



RAISING A YOUNG ACTOR: WHAT TO DO, WHAT TO AVOID

A Parent's Guide to Doing It Right
With Confidence, Calm and a Sense of
Humor

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1

CHAPTER

INTRODUCTION WHY DOES MY KID WANT TO ACT?

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WHY DOES MY KID WANT TO ACT?

Understanding the Spark, Not Just the Spotlight

It often starts quietly, a moment, a spark. Maybe your child reenacts scenes from a favorite movie with surprising emotion, or you notice how much they love playing different characters at home. Maybe they've asked to be in a play, or they light up when they talk about a movie scene. Maybe it came out of nowhere: "I want to be an actor."

If you're anything like me, your first reaction might have been a mix of pride, panic, and a million questions. Is this a real dream or just a phase? How do I know if it's serious? What if I say yes and it all goes wrong?

Take a deep breath. This chapter is all about understanding where this desire comes from and how to respond in a way that supports your child without overwhelming them (or yourself).



Why Acting? The Many Reasons Behind the Dream

Kids and teens are drawn to acting for different reasons. Some love attention. Some love stories. Some want to be famous. Some want to express emotions they don't have the words for.

All of these are valid, but they each come with different needs and mindsets.

Here are some of the most common reasons kids say they want to act:

- **Creative Expression:** They love imagining, pretending, and stepping into someone else's shoes. Acting becomes a way to express what they feel inside.
- **Emotional Outlet:** Some children have big feelings and don't always know what to do with them. Acting gives them permission to cry, laugh, or shout in a safe, structured space.
- **Confidence Building:** For shy children, acting can actually be a lifeline. Pretending to be someone else often gives them the courage to speak and be seen.
- **Love of Storytelling:** Some kids love movies, books, and characters so much they just want to live in those worlds a little longer.

- **Fame & Recognition:** Yes, some children want the spotlight, the applause, and the dream of being "discovered." This isn't necessarily bad, but it needs careful grounding.

The key is not to judge the reason but to understand it. When you understand why your child wants to act, you can better support their emotional needs and set healthy expectations from the start.

Start With Curiosity, Not Correction

Instead of trying to define whether it's "serious enough," start by asking curious questions:

- "What made you interested in acting?"
- "What do you think actors do every day?"
- "Do you want to act in movies, on stage, or make your own videos?"
- "Would you want to do it once or keep learning and getting better at it?"

The goal is not to quiz or interrogate, but to understand their why.

- You'll discover if they love the creativity, the connection, the challenge, or if they simply want to try something new. That clarity will guide your decisions going forward.

Our Story: From Random Scenes to Real Passion

When my son first said he wanted to be an actor, I didn't know what to do. At first, it felt like a cute phase, he was always dramatic and loved pretending.

But then came the YouTube sketches.

Then monologues from Spiderman (with the toothbrush as a prop).

Then, real tears when he couldn't express what he wanted fully. I saw that this wasn't just a game, it was something deeper.

That's when I started taking it seriously. But I didn't know how. I made mistakes, rushing in too fast, giving him pressure I didn't even realize I was giving, trying to "fix" things instead of understanding what he needed.

Looking back, I wish someone had told me: Your job isn't to control the dream. It's to hold space for it and guide it with love.

Mental Health Starts Here

One of the biggest mistakes we parents make is seeing the acting dream as something that needs to be "solved." Either we go all in and start chasing agents and auditions, or we say "no" to protect our child from disappointment.

But this binary mindset doesn't help anyone.

What your child really needs is emotional support, space to explore, and a parent who can help them process the highs and lows of this journey, without making it about success or failure.

Let acting be a source of joy first, not pressure.

That's the foundation of good mental health in this space.

Try This: A Supportive First Step

Here's what you can do this week to gently support their interest:

- Watch a movie together and talk about the performances. Ask what they liked or didn't like. Let it be fun and casual.
- Find a local screen acting class, not to test them, but to give them a chance to learn in a safe, structured space.
- Journal together: Ask them to write or draw what kind of actor they want to be. This can reveal a lot about their vision and motivation.

Final Thought: Stay Open

This might be a passing interest or a lifelong dream, you don't need to decide today. Your only job right now is to stay open, stay curious, and stay emotionally available.

Even if your child changes their mind later, what they'll remember most is that you took them seriously, listened, and believed in their voice.

And that's the first step of raising a young actor, or simply raising a confident, creative, and emotionally healthy human.

Let's begin. Take a deep breathe and do not forget to smile!

With love,
Naz



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CHAPTER

WHAT TO DO

WHAT TO DO

A.K.A. How to Be a Supportive Parent Without Losing Your Mind (or Your Child's Trust)

So your child wants to be an actor. You've asked the questions. You've seen the sparkle. You know this is more than just a passing phase. And now you're wondering what to actually do.

This chapter is your step-by-step, reality-checked, emotionally grounded parenting guide.

What helps. What hurts. What to say. What to not say.

And how to walk beside your child in a way that builds their confidence and your connection.

Let's begin with this truth: If your child wants to act, and you want to support them, that already makes you a great parent.

- You don't have to know the industry.
- You don't need insider contacts.
- You don't have to be perfect.

You just have to show up with care and a willingness to learn.



Say Yes... Responsibly

Your “yes” doesn’t mean hiring a manager and flying to L.A. It means opening the door, a crack and seeing what your child does with the opportunity.

Start with a structured screen acting class or drama course. Let them experience what it’s actually like to perform, take direction, remember lines, and work with others. Look for a class that focuses on skill-building, not just performance.

Tip: Look for terms like “on-camera training,” “scene study,” or “script work.” Avoid vague classes that sound more like a birthday party than a lesson.

