

# aspire

AW/21

Myths  
**and**  
**Mayhem**

**Baby, Baby, Baby...**  
*Search!*

MEET   
**BETTINA PETRONE**  
**TOP TALENT AGENT.**

**Dad-fluencers:**  
*Riding the Social*  
*Media Wave*

**BALANCING**  
**ACT**

...and ACTION! 

**Winter Warmers**  
*The latest trends to keep your little ones chic and cosy this Winter.*

**Casting Agents**  
**Vs. Talent Agents;**  
*What's The Difference?*





# Editors Notes

Welcome to our Autumn/Winter 2021 Edition!

As the seasons begin to change, we are looking forward to this seasons fashion, and the A/W collections being launched by our favourite brands. For this edition we got to sit down and chat with some amazing individuals who have found themselves within the industry, all in very different capacities. We also focused strongly on social media, diving deep into influencer marketing and keeping your children safe online. Lastly, in between the last edition and now, we launched our Aspire Magazine blog – a very exciting moment for our team. So feel free to check us out online to keep up with all things Aspire.

I would like to thank all of our writers, advertisers and interviewees who contributed to the edition. We always love to hear your thoughts, so don't be afraid to reach out if you have anything you would like us to explore!



*Rebecca Keith*  
EDITOR

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Supplied by: Bettina Management

Photographer: Neil Goldsmith (Attitude Studios, Melbourne)

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Above: Austin Oetomo  
Right: Neil Goldsmith

# Myths and Mayhem

By Rebecca Keith

**M**yths consistently surround themselves around the child talent industry and child talent/modelling agencies alike. However, many back handed comments to the industry are in fact myths, rather than a factual description of the industry. While many may believe they know the ins and outs, only those within the industry really understand the blood, sweat and tears that comes with an extremely rewarding yet harsh industry.

The industry can be extremely fast paced, with clients organising shoots and castings with only a day's notice, so expecting these kinds of situations is crucial. While such short notice isn't exactly convenient as a parent with a child in the industry, this is a situation you may come across and it is important to align your expectations to the industry. However, don't fret about the safety of your child, because though fast-paced, the child employment space is also extremely regulated – as any area involving children should be.

Ultimately this is one of the main reasons why having an agent is so important – to ensure that everything is done right.

## Is This Legal?

Within the industry, agents must ensure that anyone who wishes to employ their talent is registered with the relevant organisations and can provide the required documentation to prove they have met the correct legal and government regulations.

For example, if your child does a catalogue shoot or a TV Commercial for Kmart, your agent should ensure that Kmart is following all the proper guidelines to be employing children, such as being registered with the correct organisations, no matter the state.

Also in some states, if the child is of school age, you must have the permission of your child's school and principal in order for them to leave school and work during school hours.

All legal guidelines must be followed meticulously by your child's agent, otherwise the agency risks large fines and penalties, and could also risk putting a child in an unsafe environment.

The occurrence of unsafe situations is almost non-existent, as child employment is a heavily regulated sector. Most brands these days will always go through a reputable agency to find



talent and any reputable agency will not work with a non-reputable and law-abiding client, so the risk of this is extremely minimal.

In regard to if your child has an agent, the modelling or talent agency needs to have a labour hire license in the state where the work is taking place in order for them to be following all necessary regulations. This way they will be audited every year, and you can be certain you can trust the agency. You can also look up to see if the name your child's agency trades under, has a labour hire license, remember that compliance matters.

At the end of the day being informed is necessary but you really have no need to stress. If your child is represented by a reputable agency, they will be aware of all legal obligations and follow them methodically.

## Clients & No Guarantees

One of the major downfalls of the industry is that no agent can guarantee work – Yes, you read that correctly, no agent can 100% guarantee that your child will get work.

Any good and reputable child talent agency will tell you this, and unfortunately not all kids will come across work during their representation.

This is because the role of a talent agency is to act as the middleman between the brand/client and the talent. The agencies do not create the 'work', nor do they know which talent the client will prefer or select for their campaigns. The client will ultimately make the final decision. So always keep this in mind if your child is a part of the industry or you are considering entering the industry, unfortunately that's just the way the cookie crumbles.



*Remember that money isn't everything. A job will be an exciting and enjoyable time for your child and a great opportunity for them to build confidence and gain experiences that they can remember for the rest of their lives.*

## Money, Money, Money!

Everything costs money, so don't be surprised when talent management also comes at a cost. Once you have successfully landed a position at an agency, the next step is to wait and hope an opportunity for your child arises.

If your child is lucky enough to be chosen by the client to attend an in-person or online casting, and they choose to attend, this portion of the process is unpaid. A casting will usually only take 5-15 minutes and doesn't require a payment from the client to your child.

