FREE GUIDE FOR PRODUCERS, PHOTOGRAPHERS AND BRANDS

How to Find Youth Talent in the DMV for Commercials, Short Films and UGC Projects

By Eleaya Neveah's family

Casting a child for a photo shoot, a short film or a user-generated content (UGC) campaign in Washington, DC, Maryland or Virginia? The right kid can make your project feel real, warm and trustworthy. The wrong fit costs you time on set. As the family of a working youth actress and talent, here's what we've learned from the other side of the camera.

Where to find child talent in the DMV

- **Licensed talent agencies:** agencies in DC, Maryland and Virginia keep rosters of kids who already have photos, credits and parents who know how sets work; send a breakdown with dates, location, rate and usage.
- **Casting platforms:** Backstage and Actors Access let you post a casting call and review headshots, resumes and reels.
- **Regional film offices:** the Virginia Film Office, Maryland Film Office and DC's Office of Cable Television, Film, Music and Entertainment list local crew and production resources.
- **Local photographers, acting classes and theater programs** know which kids are reliable and camera-ready.
- **Social media portfolios:** many young models have parent-run pages; always confirm representation and credits before booking.

What makes good youth talent on set

- Takes direction well and can repeat a take with the same energy.
- Comfortable in front of the camera and around new adults and crew.
- Current, professional photos and a resume with real, verifiable credits.
- A reliable parent or guardian who answers quickly, shows up on time and knows set etiquette.
- For UGC: a natural, unscripted personality that feels like a real kid, not an ad.

Tips for UGC projects with kids

- Work through the parent or guardian; kids should never be contacted directly or run brand accounts.
- Spell out usage rights in writing: where the content runs, for how long, and whether paid ads are included.
- Paid or gifted posts need a clear disclosure (for example #ad), as the FTC's endorsement guidance requires.
- Never publish a child's school, home address, full legal name or location tags.
- Send a simple shot list and talking points, and let the child say them in their own words.

Keep your set safe and legal

- A parent or guardian should be with the child at all times on set.
- Use a written agreement signed by the parent or guardian covering pay, hours, usage and approvals.
- Work permits differ by state: Maryland requires a special permit for minors in entertainment, signed by the parent and employer; Virginia's rules differ between live public performances and film or TV work; in DC, check with the Department of Employment Services. Confirm the current rules for your shoot location before the shoot day.
- Plan short, kid-friendly shoot days with snacks, breaks and a quiet place to rest.
- Respect school schedules and give plenty of notice for callbacks and fittings.

Questions to ask before you book

- ■ Who represents the child (agency name and agent contact)?
- ■ What is their playing age, and are wardrobe sizes current?
- ■ Can I see recent credits, a reel or a resume?
- ■ Is the child available on our dates, and is travel OK?
- ■ Does the parent agree to the usage, rate and approval terms in writing?
- ■ Do we need a work permit for this state and type of shoot?



Looking for a youth actress in the DMV? Book Eleaya Neveah

Eleaya Neveah is a youth commercial actress (plays 9-12) available in the DMV, Atlanta and North Carolina, and she's passport-ready for travel. Her credits include the role of Rita in the film The Therapist, commercials for Children's Hospital of Richmond, CBN and String Ring, and modeling for the Tanya Taylor kids collection in New York. She sings, dances and is a natural on camera, which makes her a great fit for photo shoots, short films and UGC.

Represented by The Brock Agency, Inc. (East Coast) and L.A. Talent Youth & Emerging (California).

Book Eleaya: www.eleayaneveah.com/#contact
View Resume: www.eleayaneveah.com/resume

Frequently asked questions

Where can I find youth talent in the DMV?
Start with licensed talent agencies in DC, Maryland and Virginia, casting platforms like Backstage and Actors Access, and referrals from local photographers and acting programs.

Does youth talent need a work permit in Maryland?
Maryland requires a special permit for minors working in entertainment, signed by the parent or guardian and the employer.

Can kids do UGC content for brands?
Yes, through their parent or guardian, with written usage terms and clear #ad disclosure on paid posts.

How do I book Eleaya Neveah?
Use the booking form at eleayaneveah.com or contact her agency, The Brock Agency, Inc.

This guide is general information, not legal advice; confirm current permit rules with the labor department for the state where you're shooting.

Read the full guide online: www.eleayaneveah.com/blog/how-to-find-youth-talent-dmv