Start Small, but Smart

You don’t need to book professional headshots yet. Or sign up for a talent agency. Or create a showreel from home. Small steps are enough, as long as they’re intentional.

Here are good first steps:

- A 6–12 week acting course for film or TV
- A content creation class if they love TikTok or YouTube
- A short drama camp over school holidays
- Let them film their own mini-scenes on a phone at home

It’s not about how far you go, it’s about how real the learning is.

Learn the Industry:

Just Enough to Speak the Language

You don’t have to become a film expert. But it helps your child so much if you can understand the basics of what they’re talking about.

Take time to learn:

- What a self-tape is (audition filmed at home)
- What a monologue is (a solo speech used in auditions)
- What a blocking means (where the actor moves during a scene)
- What a cold read is (reading a script with no prep)

When your child sees that you care enough to learn, it builds trust and keeps the door open for communication.

Mental Health Note: Kids feel safer and more supported when parents are informed, not controlling.

Praise Effort, Not Just Talent

Here’s a big trap: Telling your child they’re so talented can actually backfire.

Why? Because when things get hard and they will, they’ll think, “Maybe I’m not talented anymore.”

Instead, praise:

- Their effort
- Their improvement
- Their courage to try something new
- Their patience in learning

Say things like:

- "I'm proud of how focused you were in class today."
- "I could see how much emotion you brought to that scene."
- "It's brave to audition. You should be really proud of yourself."

This teaches resilience, not perfectionism.

Keep It Fun, But Focused

Yes, acting is serious work. But your child is still... a child. And if it stops being fun, the passion can burn out quickly.

That doesn't mean letting everything be silly. It means finding joy in the challenge. Talk about scenes over dinner. Let them direct a short family film. Encourage them to create characters. Show them that this world is exciting, not overwhelming.

And remind them: This is their journey. You're the guide, not the GPS.

Check In Often (Emotionally, Not Just Logistically)

We get so caught up in the details, rehearsals, lines, auditions, that we sometimes forget to ask:

"How are you doing in all of this?"

Make time, regularly, to check in without an agenda. No questions about school. No reminders about class.

Just:

- "Are you still enjoying this?"
- "Is there anything that feels too much right now?"
- "What's the best part of acting for you lately?"

Mental Health Note: When children feel they can be honest without disappointing you, you'll know you're doing this right.

Be United With Your Partner (Even If You Disagree)

If you and your partner or co-parent are not aligned, your child will feel it and it may affect their emotional safety in this process.

My husband and I had a lot of talks. Sometimes heated ones. But we always tried to have them away from our son. Why?

Because when a child senses that their dream is creating stress, tension, or disagreement at home, even subtle tension they may start to feel like a burden.

They might shrink their passion, suppress their excitement, or carry guilt without ever saying a word.

That's a lot for a young heart to hold.

So we made a decision: talk privately, agree publicly.

- Talk about your boundaries.
- Talk about the logistics.
- Talk about your finances, values, and hopes.

But talk together, away from your child.

Ask each other:

- Are we both fully on board with this journey?
- What are our shared goals? And what does "success" mean to us?
- How much time and money are we truly willing to invest?
- What are our red lines? (Auditions during school? Long days on set? Travel?)

You don't need to agree on everything immediately, but you do need clarity and teamwork.

That unity gives your child safety. It gives them permission to explore this path without guilt. And it protects their mental health more than you can imagine.

And here's something else important:

Grandma, Auntie, the neighbor, your best friend, and the parents at school? Not your co-parents.

People will have lots of opinions. You'll hear:

- "Shouldn't she focus on school instead?"
- "He's too young for this industry."
- "You know how hard it is to make it, right?"
- "It's just a phase."
- "Why are you wasting money on this?"

Let them talk. But don't let them in.

Unless they live in your house, share your responsibilities, and know your child like you do, they do not get a vote.

Even if it's well-meaning, outside commentary can plant doubt and guilt, especially if it reaches your child. Your child doesn't need to see adult disagreements, side-eyes at family dinners, or whispered judgment about their dreams.

You and your partner are the only ones who need to be on the same page. No one else. Set a boundary.

Say kindly:
"Thanks for your thoughts. We're handling it together."

Your child needs to know that their safe circle is strong and steady. That their home is a place of support, not politics or pressure. And that their dream is valid, no matter what anyone outside the core family thinks.

Because at the end of the day, it's not about impressing the aunt or silencing the neighbor. It's about raising a confident, emotionally supported, creatively fulfilled child, who knows their parents have their back.

Build a Strong Home Base

Even if your child is auditioning, filming, or performing, home needs to feel safe, calm and predictable.

That means:

- Not over-scheduling
- Keeping their social life and downtime intact
- Offering space to process rejections or bad days
- Never letting their worth feel connected to their acting "success"

Your child needs to know:
They are enough, whether or not they ever land a role.

Final Thoughts: You're Doing Better Than You Think

Supporting a young actor is both magical and messy. You will get some things right. You'll mess up others. But what matters most is that you're trying, with love, honesty and patience.

This is not just about acting. It's about raising a human who:

- Knows who they are
- Has the courage to chase a dream
- Feels seen and heard by the people who love them most

And that is more than any Oscar, it is a win worth celebrating.

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CHAPTER

WHAT NOT TO DO
SERIOUSLY. DON'T.

WHAT NOT TO DO

Now that we've covered all the loving, thoughtful ways you can support your child's acting journey, it's time to talk about the traps.

The mistakes so many well-meaning parents fall into, not because they're careless, but because they care too much, too fast, or in the wrong direction.

This chapter is about holding a mirror up gently. If you recognize yourself in any of these pages, don't worry.