***If a child makes it through to the next stage, they will either attend a call-back or they will be requested for the job. A call-back is basically a second casting.***

This happens when a client would like to see some of their options again, in order to make a final decision. Call-backs are usually paid if they are for commercials, but not for feature films or a TV series; the payment for a call back is most likely going to be a base wage amount per hour.

If your child is successful and is requested, they may be required to attend a wardrobe fitting. A wardrobe fitting is exactly how it sounds, the child will need to go and try on their wardrobe for their shoot, this is to ensure that all items fit, adjustments can be made if necessary or give the stylist time to source other items if needed. This is very similar to a call back in the sense that they will be paid for their time, likely an hourly rate.

The next stage will be the shoot, the best part of the process. The majority of shoots will be paid opportunities, but every shoot will be different. Shoots can be unpaid; however, you may be compensated with clothing or vouchers from the client, however the line here is quite murky in regard to legality. These shoots aren't very common but when you receive the booking details for the shoot, you will also receive the details for your child's payment.

It depends on the type of work your child does to determine the minimum rate, however the rates start from \$13.13 per hour for an under 15-year-old for Mon-Fri and go up from there.

The payment amount will also depend on other factors including the type of work, hours needed on set, where the advertisement will be shown and how long it will be shown for etc. for example, a stills shoot model (no matter what their age)

has a minimum pay rate of \$106.43 for the first hour and then less per hour after that (photographic and similar modelling work is covered by the Mannequins and Models Award). It is important to align your expectations with the fact that every shoot is different. Some will pay per hour and others will be a lump sum and in most cases no payment will be the same.

While it is important to know this information if you have a child within the industry, also remember that money isn't everything. A job will be an exciting and enjoyable time for your child and a great opportunity for them to build confidence and gain experiences that they can remember for the rest of their lives.



# Baby, Baby, Baby... Search!

By Rebecca Keith

Since their conception, Facebook and Instagram Model and Baby searches have become more prominent as the years go on; with what feels like every brand running a brand model search or model competition at some point.

Even though this marketing tactic is quite common nowadays, one of the most well-known and longest running baby searches is the Bonds Baby Search. The Bonds Baby Search is extremely well-known and seen as a more prestigious baby search because of the success of Bonds as a brand. Many parents would kill to have their child posted on one of their social media platforms.

However, as most boutique brands are now launching their own Brand Model Searches, Bonds have had to adapt and innovate in order to keep their search as prominent as ever.

Here is where it gets interesting, over the past two years Bonds have completely changed the format of their searches and now they no longer mirror their original searches.

The winners of their baby 'search' no longer get shared on their platforms, or star in any of their advertising, at this point it's just a competition rather than a search. So what keeps bringing people back? It has to be the major prize pool because exposure or a modelling job for your child is no longer a part of the deal.

In 2020, they added two new categories to their Search, which was Bump and Pets.

Considering their side brand Bonds, Bump & Baby, Bump seemed like a natural progression, however pets definitely seemed like a stretch, yet it was widely well received.

However, in 2021, their Baby 'Search', was named the 'Every Baby, Baby Search'. They launched 21 new not-so-cute



categories, as a way to include diversity and differentiation into the market. So, is this new addition of 21 categories over the Baby, Bump and Pets sections, the company's way of avoiding any kind of backlash for choosing one winner for each category and then posting them to their socials?

It is likely that bigger companies would move away from the traditional search style because many boutique brands are now holding their own brand ambassador searches as a way of getting some quick marketing and free models, a questionable strategy to use and borderline ethically murky.

So, the way to avoid any slight PR mishaps is to have a category for everyone. So, do you still like the idea of submitting your little ones into brand or model searches, and why? Is it for the exposure, or are prizes a better way to go about it?

A young girl with long curly hair, wearing a floral dress, a matching headband, white socks, and tan boots, standing against a stone wall.

# little NOA

Happiness you can wear

A small cartoon illustration of a girl with a flower crown and a floral dress.

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# Meet Bettina Petrone Top Talent Agent

By Rebecca Keith

**A**s the director of Australia's leading talent agency for kids, Bettina Petrone is well versed on all aspects of the entertainment industry. Bettina Management has been a well-known name in the children's entertainment industry for almost 30 years, and have been through quite a journey over those years. When Bettina sat down with *Aspire Magazine*, she discussed her journey, and the agency's and how it has been so successful, and still is 30 years later.

## How and when did you get your big break into the industry?

**Bettina:** I started in the industry when I was 17, and entered a beauty contest. I won the competition, and one of the prizes was a modelling course with the one and only Suzanne Johnston. That was the beginning of it all. From there I joined Cameron's modelling agency and then began my career as a professional model.

