

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TELEVISION AND FILM PRODUCTION HOUSES FOR MAKING IT SAFER AND MORE APPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN. GUIDELINES TO BE USED WHENEVER A CHILD IS PART OF THE PRODUCTION.

EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION

The film and television industry has helped shaped our society as it is today, we owe many path-breaking changes in society to some hard-hitting films that changed the way in which kids were perceived and treated in our society. We hence urge them to take a step forward and be a progressive industry that respects and nurtures the young children and is sensitive about the messages that these young minds receive from songs, dances, dialogues and films and how they are treated as child artistes.

The Early Childhood Association would like to openly address and appeal to the film and television associations through this recommendations document.

We have also sent a copy of this to the following ministries and are hopeful that the ministries will look into the same and bring about necessary changes.

- a. Information and broadcasting ministry
- b. Women and child development ministry
- c. National commission for protection of child rights and safety
- d. Labour ministry.

MAJOR GUIDELINES-

1. **Film and television-** shows should carry disclaimers that no child was hurt during production.
2. **Child Artistes** should not miss school for more than 10 days in an academic year for work.
3. **A copy of the** contract signed with the entertainment company should be submitted to the school , so that the school is aware about its terms and conditions, and can check if the child is being taken advantage of
4. **Child artistes** should not be made to work for more than six hours in a day. They should work strictly between 10am to 5pm or from 3 pm to 9pm
5. **Ample breaks**, stretching for at least 15 minutes every 2 hours , should be given
6. **Hygiene needs** to be maintained on the sets. Clean toilets should be available to the children and toilets not shared with adults.
7. **An expert** in child development issues should be part of the unit
8. **First – aid** facility should be available at all times.
9. **Recreation-** Age appropriate play material and books too should be provided. The onus is on the unit to provide these facilities
10. **Child –friendly** make up and lights should be used during the shoots, so that it does not harm the child's eyes or skin.
11. **There should** be no violation of child rights such as doing away with a lunch break.
12. **Food needs-** no junk food to be served to children and food served to be healthy and hygienic.
13. **A policy against** child abuse should be in place. The child should not be involved in lewd songs.
14. **Zero tolerance to child abuse-** every staff member of the whole unit to be made aware (and sign if required) about the POCSO act and about appropriate and inappropriate touches. Staff like make up person and dress person should be as per the gender of the child and incase not possible then the parent or guardian to be present and alert when dress measurements etc are

being taken. Changing room for the children to be kept such that no one can see them or photograph or video them.

15. **Good touch bad touch-** Children to be trained about good touch and bad touch.
16. **Parent or guardian-** to be with the child at all times.

OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS IN DETAIL-

TIMINGS AND NUMBER OF HOURS-

1. Child artistes should not be working more than 5 to 6 hours a day
2. They should be working only 3 to 4 times a week.
3. The timings per day should be between 10 am and 6pm or 3pm to 9 pm.
4. A school going child should not miss more than 60 days of school.
5. Whatever the child has missed in school the parents must find some appropriate way for the child to cover the same.

FOOD AND HEALTH-

1. Appropriate food that is age specific and healthy to be served to the child.
2. Food served to crew is sometimes not suitable for young children.
3. Food served to be healthy and should take care of the nutritional needs of the child as per the child's age.
4. Child should eat at time that the child is used to and not as per the breaks of the unit.
5. Appropriate snacks to be catered too for the child to ensure that hunger pangs are met.
6. There should be clean and hygienic toilets for the child to use with ample water available.
7. Child should not be made to wear a diaper just because the unit does not want washroom breaks.
8. Water served to the child should be safe and at the temperature that best suits the child.
9. Soft drinks, coffee, tea to be avoided for young children. Especially their use to make the child alert and active.

MAKE UP AND LIGHTS-

1. Skin friendly make up that is non-allergen to be used on children.
2. Garish and adult like make up to be avoided.
3. Brushes, sponges used to be only for that child and not to be used on others as it can cause rashes and spread diseases.
4. Child should not be in the make up for more than 6 hours.
5. If child is very young then minimalistic make up and young children tend to touch their faces and then put the fingers in their mouth.
6. The lights used to be such that they do not cause skin allergies or skin rashes.
7. Direct light on the skin of young children to be avoided.

DIALOGUES, COSTUMES AND GESTURES

1. Children should not be made to mouth dialogues or lines that are vulgar, inappropriate for their age, gender, or culture.
2. Clothes, costumes, and shoes to be such that they do not harm the child's health. Should not be too tight or give allergies etc.
3. Child should have duplicate of the costumes as the same costume cannot be worn the next day, it should be appropriately clean.

4. Let children be children so avoid vulgar, lewd songs and dance moves being pictured on young children.
5. Child should not be made to cry, scream or do any kind of acts that are against child rights.