I've made these mistakes too. Almost every parent in this world makes at least one (or five).

The key is recognizing them and doing better, not perfectly, just better.

Let's go.



Don't Project Your Own Dreams

Your child is not your second chance at stardom. Or at confidence. Or at doing the thing you once loved but never pursued.

This might sound obvious, but it sneaks in subtly. You get excited when your child wants to act because you once loved performing.

You see their spark and think, "Maybe they'll live the dream I couldn't."

It's beautiful that you have dreams. But this one has to belong to them.

Ask yourself:

- Am I pushing them toward something, or walking beside them?
- Am I more invested than they are?
- Am I imagining a future that's more about me than them?
-

If the answer is yes, pause. Reflect. Redirect.

Don't Say "You'll Be Famous One Day!"

This one is tempting. It's meant to be encouraging. But here's the truth:

Fame is not a goal. It's a side effect. A rare one.

Telling your child they'll be famous builds pressure and fantasy, not self-worth.

Instead, say things like:

- "You're really growing as an actor."
- "You have a gift for connecting with people on camera."
- "It's amazing how committed you were in that scene."

Notice effort. Celebrate progress. Let fame be irrelevant.

Because if you teach your child that their value lies in being known, you're setting them up for a world of insecurity.

Don't Compare

It's almost instinctual: You scroll Instagram and see another kid your child's age in a Netflix trailer. Or someone else just booked a commercial. And suddenly, you think:

- Why not my kid?
- Are we behind?
- Are we doing enough?

Stop. Breathe. Step back.

Comparison is poison, especially in this industry. Every child develops at a different pace. Every family has a different rhythm. Some kids start early. Others hit their stride at 16. Or 26. Or never and still grow from the experience.

The only question that matters is:

"Is my child learning, enjoying, and developing as a person?"

If yes, you're doing great.

Don't Hover or Micromanage

I know. You want to help. You want the scene to be perfect. You want them to say the line just right. But when you become the unofficial director of every self-tape, rehearsal, or class... things can go sideways quickly.

Here's what happens when parents hover:

- The child loses ownership of their process.
- They stop experimenting, fearing "mistakes."
- They perform for you, not for the work.
- They start to doubt their instincts.

You don't want that.

Be present, yes. Offer help when asked. But give them space to explore, mess up, and find their way.

Remember: Your child doesn't need you to be a coach. They need you to be a calm, loving presence in the wings.

Don't Overshare or Overexpose

We live in a world of content. It's normal to want to share your child's work online, especially if you're proud. But there's a difference between documenting and performing parenthood for an audience.

Before you post:

- Ask your child if they're comfortable with it.
- Think about what message the post sends (e.g. "Look how talented my kid is" vs. "Here's something they're proud of").
- Reflect on your motive. Is it for them, or for your ego?

Also: Not every audition, rejection, or class needs to be broadcast.

Some moments belong to your family alone. Protect that.

Don't Let Their Mood Determine Yours

When your child doesn't get a role...

When they cry after class...

When they feel disappointed in themselves...

It's painful. I've cried behind closed doors, feeling helpless. I've doubted whether we should continue. I've questioned everything.

But I've learned this:

Your child's emotional world needs to be held, not mirrored.

You are their calm. Their steadiness. Their reminder that it's okay to feel, and it's okay to try again.

If you fall apart when they fall apart, it creates more instability. Be compassionate, yes. But stay grounded.

Say:

- "It's okay to be sad. I'm here."
- "You're allowed to feel this way. Let's talk about it when you're ready."
- "You worked hard. That matters more than one audition."

Don't Let Acting Become the Only Thing

This one might surprise you. But it's huge.

When a child's life becomes only acting, classes, auditions, self-tapes, character analysis, it can lead to:

- Burnout
- Identity confusion
- Anxiety when they're not "doing well"
- Social isolation

Acting should be a part of their life, not their whole life.

Make sure they still:

- Have friends outside of acting
- Play games, read books, and be silly
- Sleep well and eat regularly
- Have downtime that isn't career-focused

This protects their mental health, and helps them grow into balanced, creative adults, not just "performers."

Final Note: It's Okay to Get It Wrong Sometimes

You will make mistakes.

You will say something unhelpful.

You might push too hard, or not hard enough.

You might cry more than your child does. **That's okay.**

But if you can learn from those moments, talk openly, and keep showing up with love, your child will thrive.

Not because they're perfect.

Not because you are.

But because the foundation is strong.

This is not just a guide to raising an actor.

This is a guide to raising a confident, resilient, emotionally safe human being, who happens to love storytelling.

And that's a role worth showing up for.

4

CHAPTER

THE INDUSTRY
NOT JUST GLITZ AND
GLAM

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THE INDUSTRY IS NOT JUST GLITZ AND GLAM

What It Really Looks Like (and Why That's Okay)

Let's be honest for a moment.

When your child says, "I want to be an actor," it's easy to imagine red carpets, glowing lights, a camera slowly pushing in on their teary-eyed monologue, and everyone clapping.

Maybe you've pictured them starring in a Netflix show, or hearing their name called at a film festival.

Maybe you've already practiced your proud-parent smile for the Oscars red carpet.



I did. I pictured all of it.

But what I didn't picture was:

- The hours of waiting in uncomfortable casting rooms.
- The late-night self-tape deadlines.
- The fifty takes to get one line right.
- The silence after an audition: days, weeks, sometimes forever.
- The rejection that isn't even personal, but still hurts.

This chapter is about the real industry, not to scare you, but to prepare you.

Because here's the truth: When you and your child know what this path actually looks like, you'll walk it more calmly. With clearer eyes, steadier hearts, and way less panic.

Let's dive in.

