



# Five steps to help your child get their first professional acting job





People always say that your child should be in the movies. Everyone sees that they have flair and know how to tell a joke. They put on shows for everyone in the living room. Their talents belong on a stage and in front of a camera, but where to start?

While becoming a movie star can take a long time, getting that first job as a performer may not be that far away. Here are the five steps to help your child get their first professional acting job.

## **STEP 1: Help them make and post their own movies**

Does your child like to make up crazy characters? Can they write funny jokes? Are they good at creating their own stories? Then get out your camera or iPad and start filming them.

Making your own movies will help your child's acting career in many ways. To start, it will help them practice the craft of acting. They will also get experience writing their own material. Next, when you post the movies, it others see their talents. The more you continue to post, the sooner someone will recognize those abilities and want to hire them for a commercial, play, or other acting jobs.

Making a movie and getting someone to see it used to be difficult, but not anymore. There are thousands of people making and posting funny videos every day. To get your videos to stand out, avoid making wacky videos to get a quick laugh (no movies starring your cute cat)! You want to create exciting content that showcases your child's performance skills. If you want them to get hired as an actor, make your movies all about THEM!





## \*Write a skit

Write a simple skit with your child, like a commercial. Commercials have an easy, three-part format: the problem, the solution, and the sell. For practice, film your child in this commercial, “The Pizza Pen”. You or another family member can be the announcer while your child is the actor.

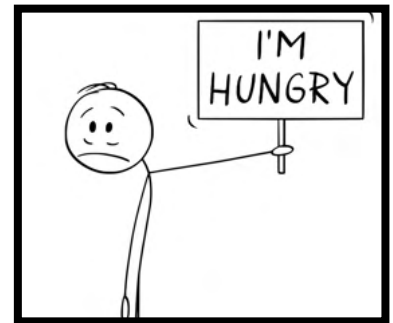
Write and film more skits like this. As you do, the process will become easier. Encourage your child to write longer skits that focus on them. For inspiration, check out the movies of Audrey, one of our long-time students. Her movies are featured on the [Theatre of the Imagination Youtube channel](#).

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Part 1:                      The problem

Announcer:              Have you ever had to do homework when your stomach was growling?

Actor:                      I’m hungry AND I have a test!  
Whatever will I do?

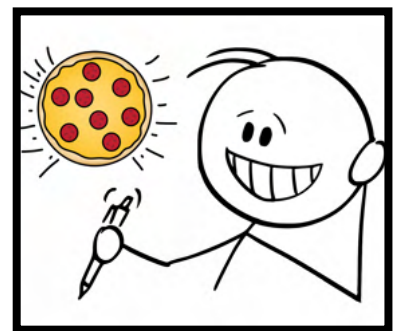


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Part 2:                      The solution

Announcer:              You need the Pizza Pen! It helps with homework and cooks you a pizza!

Actor:                      *(pizza appears)* Wow! The Pizza Pen is amazing!

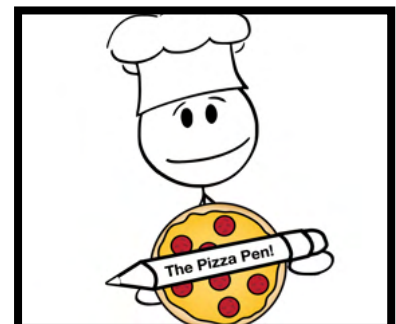


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Part 3:                      The sell

Announcer:              Buy the Pizza Pen today, wherever pizza and pens are sold!

Actor:                      Homework never tasted so good!

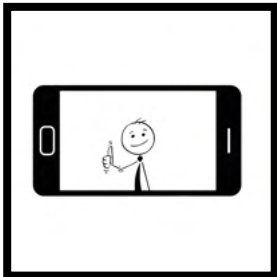




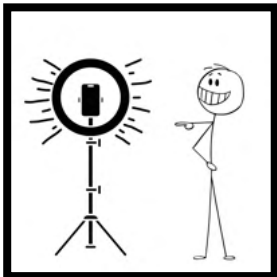
## **\*Film your child's skit**



A cell phone or a tablet will work just fine to film your child. It is best to use a tripod or a selfie-stick instead of holding the phone, so the video does not come out shaky. Scenes look better if you hold the phone horizontally instead of vertically. Also, don't zoom when filming; the picture can come out grainy.



