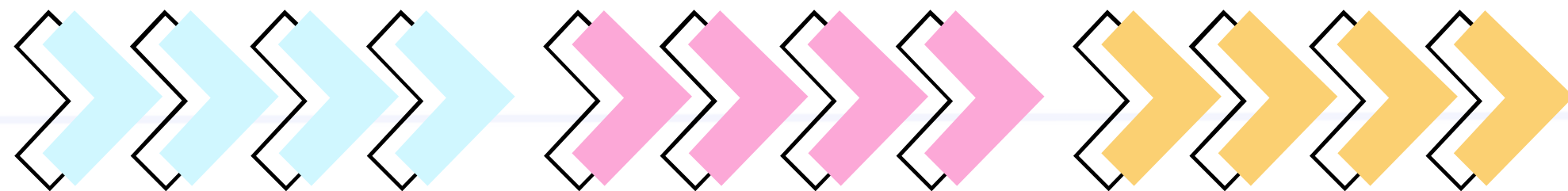


How to Write an Access Rider

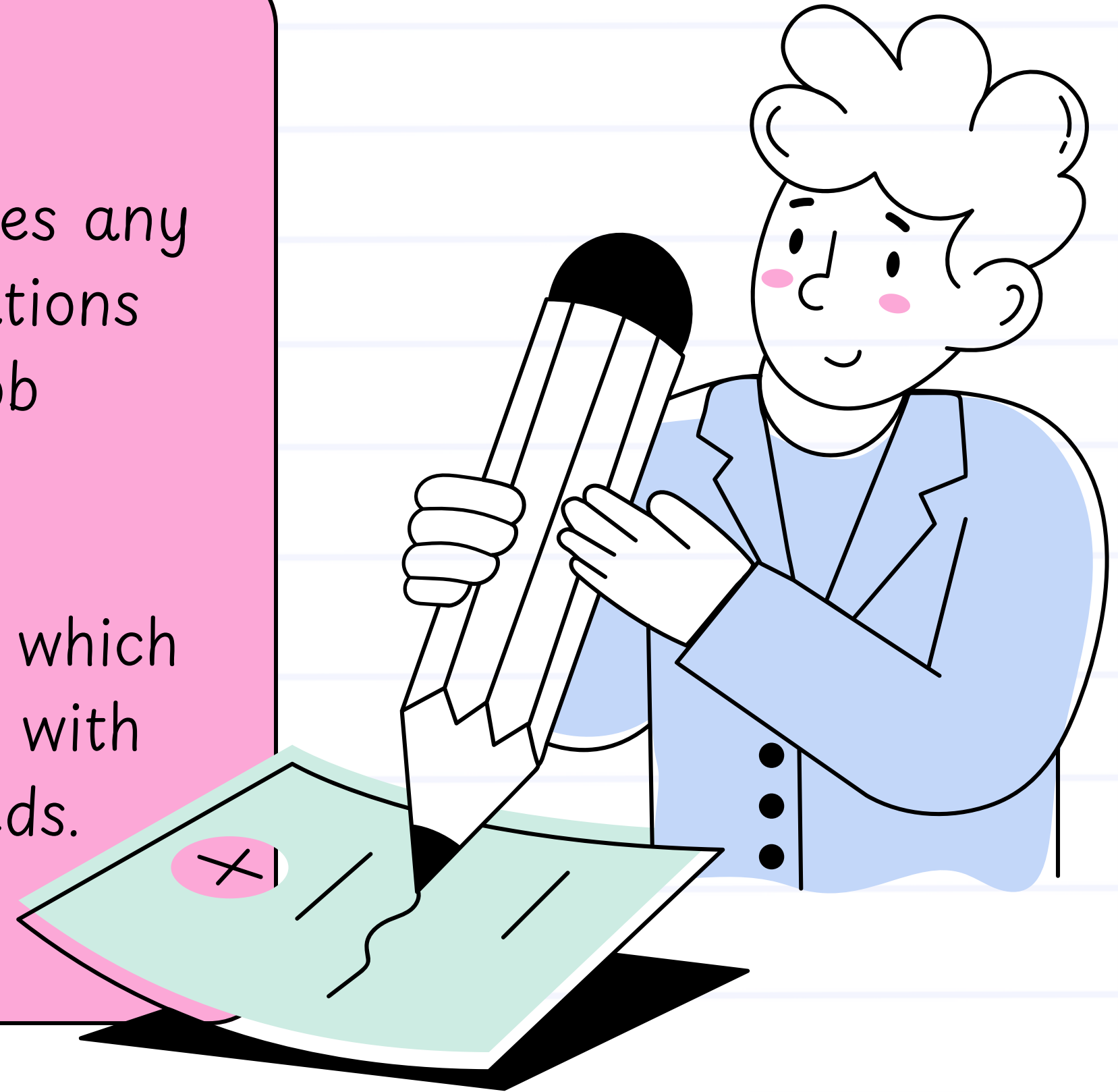
For a Young Performer



What is an Access Rider?

An Access Rider is a document that outlines any specific support or reasonable accommodations that a performer might need to do their job effectively and safely.

Access Riders are really useful documents which ensure that anyone working professionally with your child knows (and can meet) their needs.



Why write an Access Rider

- By outlining your child's needs up-front, you avoid having to rush a conversation about comfort or safety during a high-pressured rehearsal or on a busy set.
- Access Riders ensure your child has access to essential support, such as predictable quiet spaces, necessary breaks, or specific sensory adjustments, which protect their mental and physical health.
- Access Riders are common practice for people of all ages and abilities. Submitting one is a professional step that helps the production plan for a successful working relationship.



How to write an Access Rider

Access Riders should focus on practical, actionable requests related to the environment and the process.

Your child's agent will help you to write an appropriate and professional Access Rider.

Always remember that YOU are the expert in what your child needs and it's good practice to let people know what those needs are.

You are not asking for special favours; you are simply providing the necessary information so that the production can meet its legal and ethical obligation to protect and support its young performers.

On the next pages there are breakdowns of some key aspects that you might choose to consider and personalise for your own child's Access Rider.

Sensory and Emotional Needs

- Understanding masking: State clearly that your child may seem fine, but they might actually be struggling ("masking"). This alerts the team to pay attention to non-verbal cues even if the child says "I'm fine."
- Sensory Triggers: List any specific triggers to avoid.
- Lighting: Does your child need extra support or advance warning if there is going to be any strobe lighting or sudden bright flashes?
- Noise: Does your child need noise-cancelling headphones between takes/scenes?
- Smells: Does your child have an aversion to strong perfumes, scented makeup, or catering smells?
- Textiles: Does your child have any specific fabric intolerances for costumes (e.g., need soft linings, avoiding rough wool)?
- Emotional State: Let the team know if your child has heightened anxiety due to environment changes.