## How did Bettina Management come about?

**Bettina:** While working as a professional model, I was also a dance teacher for younger kids. During my classes the kids would ask lots of questions about modelling. They wanted to learn how to walk a catwalk and how to pose for the camera – generally just wanting my advice.

So, after I realised how much of a demand there was I decided to run modelling classes, alongside dance classes. This eventually grew to such a large demand, that Bettina Modelling and Department School was created.

Then while I was working as a model, the clients I was working for found out about my modelling school and then asked if any of my kids would be interested in actually doing some modelling work for their brands. So from there I started helping these clients with their campaigns, and it slowly grew, eventually leading to the decision to start an agency.

In the early days of the agency I was interviewing new talent and working from my home office, then when we got bigger we moved to the heart of Melbourne in the Docklands. From there I got some other people on board to help with bookings and running the agency, and then everything fell into place.

*I also pride myself on seeing the actual agency we have built, with many of our staff having amazing personal success within the industry.*



## What were the first couple of years like when starting the agency?

**Bettina:** Every job we got was exciting, they were all firsts for us, so it was a very enjoyable time for the kids and everyone working with us at the agency. Our first campaign was for Run Scotty Run, a kids clothing label, and seeing one of our kids in print was an amazing moment for the agency.

Of course there were challenges along the way, the overhead prices, creating structures and hiring staff and taking that leap was a huge step for us all.

The agency grew very quickly and eventually we opened up interstate to keep up with the demand. We always wanted to have a local presence everywhere that we had kids working which was also a big ask, but we managed to do it. Then we began booking a whole range of jobs, not just catalogues and print but TV commercials, feature films, TV Series and all kinds of work.

## What were your original goals when starting the agency?

**Bettina:** When we first began the agency it was just to keep up with client demand. I enjoyed helping out the clients and providing them with the absolute best children for their campaigns. However, once we really got going our goals were to help our talent grow and become little professionals, and continue finding more talent. We just loved helping them break into the industry and watch their skills and confidence grow through the industry.

## How did COVID-19 impact the business?

**Bettina:** It was tough, however, mainly for our Melbourne office. Because we are a national business our interstate offices kept going, and picked up more work as a result of the Melbourne shut down. We worked consistently with clients to try and fill any gaps they had from not being able to use our Melbourne talent pool.

As a result we are seeing gaps in our categories of Victorian talent, and we are always looking for new talent to continue to fill these gaps and it's likely it will take months for these to all fill up again as they were pre-COVID.

## How do you see the future of the industry post-COVID?

**Bettina:** Very positive. A lot of clients are doing more online auditions which is great for us. Parents don't always want to be dragging kids to auditions, so being able to do them at home with less travelling is great for parents, especially working parents. We have also seen an increase in work for real families, as a result of limited contact being allowed between everyone on set, which ended up being great for the children's industry.

Also, Australia as a whole is seeing an increase in international work making its way to our shores, mainly from the United States, due to our huge difference in positive cases. Clients are bringing in more jobs, which means more work is coming our way. The future is looking very bright for our industry.

## What has been the highlight for you, since the agency began?

**Bettina:** It has all been a great experience. I have loved seeing the agency go from strength to strength, and then continue to grow over the last 29 years. We have premises across four states and are the only national exclusive children's agency with locations across the country, which is an incredible feat in itself.

One of the best things to see is our talent star in huge blockbuster and Hollywood movies with a range of stars. They are learning and starring alongside the absolute best! All of these moments have been highlights for us!

I also pride myself on seeing the actual agency we have built, with many of our staff having amazing personal success within the industry. They are all passionate about what we do, and many of our employees have been with us for over ten years, bringing that depth of knowledge and stability in support to our parents and clients.

Ultimately, seeing the great team that we have built across Australia and the continued success of our talent, is something I take great pride in.



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## Dad-fluencers: *Riding the Social Media Wave* By Elle Cecil

**A**s social media continues to rise in popularity, more and more parents are becoming tech savvy and turning to online platforms for advice, tips and new ideas. From this increased use comes the modern day 'influencer'; a social media celebrity with a large social media following and an often-niche focus area. As defined in the Oxford Dictionary, an influencer is "a person with the ability to influence potential buyers of a product or service by promoting or recommending the item on social media". One of the niche areas in which an influencer can operate on social media is parenting.

Historically, women have been the ones to remain home and parent children. This may explain the current popularity of mummy bloggers and influencers. Mum-influencers with thousands and thousands of followers share things like nursery styling tips, lunchbox ideas and children's clothing recommendations.

