The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) logo. Each logo is circular, featuring a stylized profile of a person's head facing right, with the words "SCREEN ACTORS GUILD" written around the perimeter. The logos are arranged in a grid, with some overlapping.

# Young Performers Handbook

Description A Guide for Young Performers

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Presented by Screen Actors Guild

# Notes

## Acknowledgment:

Much thanks to the parents of child actors and the National Young Performers Committee and staff of the Screen Actors Guild who researched and assembled this handbook. Special thanks to the IACF for funding this project.

SAG — (800) SAG-0767 (724-0767)  
website: [www.SAG.org](http://www.SAG.org)

Disclaimer: The information contained herein is provided for general information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. We try to provide quality information that is as accurate and up-to-date as possible, but we make no claims, promises or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the information contained herein. As legal advice must be tailored to the specific circumstances of each case and laws are constantly changing, nothing provided herein should be used as a substitute for the advice of competent counsel. You should not act or refrain from acting based solely on information herein.

Paul Petersen, Advocate  
for Young Performers



Daryl Sabara and  
Alexa Vega  
in "Spy Kids".



Raven Symone  
and Bill Cosby



Sean Astin,  
Angus T. Jones  
and Anna  
Sophia Robb,  
pose for the  
cover of a  
special Young  
Performers issue  
of Screen Actor  
magazine.

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# SAG Presidents as young performers



Barry Gordon



Kathleen Nolan



Bill Daniels in  
"Life With Father"



Patty Duke



Melissa Gilbert



# Section One - Introduction

## **About the Screen Actors Guild**

Screen Actors Guild was established in 1931 to improve wages and working conditions for actors who worked in motion pictures. Over the last 70 plus years, SAG's jurisdiction has expanded to include television programs, commercials, the Internet, video games, mobisodes, non-broadcast industrials and many other areas to come. Actors join SAG to improve access to work opportunities with the employers that are signatory (have agreed to the provisions) to the applicable SAG contracts.

It is the Guild's primary responsibility to enforce these contracts and improve wages and working conditions. It is the primary responsibility of the member to not accept work from a non-signatory producer (non-union). It is the unity of our professional membership that gives us the power to preserve the benefits these contracts provide.

For more information about the rich history of Screen Actors Guild, visit our website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org) and click on the 'About SAG' tab.

## ***Eligibility (How Do I Get My SAG Card?)***

Actors become eligible to join SAG when they can provide proof of appropriate employment under SAG or another affiliated performers' union contract. Prior to age 4, Young Performers may work under SAG contracts without joining the union.

Proof of employment is earned by performing a 'principal' role or multiple 'background' roles. The principal role is usually a speaking part, at least one scripted word, or a non-speaking principal business role (a scripted activity without lines). In a background role a performer must obtain three vouchers (receipt for a day of work on a SAG production) as proof of employment in order to be eligible for membership. NOTE: A limited number of vouchers are issued on SAG productions. Not all background performers receive a SAG voucher. More detailed information can be obtained by speaking with the Guild's membership department. General information including a list of membership benefits, how to qualify, what SAG does and when you should join can be found on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org) under the 'Join SAG' tab.

Actors may also join SAG if the applicant is a paid up member of an affiliated performers' union (ACTRA, AEA, AFTRA, AGMA or AGVA) for a period of one year and has worked at least once as a principal performer under that union's jurisdiction.

## ***Taft-Hartley***

Under the provisions of federal labor law (the Taft-Hartley Act) non-union actors who work as principals under a SAG contract have thirty days after the first day of SAG employment during which the actor may work any other job, union or non-union, before joining the Guild. After the thirtieth day, the actor must pay the SAG initiation fee before working under a SAG contract again. For background performers, paying the SAG initiation fee after working on the

specified number of SAG vouchers is required before working again under a SAG contract, provided thirty days have elapsed since the third day of SAG voucher employment.

### ***Rule One - Work Union!***

Actors who join SAG, regardless of age, are no longer allowed to work non-union jobs, including non-SAG background roles on SAG productions, anywhere in the world. It is the SAG member's responsibility to verify the producer's signatory status before going to work. Actors should call SAG Station 12 or search the SAG Signatory Database online at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org) to determine the producer's status. Any SAG member who works non-union is in violation of Rule One under the Screen Actors Guild Constitution and could be subject to disciplinary action ranging from a fine to expulsion. More information about Rule One can be found on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org) under the Resources menu.

### ***Membership Status***

To work under SAG contracts, members must be in good standing (dues must be paid up). Any member not actively pursuing SAG work may request an "Honorable Withdrawal" from the Guild (a temporary status with no financial penalty). For more information about "Honorable Withdrawal" status contact the membership department in Hollywood at (800) 724-0767 or (323) 954-1600.

### ***Contract Provisions for Minors***

Each Guild contract (TV/Theatrical, Commercials, Industrials) contains a section specifically related to the employment of minors with regard to their engagement, education, and supervision. Each contract also defines what age is considered a minor and work hours for minors. These can vary from one contract to the next therefore, parents should become familiar with this section of the agreement their child is working under. Copies may be obtained by contacting the contracts department in Hollywood at (800) 724-0767 or (323) 954-1600.

### ***Union Jurisdictions***

The five largest performing arts unions — SAG, AFTRA, Actors Equity Association, AGVA and AGMA — are all members of an umbrella organization called the Associated Actors and Artistes of America, commonly known as the 4As, a part of the national labor organization the AFL-CIO. Each of these unions operates independently.

Any member of a union that is part of the 4As is required to respect the jurisdictions of the other member unions. Even though a SAG member may not belong to some or any of the other unions, he or she may not perform non-union work under that union's jurisdiction without a waiver. (Such waivers are usually granted if the union is not actively attempting to secure jurisdiction over that production.)

## The SAG National Young Performers Committee

Screen Actors Guild is distinctive in offering all minors the opportunity to be full-fledged members of a labor union. Paid up SAG members, regardless of age, may vote in all elections and referendums, serve on committees and avail themselves of all Guild services.

Established in 1975, the SAG National Young Performers Committee makes it possible for Young Performers and their parents to have their voices heard at the Guild. Since its inception, the committee has dealt with major issues relating to minors. The committee has provided invaluable services for actors including the revision of the California Labor Code as it applies to work by minors in entertainment. Recent changes include expanding the protections of the Coogan Law, updating and streamlining the work permit process, instituting orientation and mentoring programs especially for Young Performers, as well as producing four editions of the SAG Young Performers Handbook, the ultimate guide to professionalism for young actors.

Like their adult counterparts who sometimes hold non-actor jobs, Young Performers also have two jobs: being an actor and being a student, pursuits that are often at odds. A major goal of the Young Performers Committee is to safeguard the young actor's education. The committee consistently seeks opportunities to make the young actor's career and education a compatible partnership. Careers for Young Performers can be fleeting. Young actors need to plan for their futures whether as actors or in other careers both in and out of the entertainment field.

The committee encourages the participation of all SAG Young Performers and their parents at its caucus sessions as well as regular monthly meetings of its steering committee. These are the sessions where proposals affecting Young Performers' futures are often crafted.

