

COMPETITIVE DANCE/PERFORMANCE COMPANY

Company Handbook—2007/2008

STEPPIN' OUT THE STUDIO

Introduction

The competitive dance and performance company at *Steppin' Out* is designed for the student who is highly motivated in the performing arts. Those selected for company will possess the following:

- *Must be physically fit with emphasis on healthy mind and body.
- *Must be self-motivated and able to evaluate themselves.
- *Must have solid technical and performance skills, with a desire to develop further.
- *Must have a sense of humor, bright smile, and positive attitude.
- *Must have a team attitude that shows support for the studio, the teachers, and Fellow dancers.
- *Must have a supportive family base, that shows respect for the teachers at all times.

Company Commitment

Company participants are required to participate from August 2007 through Nationals in 2008. Your commitment is not to be taken lightly, as you will be expected to fulfill this commitment. All students and their parents will be required to sign a parent/student agreement.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for all *Company* classes. When it comes to school and family activities, you will find *Steppin' Out* to be very flexible. However, by accepting placement in this program, you have agreed that this is a priority in your schedule. Missed classes for any reason other than illness or school/family activities must be cleared personally through Ms. Phyllis. Student absences will be recorded, and any ballet/jazz/lyrical classes that are missed must be made up. Being a well-rounded individual is important, and I support students pursuing other activities. However, when it comes to participation on a competitive team, skills are constantly being taught...students must be present!

Financial Commitment

Being in a program such as this requires a certain financial commitment. *Steppin' Out* has hired a company accounts manager to keep track of payments/tuition/entry fees, and a costume accounts manager to help with the tracking of payments for costumes. You will find both very helpful, as well as very organized.

In an effort to simplify our accounting system, company tuition will be as follows:

Base fee for Company is \$125.00 per month, plus a \$10.00 per month fee per routine a student is listed in. For example: Susie is in two large groups, two lines, and two small groups, and one extra large group - her monthly tuition will be \$195.00.

Payment for classes is due on the first day of every month and considered late by the 5th of each month. Any payment made after the 5th will be assessed a late charge of \$10.00 per week.

Please note: The all-company production will also be assessed a \$10.00 monthly fee, payable beginning in January.

Opportunities Available

All students, except for our new mini's, are placed in two large groups, and two lines. Students who meet the necessary technical/performance requirements are placed in small groups, at the parents discretion. Those students who meet or exceed the technical/performance requirements are given opportunities in solo and duo/trio work. Solo fees are: \$250.00 per solo. (\$200.00 to the choreographer, \$50.00 to the studio—all must be paid prior to the start of the routine—no exceptions!). This fee included three rehearsals. After that, students pay the private lesson rate. Guest choreographer fees may be different.

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Teacher/Choreographer

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**"Committed to Kids
and Dance
Since 1989"**

**2007
Federation of
Dance Competitions
"Studio Excellence"
Award Winner**

**"Success is not counted
by how high you have
climbed, but how many
you brought with you."
Wil Rose**

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Competitions

The competition schedule for 2007/2008 will be announced in early October. All dancers are required to perform at all regional and national competitions and conventions. These events will take place locally, with a possible out-of-town regional. Every effort is made to select competitions that will provide our dancers and their families with the best experience possible. *Steppin' Out* approaches competition with three things in mind:

*It is an educational opportunity - competing against the finest teams allows our teachers and students the opportunity to “see what is out there” and grow from there.

*It is a pre-professional opportunity - students who wish to pursue the professional world of dance have an opportunity to grow and develop their performance skills through competition.

*It is a fun, family activity - *Steppin' Out* believes this to be the most exciting, family- friendly activity that exists. Students learn team-building skills, performing arts skills, and develop self-confidence that will last a lifetime. Having fun is the number one priority for this program!

