

## **4 THINGS EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW BEFORE CHOOSING A DANCE STUDIO**

If most dance studios seem to have qualified, friendly teachers, experience teaching children and a big show at the end of the year, aren't they all pretty much the same? Does it really matter which place you decide to enroll at? Yes. There are 4 main things that can make a huge difference in the quality of instruction your child receives, the amount of extra work and hassles the parents must deal with and the overall enjoyment and satisfaction of being involved with a dance program. Here are 4 things that every parent should consider before deciding on a dance studio for their child.

### **1. WHAT TYPE OF DANCE FLOOR IS USED?**

Dance is a very physical activity that requires a lot of jumping, which can put stress on bones and joints. Most dance footwear does not provide any cushioning or support, so the shock of dance movement can place a lot of pressure on the knees and back of a dancer. The best way to prevent against potential injury is by choosing a studio with a professional "floating floor". A floating floor is a dance floor that rests on a system of high-density foam, to absorb the shock of jumping. A high-density foam base is superior to a "sprung" floor, which usually consists of a wood structure built on the regular floor.

The top layer of the dance floor is also an important factor. A vinyl composite "marley" floor is accepted worldwide as the best surface layer for recreational to professional dance. Facilities such as the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Royal Academy of Dance in London, England, and Riverdance - The Touring Show, all use marley floors as their dance surface. A marley floor allows dancers to slide, with a degree of "controlled slip", but is not slippery so there is less risk of slips and falls. Very few studios use professional marley floors because of the expense involved, and usually opt for a regular floor tile for a studio floor. Our special floors help reduce the risk of injuries and allow students to dance longer without getting tired.

### **2. WHAT IS THE SIZE OF THE CLASS?**

If the dance class has fewer students in it each child will receive more personalized attention, learn more and have more fun. With younger students it is easier for a teacher to maintain control over the class and make sure each student understands the concepts and instructions. Our smaller class sizes make sure that no fundamental concepts are being missed. A smaller class size also allows our teachers to ensure that students are not developing bad habits or improper technique. Our studio limits all of our classes (ages 6 and up) to a maximum of just 12 students per class. With our kindergarten dance classes (ages 3 - 5) we limit all of our classes to a maximum of just 8 students per class.

### **3. WHAT ARE THE "EXTRAS" REQUIRED FOR THE YEAR END SHOW?**

We have a pre school recital broken up into small 45-1 hour programs so it is special for our toddlers. We also have a 7 and older show that is a sit down dinner and after the students perform. A paper is given out in November updating everyone on Dates and the fee which includes the costume and rehearsal fee. Tickets are sold in May for the recitals.

### **4. CAN I GET IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE?**

In many studios the teacher or the studio owner conducts classes and does the administration. By trying to do two jobs at once, the class may suffer as the teacher has to use class time for customer service issues, or the studio may have no customer service available if the teacher is in a class. To have a good experience it is important to choose a studio that can assist you with details like costumes or schedules, even if a teacher is occupied in a class. Our studio is open almost every evening and office has communication with department heads to get information. Parents can email questions, phone, or stop into the office. The website provides much information as well.