The Young Performers Committee also works closely with the SAG Foundation ([www.sagfoundation.org](http://www.sagfoundation.org)) on the *Life Raft* program and with the Actors' Fund of America ([www.actorsfund.org](http://www.actorsfund.org)) on the *Looking Ahead* program. These programs are geared toward assisting Young Performers and their parents as they plan for the future. Both programs are supported through the generosity of the Industry Advancement Cooperative Fund (IACF), a grant program funded by SAG producers and administered jointly by the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) and Screen Actors Guild.

Lil' Rascals



# Section Two - On The Job

## California – The Basics

The following basic items are mandatory (by law or necessity) for minors working in the entertainment industry in California, regardless of their place of residence.

### California Work Permits

Every minor working in California, regardless of age, must obtain an Entertainment Work Permit from the State of California Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE). The permit currently is free and is generally valid for six months. The application for this permit can be downloaded at [www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/DLSEForm277.pdf](http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/DLSEForm277.pdf).

*Please note:*

- For school age minors, the application requires a signature from the minor's school stating that their work is satisfactory in several areas.
- Initial applications also require a photocopy of the minor's birth certificate.
- Applications are generally accepted only by mail, although some DLSE offices will process applications in person in emergency situations. Forgetting to renew the permit isn't considered an emergency.
- Renewal applications should be mailed two to three weeks before the expiration of the previous permit. You must include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return of the permit.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Proof of a Coogan Account (see below) must be attached to the application or the permit will only be valid for ten days.

### California Coogan Accounts

On January 1, 2000, changes in California law affirmed that earnings by minors in the entertainment industry are the property of the minor, not their parents. Since minors cannot legally control their own money, California law governs their earnings and creates a fiduciary relationship between parent and child. This change in California law also requires that fifteen percent of all minors' earnings must be set aside in a blocked trust account, commonly referred to in California as a Coogan Account. The parent is responsible to pay all expenses relating to the minor's employment, including any taxes that may be owed after withholding, or on gross earnings received without withholding. These and other professional expenses (headshots, resumes, acting lessons, commissions, union dues, etc.) may be paid from the unblocked portion of the minor's income. However, the parent still has a legal responsibility to pay all personal expenses of the minor.

Parents must open a Coogan Account to receive the blocked portion of income that employers are required to set aside. A Coogan Account is a special blocked trust account found at a bank, credit union or brokerage firm that receives the fifteen percent of minor's gross wages required to be withheld by the producer and deposited within fifteen days of employment.



Jackie Coogan  
with Wallace Beery



and as Uncle Fester  
in "The Addams  
Family"

- These funds are blocked (not available for withdrawal) until the minor turns eighteen (or is emancipated).
- The parent, as trustee, is responsible for setting up and maintaining the account and notifying the minor's employers of the bank routing and account number via a Trustee Statement and Deposit Instructions, provided by the financial institution.
- Minors must have their Coogan Account Trustee Statement attached to the work permit at all times.  
*Therefore it is a good idea to open a Coogan Account before applying for a work permit.*
- Various financial institutions offer Coogan Accounts. The SAG Young Performers Committee can assist with locating one. See page 28 for affiliated credit unions that may be able to help.
- California Coogan Accounts satisfy both the California and New York trust account requirements.

More information about Coogan Accounts can be found on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org), click on Young Performers under the Resources menu.

## ***Agents and Managers***

In California, talent agents are licensed by the state to solicit employment and negotiate wages and working conditions for performers. Many agents may request exclusivity for the type of work they handle. This means that an actor may have a contract with only one agent for theatrical, commercials, stage, voiceover and/or print, although one agent may also handle more than one (or all) of these areas. SAG franchised agents (see insert on following page) may charge no more than ten percent of gross compensation as commission, and a franchised agent's ability to collect this commission is strictly regulated by the Guild. More agency information, and a list of SAG franchised agents, can be found on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org), under the Resources menu by selecting Agent Information.

Managers may counsel, advise and provide general career direction to performers, as well as assist agents in their quest to secure employment for their clients. A manager is not permitted, by law, to seek out employment opportunities for a client, unless they are doing so at the direction of a licensed agent. A client, agent, and manager should function as a team if they are to be effective. Except as discussed above, managers must obtain a state talent agency license if they intend to solicit, procure, or negotiate terms and conditions of employment on behalf of a performer. Managers generally charge between ten percent (on the low end) and fifteen percent (on the high end) for their services, although their fees are not regulated by the state.

## ***Headshots and Resumes***

With the increasing use of the Internet in the casting process, color headshots are a necessity. The standard format is 8"x10" vertical full-frame headshots; no full-length, no three-quarter shots, no profiles. Most reproduction companies do print runs of 300 copies, which is more than enough for a year's supply. A digital copy of the headshot should be obtained directly from the photographer or have one made. It will be needed for reproductions as well as for use with Internet casting services. See section entitled "Internet Casting Services" on page 13 of this book. Also, see section entitled "Online Services Available to SAG Members," on page 26 of this book for information regarding SAG's new online casting service.

With resumes, less is more. There is no standard format, but uncluttered is better. Information should include name, hair and eye color, union status as well as significant credits in film, television and stage work. Brief indications of the role (such as "guest star," "co-star" or "recurring") are sufficient, plus the name of the producer, director or studio, if significant. For stage work, the role name (if any) should accompany the show title and the name of the theater. Resumes should also include a listing of professional training and coaches, special skills and talents, and names and telephone numbers for professional representatives. Commercials and background (extra) work are not listed on professional resumes. **No other personal information such as home address and telephone number, social security number or school names should be included on the resume.**

## About the SAG Agent Franchise Agreement

*Guild members who wish the protection of the Screen Actors Guild in their relationships with their agents are required to choose from the list of SAG franchised agents in their individual markets. Franchised agents (as well as the SAG members they represent) are protected by, and bound to, the terms and conditions of the SAG Agency Regulations.*

*SAG members may also currently be represented by agents affiliated with either the Association of Talent Agents (ATA) or the National Association of Talent Representatives (NATR). However, members who do so will likely be entering into a relationship that is outside of the Screen Actors Guild's protection. Performers should obtain additional information from the Guild before committing to any agency contract that is not SAG-generated.*

*SAG members may not be represented by Agents that are not franchised or affiliated with the ATA/NATR.*

## New York - The Basics

The following basic items are mandatory (by law or necessity) for minors working in the entertainment industry in New York, regardless of their place of residence.

### ***New York Work Permits***

Under the provisions of the Child Performers Education and Trust Act of 2003, all minors working in New York must have a valid work permit issued by the New York State Department of Labor.

- Work permits may now be applied for online.
- Work permits are valid for six months and require satisfactory academic performance.
- There will be no work permit renewal issued without proof of a trust account.

To apply online or for more information regarding the permit process and the Trust Act of 2003, go to [www.labor.state.ny.us](http://www.labor.state.ny.us). Follow the Quick Link to Child Performer Center.