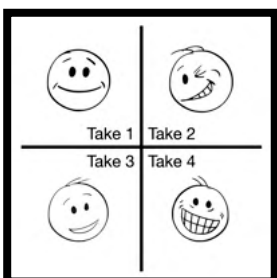
Always film your child against a blank wall or some other neutral background. Put any pets outside and remove any distracting elements. Have them stand several feet in front of their background. You want the focus on them. Shoot with the camera right at their eye level, not too high or too low.



Start with some test shots to ensure the sound and lighting are good. Good audio is essential, so keep background noise to a minimum. If your video looks too dark, get a ring light or put a lamp or other light source behind your camera to light their face better. Make them look like a star!



Always have your child smile and speak in a clear voice. Make sure they look straight into the camera, are relaxed, and not rushed. Have them memorize their lines; it looks much better. Avoid having them wear white or clothes with patterns. Neither of those shows up well on video.



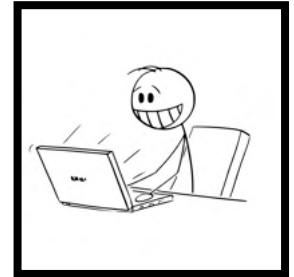
Don't worry if you have never filmed before. Record many takes and delete those that don't work. Have your child try different expressions each time. Try takes where they speak very natural and relaxed. Try other takes where they are dramatic and cheesy. Have fun with it!





## **\*Edit your movie**

For editing, there are plenty of free movie editing apps to use (*see appendix*). Go to Youtube for how-to videos on video editing for beginners; there are many to get you started. Don't worry; it's pretty easy. Keep your movies short. Many sites, such as Instagram, limit videos to 30 seconds.



Be careful if you want to add music. Youtube, Facebook and most other sites use music-recognition software that scans your video for copyrighted material and flags it or takes it down. The good news is that there are plenty of royalty-free music sites you can use (*see appendix*).



## **\*Post your movie**

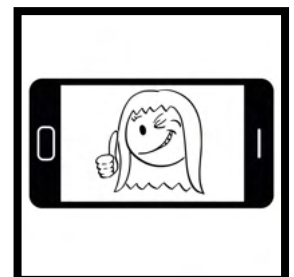
Upload your masterpiece to Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, and any other social media sites that you use. You can even make a Youtube channel for your child and invite your friends and family to follow. Post your movie to as many places as you can. You want to get your child's name out there!



Don't stop with one movie, rather post a movie per month, or better yet, one per week. The more movies your child creates, the more people will see their talent. Soon, they will be getting offers to be the spokesperson for the local toy store or act in a commercial for an area restaurant.

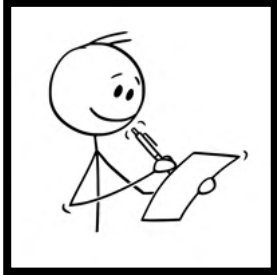


Lots of our students got acting jobs this way. The [Theatre of the Imagination Youtube channel](#) features much of their professional work. To see great acting, check out their auditions for Nickelodeon. Super funny!



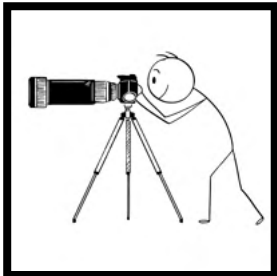


## **STEP 2: Headshots and a resume**

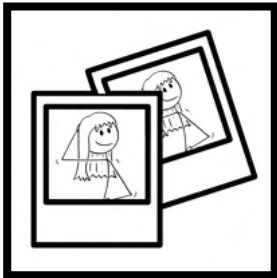


Headshots are the pictures that actors use to get jobs. Think of them as an actor's business card. An acting resume is a list of an actor's acting jobs. You want to get both into local Casting Directors and Talent Agent's hands. They are the ones who can help get you acting jobs.