As a natural continuation from the mummy blogger trend, we are also beginning to see the increasing popularity of dad-influencers. Dads like Melbourne-based Jarrad and Michael Duggan-Tierney, or as you may know them @realdadsofmelbourne, post their parenting hacks, fails, and dreams with their 122,000 followers.

**There are several reasons why dad-influencers are becoming more common and building larger followings.**

First and foremost, the proliferation of social media in itself is encouraging the majority of society to engage in the use of social media platforms to connect with others and to promote their endeavours. As social media becomes more and more commonplace, dads are finding themselves more efficient

and able in their use of social media, therefore allowing for their social media accounts to flourish. Now, parents can keep connected with other parents on platforms such as Instagram.

Secondly, society in its entirety is becoming more accepting of different occupational and familial positions for parents. This is opening new doors in the world of gender expectations with regards to work and family life. A different branch of this more open-minded and progressive society is the widespread acceptance of different gender and sexual orientations. Same sex parents Michael and Jarrad Duggan-Tierney are just one example of not only dad-fluencers, but also the societal acceptance we continue to see growing in Australia. Their son, Reid, who was born via surrogate, and with his Dads are showing their social media followers that families come in all shapes and sizes.

Finally, as dad-fluencing becomes more popular and commonplace, it allows dads a freedom to connect with others in a way that has historically been deemed a maternal connection. They can build more connections with fellow parents and provide more of a support network. Social media influencers on platforms such as Instagram often portray their lives

to be perfect and without stress or mess. However, parent bloggers are known to be more #real, highlighting parenting fails and accidents with their followers. This is a greatly beneficial improvement to society. It shows other parents that nobody is perfect, that no parent really knows exactly what they're doing, and that it's perfectly okay and they are still good parents.

While dad-influencers and dads may still face disapproval or criticism, so too does everyone that puts themselves out into the public sphere. The rise of dad-influencers in a typically female-led niche industry is a really positive step for parents and society in general. Promoting a more accepting and inclusive environment for parents and kids alike is good for families as a whole, and family members as individuals. It raises more inclusive and accepting kids, which will lead us to a greater and more equal future.





# What is it actually like to have a child model?

By Rebecca Keith

**W**e recently spoke to Annita, whose 2-year-old Goldie unintentionally fell into the world of child modelling over a year ago. So, we had to find out what it's really like to have a young child in the industry.

It all started when a friend of Annita's got her youngest daughter Goldie to participate in a photoshoot. Next thing she knew, Goldie was signing up to a talent agency. After many of her friends that already had kids in the industry recommended agencies, Annita knew she had nothing to lose and everything to gain from signing Goldie up for more opportunities.

What came next was definitely unexpected, as within a couple of months Goldie had landed a job with well-known Australian brand Best & Less. From there the work just continued coming in over the next year and now Goldie has worked for a range of brands from Country Road and Bonds, to Tutu Du Monde and Sheridan.

Annita loves being on set with Goldie and watching the production unfold. Toddlers on the other hand are less likely to be on their best behaviour every day. She says that as long as Goldie sleeps well the night before, she loves being on set and has a great time. However, toddlers are known as being unpredictable so you never really know what the kids will be like on the day.

**When asked what her favourite shoot was, Annita knew straight away that Goldie's Bonds shoot was her absolute number #1.**

This was mainly because she was in the front window throughout many Bonds stores; an amazing achievement for someone so little.

For many the industry isn't all sunshine and rainbows. The entertainment industry is known for being notoriously unpredictable with only a few days' notice before the kids need to be on set, which can be difficult when you have a young family.



The most difficult aspect for Annita is finding the time, as her family gets busier, to take Goldie to shoots, and working around the children's sleeping schedules when organising shoots. However, she does give props to all teams on set as they have never been anything but accommodating to the little ones on set. She also admires the amount of effort that goes into the productions and shoot, pointing it out as something people might not be aware of unless they are actually in the industry - "The preparation that goes into actually doing the shoot, I would never have known about it had I not been here with Goldie."  
—Even though the title of 'child model' has been given to Goldie, Annita will never not be able to just think of her as Goldie, as every parent would. To her she is just a kid and she often doesn't discuss the work Goldie does with others, in reality she is no different to her two sisters.

While she does assume that Goldie might find some of her shoots to be a little embarrassing as she gets older, they are amazing memories to look back on one day. The entertainment industry, especially for children can be busy and chaotic, but so much fun at the same time. Annita can only describe the experience as rewarding. Considering everything that goes into the shoots, the whole experience and the end result is rewarding.

Even though she isn't sure when Goldie's time as a model will be up, they are going to play it by ear and as long as they have the time and Goldie is happy, they will continue to be a part of the industry.