Acting Is Work, And That's Not a Bad Thing

One of the biggest misconceptions about young actors is that they're just "playing pretend" or "being cute on camera."

But real screen acting requires discipline, precision, and an enormous emotional range.

A young actor has to:

- Memorize and internalize lines quickly

- Repeat a scene over and over, exactly the same, from multiple angles
- Stay emotionally connected under pressure
- Listen deeply to scene partners
- Understand direction, blocking, and camera awareness
- Be vulnerable on cue
- Handle feedback with maturity

It's not play. It's craft.

And that's the first shift we, as parents, must make. To respect the work. And to help our child respect it too.

Rejection Is Normal and Constant

Here's a rough but necessary truth: Even the most talented kids don't get most of the roles they audition for.

Sometimes:

- They're "too tall."
- Their accent isn't quite right.
- The client wanted a different hair color.
- The sibling pair is already cast and your child doesn't match.
- The part gets cut.
- The project disappears.

It's rarely about them. But it still stings.

"Rejection isn't failure. It's part of the job."

And:

"You can be amazing and still not be the one they pick."

Your job is to normalize the process, not the outcome. Celebrate the courage it takes to try, to show up, to care.

Mental Health Comes First

This industry, even for kids, can challenge emotional regulation, confidence, and self-esteem.

Especially in performance-driven cultures, there's a pressure to excel quickly, to be "special," to have an edge. That pressure, when internalized, can build anxiety or perfectionism.

What can you do?

- Build rest into the schedule
- Talk about feelings often, not just outcomes
- Never let acting define your child's entire identity
- Celebrate who they are, not what they do
- Remind them often: "You are enough, just as you are."

Sometimes, if they're struggling, you may even decide to pause acting for a bit. That's not quitting. That's parenting with wisdom and love.

Auditions Can Be Exhausting (But They're Also Practice)

Let's talk about self-tapes, because chances are, your living room is about to turn into a mini studio.

You'll need:

- A ring light
- A clean background
- Quiet space
- A good reader (yes, often you!)
- Patience. So much patience.

Some days, your child will feel off. Tired. Frustrated. There may be tears. And some tapes won't be great and that's okay.

Treat every audition as practice. A learning moment. A creative challenge. Not a test.

If it becomes a source of dread, it's time to take a breath.

The Glamor Is Rare, and Brief

Yes, there are photo shoots. Premieres. Press events. There are fun days on set and exciting costume fittings. And they're amazing! But they're not the norm.

Most of the journey is:

- Rehearsing
- Waiting
- Practicing
- Taping
- Being told "not this time"
- Trying again

If your child is only in it for the glamor, it will fade. But if they love the craft, they'll stay, through all of it.

Let Them Love It, Without Needing It

One of the healthiest attitudes your child can develop is:

"I love this, but I don't need it to prove my worth."

That mindset protects them when:

- They don't get callbacks
- They lose a role
- They take breaks from acting
- They change their mind

Your job is to keep helping them return to joy, the joy of pretending, of performing, of connecting with others through stories.

Because joy is sustainable. Fame is not.

And For You, Dear Parent...

You'll get tired too. You'll feel lost sometimes. You'll wonder:

- "Are we doing this right?"
- "Is it worth it?"
- "Should we be pushing more... or pulling back?"

There is no perfect answer. There is only what feels healthy, balanced, and supportive for your family.

You're allowed to step back. To regroup. To change direction. What matters most is that your child feels safe, seen, and free to explore who they are, actor or not.

And don't forget this:

If your child learns how to:

- Take feedback
- Communicate clearly
- Express emotion
- Stand in front of others with confidence
- Recover from failure

Then you've already won.

5

CHAPTER

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT ACTING CLASS

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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT ACTING CLASS

Because "Drama Class" Isn't Always What You Think It Is

So, your child is excited. You're on board. You've had the deep conversations, and now it's time to take the next step.

But then... you open Google.

"Acting class for kids"

And suddenly, there are 42 tabs open on your laptop, each with a smiling child on a stage, a vague promise of "fun," and words like confidence building, creativity, or future star.

How do you know which class is right?

What's the difference between "drama," "film acting," and "screen performance"?

And how can you tell if it's just glorified daycare... or a class that will truly help your child grow?

Let's break it down.



Drama Class vs. Screen Acting Class

Drama class often means theatre-style performance.

Think:

- Stage projection
- Big gestures
- Improvisation
- Ensemble games
- Storytelling as a group

Great for confidence, expression, and playfulness. But not the same as film acting.

Screen acting class (or film acting class) focuses on:

- On-camera performance
- Realism and subtle emotion
- Scripted scenes
- Blocking for frame
- Working with close-ups and marks

If your child dreams of being in movies, series, or YouTube productions, this is the right direction.

Tip: Many parents assume any acting class will do. But just like ballet is not hip-hop, theatre is not screen acting. Be clear on the style your child wants to pursue.

What a Strong Film Acting Class Should Include

Here's a checklist. Ask yourself, or the school these questions before signing up:

1. Do they teach actual screen acting techniques?
2. Eye line, realism, hitting marks, working with a script, playing to camera, these are essentials.
3. Do kids get real on-camera practice?
4. Watching themselves back is one of the fastest ways kids learn.
5. Is the class structured and progressive?
6. Is there a clear curriculum? Or is it just "play time" every week?
7. Who are the instructors?
8. Are they trained in screen acting themselves? Have they worked in the industry or just "like drama"?
9. Is there feedback like real, kind, useful feedback?
10. Growth doesn't happen without correction and guidance. The best classes balance encouragement with truth.
11. Is there a final project or showcase?
12. Even if it's just a filmed scene or monologue, a final outcome helps kids stay motivated.
13. Is the class size manageable?
14. More than 12–14 students per teacher? Your child may not get enough attention or on-camera time.