### ***New York Trust Accounts***

A trustee account (generally a UTMA — Uniform Transfer to Minors Account) receives fifteen percent of gross wages withheld by the employer, deposited in trust for the minor. The parent is responsible for setting up the account within fifteen days from the start of employment and notifying employers of the bank and account number of the minor's account. California Coogan Accounts satisfy both the California and New York trust account requirements. However, trust accounts set up as defined by the New York requirements do not satisfy California trust account requirements. If a New York minor works for a California employer, they will need to open a California Coogan Account for their California earnings.

### ***Agents and Managers***

In New York, agents are licensed by the New York Department of Consumer Affairs. It is not uncommon for Young Performers to be represented by several agents on a non-exclusive basis, accepting auditions from whoever calls first. Managers may also be involved to coordinate this. Franchised agents can charge no more than ten percent of gross compensation as commission, and a franchised agent's ability to collect this commission is strictly regulated by the Guild. For further information specifically involving child models and actors, go to [www.consumer.state.ny.us/modeling\\_scams.htm](http://www.consumer.state.ny.us/modeling_scams.htm).

## ***Headshots and Resumes***

Either color or black and white headshots are acceptable. Many headshot formats are acceptable. Get a digital copy of the headshot for reproductions and Internet casting services. With the advent of Internet casting services (especially for commercials) only about 100 headshots a year are needed. For more information, see section entitled “Internet Casting Services” on page 13 of this book. Also, see section entitled “Online Services Available to SAG Members,” on page 26 of this book for information regarding SAG’s new online casting service.

In general, resumes conform to the California format.

## **Outside California and New York**

Production outside California and New York by local production companies is governed by the laws of that state. However, sometimes a production that originated in Los Angeles or New York, for instance, is shooting and casting on location. In these situations since state laws impact both the employer (producer) and employee (Young Performer) the laws of multiple states must be considered. Screen Actors Guild has twenty-two branches around the United States. Always check with the SAG branch in the area where you are working to see which laws may impact the Young Performer.

## ***Work Permits, Trust Accounts and Representation***

Laws pertaining to work hours and permits for minors, trust accounts and talent representation in places other than California or New York vary widely. For instance, Louisiana recently passed legislation with the help of the Screen Actors Guild similar to California’s Coogan law. Also, waivers from state officials to facilitate production may greatly affect the way minors are employed. SAG contract work day provisions for minors will always take precedence over state laws when the SAG contract is stricter. For a detailed listing of work hours allowed under the various SAG contracts, see the section entitled, “Work Days,” found on page 15 in this book.

The State Statutes Database for Young Performers is a resource for young SAG members across the country. Although provisions in the SAG contracts follow the performer anywhere in the US, many states have laws that specifically address Young Performers. To check individual state statutes, go to the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org) and search the Young Performers Database, found under the Resources menu.

## ***Headshots and Resumes***

Follow California or New York guidelines for headshots and for resumes (although fewer copies may be needed).

## **Casting, Callbacks and Booking**

Most of the roles for Young Performers are cast as a result of communication between agents and casting directors. However, on occasion, casting directors will hold open calls.

Mickey Rooney



## ***Internet Casting Services***

The use of Internet casting services has become important to the casting process for the services' ability to both distribute role breakdowns (explained below) and audition notices and provide a performer database for instant access by casting directors and agents.

Agents will register clients with these performer databases but they are also open to actors directly with or without representation. The Guild has its own online casting site to debut in 2007 with a special section just for Young Performers. See section entitled "Online Services for SAG Members" on page 26 of this book for more information.

## ***The Casting Process***

1. The casting director receives the script (movies and television) or the storyboard (commercials) from the producer. The casting director 'breaks down' the script (identifies the roles) and distributes the breakdown to agents, usually via one or more of the Internet casting services.
2. Agents respond to these breakdowns by making 'submissions' (suggestions) for each role to the casting director. These submissions can be made electronically or with hand delivered hard copies or both. Most breakdowns and submissions are not available to actors directly. Personal managers may have access to some of the breakdowns, but their ability to make submissions is limited by law.
3. Casting directors review the submissions and decide which actors to interview for the roles. Only a small number of actors submitted receive interviews. For this reason, every interview is a success story in itself.
4. The casting director then contacts the agent with an appointment time for each actor and the location of the interview. Often interviews will be on the same day so actors must be prepared to respond quickly.
5. The agent will then contact the actor with the appointment information and the 'sides' (script material), if any.

## ***Arriving at the Interview***

Appointment times are significant. Actors who arrive and sign in on time will be entitled to compensation if the interview runs over time and the sign-out has been completed properly.

Always bring a headshot and resume; it may or may not be required. Sign in with name, union identification number (not social security number), agency name, call time and arrival time. Use a ballpoint pen (not a pencil) and do not initial until you sign out. If no sign-in sheet is available when you leave, make note of the time and notify the contracts department at the local branch at (800) 724-0767.

Completion of information sheets may also be requested. Personal information such as social security numbers, home addresses and telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and personal websites should not be included on these sheets, as they are often not discarded securely.

The interview (audition) will most likely be videotaped and the process is usually restricted to one parent and one child. Do not bring friends or other family members.

## **Callbacks**

After the first interview, casting directors may review the taped audition with the producers and/or director. Callbacks (second interview) are usually necessary and the casting director will notify the agents which actors have been selected for callback. More than one callback may be required. Remember, very few actors on the original interview will receive a callback. This does NOT mean the others did poorly it's more about the look or fit with other actors.

In general, a performer may be entitled to compensation for interviews when detained for more than one hour from their call time (all contracts) or are required to speak lines given to learn outside the studio (TV/Theatrical and Industrial/Educational Contracts). For specific rates and conditions in which overtime is paid, or if overtime is due but a check is not received within twelve days, contact the SAG contracts department at the local branch at (800) 724-0767.

## **Booking the Job**

After the callbacks, the 'booking' (employment) process begins. Casting directors may put several actors 'on avail.' This is a courtesy between the agent and the casting director and is simply a notice to the agent that the actor has not been eliminated from consideration. In return, the agent agrees to notify the casting director if the actor becomes unavailable due to another commitment.

When the casting director contacts the agent with an offer, it is a verbal proposal to employ the actor and, if accepted, is legally binding. At this point, the agent and the casting director negotiate the terms of employment: rate of pay, length of employment and billing (position in the credits). When an agreement is reached, the agent will communicate the offer to the client (or the manager) who will decide whether or not to accept it. Agents cannot legally accept an offer of employment without client authorization. Some managers may have the power to do so on an actor's behalf.

If the client accepts the offer, the booking is concluded and is legally binding on both the producer and the actor even though it is verbal. Sometimes the verbal agreement will be followed up by a written 'deal memo' (a confirmation of the negotiated terms), but it is not necessary. The formal employment contract may be available on the set (common practice on commercials and TV shows) or may not be available until some time after employment. The producer then checks SAG membership status to make sure the actor is paid up with SAG dues.

