it. Please inform the box office when purchasing your tickets if this accommodation will benefit your performance experience.

Q. If my family member/client is not able to sit through the entire show, will we be able to leave the theatre? If they decide to, will we be able to return to our seat?

A. If the patron decides they cannot remain for the whole the show, they can absolutely leave the hall early. Ushers and staff can help any patron to the lobby area or to our quiet rooms. If they simply need a break, our lobby will be available, as well as a couple quiet rooms located throughout the hall. If/when the individual is ready to re-enter the hall for the performance, they are welcome to do so. An usher can help you find your seat.

Q. How do I purchase tickets?

A. SymphonyCharge manages all tickets sales for these performances. A friendly operator will walk you through the ticketing process and send you a confirmation of purchase. The phone number for SymphonyCharge is (617) 266-1200.

Q. Who can I contact for additional information about the sensory-friendly performance?
A. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Sarah Saenz, Manager of Education and Community Engagement with questions! Call (617) 638-9375 or email at ssaenz@bso.org.