**If Annita could pass on any advice to parents wanting to join the industry it would be to "go for it", if they want to do it, there really is no reason not to try. The main thing is that the kids have fun.**



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# Behind Closed Doors; *The Power Of Influencer Marketing*

By Rebecca Keith

**Influencer is a word familiar to most. However, even though most days we all see influencers through the eyes of our social media accounts, we don't truly see them, or the behind-the-scenes work.**

The connotation that influencing is easy, fun and mainly involves receiving free products has long reigned as the industry has grown. It is easy to see how this can be conveyed. With their perfect Instagram grids, and stylised stories, our natural response is to assume what we see at face value, and that is look how glamorous and easy their lives are. However, being an influencer and using influencer marketing as an income is much more difficult than it seems.

Firstly, since Instagram has adjusted its algorithm many times since the birth of the influencer, it is much harder to gain such a large following organically. If you are attempting to build a following and become an influencer in 2021, you can only build a huge organic following through either pure luck or a range of purposeful strategies. These strategies usually involve knowing brands or other people with large followings that you can "bounce" off to gain a following, using paid advertising, or landing a job within the entertainment industry on a reality show, soap opera or movie. Either way, it isn't as easy as it used to be.

Many teens have unrealistic expectations on how easy it is to create viral following, as this age group often carries the most unrealistic expectation for themselves and how they perceive the lives of these social media stars.

***The only platform that is much easier to grow an original following on is TikTok. Once made popular by the Gen Z kids, it is now home to people of all ages.***

The algorithm of TikTok makes it much easier for your content to 'go viral' and therefore gain you a following. While still sometimes luck based, the app itself isn't working against you.

Then once you have gained this following, if you begin to make brand deals and advertise brands through your following it only gets harder. One you begin making an income from these platforms, it is similar to running your own business. You need to follow all necessary rules and restrictions especially when promoting on social media. You need to be continuously creating content for your account and liaising with brands to determine deals, ensuring you are both getting the best out of each deal. It isn't an easy feat. It also isn't as lucrative as it may seem, you need to build yourself to be quite a large brand to



***While influencing isn't easy, they do feed into some common misconceptions that can easily be mistaken by parents and, especially children, as the reality.***

actually make a decent income. Most influencers will use their influence to then promote their own business ventures such as clothing, wellness, make-up and skincare brands, which is where the majority of their income will come from.

So, what about when it comes to your child's Instagram? If you are a parent whose child is a part of the entertainment industry, you might assume that creating an Instagram account for them is a great way to gain exposure and get them work. The reality however is not as bright as this. As mentioned previously it can be hard to build a following and unless you have millions of followers, you need to realise that the big brands you are after, are unlikely to see your child's profile. They are more likely to see their faces when their agent pitches them for jobs. Unfortunately, much to the disappointment of many, it is not

a case of promoting your child on Instagram, then a huge brand lays eyes on them and decides to create a campaign around them; while not completely impossible, extremely unrealistic. This is just one of the common misconceptions that can come from watching influencers on Instagram.

While influencing isn't easy, they do feed into some common misconceptions that can easily be mistaken by parents and, especially children, as the reality. It's important to always take what you see on social media with a grain of sand, while also appreciating that what influencers do, isn't as easy as portrayed. Remember to always listen to a trusted source of information when thinking about your child and the entertainment industry, so that you can get realistic information that doesn't sugar-coat the hardship and work that comes along with being a part of the entertainment industry.

# ...and Action!

The Twenties Are Australian Film's New Golden Years *By Elle Cecil*

**A**s Australia begins to move toward a post-COVID normal, our nation's film and screen industry looks set to boom in upcoming years.



Boasting minimal cases of Covid-19, relaxed government measures, monetary incentives and stunning scenery, Australia continues to be one of the world's best places to shoot and produce films. As our cases continue to diminish and restrictions ease further, production companies are eyeing off Australia as a safer and more flexible location for screen productions.

Ausfilm is one of the main channels through which Australia connects and works with the international film community, putting production companies in touch with writers, incentives, facilities and more. Ausfilm CEO, Kate Marks, spoke to a parliamentary committee in December 2020. Her optimism and enthusiasm for our country's industry is one of many promising signs for the future.

*"The international [film industry] spotlight is firmly on Australia," she said.*

Beautiful, vast and varied scenery is one of the reasons why Australia is such a sought-after location for screen productions. Mountainous forest regions, stunning beaches, and sparse, dry deserts are in abundance and easy to find in Australia, making it an ideal and versatile location for any number of productions.

Despite these obvious benefits, Australia also offers film producers a generous series of financial incentives to support screen production in the country.

The Australian Screen Production Incentive offers tax rebates to production companies for eligible films for things such as large-budget films, feature films, and television projects, as long as these films or shows are shot and produced on Australian shores.