GUARDIAN ON THE SET

1. A family or guardian to be on the sets where the child is shooting at all times
2. Family member or guardian to be in the same hotel room as the child in case of outdoor shoots
3. Child should not travel alone with the unit on outdoor shoots.
4. The guardian to accompany the child for all costume changes and to the washroom.

REST AND BREAKS-

1. The child should be given a break of 10 t 15 minutes after every 30 minutes of shooting
2. During the breaks the child should be given access to age appropriate books, toys etc.
3. If the child is used to nap time in the afternoon then it should be adhered to.
4. Proper hygienic and safe bed to be provided for the child where the guardian can also be present.

SAFETY FROM ABUSE

1. Language and profanity to be monitored around young children. Bad words, tempers, shouting matches can upset young children and impact their emotional development
2. If the child is acting in an emotional scene then it should be explained to the child so that there are no lingering repercussions on the child's mental health.
3. Men and women of the unit to be groomed in good touch bad touch so that they avoid unnecessarily touching the child on the lips, chest, part between the legs and bottom unless absolutely necessary for make up or costume change or fitting.
4. Point three if required should be done only after the approval of the mother and in the presence of the mother or authorized guardian.
5. Shouting at the child, calling him names, teasing etc. to be avoided at all costs as it can have a damaging impact on the child.
6. Everyone member of the unit to be made aware of the POCSO act.

PAYMENTS

1. All payments for the child to be done in the child's name in his account. Cash payments for the child to be avoided at all costs
2. Parents to sign a declaration that the payment collected will be used only for the child's education and needs.
3. Production house to pay the correct dues to the child artiste and not take advantage because it is a child artiste.

SCHOOL AND EDUCATION

1. The school should be informed about the dates on which the child will be missing the school.
2. Shootings to be avoided during exam or test dates
3. Schools to ensure that they give permission only if they will be able to support the child with studies etc.
4. Parents to ensure that they are not burdening the child with shooting, school, tuitions etc. all on the same day.

INSURANCE AND MEDICAL POINTS

1. The production house must have an insurance policy of the child.
2. A mediclaim policy to be done for the child by the production house that can cover hospital costs including burns, fractures, plastic surgery etc.
3. The production house to bear all medical bills for accidents caused to the child on the set, during transition to a set, and during flights, train or car travel to and from the set.

REALITY SHOWS-

1. Children below the age of 6 should not take part in reality shows as their socio-emotional development is not developed for them to accept failure, comparison and such heightened, sometimes false and negative emotions that are part of the format of reality shows.

OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS-

1. While camera equipment is being taken or shifted ensure the safety of the child
2. Ensure that wires or plugs are out of reach of the child
3. Responsibility of feeding or taking care of the baby toilet needs should be the sole responsibility of the guardian accompanying.
4. If music is on the set, ensure it is child friendly or instrumental
5. Ensure that baby is not uncomfortable during shoots
6. Do not give any medications to the child unless approved by the guardian.
7. Doctor on call to be available incase of any health emergency of the child.
8. First aid box with appropriate items to be there at all times and available easily in case of emergencies.
9. Bumps on the head and nosebleeds are common in young children. Staff on the unit to know how to handle this till medical help arrives.
10. Competitions on television or reality show content should be in line with the age, stage, and development of the child artiste.
11. Any competition format that will have a negative impact on the social, emotional development of the child to be avoided.
12. Children below 6 years of age should not be allowed to take part in competition or reality show formats
13. Children above the age of 6 that do take part should be counseled regularly to ensure that there are no negative lasting effects of the said format.
14. The Early Childhood Association would like to send out a strong message and appeal to all songwriters, lyricists to leave the kids rhymes and songs alone. Don't pollute their rhymes like Johnny Johnny to teach kids about drinking etc. young kids are at a very sensitive period of development when their language development, social manners and moral values are learnt from songs and stories that they are exposed to by the adults. Parents find it increasingly difficult to keep the kids away from songs that promote such lyrics as sometimes these songs are blaring in malls, marketplaces, and parties.
15. The Early Childhood Association appeals to the film and music industry to practice some sensitivity towards young kids as they are impressionable at this age and learn by imitating adults especially film heroes and film stars.
16. Early childhood association would also like to state that one representative from the association to be always present during the shoot or has signed off on the safety and adherence to all points.

17. Early childhood association would like the censor board to nominate one person related to early childhood to be part of the censor team of all films involving young children.
18. Early childhood association would like all film and television makers to include a disclaimer at the beginning of all films, serials, documentaries etc. - **No child was harmed, hurt or ill-treated during the making of this film. All child rights and dignity of the child were upheld during the course of the production.**

**COMPILED BY EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION IN THE INTEREST OF CHILD PROTECTION
AND SAFETY OF CHILD ARTISTES IN FILMS, TELEVISION, AND ADS.**

www.eca-india.org

ecaadm@gmail.com

swatipopat@podar.org

9819121384/ 7506639870