

# BUSINESS

A2 Monday, March 10, 2008

## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

# Giving kids a chance to act up

New business helps those who want to work in movies or TV, or who just need to boost confidence.

By Ryan Vaillancourt  
News-Press

Standing in the middle of a brightly-lit, key-lime colored room, 9-year-old Anastasia Snyder stared at a digital camcorder, opened her eyes wide and offered a pitch for Cheerios.

"My favorite way to start the day is with Cheerios," she said, putting particular emphasis on the word "favorite."

Anastasia really does commence some of her mornings with bowl of the popular cereal, she said, but the "favorite way to start the day" line was scripted.

But she delivered it with such convincing gusto that acting coach Mae Ross, the owner of and sole teacher at 3, 2, 1 Talent Showcase performance school in Montrose, thinks the young actress might be ready to audition before an agent.

Ross said so out loud, coaxing a grin out of Anastasia and quips about the importance of agents and managers from Anastasia's fellow students, Sanjay Mokha, 7, and Elias Raphael, 7.

These lively children all say they hope to be on screen one day, whether it's for a commercial, a television series or a movie.

But on their way to the big time, they're putting in a few hours a week with Ross, playing memory games, practicing commercial scripts and fine-tuning their hand shakes.

It's part of the business, Ross told her students as she demonstrated proper firmness.



TAMMY ABBOTT News-Press

Mae Ross of 3, 2, 1 Talent Showcase in Montrose helps 9-year-old Anastasia Snyder, left, and Savannah Baum, also 9, during an acting session Saturday. Ross, a 16-year entertainment coach, opened the business earlier this month.

"It's OK to look me in the eye," she told Elias. "I won't bite."

The etiquette tips are only indirectly helpful in the entertainment industry, Ross said. But the skills she teaches are not necessarily just for those who aspire to the screen.

"Those that really want to get into the business, I can offer that. But it's also for parents who just want their kids to learn self-confidence," she said.

Ross' blend of acting tips

and entertainment industry advice — as part of their child's participation in the program, parents are encouraged to take a seminar with Ross on talent management and how to navigate Hollywood — was fine-tuned as a coach for 16 years with Macker Entertainment in Glendale and Burbank.

She struck out on her own earlier this month, opening 3, 2, 1 Talent Showcase, which she runs out of The Vibe dance studio in Montrose.

Ross' advertising literature

### FYI

For more information about the classes, visit [www.321talentshowcase.com](http://www.321talentshowcase.com).

promises: "Get discovered by Hollywood's Top Agents!"

For some of her students, that promise might come true — a bulletin board outside the studio that is covered with head shots of former students who have since established budding careers is proof.

But not all of her students

are driven solely by the promise of celebrity.

"What's the best part about acting?" Ross asked her class on a recent week night. "Why do we do it?"

Anastasia closed her eyes, thought hard and asserted an answer with the same gusto that could lead to success as an actress: "It's fun," she said.