This fantastic incentive aims to entice international screen productions to Australia, ensuring that more jobs and opportunities are available to Aussies.

The Daily Telegraph reported in mid-February 2021 that the Marvel Cinematic Universe is strongly considering moving all production of its future films to Australian shores. This would be an astronomical win for our screen industry and would secure countless jobs for Aussies as well as encouraging other production companies to work down under.

Big name actors such as Jennifer Lawrence, Idris Elba, Natalie Portman, Christian Bale and Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson are set to venture down under for upcoming films and television series. These stars will be adding to the list of Hollywood celebs that have recently shot films in Australia, from the likes of Matt Damon, Benedict Cumberbatch and Zac Efron to Liam Neeson, Kirsten Dunst and Tom Hanks.

These talented entertainers will be joined by our own home-grown Aussie talent. Names like Nicole Kidman, Toni Collette, Chris Hemsworth, Rose Byrne, Eric Bana and Mia Wasikowska have screen productions lined up for this year.

Furthermore, the federal government is providing over \$10 million to production companies Imagine Entertainment and MGM, as famous director Ron Howard begins shooting for his feature film *Thirteen Lives* on Australian shores in March. Based on the incredible true story of the 2018 Thai cave rescue, *Thirteen Lives*



**Australia also offers film producers a generous series of financial incentives to support screen production in the country.**

is set to be filmed in Queensland, with the state providing countless ideal locations to emulate scenery in Thailand.

Paul Fletcher MP, federal minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts, has said that the production is set to create hundreds more jobs for cast and crew, as well as providing a financial boost of around \$96 million to the industry.

"The production itself will create vital job opportunities and will engage the services of an estimated 300 Australian businesses," he said.

*"This project will also undertake a significant amount of cutting-edge visual effects work here, a great opportunity for our local post, digital and visual effects companies."*

The upcoming opportunities for film and other screen productions are infinite, and the future is very bright in terms of jobs for those cast, crew and production workers. We can't wait to see all of the hard work coming from Australia in 2021.



Parents should trust in the fact that their child's agent has their best interests at heart. They often want your child to book a job as much as you do! Be patient with your child's agent and the industry itself, as a star-studded career won't just happen overnight.



## Agents in the talent industry: the key to beginning a successful career

By Elle Cecil

**T**he entertainment industry is one of the most broad and prolific industries in the world. No matter where you are or what you're doing, you're surrounded by the work of the entertainment industry.

Standing at a bus stop? Clothing or product advertisements are likely to be plastered on the signs around you. Sitting in a waiting room? Notice the stack of magazines on the coffee table. Watching television on a Friday night? You're going to be seeing all sorts of television shows, movies and ads.

Should your child wish to start a career in the industry, it can be extremely overwhelming, and you may not know where or how to begin. This is where an agent comes in.

### What is an agent?

An agent is essentially the industry representative for your child. Agents are widely experienced in the industry, with a broad range of industry connections. These connections are known as 'clients'; those that are looking for someone to star in their film, television commercial, magazine spreads or stage productions. The client could be anyone from photographers or casting agents, to producers, or brands. Your child is the 'talent', the subject of the shoot.

As the bridge between the client and talent, the agent presents suitable talent to a client, as per their briefs, so that the client can find the best fit for their job. Agents often have a wide range of talent to represent, usually sending several suitable matches per job to a client, depending on the brief.

### Why does my child need an agent?

Agents are helpful in getting your child's career up and running. Talent agents are responsible for ensuring that your child's safety and wellbeing is maintained at jobs. They obtain the relevant work permits for children in their home state to participate in work, and also ensure that regulatory frameworks are followed with regards to conditions at the job, hours worked by children, supervision

on set and other health and wellbeing requirements.

Agents, with their inside connections to the industry, will only submit your child to work with genuine and legitimate clients, saving you and your child from working with improper or dishonest parties. It is also common for many clients to not actually work with freelancers, and only work with reputable agents, which means freelancing your child's career isn't even a viable option with most clients. This is mainly due to the strict guidelines and regulation surrounding working with children.

As your representative, a talent agent will ensure fair compensation for your child, and also manage contracts, invoicing and payments from jobs. As an industry insider, agents maintain mutually beneficial relationships with both clients and talent. This is a great way for talent to establish their careers and even prolonged working relationships with clients.

Prior to bringing a child onto their books, agents will outline the fees for their representative services. This includes a percentage of any payment your child receives from working on a job that your agent has booked. Commission will be between 10 and 20 percent depending on the state.