## **Work Days**

While much of the work done under SAG contracts is performed in California and New York, significant production occurs in other places both in and outside of the United States. Laws pertaining to minors working in the entertainment industry vary from state to state; in many states there are few if any significant regulations. **Where state and local laws are less protective, the SAG contract will prevail.** This will be true in most locations.

## ***Paperwork***

Before arriving at the job, parents should make sure the minor has school assignments, books and supplies and the child's current work permit and trust account information to be given to the producer.

Parents may be asked to sign a completed copy of the minor's contract. It is the parent's responsibility to read the contract carefully. They should make sure they understand it and are in complete agreement with the terms and compensation. Any questions should be directed to the minor's agent or the contracts department at SAG at the local branch at (800) 724-0767 prior to signing.

## ***I-9***

The I-9 is the Employment Eligibility Verification form that confirms an individual's right to work in the United States and establishes identity. For minors, a passport is the most useful identification to have as it confirms both right to work and identity. Additional options may be a school identification card (with a picture) or school record to prove identity *and* a social security card or birth certificate to prove right to work. To learn more about current I-9 documentation requirements go to [www.formi9.com](http://www.formi9.com).

Parents will be provided a W-4 form in order to indicate the rate of federal payroll tax withholding. Use the personal allowance worksheet on the top of the form to calculate the number of exemptions. If the minor is incorporated a different form is used. Parents should consult a tax professional familiar with child performers' work with any questions regarding the payment of taxes.

## ***Where To Go***

Upon arrival at the job in California, locate the studio teacher/labor law representative, or the first assistant director everywhere else, who will direct the parent and minor to the dressing room or set. The SAG contract provides that a minor may not share a dressing room with an adult performer or a member of the opposite sex. The parent should be within sight and sound of the minor at all times, including time spent in hair, wardrobe and make up. If the child is to be driven to another location or another part of the set, the parent should travel in the same vehicle. The parent's responsibility on the set is to their child only, and his/her main purpose on the set is to assure the safety and well-being of their child.

Another very important role of a parent is to supervise the minor's education. It is essential to have a good working relationship and open communication with your child's home school. A minor's transition from regular school, to school on the set, and back, can be a smooth one with the right preparation and communication.

### ***The Studio Teacher/Labor Law Representative***

The responsibilities of the teacher vary from state to state. In California, teachers are called Studio Teachers/Labor Law Representatives and are provided from the first day of employment, whether school in session or not. In California, the Studio Teacher carries the additional Labor Law Representative title because they are responsible for the health and safety, in addition to the education of the minor.

In New York and many other states, teachers are called Set Teachers. They are responsible for the education of the minor, but are not responsible for enforcing health and safety. Generally, teachers are required after the second day of employment in New York, New Mexico and Louisiana. Set teachers must be certified by the state they are employed in and hold the required teaching credentials of that state. Many other states are currently developing child labor laws. Check with the individual state labor departments for current requirements.

The producer is responsible for hiring the studio teacher and complying with education requirements, SAG contract and labor law requirements, such as hours, health and safety of the minors employed.

### ***Employer's Duties***

The production company (producer) is normally the employer. However, producers may outsource payroll duties to an independent payroll company, either during or after production, to issue paychecks, calculate and pay tax withholding to the IRS and other payroll-related employer functions.

The production company's responsibilities include conforming to the SAG contracts and applicable state law. Producers also contribute to the Screen Actors Guild-Producer Pension and Health Fund to provide for members' and their families' health insurance and pension benefits. See section entitled "SAG Pension and Health Plan" on page 24 of this book for more information.

### ***Work Day Rules***

The SAG contract governs minor's work hours *everywhere in the United States Unless stricter work hours are mandated by the state.*

Work day rules that are as follows:

- Minors may not work before 5:30 a.m. or after 10:00 p.m. on evenings preceding a school day (work days must end by 12:30 a.m. on non-school days). The minor's final work day must be concluded at least twelve hours before the beginning of the minor's next regular school day.
- On a school day (determined by the calendar of the district where the child resides), school age minors must receive at least three hours of instruction. Maximum allowable hours and times of instruction vary by grade level.

- Minors through age 15 must be accompanied at all times by a parent or guardian. Minors age 16 or 17 may work without a parent or guardian but are entitled to have a parent or guardian present. The parent or guardian is entitled to be within sight and sound of the minor at all times.
- Minors who are high school graduates are exempt from the child labor laws and may work on the same basis as adults.

### **School Age Minors**

On a school day, school age minors may work as follows:

- Ages 6 to 8 — four hours (maximum of eight and one half hours on the set).
- Ages 9 to 15 — five hours (maximum of nine and one half hours on the set).
- Ages 16 and 17 — six hours (maximum of ten and one half hours on the set).
- On days when school is not in session, school age minors may work an additional two hours a day.
- On all days, the minor must have at least one hour of rest and recreation and one half-hour meal break.
- By prior arrangement with the studio teacher, up to two hours of school may be banked (stored) to offset additional work hours on other days; there must be at least one hour of school on each day the minor's regular school is in session.

### **Pre-School Age Minors**

Minors who are 6 months through 5 years do not attend school on the set, even though they may attend pre-school or kindergarten on a regular basis. Work hours are as follows:

- Ages 6 months to 2 years — two hours (maximum of four hours on the set).
- Ages 2 years through 5 years — three hours (maximum of four and one half hours on the set).
- Minors 6 months through 5 years must have at least one hour of rest and recreation.
- Minors 2 to 5 years may also have a half hour meal break.

### **Infants**

In California, infants 15 days to 6 months of age may only be on the set between the hours of 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. or 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. No infant born prematurely may work until he/she would be at least 15 days old if born at full-term. SAG producers have agreed to observe these restrictions in other jurisdictions.

- Ages 15 days to 6 months — twenty minutes (maximum two hours on the set).

### **SAG Contract Variations**

The SAG contracts also contain the following provisions that differ from the state labor code.

- If a minor is guaranteed three or more consecutive days of employment, whether the minor actually performs or not, the producer will provide a teacher on the set. If on any of the guaranteed days of employment the minor is not required to report to the set, the minor may elect to return to his/her regular school. However, the minor may choose to continue education on the set whether performing that day or not.
- If a studio teacher is employed on any day that minors are working, all minors employed on that day will be eligible to be taught according to their regular school schedules. All minors will be taught if they are actually on the set, whether or not their contracts would otherwise qualify them for education.
- While the studio teacher has the primary responsibility for supervision of minors on the set, if the minor is under the age of 14, the producer is required to designate one member of the production staff to coordinate all matters relating to the minor's employment.
- Emancipated minors have rights that vary from state to state. In California, for example, emancipation by itself does not allow minors to work as adults. Emancipated minors must comply with the laws of the states in which they are working.