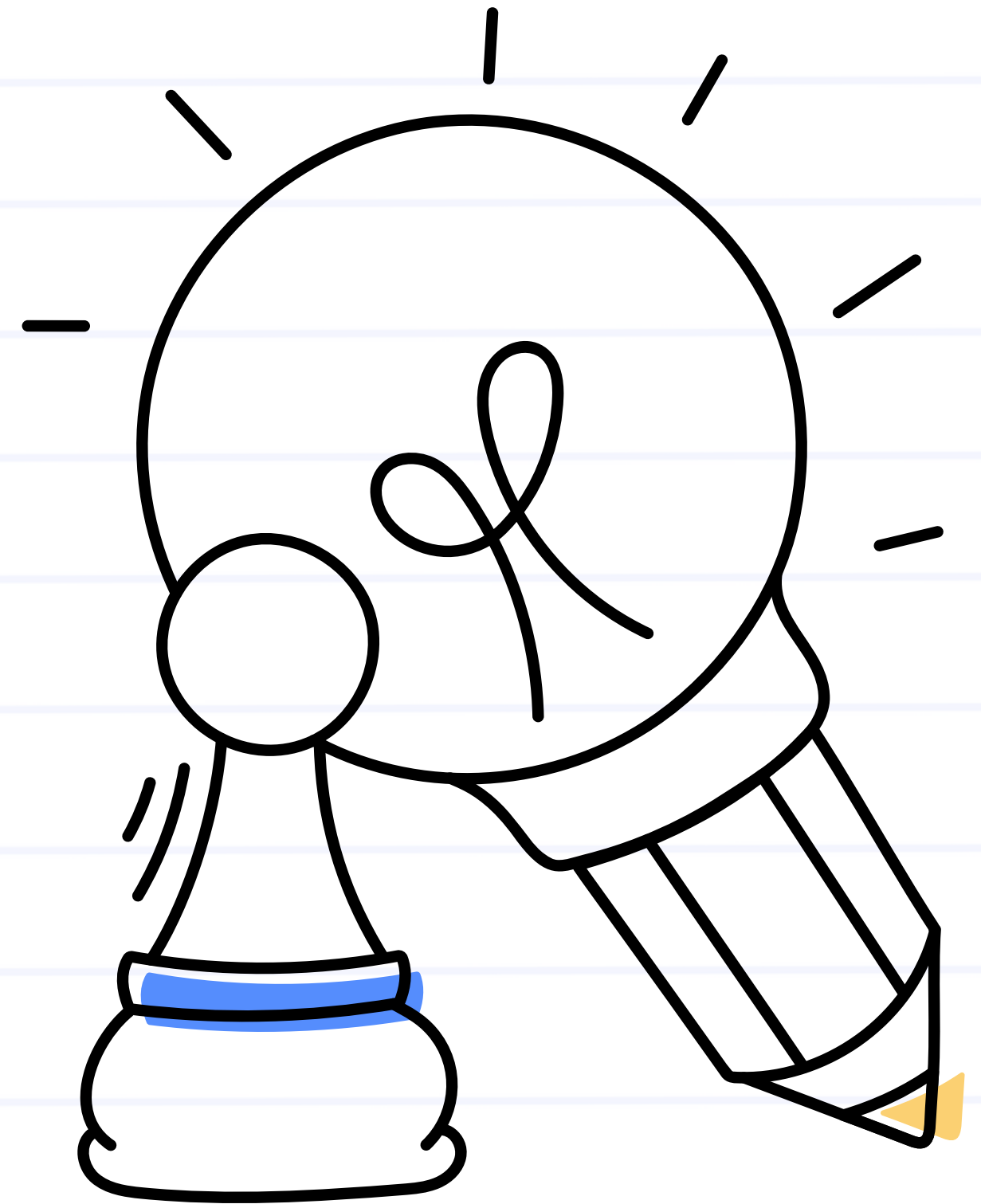
Communication Style and Learning

- Instruction Preference: Let the team know if your child needs instructions given in a particular way, such as one step at a time, or using visual cue cards.
- Instruction Format: Let people know if your child prefers written notes, visual aids, or any other kind of specific communication support.
- Tone: Let the team know what works best for your child, and also what could upset them.