### Will having an agent guarantee my child work?

It's important to remember that your child's agent is not responsible for the job itself; the agent is not the employer, but simply the bridge between your child and a job. Your child's agent will put them forward for any suitable jobs, but whether or not your child actually books the job does not depend on the agent. Remember that agencies can't submit talent, unless the client creates the work, without a client wanting a certain talent pool, an agent assists that talent pool in getting a job.

While the industry is a waiting game, the longer you are in the industry, the more exposure you will get and the more likely you could be to get work. While this still can't create a guarantee, it creates the expectation that you can't expect work within a certain amount of time.

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# Safe and Sound; *Cutting through the red tape of child employment legislation.*

By Kara Oakes

**W**hile joining an agency and seeing your child secure their first job can be a very exciting time, there is more to it than just turning up to set and getting the job done. Agents and clients alike go through a large amount of red tape to ensure that your child is safe on set.

Over the past decade rules and regulations surrounding children working in the entertainment industry have become more regulated. This has included stricter rules surrounding areas such as limits on work hours per day, travel times to and from locations being included in total hours in their workday, and now requiring written permission from principals of school-aged children.

*Here in Australia, talent agents work closely with clients to protect children from harm and provide safe and healthy working environments in the entertainment industry.*

An important part of the industry, which is rarely touched on, is the legislation surrounding child employment and working regulations. Standard compliance, such as making sure that children reside within 2 hours of the jobsite, is often monitored by talent agents, however clients are then tasked with organising permits, consent forms, and working with children checks.

There are government organisations who have taken the responsibility of ensuring that any person wanting to employ children adheres to strict guidelines and protocol. These organisations differ state to state but all strive to create safe working environments for children.

Business Victoria and the Office of the Children's Guardian in New South Wales are the main government agencies that clients will deal with. While they both offer similar services, they do differ from each other. A comparison of the two shows that while both require anyone wanting to employ children to apply for permits, only the Office of the Children's Guardian will charge you for doing so.

In Victoria, a client can receive a child employment permit within 2 business days and free of charge, whereas in New South Wales, an 'employer's authority' must be applied for at least seven days prior and will cost the client upwards of \$100 for a once-off or in excess of \$2000 for a yearly permit.

***This can force clients to cancel jobs entirely at the last minute due to permits not coming through in time, especially in NSW where the wait period for a permit is longer. This is an unfortunate situation for everyone, especially the talent!***

However, a yearly permit allows clients to not have to apply for a permit for every production and instead submit the talents information throughout the year as the jobs occur, without the need for a 7-day waiting period. Many large brands who may

do 100s of shoots a year in NSW, often use this option to limit any time constraints.

Clients who work regularly with children will find these issues to be mostly avoidable by working effectively with all parties involved, allowing ample time for permit processing, and factoring the extra time and costs into their original budget. While agents and clients alike would like to provide the best working conditions for talent, they also need to be informed on the necessary regulations they need to meet and effectively plan their shoots, so that these regulations do not impact their outcomes as a result. All rules that are in place, are only there to keep child talent within the entertainment industry safe.





## Winter Warmers The latest trends to keep your little ones chic and cosy this Winter.

By Kara Oakes

**A**s the weather cools down, the style heats up! Many of this past summer's looks are being adapted for the new season with similar colour palettes and silhouettes. While summer was all about fresh pastels and pretty patterns, early trends are showcasing moodier tones and experimenting with texture.

With all the changes that we've seen in the world over the past 12 months it's only natural that we'd see some of these changes in fashion as well. As we spend more time at home, there has been a shift to buying less but buying better. Parents are now looking to dress their children in quality, stylish clothing that will last rather than fast fashion that we've seen in previous years.

The post-COVID economy has shifted our focus towards supporting small businesses and quality craftsmanship. Sustainable fabrics, organic dyes, and natural fibres are growing increasingly popular across children's and adult wear alike. Brands are moving towards becoming more environmentally friendly as consumers are looking to lead more sustainable lifestyles. This is reflected in not only the fabrics, but the textures, colour palettes, and designs as well.

One of the prominent trends coming through is the use of textures. Think velvet, corduroy, sequins and tulle. As always with children's fashion, comfort and durability are key. We want

*Children's fashion should be fun and playful, while still offering function and comfort.*

our mini's to dress to impress, whilst still feeling comfortable and ready to have fun in whatever they're wearing. Designers are pairing sequins with denim; tulle with jersey; and keeping colours in the same shades which makes for a fun and fresh style.

Autumn/Winter's on trend colours will be deeper, earthier tones, but still a continuation from summer's dreamy pastel palette. Rust, terracotta, and forest greens will feature for both boys and girls, while blush, peach, and cream will be popular for girls once again. Denim is coming through in lighter washes which pairs well with some of the warmer colours that we're seeing.