## Work Hours Across the SAG Contracts

<b>Contract Type</b>	<b>Call Times</b>	<b>Work Hours</b> (Includes school time but not meal breaks)	<b>Release Times</b>
<b>TV/Theatrical</b>	5 am	15 mos – 5 yrs, 6 hrs 6 – 8 yrs, 8 hrs 9 – 15 yrs, 9 hrs 16 – 17 yrs, 10 hrs	10 pm before school days 12:30 am before non-school days
<b>Commercials</b>	7 am studio 6 am location	15 mos – 5 yrs, 6 hrs 6 – 17 yrs, 8 hrs	15 mos – 5 yrs, 7 pm 6 – 17 yrs, 8 pm before school days 10 pm before non-school days
<b>Industrials</b>	7 am studio 6 am location	15 mos – 5 yrs, 6 hrs 6 – 11 yrs, 8 hrs 12 – 17 yrs, 9 hrs	15 mos – 5 yrs, 7 pm 6 – 11 yrs, 8 pm before school days 10 pm before non-school days 12 – 17 yrs, 10 pm before school days 12:30 am before non-school days

## Education is Job One

A good education is an actor's most important resource. All of the tools upon which an actor draws for a successful career are firmly rooted in a well-rounded background in many areas of study. Excellent skills as a reader and a writer are also invaluable. Compulsory education requirements vary from state to state, and many times they are not interchangeable. For instance in California, school absences for work in the entertainment industry are only excused for a limited period of time (up to 25 days per year) and independent home schooling is not legal. Home schools must work under the jurisdiction of the local school districts in which the minors reside; out-of-state home school arrangements are not automatically recognized.

Parents should establish a solid working relationship with the minor's school as soon as possible. Cultivating one person at the school who can coordinate the minor's assignments and responsibilities usually works best; the classroom teacher at the elementary school level, a counselor or homeroom teacher at the secondary level, a person who is supportive of the minor's pursuit of an acting career. Advance arrangements for obtaining assignments, books and materials, often on very short notice, will make workdays much better experiences.

Since schools may not receive their ADA (Average Daily Allotment) payments for a minor absent for work, a good advance relationship with the school is necessary. In many jurisdictions, minors may need their schools' cooperation to maintain their work permits. It is important that parents' and school officials' roles in the work permit process be clearly understood so that obtaining work permits, sometimes on short notice, can be achieved smoothly.

In California, a minor may not attend regular school on a workday, even if the work is scheduled after school. However in New York, minors may attend regular school on a workday. In states where no laws govern the working child's education, the provisions of the SAG contract will still apply. In California, the details of the working child's responsibilities may be found in the California Education Code [EC 48225.5(a)(1)]. In New York, both the Labor and Education Codes contain information regarding the education of minors in the entertainment industry.

## Stunts and Safety

*"I can't define what a stunt is, but I know one when I see it."*

That's what any experienced stunt person will say. And it's very true. Whether or not an activity is a stunt depends on what it is, where it is, how it's done and who is doing it. SAG contracts provide that any actor who performs a stunt is entitled to a stunt contract in addition to the regular contract. For minors, ordinary activities such as riding a bike or a skateboard, climbing a tree or a fence, even walking along a high wall, could be a stunt. Even passive activities such as riding in a speeding car with a stunt driver can be stunts.

## ***Protecting Yourself***

If a minor is asked to perform any activity that seems hazardous or even questionable they are entitled to have the activity performed by a qualified stunt person. **It should never be the sole decision of the producer, director, stunt supervisor or any crew member, if an activity is safe enough for the child to perform. It is the minor's parent's primary and *most important* responsibility to ensure the safety of their child.** Allowing a child to do something unsafe is simply not an option. Parents who do so may be reported to the appropriate child protective agency. The minor or the minor's parent always has the right to refuse to perform any activity that might be hazardous to the minor, either physically or emotionally. If the minor believes that the situation is dangerous or is fearful (whether real or imagined) they cannot be required to perform. Parents should request a stunt and safety expert, if the minor is to perform the activity, or a stunt double if necessary.

Stunts and strenuous activities are almost always planned in advance. However, non-strenuous activities may also present a danger, such as handling a firearm or other weapon. Parents should also consider the impact of mature or emotionally difficult dialogue or actions on their child's well-being. Parents should be on the alert for these types of situations as they may not be planned in advance. Only the parent knows what their child can tolerate and therefore, **MUST** ensure their child will not be harmed physically or emotionally by the dialogue and activities they are being asked to perform.

Minors should be acquainted with all first aid personnel (required on all SAG productions) and procedures immediately on arrival. Outdoor shoots often require long periods of time in the elements. Parents should guard minors against dehydration, hypothermia and overexposure to the sun. Bringing warm clothing, thick towels and robes and sunscreen is important. Parents should not hesitate to contact first aid personnel immediately if the minor is too wet, too cold or too tired.

Animals can often be a part of the storyline. Anytime an animal actor is on the set, the animal's handler will be there. No animal should be approached without the direct supervision of its handler. At the producer's discretion family pets may be allowed on the set. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the pet is not a nuisance or danger to anyone on the set as they could be liable for any injuries caused by the animal. Animal behavior is unpredictable, particularly in unfamiliar surroundings. For their own safety, minors should be instructed to keep a safe distance from other pets on the set.

Other precautions should be taken when working in or around fire, smoke effects, water or machinery. No minor should work in any of these situations without careful supervision by trained technicians and medical personnel.

The Industry Wide Labor-Management Safety Committee periodically issues Safety Bulletins that deal with various safety issues. Parents may review these bulletins at <http://csatf.org/bulletintro.shtml>.

## Background Performers

Background performers are a vital part of film, television and commercial production. Any knowledgeable SAG producer will agree that working with a core of experienced, skilled SAG background performers is an important requirement for a successful project.

Minors are often used in background roles. Large groups of children may populate many different types of scenes in films, TV shows and commercials. Many successful Young Performers have started as background performers on SAG productions, gaining valuable experience and familiarity with the particulars of on-camera work.

Casting for background work is handled by casting directors who specialize in these roles. Adult background performers are contacted for work directly by these casting offices, but casting calls for background performers who are minors are usually subcontracted to background managers —managers who maintain client lists specifically for this purpose. SAG does not franchise or sanction these background managers. Many are not licensed talent agents, and they are not legally authorized to represent SAG members for employment without the permission of a licensed talent agent. SAG members are encouraged to determine the status of any background manager who may offer them representation. Questions about representation in this area should be directed to the agency department at SAG.

As SAG members, background performers have the same rights and privileges as members who joined by doing principal work, but the requirements for joining SAG as a result of doing background work are different. Those requirements are determined by the SAG national board of directors and are subject to modification at any time. Prospective SAG members seeking to join the Guild by doing background work should check the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org) for current requirements. Issues relating to background performers are accessible from the Resources menu on the homepage.



Mike Meyers and Spencer Breslin  
in "The Cat in the Hat"

# Section Three - Talent Payments and Other Benefits

## Parental Financial Responsibilities

### *Income Taxes*

A sensible and solid approach to managing a minor's finances is very important. Parents should consult a tax accountant who is familiar with children's entertainment tax law before filing a tax return on behalf of a dependent minor. If the earnings threshold is met, a separate return must be filed for the minor. There are multiple resources available outlining the specific expenses that are deductible for performing artists.