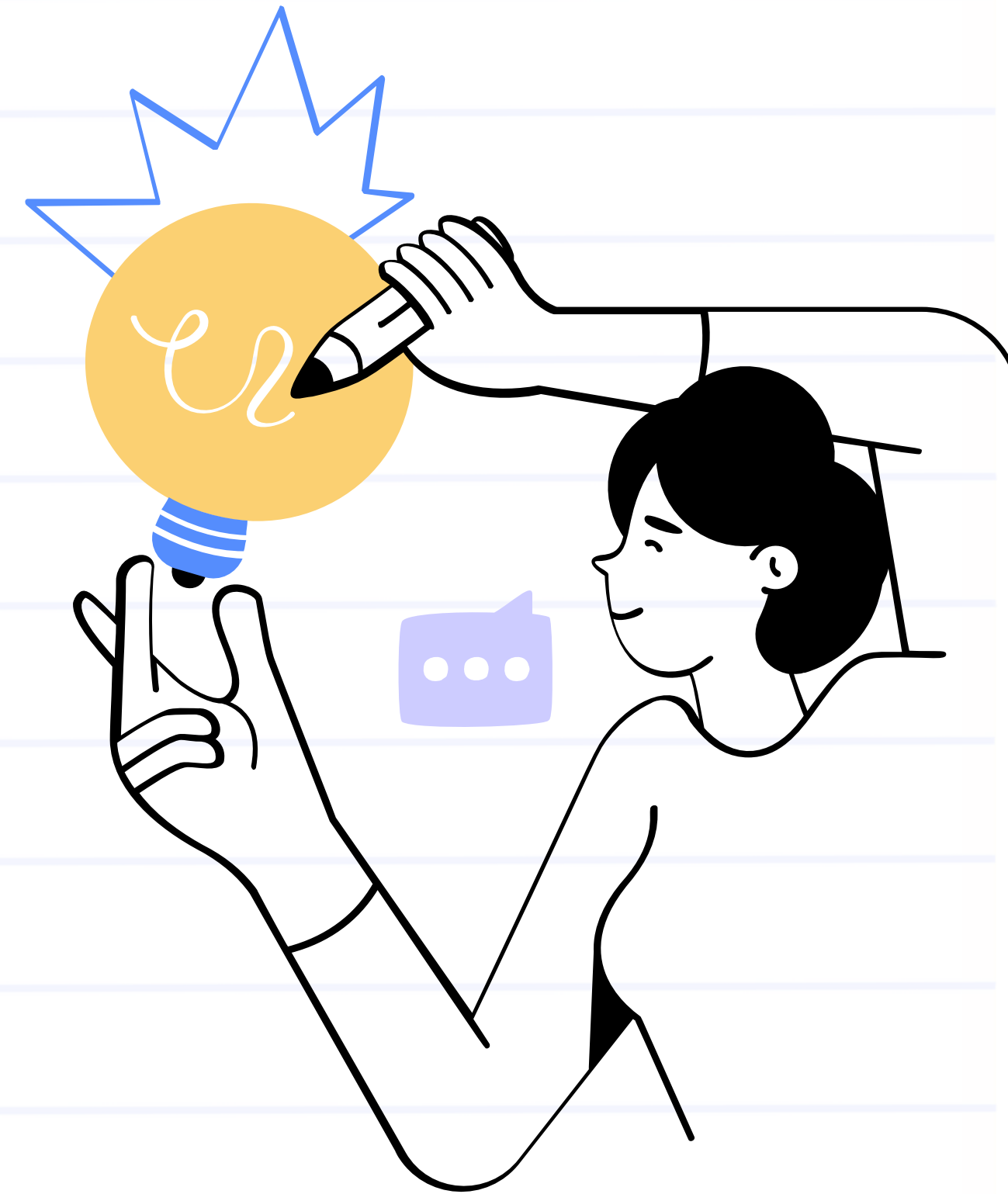
Schedule, Routine and Breaks

- Rest Breaks: Request that your child is allowed regular quiet moments through the day to recharge and avoid burnout (separate from legally required breaks).
- Routine Consistency: Detail the desired notice period required for any changes to the schedule or routine (e.g., 30 minutes notice) and that a designated person should talk those through with your child AND you.
- Fatigue Management: If your child has a condition that increases potential for fatigue, request longer breaks or shorter working hours when necessary due to avoiding fatigue or joint pain.



Health and Safety

- Comfort Space: Identify the need for a designated, low-sensory quiet space that your child and Chaperone can access immediately if the need arises.
- Medical Needs: Include instructions for dealing with minor but common issues (e.g., nosebleeds, minor accidents, specific allergy medication protocols).



Identity and Interaction

- Preferred Pronouns: If applicable, state your child's preferred pronouns and politely request that all team members use them.
- Physical Boundaries: Ask that anyone entering the child's immediate space always introduces themselves and seeks consent before touching or moving your child.
- Professional Boundaries: Request that crew/cast keep the information on the Access Rider confidential.
- Primary Contact: Clearly designate the parent/guardian and their phone number (or your child's agent if you prefer) as the point of contact for any questions related to the Rider.