Competition Fees

Fees associated with each competition are based upon prices set by the competition itself. These generally run around \$30.00 per person per routine. Trios/Solos have different prices. Fees for competitions are due to the studio at least 35 days prior in advance of each competition. Missing an assigned deadline will result in a \$5.00 per day late penalty. Please note that there will be a \$1.00 administrative processing fee placed on each entry for competition. NO STUDENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO COMPETE IF FEES ARE NOT PAID.

The Competition Experience

It is important to understand that the “competition” aspect of being a member of *The Steppin' Out Dance Company* should be considered a “performance” opportunity. Competition results are strictly a subjective opinion, and your child’s growth should not be completely gauged by their scores or achievements at competitions. It is also important that you be able to keep your competition experience positive and most importantly, be proud of the growth and development that takes place within your child. We do not foster competition within our company, and all we ask from our students is that each child work to their full capacity. We understand that each child is a gift to us, and each are uniquely different.

Costumes

A separate costume will be chosen for each routine that a dancer is selected for. Be accepting placement in this program, you agree to purchase and wear the costumes designed by the Director or Choreographer. Please note the schedule for deposits:

*Large Groups/Lines - \$60.00 per costume per routine due by September 21st.

*Small Groups - \$60.00 per costume per routine due by October 21st.

*Duo/Trios/Solos - \$60.00 per costume per routine due by November 10th.

NYCDA

New York City Dance Alliance will be holding their regional convention/competition in Topeka, Kansas on November 3rd and 4th. We will be sending dancers to this, along with some fresh, new routines. Those routines competing at NYCDA will be attending the NYCDA Finals in New York City in July of 2008.

Team Warm-ups

We’re getting new team warm-ups! We’ve had the same warm-ups for six years, and it’s time for a change. All company members are required to purchase a team warm-up, which includes a jacket and matching pants. Company members must have on at all times their team warm-up jackets when at competitions. Sheri Burris, Dancewear Manger, will be taking orders at the company meeting in August. Deposits of \$50.00 per dancer will be taken at that time.

Extra Performance Opportunities

Throughout the year, Steppin' Out receives invitations to perform for various functions and community events. It is important that we accept these invitations. OKTOBERFEST weekend in Lee's Summit is September 28th and 29th, and our studio will be providing two to three shows, featuring our dance, cheer, and song and dance companies. These performances are mandatory, unless there is a school conflict.

Showcase 2008 - "Wish Upon A Star"

Dance Company members are required to fully participate in Showcase 2008. This means that company routines will be placed throughout the day in three different shows. Only in the event of a family function will students be allowed to miss the showcase performances.

Booster Club Participation

Membership in this organization is a must for all families. This organization gives a great amount of support to the studio and its many fine families. The "Club" offers a variety of means for which to pay for the costs that are incurred in this program which are above and beyond the monthly tuition. With this in mind, fundraising monies are only allowed to be used for costuming and competition fees. *Steppin' Out* requires that monthly tuition be paid for by means of cash, check, or charge, at the time tuition is due, which is the first of each month.

Parent Roles

Steppin' Out—The Studio is a "drama-free" zone! Plainly speaking, this means you are expected at all times to be supportive, respectful, and courteous to all team members and their families. This studio will not tolerate rudeness, jealousy and resentment, and disrespect to another team member, their family, a teacher, nor the director. It is well known, whether you may know it or not, who likes to "gossip," who likes to "stir the pot," and "who thinks their child is better than anyone else." If you are one of the very small percentage of this type of parent, think twice before you speak negatively about anything to do with this studio on these premises. It makes no difference to this studio how good your child is or who you are...you are not permitted to bring into this very expensive, fabulous facility that is full of fabulous families and kids any negativity whatsoever.

Your role is to do the following:

- *Lift up and support all of our children.
- *Teach your child that there is always going to be someone better than they are.
- *Teach your child to be happy for others.
- *Give a hand to those who may be behind or struggling.
- *Stand firmly behind the teaching staff.
- *Work with the teaching staff, showing your child that you are behind their coaches.