Red Flags to Watch Out For

- They promise fame. ("Your child will be the next big star!")
- It's all games and no technique.
- There's no camera in the room... ever.
- No feedback is given, just clapping and "You're amazing!"

Remember: Fun doesn't mean fluffy. A great class can be full of laughter and full of learning.

Mental Health and the Right Class Environment

Some classes are high-pressure. Some are chaotic. Some treat kids like mini-adults. Some let kids run wild.

Here's what you want instead:

- A class that is safe: emotionally and socially
- A teacher who sees your child as a whole person, not just a performer
- A culture where mistakes are normal, and trying again is encouraged
- A balance between discipline and kindness
- A space where your child feels excited, not anxious, about going

Your child's mental health matters more than any skill.

If they leave class feeling defeated, criticized, or ignored, that's not a class worth staying in.

Talk About the Class Privately, Calmly, Honestly

After each session, don't grill your child with "Did you do well?" or "Were you better than the others?"

Instead, ask:

- "What did you learn today?"
- "What part was fun?"
- "Did anything feel hard or confusing?"
- "Want to show me something you practiced?"

And then listen. The way your child talks about class will tell you more than any report ever could.

Also: Check in with each other as parents, away from your child.

Are you both happy with the tone of the class?

Do you both feel the instructor "gets" your child?

Because as we said in the earlier chapter: Parents must be on the same page. Your child should never feel like their class experience is causing tension at home.

The Goal of the Right Class

It's not just about technique.

The right acting class helps your child:

- Build creative confidence
- Learn emotional literacy
- Develop discipline and responsibility
- Handle performance pressure in healthy ways
- Express themselves with courage
- Learn collaboration, patience, and respect

And yes, to get better on camera.

But most importantly: to feel seen, supported, and excited to grow.



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CHAPTER

YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT

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YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT

Support, Stability, and the Magic of Letting Go (Sometimes)

When your child wants to be an actor, it doesn't just become their journey, it becomes yours too.

But here's the thing: you're not their director. Or their co-star. Or their agent. You're something even more important.

You're their anchor.

In a world that can sometimes feel chaotic, competitive, and confusing, your child needs one constant: a parent who believes in them, without pushing too hard. Who holds space for the emotions, without falling into them. Who stays steady, no matter what.

It's not an easy job. But it's one of the most meaningful roles you'll ever play.



You Are the Logistics Coordinator (with Snacks)

Let's be real. You'll drive to classes. Wait in lobbies. Search for monologues at midnight. Charge ring lights. Send self-tapes on flaky WiFi. Buy a costume the night before.

You'll become:

- The Uber driver
- The tech assistant
- The line-reader
- The bag packer
- The snack bringer
- The "do we really need to film this AGAIN?" supporter

And you'll do it all without applause. But know this: these acts of support are never invisible to your child. They're the foundation.

They may not say it now, but they'll remember it later.

You Are the Emotional Regulator

Acting is full of emotional highs and lows. There are auditions where your child feels amazing and doesn't get the part.

There are roles they worked hard on and forgot their lines. There are days they don't feel good enough, talented enough, or confident enough.

Here's your job:

- Don't join them in their overwhelm. Be their steady ground.
- Normalize rejection. Remind them, kindly, that "no" isn't the end.
- Teach emotional resilience: "It's okay to feel disappointed. Let's feel it, and then keep going."
- Celebrate effort more than outcome.

Mental health matters more than the résumé. Every. Single. Time.

You Are NOT the Director

This is a hard one, especially if you see potential in your child that others don't. You might want to "help" by stepping in with suggestions. Giving line readings. Correcting posture. Changing how they cry.

But here's what kids really need:

- Space to experiment
- Permission to fail
- Encouragement to take risks
- A safe landing when it doesn't go well

Be nearby, but not overbearing. Cheer quietly, not loudly. Let the acting coaches coach. Your child will flourish more when they feel ownership over their process.

You Are the Translator Between Dreams and Reality

Kids often dream big, as they should! "I want to be on Netflix!" "I want to act with Zendaya!" "I'm going to be in Marvel!"

Don't squash the dream, but help them break it down. Teach them the steps between here and there.

- "That's amazing! Let's start by learning to act for camera."
- "Great goal. Want to practice auditioning first?"
- "Every actor starts somewhere, let's find your starting point."

Turn those dreams into action without turning the excitement into pressure.

You Are the Mental Health Mirror

Your child is learning to perform emotions on cue. That's powerful and vulnerable.

So check in:

- Are they still enjoying the process?
- Are they trying to be "perfect" all the time?
- Do they feel safe making mistakes?
- Are you creating space for non-acting days, too?

Support their emotional health not just with affirmations, but with structure:

- Clear routines
- Balanced schedules
- Boundaries around social media
- Time off from performing
- Protection from toxic comparison (especially online)

Let them be kids, even when they're playing grown-up roles.

You Are a Parenting Team (Hopefully)

One of the greatest blessings in this journey? When both parents are on the same page.

Acting brings with it schedules, emotions, costs, and choices that affect the whole family. If one parent is "all in" and the other is skeptical, kids pick up on that. It creates confusion or worse, guilt.

Your child should never feel like their passion is causing tension between you and your partner.

So, talk privately. Agree on:

- How much time and money to invest
- What kind of classes feel right
- What your family values are around fame, performance, and effort
- How you'll talk about acting at home

You don't need to agree on every detail. But the overall message your child hears should be: "We believe in you. We're in this together. We've got your back."