### **\*Headshots**



All actors need headshots. It is very difficult to get cast without them. Avoid taking them yourself. If you are serious about getting your child acting jobs, it is best to have them professionally done. Agents can easily tell the difference. See our list of Kansas City headshot photographers (*see appendix*).



For acting headshots, you want a nice picture of your child looking right at the camera, smiling and happy. Avoid headshots that are too dramatic or ones that are geared towards modeling. Have them wear nice clothes, avoiding patterns and stripes. Go easy on the makeup and jewelry.

### **\*Resume**



Now it's time to put their acting resume together. Don't worry if they've never done professional acting before. Just list out any acting experience, such as school plays, church skits, and talent shows. Check out our examples for beginner's resumes (*see appendix*).



## STEP 3: Getting their name out

If you want your child to get hired, you need to get their name out. Send their headshot and resume to local Casting Directors and Talent Agents.

### **\*Casting Director**

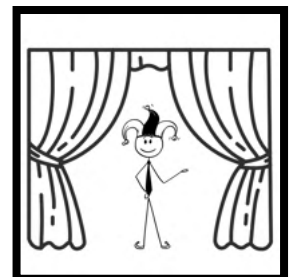
Producers hire Casting Directors to find talent for projects. After seeing many auditions, the Casting Director picks the best ones and recommends those to the Director. Though Casting Directors get most of their talent through Talent Agents, they accept submissions from actors who are not with an agent.

### **\*Talent Agent**

Talent Agents represent actors. They look for acting jobs for your child and field offers from Casting Directors. They set up auditions, getting actors their scripts and call times. They also help actors get paid for their work. Talent Agents usually take between 10%-20% of an actor's pay as their fee.

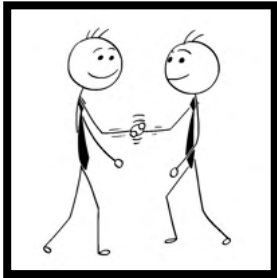
Check out our list of Kansas City Casting Directors and Talent Agents (*see appendix*). Email them your child's headshot and resume. **Do not show up at their offices uninvited; they don't like that!** If your child gets cast in a local play, invite them to come. That is often how they find new talent.

When he fixed our office sink, our plumber got inspired about acting. Having never acted professionally before, he sent his information to a local Casting Director. He got a commercial that paid \$1,000 for one day's work within a week!





## **STEP 4: Join local acting groups**



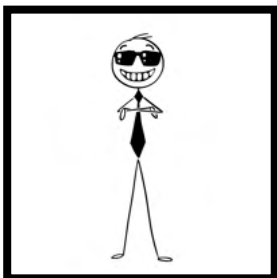
There are many local acting groups on social media. Writers, directors, and performers, all networking about locally-produced movies and plays. They share job posts and casting information. Join these groups on your child's behalf and start making as many connections as you can.



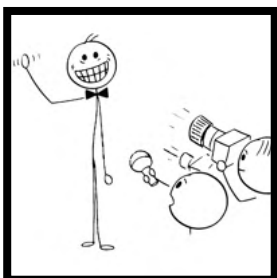
These groups are always making micro-budget movies. No speaking parts for your child? Ask to be a background performer. Try out for community theater plays. If your child doesn't get a part, both of you can volunteer to be ushers. The more your child is around acting, the sooner they will get hired.



When you and your child are around the acting community, learn as much as you can from others. Ask lots of questions on how to break into the business. The acting community is very supportive. The more connections you make, the faster that first acting job will come.



Get the phone numbers of everyone you meet and follow them on Facebook. Recently, a local director put up a post that read, "I need five actors today! Can anyone help?". Five of our students, who also follow him on Facebook, got picked and were cast in a Hallmark TV movie!