Some of the key things to further research and understand are the use of Qualified Performing Artist tax situations (QPA), the state and federal filing requirements, and the dependency tests.

### *Earnings and Record Keeping*

California law designates that the earnings of a minor in the entertainment industry belong solely to the minor. This is unique to California; other states define the earnings as family money. California law entrusts parents with specific requirements and fiduciary responsibilities.

In performing this fiduciary responsibility, some things parents should keep in mind are:

- Agent/Manager Compensation - Industry standard commissions for an agent are ten percent of gross wages. Managers generally charge between ten percent (on the low end) and fifteen percent (on the high end) for their services. These percentages can often be negotiated prior to signing representation contracts. Many agents may request that a parent complete a "check authorization" that allows the agent to accept checks on behalf of their client, deposit them, and reissue a check to the client for their earnings less the agent's commission.
- Residuals (payments for the reuse of an actor's performance) — For those being represented by SAG franchised agencies, the contract does not require commission payment to agents for non-primetime theatrical residuals. Theatrical residual payments are sent to SAG by the producer. SAG records them and forwards the check to the performer. This process may take several weeks.
- Federal and state income tax, Social Security or FICA, Medicare and state unemployment/disability contributions are common payroll related deductions, and Young Performers are subject to those withholdings without any consideration that they are minors. Parents also need to be aware of the additional withholding of wages from a paycheck for the minor's trust account.
- It is a parent's responsibility to keep accurate records of all jobs performed and all money that their child has earned. Accurate record keeping and retention of receipts for professional expenses paid, such as commissions, business mileage, headshots, resumes, acting lessons, union dues, etc., is essential for income tax preparation.

- Bank account reconciliation should be done in a timely fashion. It is recommended that a separate checking account, preferably in the minor's name, be maintained in addition to the required trust account. Parents should run all transactions, both income and professional expenses, through the minor's account. These professional expenses, if paid for by the child's income, may be used to offset the minor's income for tax purposes.
- SAG is available to assist in issues relating to non-payment of earnings.

### ***Helpful Hints***

- Carry a notebook and keep detailed expense and mileage logs for jobs as well as auditions. Be sure to keep all receipts!
- Pay industry-related expenses by check or debit card from the minor's account. Avoid paying cash whenever possible as those expenses are easy to overlook.
- The account reconciliation and verification of deposit of trust funds **MUST** be done. Any error, transcribing an account number, lost paperwork, missing account number or bank merger may result in the withheld wages not being deposited into the Coogan or trust account. Unclaimed Coogan funds in California may be transferred to the Actors' Fund, who will become the trustee. Check [www.unclaimedcoogan.org](http://www.unclaimedcoogan.org) for a list of minors for whom money is being held. In New York, funds are forwarded to the State Comptroller's office. They may be reached at (518) 474-4017 or get information from the NY Labor Department website at [www.labor.state.ny.us](http://www.labor.state.ny.us). Follow the Quick Link to Child Performer Center. Click on Trust Accounts. Laws in other states vary. Consult the Young Performers Database found on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org) under the Resources menu for the most current laws in your state.
- Substantial earnings by minors may trigger an inquiry by the Social Security Administration. If a minor receives a letter asking for verification of earnings, it is very important that the parent respond and follow up to be certain the minor receives credit for the Social Security contributions. Errors and corrections can only be done within three years. A parent can request a printout from the Social Security Administration to verify that all earnings were recorded accurately. While adults receive this statement yearly near their birthday, they are not routinely sent to minors unless requested.
- Incorporation is another financial decision that may be appropriate. Usually incorporation is beneficial when earnings are consistently high or when they will be based upon a pending contract. The timing of incorporation is very important and research with a qualified tax accountant or attorney should be done prior to the need. Once contracts are signed as an individual it is often difficult, if not impossible, to have the business relationship contracted through the corporation. Remember, pursuit of work in the entertainment industry is a business and all matters, especially those with financial implications, should be researched and understood completely. Minors count on their parents to make decisions in their best interest.

## SAG Pension and Health Plan

Whenever an actor works under a SAG contract, a contribution by the producer is made to the Screen Actors Guild-Producers Pension and Health Fund, which administers our health and pension plans. This contribution is based on gross compensation and is part of the total compensation to the actor, but does not come out of base scale wages. Actors who earn the required minimum in any year will qualify for insurance coverage. The Fund will notify all actors by mail each year of their earnings and eligibility under SAG contracts. Screen Actors Guild does not operate the Fund; it is a completely separate entity administered by a board of trustees appointed equally by SAG and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP). Screen Actors Guild is the bargaining agent for the Fund and negotiates the amount of the producers' contribution during regular contract negotiations.

Actors may determine current qualification requirements by visiting the SAG-Producers Pension and Health Fund website at [www.sagph.org](http://www.sagph.org). Actors who opt for insurance coverage pay a small portion of the premium. Minors' coverage under SAG may be secondary to coverage under their parents' regular policy.

Although Young Performers are far from retirement age, their earnings may still generate pension eligibility that will become available upon reaching retirement age (currently sixty seven). Actors under SAG contracts qualify for pensions by earning the required minimum in any of five employment years.

*New York Young Performers attend a press conference announcing the passage of the Child Performer Education and Trust Act of 2003.*



# Section Four - Additional Resources

Members of the Screen Actors Guild may access resources from the SAG website and a number of other organizations.

## **SAG Website Serving You 24/7**

The Guild's interactive website, [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org), was created to meet the growing demands of the membership worldwide. SAG 24/7 gives members the freedom to access the information they need when they need it. It is an important tool for working actors and the industry professionals who hire them.

## **From the Homepage**

Each of these resources is available directly from SAG's homepage, either as a direct link or under the Resources menu, without registering on the site. Many of these are of particular interest to Young Performers.

- **Young Performers Committee Page** - Updates to laws and changes within the industry that apply to Young Performers, found under the Resources menu.
- **Young Performers Database** - State statutes database for Young Performers is a resource for young SAG members across the country. This details the state statutes (if any) that specifically affect Young Performers and is also found under the Resources menu.
- **Unclaimed Coogan Money** - This link, found under the Resources menu, goes to the Actors' Funds Unclaimed Coogan website, listing all Young Performers for whom the Fund is holding money. Step-by-step instructions on how to claim any held funds can be found on this site plus more information about Coogan Accounts. New York members should check with the NY State Comptroller's office at (518) 474-4017 or get information from the NY Labor Department website at [www.labor.state.ny.us](http://www.labor.state.ny.us). Follow the Quick Link to Child Performer Center. Click on Trust Accounts.
- **Unclaimed Residuals** - Using this tool under the Resources menu, members can enter their first and last name, or search an alphabetical listing, to find out if SAG is holding any residual money for them.
- **Agent Information** - Locate a SAG franchised agent in your area as well as obtain additional information about agents under the Resources tab.
- **Contract Information** - Helps answer basic contract questions such as, when are meal breaks, and when are meal penalties paid. Contract summaries can be found by following this link under the Resources menu.
- **SAG Signatory Database** - Allows members to check the signatory status of any project at any time. This makes it easier for members to comply with Rule One, which requires members confirm that a project is under contract with SAG before accepting employment. A direct link from the homepage can be easily accessed.
- **Membership Eligibility Checker** - Found under the Resources menu, social security number and first and last name are all that's needed to check eligibility status.
- **The SAG Shop** - Offers a line of quality, stylish union-made apparel and merchandise. Browse the virtual store at [www.thesagshop.com](http://www.thesagshop.com). The SAG shop can also be found via a direct link from the homepage.