Even if you and your partner see things differently, work toward clarity and unity behind the scenes.

That kind of emotional safety will be the strongest gift you can give your child.

Bonus Tips: Supporting Without Smothering

- Be available, but not over-involved. Let them lead.
- Model healthy ambition. Work on your own goals, too.
- Don't gossip about auditions or results. Teach grace.
- Don't use acting as identity. Say: "You're such a kind person" more than "You're so talented."
- Normalize rest. Some weeks are for pushing. Some weeks are for sleeping in and watching cartoons.
- Be the person who sees the whole child, not just the actor.

Final Thoughts

You don't need to be a perfect parent. You just need to be a steady one.

The acting journey will test your patience. It'll stretch your schedule. It'll pull your heartstrings.

But it will also give you moments of awe, watching your child transform into characters, express deep emotions, and surprise you with their creativity.

So breathe. Laugh when things go sideways. Cry when it's hard. And always come back to the why:

You're not doing this to create a star.

You're doing this to raise a healthy, whole, expressive human being, who knows they're loved, no matter what.

7

CHAPTER

RED FLAGS, GREEN
FLAGS, AND REAL
GOALS

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RED FLAGS, GREEN FLAGS, AND REAL GOALS

Knowing What's Worth Pursuing and What to Walk Away From

In the beginning, everything feels exciting. Every new class feels like a golden opportunity. Every audition seems like the Big One.

Every coach sounds like the expert you've been searching for. But here's something every acting parent learns eventually:

Not all that glitters is gold.

Some opportunities are truly wonderful. Others? Not so much. As the parent of a young actor, part of your role is to learn to tell the difference.

The acting world, like any other industry, has its fair share of fluff, false promises, and ego traps.

Let's break it down clearly with a calm head and an open heart.



Red Flags: Warning Signs to Watch Out For

These are the signs that something's off, either with the class, the coach, or the entire setup. Trust your gut.

"Fame Guaranteed!"

Any class or coach that promises stardom, fame, or Netflix deals is a major red flag. Real professionals never guarantee success, they focus on skill development and growth.

No one can promise a career. What they can offer is tools, training, and guidance.

Unqualified Instructors

A coach who's never worked in film, never trained in acting, or doesn't understand how to teach children should not be teaching your child. Google them. Ask for credentials. You're not being rude, you're being responsible.

High-Pressure Environments

Classes that are overly intense, emotionally manipulative, or dismissive of children's feelings can be damaging. If the vibe is cold, competitive, or shaming run.

Your child should feel safe and supported, not judged or constantly under pressure to perform.

Pushy Upsells

Some schools rope you in with free trials, then push hard for expensive showcases, headshot sessions, or "exclusive" programs. Be cautious of anything that feels like a money machine.

You're More Invested Than Your Child

If you're the one pushing auditions, doing research, and dragging your child to class, pause. Are they still enjoying it? Or are you carrying the dream?

Green Flags: Signs of a Healthy, Supportive Environment

On the flip side, here's what to look for in a program, teacher, or setting that supports your child's growth and well-being.

Structure With Joy

Great classes have a clear structure: warm-ups, technique, scene work, feedback. But they also feel alive. There's laughter, creativity, movement. Kids want to go back.

Qualified, Kind Coaches

A brilliant acting teacher for kids doesn't just know the craft, they understand young minds. They're patient, encouraging, and firm. They know how to challenge without shaming.

Emphasis on Growth Over Stardom

They talk about learning the craft, not landing roles. They praise progress, not perfection. They make space for every child, not just the "talented" ones.

Look for places where your child is seen as a learner, not a product.

Age-Appropriate Expectations

Good programs are careful about what content kids work on. They protect their emotional well-being, avoid adult-themed scenes, and never force a child into something they're uncomfortable with.

Your Child is Happy to Go

This one's simple but powerful. Do they light up before class? Talk about it afterward? Practice scenes on their own? That's a sign of something special.

Real Goals: What Success Really Looks Like

Forget the red carpets for a moment. Let's talk about what actually matters.

Skill Development

Can your child:

- Express emotion clearly?
- Memorize lines with focus?
- Understand character motivation?
- Take direction and adapt?

These are the foundations, whether they become a professional actor or not.

Confidence and Self-Expression

Has your child grown more confident?

Do they speak up more?

Are they more in tune with their emotions?

Can they stand in front of others without fear?

That's real success.

Emotional Resilience

Acting teaches rejection. Vulnerability. Starting over. If your child can bounce back from a "no" with grace and keep going, you're raising someone resilient.

Joy in the Process

The best goal is simple: they love it. Not just the applause, but the process. The rehearsal. The collaboration. The work. If your child finds joy in the doing, you've already won.

A Healthy Relationship with the Craft

This is everything. Are they able to:

- Take breaks when needed?
- Laugh at mistakes?
- Keep acting part of life, not all of it?

A child with a balanced, passionate relationship with acting will grow into an adult who can choose their path with clarity.

A Quick Check-In for Parents

Ask yourself:

- Is this still about my child's dream, or has it become mine?
- Are we still having fun?
- Is our family life balanced, or is acting taking over?
- Have I listened to my child's voice lately?

If things are feeling off, it's okay to pause. To adjust. To take a season off. You're allowed to make choices that prioritize mental health and family harmony over momentum.

There is no one path to a career, but there is one essential rule for a healthy journey:

Let your child lead, and walk beside them not in front of them.

Bonus: Questions to Ask Before You Commit

How to Make Smart, Heart-Centered Decisions About Classes and Programs

Before you sign up for any acting class, workshop, or program, take a moment to pause and reflect. It's easy to get swept up in excitement, but it's just as important to make thoughtful choices that support your child's growth and well-being.

