



CALLING ALL SUPERSTARS!

# Rising Star

2025 Rising Star Junior Grand Champion,  
Josiah Hibbs



**Calling all Superstars  
ages 6 to 21 years:**

Singers • Dancers • Instrumentalists  
Actors • Magicians • Comedians & more!  
Performing Solo or as a Group

**CANADIAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION**  
**AUG 21 TO SEPT 7 | 2026**  
**LET'S GO TO THE EX!**  **THEEX.COM**

Toronto, Ontario

**Audition deadline is June 1, 2026**

**To Learn More, Call: 416.263.3842 or visit [TheEx.com](http://TheEx.com)**  
**Apply Now at: [www.TheEx.com/contests/rising-star/](http://www.TheEx.com/contests/rising-star/)**

Canadian National Exhibition: August 21 - September 7, 2026



# Rising Star

**If you are a singer, dancer, actor, musician, magician, or comedian, performing solo or as a group, you are invited to audition for the annual Rising Star competition at the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE). Selected competitors will perform at the 2026 CNE.**

## DIVISIONS

There are two age divisions in the competition:

- 1. Junior Rising Star:** 6 to 12 years of age
- 2. Youth Rising Star:** 13 to 21 years of age

## HOW TO ENTER

1. Online application form available at [www.theex.com/contests/rising-star/](http://www.theex.com/contests/rising-star/). Entry forms must be received by the CNE no later than 4:00 pm, Monday, June 1, 2026. The administrator in its sole discretion may accept or refuse to accept entry forms that are late or incomplete.
2. To apply, contestants must complete and submit the entry form, along with a live performance video (in YouTube format) as part of their audition.
3. The YouTube video link can be submitted either with the entry form or afterward. All audition materials must have been recorded within the last 12 months. Each submission may contain only one performance. If possible, please include your full name in the title of your video.
4. Contestants acknowledge that the CNE is not affiliated in any way with YouTube and a submission made by a contestant via YouTube is the sole responsibility of the contestant, including the ability of the CNE to access the submission. Any YouTube submissions that cannot be accessed by the CNE for any reason whatsoever will be deemed not to have been received.

5. Contestants are responsible for compliance with YouTube's Terms of Use.

The judges will consist of a panel appointed by the administrator. The judges will review all video entries and score them according to the judging criteria listed below.

## SHOW DATES

The contest, which consists of preliminaries, semi-finals and finals, will run during the CNE, August 21 to September 6, 2026.

\*\*\*\*\* Dates subject to change \*\*\*\*\*

Junior Preliminaries Fri Aug 21 - Tue Aug 24  
Junior Semi-Finals Mon Aug 31 & Tue Sept 1  
Junior Finals Sat Sept 5

Youth Preliminaries Tue Aug 25 - Sun Aug 30  
Youth Semi-Finals Wed Sept 2 - Fri Sept 4  
Youth Finals Sun Sept 6

All shows start at 7:00 PM.  
Spotlight Stage, Hall B, Enercare Centre

## JUDGING

1. Contestants are judged by a panel based on the following criteria:

Natural Ability	20%
Stage Presence/Showmanship	20%
Audience Appeal	20%
Quality of Performance	40%

2. All contestants, including last year's finalists, must have an audition with the Canadian National Exhibition's production staff to be eligible to compete in the talent competition. Decisions of the CNE staff and judges are final. No discussion shall be entered into by the contestant and the judges or CNE staff regarding contest decisions. Matters not covered by the stated rules are at the sole discretion of the CNE staff.

All finalists are eligible for the **People's Choice Award**, which is determined by live audience voting on-site during the Finals. The Master of Ceremonies (MC) will announce the official start and end times of the voting period. More details to follow.

## PRIZES

The **Junior Grand Champion** receives \$1,500  
First Runner Up, \$1,000  
Second Runner Up \$800  
People's Choice \$500

The **Youth Grand Champion** receives \$3,000  
First Runner Up, \$2,000  
Second Runner Up \$1,000  
People's Choice \$500

Please visit our website to view the full list of prizing that includes additional NEW and EXciting prizing available for this year's competition.

## NOTE:

All participants are awarded souvenirs of the contest as they advance through the preliminaries, semi-finals and finals. **The structure of the competition may change without notice.**

## Please Read Carefully - Rules & Regulations

1. This competition is open to legal residents of Ontario ONLY. You can only enter ONCE.
2. For the Junior Rising Star, all contestants must be at least 6 years of age and not older than 12 by August 21, 2026.
3. For the Youth Rising Star, all contestants must be at least 13 years of age and not older than 21 by September 7, 2026.
4. The age divisions of contestants in duets or groups will be determined by the average age.
5. An act must be no more than 4 minutes and 30 seconds in duration. Any act running over this time will be disqualified. Timing begins with the first word, note or action.
6. Acts using machetes, knives, baton weapons and rigging (circus acts) cannot enter. Fire and/or pyrotechnics are not allowed on stage at any time. Profane language, swearing or suggestive lyrics or actions that are not suitable for a family audience (as determined by the administrator or the judge) will not be accepted. The administrator or the judge may refuse to accept an entry containing any of the aforesaid.
7. Once again, the competition will be held on stage indoors. Therefore, sound level restrictions will be in effect.
8. An individual may not enter the competition if they are:
  - A CNE full-time or contract employee
  - A member of the CNEA or Board of Directors
  - A contractor and/or agent of the CNE directly involved in the competition
  - Any other persons directly associated with the competition
  - A member of the immediate families of any of the aforesaid persons or any other person residing in the same household
9. Contestants who do not appear one half-hour prior to the competition or fail to remain until the end of the show will be disqualified.
10. A vocalist must sing the same song throughout the competition as it is a new set of judges at each level. However, if two contestants are singing the same song in the **Finals**, you will be given the opportunity to change your song, if you wish to. This is for the finals **only**.
11. Contestants selected to advance to the preliminaries will be notified around the end of June.
12. As a condition of the contestant being permitted to compete in the Rising Star Competition, each contestant:
  - Grants permission to the CNE to use, without compensation of any kind, any photograph, audio or video tapes or other audio or visual images or recordings, including digital recordings, in such manner as the CNE may determine including any promotions or advertising
  - Waives any right to any fee or compensation of any of the aforesaid
  - Releases the CNE from any loss, damage, injury or expense, which the contestant may suffer or incur as a result of his or her participation in the event, however caused.
13. A previous Junior Grand Champion can enter the Youth competition once they reach the age of 13. A previous Youth Grand Champion cannot enter again.
14. All audition videos must be a live recording. Videos that have a voice dubbed in will not be accepted. Audition video must represent how you would be performing in the competition. Videos should have a clean sound, no reverb.

Personal information collected will be used for the administration of the CNE Rising Star Talent Competition only.

Questions about the collection of this information should be directed to: Corporate Secretariat, Canadian National Exhibition, 210 Princes' Blvd, Exhibition Place, Toronto, ON, M6K 3C3