Who to Share It With (and When)

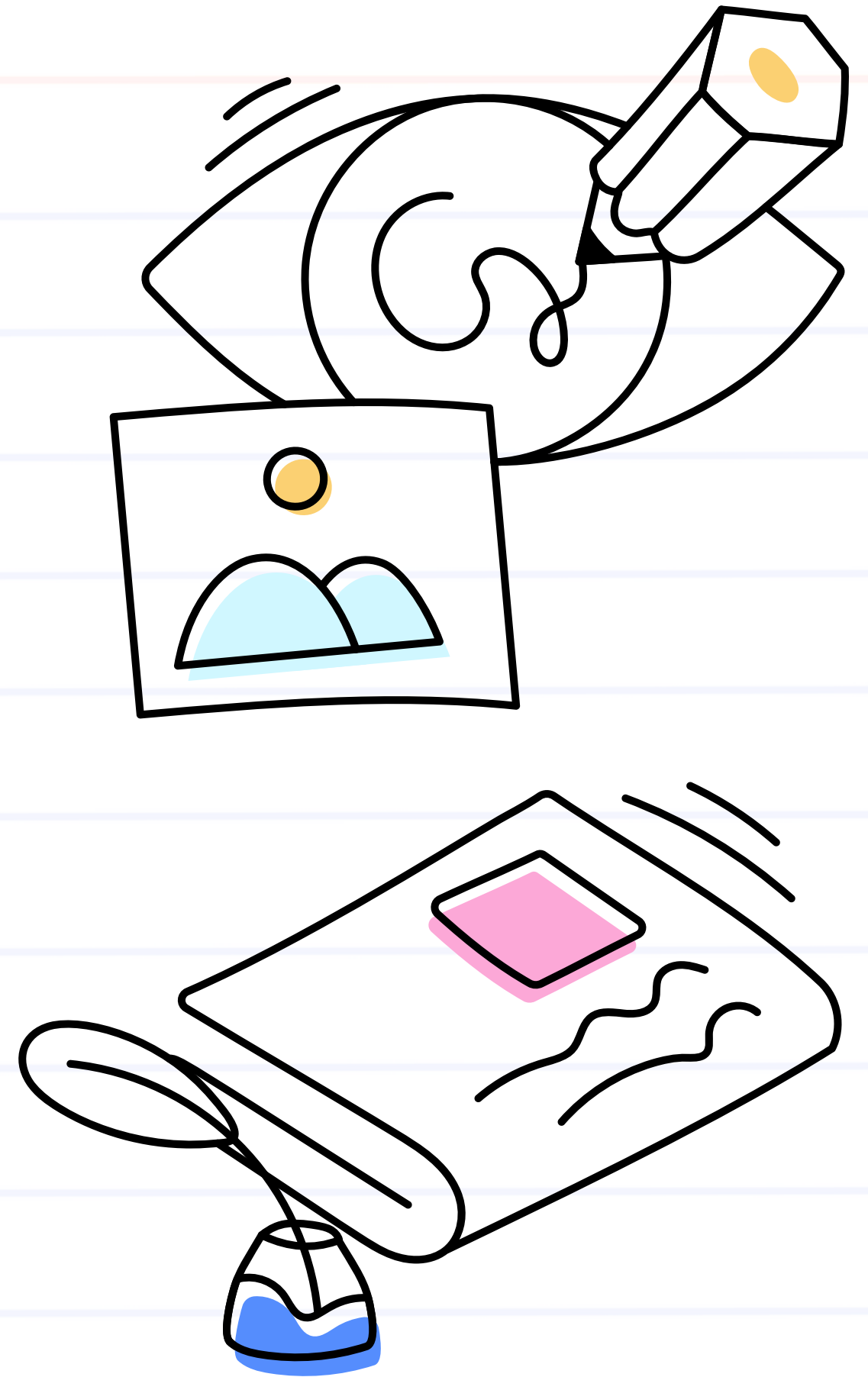
The Access Rider should be provided early in the professional process, ideally:

- To the agent: Your agent should have a copy to share confidentially during the contract negotiation phase.
- To the production team: Specifically the Chaperone and Stage Manager or Production Manager (for theatre) or the 1st AD (for Film and TV).



Remember

You are not asking for special favours; you are simply providing the necessary information so that the production can meet its legal and ethical obligation to protect and support its young performers.



SAMPLE RIDER

Professional Guidelines for Working with YOUNG ACTOR

Introduction: This document outlines the specific support and reasonable accommodations required for [Performer Name] to work effectively, safely, and professionally.

