

Dear Students and Parents:

Welcome to the exciting world of dance! We are pleased you have chosen to participate in the City of El Cajon Recreation Department's dance program. We value this opportunity to provide you with safe, affordable, quality dance instruction. Our goal is to foster youth development through positive interaction and role modeling, instilling self-esteem, confidence, self-discipline, and social skills. We strive to create a fun-filled environment where each student can thrive at his/her own pace.

Here is what you can expect. Our beginning level classes are designed to give students an introduction to dance class structure and movement vocabulary, and to foster an appreciation of dance. During each class session students will develop skills appropriate for their age and level, which are incorporated into dance routines. Each level of instruction builds on skills learned in previous levels. At higher levels, students will develop complex motor skills and refine their dance technique, as well as increase their strength and mental focus. It is not uncommon to spend several sessions at any given level before progressing to the next level. Our qualified instructors will recommend the appropriated level for your child. We do not participate in dance competitions; however we do offer performance opportunities, including a performing company for intermediate through advanced students!

To help us keep classes running smoothly and safely, please observe the following policies:

Visitation: Parents and friends are invited to observe the first and last class, and the first class meeting of every month throughout the session. We encourage *active participation* from all students, and ask that parents and friends limit visitation to the designated days in order to avoid distraction. Children look forward to showing you their progress on "observation days." If you are planning to attend on observation days, it is helpful if you can arrange childcare for siblings and other children.

Attendance: Please be on time! Each class begins with warm-ups which are essential to student safety. As a safety procedure, children arriving after warm-ups (10-15 minutes late) may be asked to observe class and not participate.

Note: For health reasons, please ensure your children wash their hands before and after class. Please do not send a child with any contagious conditions to a class or activity. (Bad cold, lice, skin disorder, etc.) In addition, all wounds on participants should be covered with fresh bandages when participating, and please, no sharing of towels, clothing etc. among program participants. Please call the center where your child is a participant to report your child's absence.

Going To and From Class: Children must be "signed in" and "signed out" of class by a responsible adult. A "sign in/out" sheet is posted in each activity room. Please accompany your child to and from their classroom. Children will not be permitted to leave the classroom without a parent, older sibling, or other responsible adult.

Behavior: For our beginning level students, socialization is as much a part of the experience as learning dance steps! Students will be learning how to conduct themselves in a dance class setting. These skills are critical in order to facilitate a smooth-running and safe environment for all students. To reduce disruptions, please attend to your child's toileting needs before class begins.

Attire: Students should wear something they can stretch and move in easily, and which does not impede movement. We suggest the following:

Preschool Dance: Any dance outfit. Ballet slippers and tap shoes are recommended, but any soft-soled shoes for ballet and jazz, and hard-soled shoes for tap dance will work fine. Please, no stockings or bare feet.

Dance Combo: Same as above, however tap shoes are required.

Ballet: Leotard and tights, dance skirt (optional), or a dance dress. Ballet slippers required.

Jazz: Jazz pants or stretch shorts, leotard or tight fitting t-shirt. Jazz shoes are recommended; however lower level students may wear ballet slippers or tennis shoes with smooth soles.

Tap: Pants or shorts, with a t-shirt or leotard. The instructor must be able to see the bend of the knees and your feet. Avoid pants that are baggy or too long. Tap shoes required.

Hip Hop: Same as jazz. Sweat clothes and athletic shoes are also acceptable.

Modern: Same as jazz. No shoes required.

Equipment: In order to maintain a safe environment, students are not allowed on any equipment without instructor permission. Please do not hang on the ballet barres or touch the mirrors.

Food or drink: Absolutely no food, chewing gum, candy or drinks are allowed in the dance rooms. You may bring water in a spill-proof container.

We welcome your feedback. Please let your instructor know how we can help to make this an enjoyable and successful recreation experience for your child. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please direct them to your instructor, or contact the Instructional Division at (619) 441-1516.

By participating in the City of El Cajon Recreation Dance Program you are helping your child to reach for their potential. As you may discover your child will benefit in many ways, not only by gaining physical skills, but also by strengthening their personal and social skills. We look forward to creating positive memories to last a lifetime!

Most Sincerely,

YOUR DANCE INSTRUCTOR