Another trend we're seeing popping up everywhere is mini me dressing. Retailers are jumping onboard the social media trend of matching family outfits and we are loving it! Kids love dressing up like mum and dad and there's no better way to do it than dressing your little one in the pint-sized version of your outfit.

Children's fashion should be fun and playful, while still offering function and comfort. This Autumn/Winter Season is the perfect time to experiment with different colours, textures, and designs when dressing your little one. Rules are made to be broken after all!

## Casting Agents Vs. Talent Agents; What's The Difference?

By Elle Cecil

**T**he talent and entertainment industries are vast and confusing at times, with lots of differing terms and concepts. One concept that often confuses people new to the industry is the difference between casting agents and talent agents. A common misconception is that the two are interchangeable. While it is true that they both deal with many of the same people, their roles and responsibilities are quite different.

Talent agents are those that represent the talent; that is, they sign and manage a variety of actors, models, singers and other performers. They are the link between talent and work. The role of a talent agent is to receive a brief or description of a job, and then match their most suited talent to the role.

A casting agent on the other hand is the connection between the talent agent or representative and the client. They communicate with the talent's representation on behalf of the client to decide the best match for a job.

*To put it into an analogy, the difference between casting agents and talent agents can be likened to a personal shopping experience.*

A personal shopper needs to fit a brief for the client, just like a casting agent must fulfil a brief for their client (brand or company). However the personal shopper needs the store manager to help locate the item, just as a casting agent needs a talent agent to help them locate the right talent.

Both parties, the casting and talent agents, facilitate the end result and are working towards a similar goal, but play very different roles. While the talent agents want to get their talent work, the casting agent just wants to find the perfect match for their clients.

Which is why the clients, be it a brand or company, employ a casting agent to find the best match for their job. The casting agent will receive a selection of choices from the talent agents, who represent the talent. It is a three-way transaction between all of these key players in order for a child to ultimately end up with an opportunity. However, while talent almost always needs an agent, brands or companies do not always use a casting agent, sometimes they prefer to send the brief and select talent themselves rather than through another party (the casting agent).

Once you understand what a casting agent does and how it is different to a talent agent, your understanding of the whole process becomes easier. While it may seem confusing to begin with it is essential that if your child is a part of the industry, that you understand the ins and outs. In this industry nothing is more important than preparation and expectation.

# Balancing Act

By Elle Cecil

**A**s parents in the age of technology, there's no doubt that your child will have come across screens of some variety. Whether it be your mobile phone, devices from school or a screen at home, your child will continue to grow up in the ever-increasing technology-reliant society we now live in. With this advance in technology comes social media, its many wonders, and of course its risks.

Your child will undoubtedly be exposed to social media as they make their way through school and build new friendships. The current most popular platforms for youngsters are Instagram and TikTok. Kids can use these social media platforms for entertainment, as well as to connect and maintain friendships online.

Whilst these platforms are a great outlet for your kids to socialise with friends, they are also a valuable resource for their journey through the talent industry. Social media can supplement your child's talent career, where if they land an opportunity, their work can be showcased and displayed for friends to see. Parent-run pages like @moniquejade\_1 and @little\_miss\_eliana on Instagram show how kids can stay age-appropriate and still build thousands of followers.

However, many social media platforms don't allow users under the age of 13 years to access their sites for safety reasons. This restriction is well justified, as it aims to protect young, vulnerable and inexperienced internet users from potential harm. There are plenty of lovely, genuine, well-meaning people on the internet, but there are also people whose intentions are quite the opposite.

It is therefore important for both your child and you, as a parent, to recognise the need for proper management and education around social media use. Your child will need to learn about cyber safety and proper internet behaviour. You can do this together as you build and establish their account, showing them how to navigate the web safely and appropriately.

As a parent, if you and your child decide to begin using social media to promote and showcase your child's work, it is important to establish with your child that you, as the adult, are in charge of running and using the account. Your child should really just be the subject of the account, rather than the user. You should have full control of what content is posted, who follows and views images of your child and engages with the content. You can delete comments, block followers, and maintain a safe online presence for your child's content.

It is also important to remember that your child is still just a kid. If a potential client wants to hire a child for a job, it may be best to maintain your child's youthful and natural appearance so that the opportunities presented to them are age appropriate and not too mature for them.

*Keep content fresh, young and vibrant, as opposed to work with heavy makeup and mature poses. They are only kids for so long, you should make the most of it and enjoy it while you can!*

As you teach your child, you may also learn something new. It is important for your child to learn about social media, as it is a strong facet of the entertainment industry and today's society. Guide your child, equip them with the necessary knowledge for the future, and most of all, have fun together!



*Guide your child, equip them with the necessary knowledge for the future, and most of all, have fun together!*

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