1. Sensory and Emotional Needs

- Understanding Masking: Please be aware that [Name] may appear to be "fine" while actually struggling with fatigue or high emotions. Please pay close attention to non-verbal cues.
- Noise & Light: [Name] requires access to noise-cancelling headphones between takes to manage sensory input. Please provide advance warning for any strobe lighting or sudden bright flashes.
- Textiles: Costumes should avoid rough wool; soft linings are requested where possible to prevent sensory distress.

2. Communication and Learning

- Instruction Preference: Please provide instructions one step at a time or via visual cue cards.
- Format: Written notes or visual aids are preferred over purely verbal directions for complex tasks.
- Tone: A calm, considerate approach is best; sudden loud directions or a harsh tone may cause significant upset.

3. Schedule, Routine, and Breaks

- Notice Period: [Name] requires at least 30 minutes notice for any changes to the schedule or routine.
- Designated Contact: Changes should be discussed with both [Name] and their parent/chaperone.
- Rest Breaks: Beyond legal requirements, [Name] needs regular, short "quiet moments" throughout the day to recharge and avoid burnout.

4. Health, Safety, and Physical Boundaries

- Comfort Space: [Name] and their Chaperone must have immediate access to a designated, low-sensory quiet space if the need arises.
- Physical Consent: Anyone entering [Name]'s immediate space (especially Hair, Makeup, and Wardrobe) should introduce themselves and seek verbal consent before touching or moving them.
- Hypermobility/Fatigue: Due to hypermobility, [Name] may experience joint pain. Please allow for longer rest periods or shorter hours if fatigue becomes evident.

5. Identity and Interaction

- Preferred Pronouns: [Name]'s preferred pronouns are [Pronouns]. We kindly ask the team to use them.
- Confidentiality: We request that all information in this rider remains confidential among the core production team.

Primary Contact for Rider Queries:[Parent/Guardian Name] — [Phone Number]

These guidelines will help foster a supportive and inclusive environment for [Name].

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE

Professional Guidelines for Working with YOUNG ACTOR

Introduction: XX is a young actor. These guidelines have been created with YOUNG ACTOR to help ensure a productive and supportive working environment.

Hypermobility

XX can sometimes experience periods of joint pain and fatigue.

People who are hypermobile also have an increased startle response and feel heightened anxiety.

To help:

- If necessary, allow longer breaks when necessary to ensure rest.
- Maintain a respectful and considerate approach to avoid startling XX. Anyone stepping into XX's personal space should first make sure that XX is aware that they are there. This will be especially relevant for the Hair, Makeup and Costume departments.

Social Support

XX can exhibit some neurodiverse traits that can affect social interactions and make them highly sensitive. XX identifies with the term, 'neurospicy'!

Masking is common in neurodivergent people and XX excels at seeming fine whilst actually struggling with emotions and fatigue.

To help:

- Allocate quiet moments throughout the day where XX can spend time alone to recharge their social batteries.
- If they deem necessary, encourage everyone, including other child actors, to promote kindness, empathy, and acceptance of differences.
- Foster a knowledge of masking among the team and check in with XX a couple of times a day (not too often) reminding them that it is okay to not be okay.

These guidelines will help foster a supportive and inclusive environment for XX.

We thank you for reading this rider, XX would prefer it if you did not draw attention to any of the requests on here, unless they bring it up first. If you have any questions then please talk to me (Mum)- I can be reached on XX

Links to Further Information

- NNCEE (National Network for Children in Employment and Entertainment) <http://www.nncee.org.uk/>
- AYPa (Agents of Young Performers Association) <https://www.aypa.co.uk/>
- Spotlight <https://www.spotlight.com/>
- Unlimited's guide to creating your own access rider <https://weareunlimited.org.uk/resource/creating-your-own-access-rider/>
- UK Government (Child Performance Regulations) <https://www.gov.uk/child-performance-licence>
- National Autistic Society <https://www.autism.org.uk/>
- Ambitious about Autism <https://www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk/>
- ADHD Foundation (Neurodiversity Support) <https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/>



This Resource was made by



SENSIBLE CREATIVE



**For more resources visit:
www.sensiblecreative.co.uk**