## ***Registering on the SAG Website***

To take full advantage of the site's many more features and online services members can register using their email address and a password of their choosing.

To register, find the sign in section in the upper right corner of the homepage of the website.

- Click on the word 'Register.'
- Enter email address (twice) and create a password (twice).
- Choose a Security Question and fill in the answer in the box provided.
- Indicate relationship to SAG by clicking on the circle next to the choice. Click on 'continue.' (If not yet a SAG member, some online services may not be available.)
- On the following page enter SAG identification number and the last four digits of the social security number. Click on 'continue' to save information.
- A confirmation message is sent to the e-mail address entered. In order to complete the registration, click on the link provided in the e-mail for verification. Follow the link back to the homepage to log in with the email address and the password that was registered.
- The website will now look different. A new tool bar will appear called Career Tools with links to 'Find an Agent', 'Get Work', 'Get Paid', 'Member Perks', 'Forms and FAQs' and 'Production Listings.'
- Each time a SAG member signs on, a customized page will appear with that member's settings and a national calendar of events and specific events for that member's branch.

## ***Online Services Available to SAG Members***

Access to the following online services requires registration as a SAG member on the website.

- **Dues Online** - Pay dues online using Visa or MasterCard.
- **Residual Tracker** - Allows members to follow their SAG-monitored TV and theatrical residuals through the received payment and mail process.
- **Online Casting** - SAG has developed an online performer database scheduled to launch in 2007. Members can upload their photo, resume and contact information. Pre-screened casting directors and producers may be granted access to search for performers. This service is free to members and contains a special section just for Young Performers.
- **Member Perks** - Offers a comprehensive clearinghouse of discounts and special offers available to SAG members — ranging from educational and career-building products to movie and theme park ticket discounts.
- **Forms and FAQs** - Contains the Documentation Library of all SAG Contracts, Handbooks, Division Rules and the Constitution and Bylaws. Membership update forms can be found here along with answers to the most frequently asked questions by SAG members.

- **Production Listings** - Find SAG productions in your area using this link. Listings include general information about the production, signatory status, casting and background information (if available), employer of record and stunt coordinator (if available).
- **Get Work** - Contains links to the 'Contracts' page, information on diversity and the complete Young Performers resource.
- **Get Paid** - Is the digest on residuals. Everything an actor needs to know about residuals can be found here.

## Organizations That Can Help

### ***The SAG Foundation***

Operated independently from Screen Actors Guild, the SAG Foundation provides humanitarian, educational and philanthropic programs and services to Guild members, their families and the broader community. Of interest to Young Performers are the *Conversations* program, that offers screenings and live discussions with actors in current films and television shows, and the *Life Raft* program, that offers seminars on a wide variety of subjects that affect actors' careers. SAG membership dues do not fund the Foundation's programs. The Foundation is funded by charitable contributions from SAG members as well as other private individuals and organizations. Contributions are tax deductible and can be made with dues payments. The Industry Advancement Cooperative Fund (IACF) also contributes a significant portion of funding.

The Foundation's offices are located on the entry level of SAG's Hollywood headquarters. Specifics about the Foundation's many outreach programs can be found at [www.sagfoundation.org](http://www.sagfoundation.org) (or click on the SAG Foundation link on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org)) or call the Foundation at (323) 549-6708.

### ***The SAG Hollywood Conservatory***

The SAG Hollywood Conservatory offers an opportunity for SAG members to hone and develop their craft through classes, workshops, lectures and symposia in a supportive and nurturing environment. A small administrative fee is required for membership.

Workshops are offered from October through May and include on-camera commercial and theatrical techniques, commercial and theatrical cold-reading techniques, voice-overs, improvisation, and "Meet the Casting Director" seminars.

The Hollywood Conservatory is held on the campus of the American Film Institute (AFI) located at 2021 North Western Avenue in Hollywood. SAG's agreement with the AFI requires the Institute's first year student films to cast exclusively from the rosters of the SAG Conservatory membership. This provides opportunities for SAG members to gain vital on-camera experience as well as opportunities to work with young directors, producers and writers as they develop their craft.

The schedule and membership information may be obtained by calling the Conservatory at (323) 856-7736 or check the 'Local Perks and Benefits' section for the Hollywood branch on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org).

### ***The Alice Mary Riley Conservatory (New York)***

The Conservatory is designed to expand the craft and business knowledge of the professional performer through participation in seminars, audio/video workshops, Friday Groups, and special events.

Although run under the auspices of SAG, no SAG membership funds are used to pay for any Conservatory activity. Fellow members volunteer their time to run this fine program. There is a nominal fee for equipment, printing and mailing expenses. Classes run from September through August. Applications can be mailed to or dropped off at the NY committee office. Call the Conservatory Information Line (212) 827-1594 to get current information or check the 'Local Perks and Benefits' section for the New York branch on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org).

Other branches have started Conservatories such as Nevada and San Diego. Local SAG branch offices will have more information.

### ***The Film Society***

Bi-weekly screenings of first run films is available to SAG members ages 10 and over for a moderate cost (including a season parking pass for an additional fee). Since the Film Society is a very popular activity, participation is limited to two tickets per member, assigned by lottery. Applications must be received on a specific date, usually mid-March. The application and further information regarding the Film Society can be found in the 'Local Perks and Benefits' section for both the New York and the Hollywood branches on the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org).

### ***The AFTRA-SAG Federal Credit Union and Actors Federal Credit Union***

SAG members of any age and their family members may join the AFTRA-SAG Federal Credit Union, which makes available a full range of banking, brokerage and financial services. The credit union is especially equipped to set up and administer accounts for Young Performers and Coogan Accounts, including transferring existing accounts from other institutions. The credit union is more performer-friendly than many other financial institutions allowing Young Performers to begin to establish their accounts at an early age.

In Los Angeles, the AFTRA-SAG Federal Credit Union is located at SAG Headquarters at Museum Square, 5757 Wilshire Boulevard, on the 9th Floor. An ATM is conveniently located on the building's entry level. Branch offices are located in Burbank at 2100 Pass Avenue and in Sherman Oaks at 14118 Magnolia Boulevard. Further information, including eligibility requirements, is available at the credit union website [www.aftrasagfcu.org](http://www.aftrasagfcu.org).

In New York, credit union services are available through Actors Federal Credit Union, serving members of ten unions including SAG. It is located at 165 West 46th Street. The web address is [www.actorsfcu.com](http://www.actorsfcu.com) for more information.