Hollywood's next big-time director could be in your neighborhood right now, just starting out. Make connections and your child could get cast in their first movie. Check out our list of Kansas City-based acting groups on social media (*see appendix*).



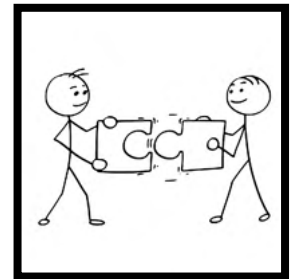


## **STEP 5: Take Acting Classes**

Enroll your child in a local acting school. Acting is a craft, and the more they practice, the more they will improve. As they get better, so will their chances to get the roles they want on both stage and screen. Good actors never stop learning. They are always looking for ways to learn and grow.



When looking for an acting school, you want to find the right fit for your child. If they like being on stage, ask the school if their classes end with a performance. Many schools offer classes with no final show. Instead, students have to audition for their 'big show' and pay extra fees to get on stage.



Another advantage of acting classes is making connections. You never know; your child's acting teacher could also be a director for movies and theater. It is not uncommon for those in the acting world to wear many different hats. Network as much as possible to find your child acting jobs.



That is how Theatre of the Imagination Director Mr. Miles got his first professional acting job. As a teenager, he took an acting class and his teacher hired him for a local drama company. He toured with that professional company for over a year, performing at schools and street fairs.



It is time for your child to venture out into the acting world. Soon they'll be getting hired on stage and screen to showcase their talents. Stardom awaits! If you have any questions about getting your child into the acting business, call Mr. Miles at 816-561-2787 for a free consultation. He is always happy to help!





## **Appendix**

### **Free Video Editing Software**

If you are a Mac user, iMovie is the standard for beginners. For PC, we recommend Lightworks. To learn video editing it is best to start with a search on Youtube. They have many video tutorials on all of these programs.

1. iMovie (only for Mac)
2. Lightworks
3. VideoPad
4. OpenShot
5. Movie Maker 10 (only for Windows)

### **Free Sound/Song Websites**

1. Bensound. <https://www.bensound.com/help>
2. Youtube Audio Library. <https://www.youtube.com/audiolibrary/music>
3. Free Music Archive. <https://freemusicarchive.org/>
4. Soundcloud. <https://soundcloud.com>

### **Kansas City Headshot Photographers**

Manon Halliburton  
816-682-0565  
[manonhalliburton@gmail.com](mailto:manonhalliburton@gmail.com)  
[manonhalliburtonphotography.com](http://manonhalliburtonphotography.com)

Brian Paulette Photography  
[brianpaulette.com](http://brianpaulette.com)  
\*Offers \$100 micro-sessions!

Larry Levenson  
816-361-6260  
[larryflevenson@gmail.com](mailto:larryflevenson@gmail.com)  
<http://LarryFLevenson.blogspot.com/>



## **Appendix**

### **Sample Acting Resumes**

1. [Aceyouraudition.com](http://Aceyouraudition.com)
2. [Actingplan.com](http://Actingplan.com)
3. [Resume-now.com](http://Resume-now.com)

### **Kansas City Casting Directors and Talent Agents**

1. [Heather Laird at Wright/Laird Casting](#)
2. [Exposure Model and Talent](#)
3. [Moxie Talent](#)
4. [Talent Unlimited](#)
5. [The Agency Models & Talent](#)

### **Social Media Sites For Acting**

1. [Castingcallskc.com](http://Castingcallskc.com)
2. [Actors and Film Makers in Kansas City](#)
3. [Actors Supporting Actors Kansas City](#)
4. [Kansas City Actors and Extras](#)
5. [The Network: Kansas City Filmmakers & Actors](#)
6. [Casting Calls Kansas City](#)
7. [Auditions Free KC](#)

### **Kansas City Theaters for Beginning Actors**

1. [The Barn Players](#)
2. [The White Theatre at the JCC](#)
3. [Shawnee Mission Theatre in the Park](#)
4. [The MET](#)
5. [Black Repertory Theatre of KC](#)