In all 25 years of my teaching, I have observed that the most successful children are those whose parents support their teachers and coaches 100%. There are the ones who do not bad-mouth or question a teacher or coach in front of their children, and they are certainly the ones who are realistic about their children and their place on any team. Granted, we all want our children to succeed, but success is not measured by the trophy a child brought home, or by the row in which they stand on stage, or by how many pirouettes they can do. Instead, it is measured by the effort that they put forth. If they give all they've got to give, what more can anyone ever expect?

We have enough responsibility in raising our own children. Please do not assume the role of parent for any other child but your own. You are not allowed to discipline, touch, or coach any other child but your own.

The Longevity of Dance

Steppin' Out is proud to have dancers who have been competing for 17 years plus. One of the main reasons is that we allow students to participate in other activities, and do not pressure them to only do dance! Kids go through many stages between the ages of 5 and 18, and we work hard to help them with the transitions from elementary school to middle/junior high school, and then into high school. Understand that there may be a time when they experience various levels of excitement and enthusiasm...this is okay!

Personal Hygiene

“Good hygiene is the first step to having Great confidence.”

Students in company are required to have a certain All-American look. Therefore, all students are asked to be aware of their grooming. All students should have in their dance bags the following: deodorant, baby powder, toothbrush and toothpaste, hand sanitizer, body spray, light makeup - essentials to keep them looking, feeling, and smelling their best!!! Even mini's need deodorant!

The Teaching Staff

Dance Company Members have the opportunity to work with the finest ensemble of studio teachers and guest teachers in the country! Many of the competitive teaching staff are “second generation” - they went through the competitive program as dancers, and are now serving as teachers - the ultimate goal/accomplishment for any business. The following will be on teaching staff for the 2007/2008 competitive year...

“Ms. Phyllis” Demoret - Director, and primary teacher for all company members. Will be teaching tap, jazz, lyrical, musical theatre, and hip-hop (younger dancers only!). Focus will be on small group, large group, and line choreography, with some solos and duo/trios.

“Ms. Kendra” Gunther - Teacher for the mini's.

“Ms. Erica” Blount - Will be teaching tap and lyrical.

“Ms. Kelly” Lund - Will be assisting Ms. Phyllis with technique classes.

“Ms. Ashley” Nowlin - Will be teaching tap, jazz, and hip-hop.

“Ms. Lisa” Thorn - Ballet and pointe.

“Ms. Jennifer” Owens - Ballet and pointe.

Guest Teachers/Choreographers

Steppin' Out takes pride in the fact that we have some of the most talented choreographers in the country right here in our studio. We also take pride in the fact that we attract some of the country's top professional choreographers who will be working with our dancers throughout the competition season. I am always looking for new, “fresh” faces in the industry to serve as guest choreographers.

*Chris Moss - Hip-Hop artist from LA will be here on October 5,6,7 to do a hip-hop choreography.

*Danny Wallace - Tap instructor, will be here in September to teach and choreograph.

*Jennifer Balagna - Will be in the studio periodically to do choreography.

*Mia Michales - Will return this fall to set another outstanding piece on our dancers.

*Joey Dowling - Will be bringing her unique jazz style in October to our senior level dancers.

Finally...

Teaching is my passion! I can't imagine doing anything else! Thank you for entrusting me, and allowing my staff and I the opportunity to work with your child/children. We take our job very seriously, and want you to know that your children are our priority! Making decisions regarding placement in dance company and in the many routines that we produce is a long, difficult, well-thought out process. It is the goal of the studio to help each child reach his/her full potential. No child is ever “held back,” but instead, encouraged to develop their skills to their fullest.

STEPPIN' OUT IS...THE STUDIO OF TODAY FOR THE DANCERS OF TOMORROW!

Our program continues to lead the way in the development of the student in confidence, leadership, team-building, and dance and performance! These are very important skills that will last a lifetime, whether or not they choose to dance past high-school. This is not a hobby...it's an extension of their educational training...an investment into your child's very crucial, formative years.