Here are some important questions to ask yourself and to ask the program providers if you can.

Is this class focused on learning real skills?

- Does the curriculum cover acting techniques, script analysis, and on-camera work?
- Or is it mostly games and improv without clear goals?
- Will my child get practical experience that builds confidence and craft?

A good class balances creativity with skill-building.

Will my child receive personal feedback?

- Does the teacher provide constructive, encouraging feedback?
- Will my child know what to improve and how?
- Or is it mostly "fun" with little guidance?

Feedback helps your child grow and teaches resilience.

Is the environment safe and supportive?

- Are the teachers experienced in working with kids and teens?
- Do they prioritize emotional safety and respect?
- Is the class inclusive and welcoming to all skill levels?

Emotional safety is as important as technique.

Are there opportunities for on-camera practice?

- Does the class include filming scenes or self-tape exercises?
- Do students get comfortable being on camera, with real equipment?

Screen acting is different from theatre, exposure to camera work is essential for film and TV.

Is there a final project or showcase?

- Will students have a chance to perform or present their work?
- Is the showcase low-pressure and focused on learning, not competition?

A positive final experience builds pride and motivation.

How flexible is the schedule?

- Does the timing fit into our family life without stress?
- Is there a clear commitment length (weeks/months) so we can plan ahead?

Balance is key to keeping passion alive.

What are the costs, and what's included?

- Are fees transparent, or are there hidden extras?
- Does the price reflect quality instruction and materials?

Investing wisely means avoiding expensive "extras" that don't add real value.

How do they handle mental health and wellbeing?

- Do the teachers encourage healthy attitudes toward failure and rejection?
- Are kids taught coping skills to handle stress and pressure?

A good program supports not just talent, but the whole child.

Is this something my child truly wants?

- Have I checked in with my child about their feelings and motivation?
- Am I supporting their passion, or pushing my own hopes?

Your child's voice matters most.

Does this align with our family values and lifestyle?

- Will this program fit our budget, schedule, and emotional capacity?
- Can we support this journey together, as a family?

Harmony at home creates a solid foundation.

Bonus Tip for Parents: Trust Your Instincts

No matter what the brochure says, or how fancy the studio looks, your intuition is a powerful guide. If something feels off, or if you see your child shrinking rather than shining, it's okay to step back and reassess.

Remember: this is a journey, not a race. The right choice is one that feels right for your family, and nurtures your child's mental and emotional health above all.

8

CHAPTER

FINAL WORDS (AND
POSSIBLY PIZZA)

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FINAL WORDS (AND POSSIBLY PIZZA)

The Journey of Raising a Young Actor, With Love, Patience and Plenty of Snacks

If you've made it this far, thank you for trusting me to walk alongside you in this unique journey. Raising a young actor is like no other parenting path, filled with bright sparks of creativity, unexpected challenges, and moments that test your patience and faith.

Here's what I want you to remember most:

It's About So Much More Than Fame

Whether your child becomes the next big star or simply learns to express themselves with confidence, the skills gained from acting are life-changing. Empathy, resilience, communication, focus, and emotional intelligence, these gifts extend far beyond the stage or screen.

The world needs more people who can listen, connect, and tell stories with heart.



You Are Your Child's Greatest Support

Your presence, calm voice, and encouragement mean more than any spotlight or applause. Celebrate every little victory, a well-delivered line, a brave audition, a new skill learned. Be there during the tough days, the rejections, and the doubts.

Your belief fuels their courage.

Mental Health is Your North Star

Keep mental wellbeing at the forefront. Notice when your child is stressed, overwhelmed, or discouraged. Teach them and remind yourself that it's okay to rest, to say no, and to prioritize emotional balance over performance.

Professional help is not a weakness; it's a strength and a resource.

Keep the Family Behind the Scenes United

Remember, having all caregivers on the same page is crucial. We were lucky that my husband and I supported this journey together, it made the rollercoaster smoother for everyone. Talk openly with each other (but not in front of your child) so they don't carry your worries or feel the pressure.

A strong family foundation creates a safe space to grow.

Don't Forget to Laugh

The acting world can be intense and unpredictable. There will be moments when nothing goes as planned, missed lines, wardrobe malfunctions, or audition flubs. Laugh through those moments. Humor lightens the load and reminds everyone that this journey is a gift, not a burden.

Celebrate With Pizza

Seriously, after every big moment, whether a tough audition or a dazzling performance, pizza (or your family's favorite treat) goes a long way. It's a simple ritual that says, "We made it through together."

You're Not Alone

Lastly, know that countless parents are walking this path with you. Reach out, share stories, ask for advice, and build your own community. We all want the same thing: to raise happy, healthy, and fulfilled young artists.

Thank you for reading this guide. I hope it gives you confidence, calm, and a sense of humor to navigate your child's acting dreams. Take a deep breath, hold your child's hand, and enjoy the incredible adventure ahead.

With all my heart,
Naz



C H A P T E R

**A-Z FILM & ACTING
VOCABULARY**

W W W . I A M N A A A Z . C O M



Action: The director's cue to begin the scene; indicates that the camera is rolling.

Ad Lib: Unscripted lines or improvisation by an actor during a performance.

ADR (Automated Dialogue Replacement): Re-recording dialogue in post-production to improve audio quality or reflect dialogue changes.

Agent: A professional who represents actors and helps them find work.

Audition: A tryout where an actor performs to secure a role in a production.

Assistant Director (AD): Manages the shooting schedule and coordinates on-set logistics.

B

Back to One: A direction for actors to return to their starting positions for another take.

Background (Extras): Non-speaking actors who appear in the background to enhance the scene's realism.

