



## **Best practice when representing, casting, hiring, and working with Performers aged 16-18**

### **General**

Representing, hiring, and working with 16-18s in the film and TV industry requires careful consideration of best practices. This document outlines the key aspects that should be kept in mind to ensure a safe and successful experience for all involved parties.

It should be noted that once a 16-year-old is out of license it should not be assumed that they can then be treated as an adult. There is a period until they turn 18 when they will need a comprehensive Duty Of Care package.

By following the best practices outlined in this document, professionals can ensure the well-being, safety, and successful involvement of these young individuals in their projects. Adhering to legal requirements, providing a supportive working environment, and prioritising the welfare of 16-18s will contribute to a positive experience for everyone involved.

### **Casting and Auditions:**

- **Age-Appropriate Roles:** When casting 16-18s, it is essential to consider age-appropriate roles and storylines. Avoid casting young performers in roles that may expose them to explicit or adult content.
- **Audition Process:** Conduct auditions in a professional and respectful manner. Ensure that auditions are age-appropriate and do not require the minor to engage in any unsafe or uncomfortable activities.

### **Duty of Care Chaperone, Mental Health and Wellbeing**

- Provision of a duty of care chaperone or option for a parent to act as such for any travel or overnight stay. Young actors aged 16-18 should not be left to travel solo or stay overnight in a hotel without the support of a chaperone. A Parent chaperone fee for overnights or provision of Duty Of Care chaperone should be included in budgeting.

- Wellbeing co-ordinator on board (awareness around the needs of young actors who are only just out of licence and no longer 'legally' require a chaperone) <https://6ftfrom.org/wellbeing-facilitators/>
- In the absence of a Wellbeing facilitator, a key person to be appointed on set to keep an eye on the young person. Ideally, someone who is trained in mental health first aid who can not only act as a point of contact for them but also someone who will quietly keep an eye on them to ensure they are getting their meals, interacting with the cast/crew and not shut away in their trailer, to spot the signs of them struggling. It could be a set PA or AD if there is no specific Wellbeing coordinator
- For young actors engaged in productions with adult themes, appropriate care will be taken to ensure they are not exposed to any content that may have a negative impact on their physical and/or emotional welfare. Production should discuss the subject matter with the young actor (and parent/guardian ?) in advance and assess if any further discussion, or provision of counselling, is appropriate, and implemented as and when necessary. This should be monitored throughout the actor's involvement.
- In any drama or reconstruction, actors that are to be filmed in scenes of a sexual nature must be 18 years of age or older, regardless of the age of the character they are playing. Age verification is required for all actors who will be involved in the scenes and any crew that will be on set. It is a criminal offence (Protection of Children Act 1978) to take, distribute or show an indecent photograph (which includes filming for television) of a minor under the age of 18.  
**\*Please refer to legalities in the appendix below**
- Production should recognise the importance of education for 16-18s and the fact they may need some time to catch up with their studies. Where possible a suitable study area could be made available for when they are off set. to ensure that their academic progress is not hindered during the production period.
- Post-production support. A producer/assistant producer (or similar) who will ensure that they are not completely overwhelmed on the run up to the release of a project and indeed following release. To help with social media and press, especially how to handle negative comments on their work or their appearance
- Should include an opt out for 18s

\*Appendix

## INTIMACY/NUDITY

Nudity and scenes of a sexual nature should not be undertaken by any actor under the age of 18.

This information is linked via the Equity website along with the Times Up document.

[https://www.intimacyforstageandscreen.com/uploads/1/3/1/5/131581092/guidelines\\_for\\_engaging\\_an\\_intimacy\\_coordinator\\_v8.pdf](https://www.intimacyforstageandscreen.com/uploads/1/3/1/5/131581092/guidelines_for_engaging_an_intimacy_coordinator_v8.pdf) PAGE 14

Child Actor and Young Adult Actor In England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Intimacy scenes where minors are present require safeguarding practices in place. The Intimacy Director will work closely with the Stage Management Team and the Chaperone to oversee the child's protection. To understand more about what level of involvement can a Child Actor or Young Adult Actor have in the scenes, please seek advice from Equity UK.

It refers to intimacy scenes where an under 18 is present

<https://www.timesupuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/210407-TIMES-UP-Your-Rights-in-Nude-Intimate-and-Sex-Scenes-UK-FINAL.pdf>

The text is as follows and can be found on page 12 of the document

For performers and background who are minors (17 years old and younger):

- Productions are required under British law to verify that any performer or background actor participating in a nude or simulated sex act scene is 18 years old or older.
- Scenes involving a minor are regulated by British law, which imposes severe penalties and requires strict adherence.
- Minors may not perform in any scene involving the simulation of a sex act.
- Your Rights in Nude, Intimate, and Sex Scenes 12
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- Minors may not perform in scenes exposing their genitals, pubic area or breasts, if they are post-pubescent.
- Minors may not be on a closed set where adult performers are appearing nude or simulating a sex act.
- An adult performer cannot kiss or touch a minor in a sexual way during the performance of an intimate scene.
- Any intimate contact that includes a minor, requires the hiring of an Intimacy Coordinator, and it is recommended also in consultation with a child psychologist.