## ***The Actors' Fund of America***

Established over a hundred years ago to aid all entertainment professionals, the Actors' Fund operates many social and educational programs for the benefit of the entertainment industry as well as providing health and emergency assistance. Of particular interest to Young Performers is the *Looking Ahead* program, which offers young actors the opportunity to explore many facets of the entertainment community.

Headquartered in New York at 729 Seventh Avenue, tenth floor, the Actors' Fund has offices in Los Angeles at Museum Square, 5757 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 400. Learn more about the Actors' Fund on its website [www.actorsfund.org](http://www.actorsfund.org).

## ***The Motion Picture & Television Fund***

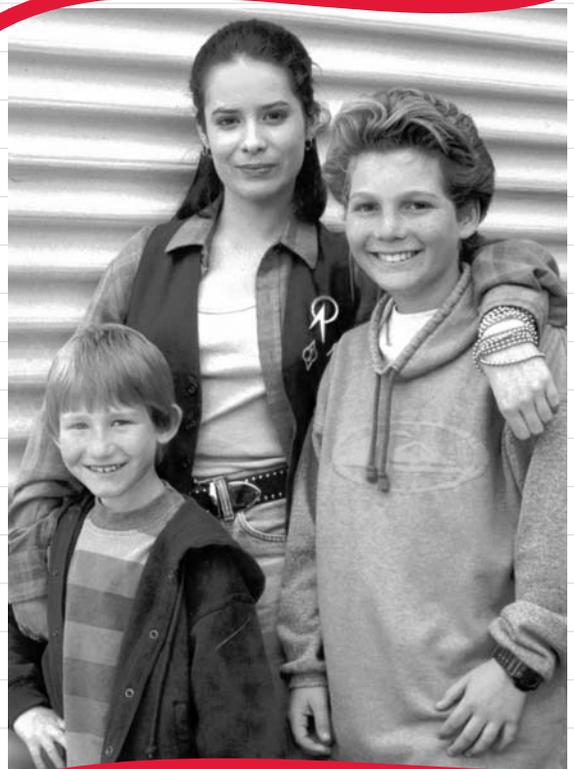
Best known for its retirement home, the MPTF has become the entertainment industry's foremost resource for help and care, continuing to increase in size, scope and capabilities in order to meet the needs of an entire industry.

MPTF services are available to active industry members and their families and include:

- Five health centers located in Southern California.
- Group and individual health care plans.
- An active retirement community.
- Emergency financial assistance.
- Estate and financial planning.
- Payroll pledge, employee giving campaigns and major gifts.
- Medicare D resources and contact information.

Questions may be directed to the MPTF Information Line at (800) 876-8320 or the website at [www.mptvfund.org](http://www.mptvfund.org).

*"Picket Fences" TV siblings  
Adam Wylie, Holly Marie Combs  
and Justin Shenkarow.*



## **Parent's FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)**

### **Q: What is the age definition of a "minor" under SAG contracts?**

Commercials — 15 and under

Motion Picture and Television — under 18

Non-Broadcast Industrials — under 18

### **Q: During what hours do the SAG contracts allow auditions?**

Commercials — after school, concluding before 8 p.m.

Motion Picture and Television — after school, concluding before 9 p.m.

Non-Broadcast Industrials — after school, concluding before 9 p.m.

### **Q: Whom do we report to when we arrive on the set?**

Find the Stage Manager or the Assistant Director. He or she should direct you to the person responsible for dealing with your child. You should also report to the studio teacher or set teacher, if one is present.

### **Q: What if I am unable to personally accompany my child to the set?**

You must provide an adult guardian, along with a letter authorizing that adult to be your child's guardian.

This also applies if you are called away from the set while your child is working.

### **Q: If I accompany my child on location, who pays my expenses?**

In general, the Producer should provide you comparable accommodations and transportation to those provided to your child. Your agent should negotiate your expenses in advance of the time your child's contract is negotiated.

### **Q: Is my child eligible for unemployment benefits?**

It varies from state to state, and it is not always crystal clear. If you believe your child is eligible, be persistent until you establish your child's right to collect. In California there is no age limitation. Visit [www.edd.ca.gov](http://www.edd.ca.gov) for more information or visit SAG's website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org) to download the SAG Unemployment Handbook found under the Resources menu that covers this topic.

### **Q: What is billing and how is it determined?**

Billing is the order of those names that appear in the titles or opening credits of a film or TV show. The agent negotiates the way the actor's name is displayed at the time of the booking.

### **Q: Will my child need to supply his/her own clothing?**

In most cases, yes, but if you do supply your own clothing; you are entitled to a wardrobe fee. Also, if you are required to come to a wardrobe fitting separate from your work time, whether you are supplying your own clothing or not, you are entitled to a prorated hourly payment.

# Happy Birthday!

## The Young Performer Turns 18

Now that you are 18 years old (or in rare cases, emancipated) you are on your own, but SAG is still your union and here to help.

Before you spend every penny in your Coogan Account, consider this. Your hard-earned money has been invested and is working for you. How about saving it? How about letting your money make more money for you? There is no legal requirement to close the account or make any changes to it once you turn 18. Check the account carefully to make sure all deposits have been received. If you think any funds are missing, or even if you don't, check the Actors' Fund special website ([www.unclaimedcoogan.org](http://www.unclaimedcoogan.org)) to see if your name is listed. If so, follow the steps on the website to claim your money.

You will probably need to start managing your own money and perhaps get another job. Get some help in preparing a budget of your income and your expenses and some help understanding and filing your taxes. Acting is a very uncertain and financially unpredictable business. You will need to have some money set aside for times when you are not earning money as an actor. You may need the money tomorrow that you set aside today.

### So, now that you are in control of your own money, what's next?

First, you're going to be signing your own employment contracts. Take time to read them carefully and find out what you are signing. In addition, get acquainted with the contents of the SAG contracts. They are a part of your employment contract, even though the producer doesn't hand you a copy. They play a major role in your success, and it's good to understand them. A digest of each contract can be downloaded from the SAG website at [www.sag.org](http://www.sag.org). Choose 'Contracts' under the Resources menu, click on the link to 'Contract Summaries.' Copies of the full contracts are also available from the same page.

Second, start developing a one-on-one relationship with your agent and/or your manager. With your parents no longer in charge of your career, your representatives need to know you better. They need to see you as a young adult ready to take charge of your own career.

Third, continue your training. In addition to the acting classes you've already been taking, now that your time is more your own, you may wish to get even more experience. Dance, martial arts, fencing, voice lessons, accents — all sorts of classes are available to you. A variety of skills will make you more employable. Remember, training is a major key to an actor's success.

And finally, read everything you can, see everything you can, try everything you can. Acting is now your full-time job. If you are not spending full-time working at your craft, you will not be ready to compete.

Good luck to you, and remember; the Screen Actors Guild is your professional organization and is here for you. Get involved with SAG and keep your union strong.



Dakota Fanning meets Shirley Temple Black at the 2005 Screen Actors Guild Awards where Temple was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

## BRANCH & DIVISION CONTACT INFORMATION

Use **1-800-SAG-0767** to reach the Branch Office which covers the area corresponding to your home telephone number.

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