Beat: A pause or moment of silence in a scene, often to emphasize emotion or a shift in tone.

Blocking: The precise staging of actors' movements and positions during a scene.

Boom Mic: A microphone mounted on a boom pole, used to capture dialogue while remaining out of the camera frame.

Breakdown: A detailed description of characters and scenes used by casting directors to find suitable actors.

Break a Leg: A phrase used to wish actors good luck before a performance.



Call Sheet: A daily schedule distributed to cast and crew detailing scenes to be shot, call times, and other essential information.

Call Time: The scheduled time an actor is expected to arrive on set.

Callback: A second audition where selected actors are invited to perform again for further consideration.

Camera Left/Right: Directions from the camera operator's perspective, indicating movement or positioning relative to the camera.

Casting Director: The professional responsible for selecting actors for roles in a production.

Cheat: An adjustment in an actor's position to accommodate camera angles while maintaining the illusion of natural interaction.

Cold Reading: Performing a script without prior rehearsal or familiarity.



Day Player: An actor hired on a daily basis for a role with a limited number of lines.

Director: The creative leader of a production, responsible for interpreting the script and guiding the artistic vision.

Dolly: A wheeled platform that allows the camera to move smoothly during a shot.

Downstage: The area of the stage closest to the audience.

Dress Rehearsal: The final rehearsal before a performance, conducted with full costumes, props, and technical elements.



Extra: A background actor who appears in non-speaking roles to populate scenes.

Establishing Shot: A wide shot that sets the context for a scene by showing the location and environment.

Executive Producer: A producer who oversees the financial and administrative aspects of a production.



First Team: The principal actors in a scene.

Foley: The reproduction of everyday sound effects added in post-production to enhance audio quality.

Full Shot: A camera shot that includes the actor's entire body within the frame.



Gaffer: The chief lighting technician responsible for the design and execution of the lighting plan.

Green Room: A lounge area where actors wait when not on set or stage.



Holding: A designated area where background actors wait when not filming.

Honeywagon: A trailer equipped with dressing rooms, restrooms, and other facilities for cast and crew.

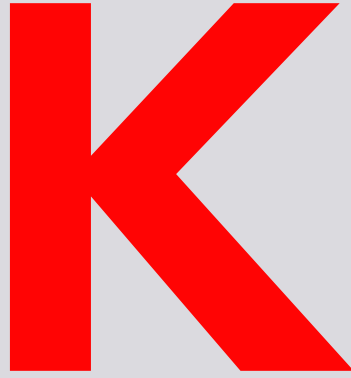


Improvisation: The act of creating dialogue or action spontaneously without a script.

INT. (Interior): A script notation indicating that a scene takes place indoors.

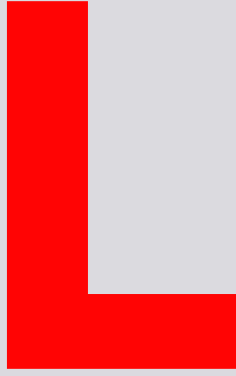


Juxtaposition: The placement of two scenes, characters, or ideas side by side to highlight contrasts or comparisons.



Key Light: The primary source of lighting in a scene, illuminating the subject.

Kill: A direction to turn off a light or sound effect.



Location Scout: A professional who searches for suitable filming locations.

Looping: The process of re-recording dialogue in sync with the on-screen performance, often used interchangeably with ADR.

M

Mark: A designated spot on the floor indicating where an actor should stand.

Method Acting: An acting technique where actors deeply embody their characters by drawing on personal experiences.

Montage: A sequence of short shots edited together to condense space, time, and information.



Non-Union: Refers to actors or productions not affiliated with a performers' union.

Notes: Feedback provided by the director or coach to improve performance.



Off Book: When an actor has memorized their lines and no longer needs the script during rehearsals.

Over the Shoulder (OTS): A camera shot taken from behind one actor, focusing on another actor or subject.

P

Pick-Up Shot: A small portion of a scene filmed after the main shooting has been completed, often to correct errors or add coverage.

Pilot: The first episode of a television series, used to sell the show to a network.

Principal: An actor with a significant speaking role.

Props: Objects used by actors during a scene to enhance realism.



Quiet on Set: A command to minimize noise on set before filming begins.

Quick Change: A rapid costume change between scenes.



Rehearsal: Practice sessions where actors prepare their performances.

Reset: Returning to the starting positions for another take.

Residuals: Payments made to actors for reruns or continued use of a production.



Scene: A segment of a film or play set in a single location and continuous time.

Screen Test: A filmed audition to assess an actor's suitability for a role.

Self-Tape: An audition recorded by the actor, typically submitted digitally.

Sides: Selected pages from a script used for auditions.

Slate: An introduction at the beginning of an audition tape, where the actor states their name and other requested information.

Stage Left/Right: Directions from the actor's perspective on stage, indicating movement or positioning.

Stand-In: A person who substitutes for the actor during technical setups.

Supporting Role: A secondary character who supports the lead roles.



Take: Each filmed version of a scene.

Talent: A term used to refer to actors or performers.

Teleprompter: A device that displays scrolling text for on-camera reading.

Tight Shot: A close-up camera shot focusing on a subject's face or detail.



Understudy: An actor who learns another's role to substitute if necessary.

Upstage: The area of the stage farthest from the audience.



Voiceover (VO): Narration or dialogue recorded off-camera.

Voucher: A document used to record an actor's work hours and payment details.



Wardrobe: The costumes worn by actors.

Wrap: The completion of filming for a scene or entire production.

Wrap Party: A celebration held after the completion of a production.



Xenoglossia: The phenomenon of a person speaking a language



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Support the dream,
but raise the human!

NAZ