

# **Just a Little Advice...**



**In-Step Dance Company  
Competition Parent Packet**

## **WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN!?**

### Pointers for New Dance Team Parents

Have you ever said, “Well, if I had known ahead of time...?” Since you may be new to the dance team experience, the “seasoned” (not old) parents, would like to share some things that they have learned. I hope our experience will help make your first year on the Dance Company go smoothly.

Being a Company Member is a major commitment of time and energy for your daughter/son, and, at times, for parents as well. It’s an exciting time - watching your daughter/son perform, achieving his/her best! Although at times, you may wonder, “How much more can we cram into one week or weekend?!” take the opportunity to become a part of this phase of his/her life. Become involved...make some marvelous memories together. Share these years, and enjoy them!

## **HOW CAN THEY DO EVERYTHING?**

### Helping Your Dancer Juggle Everything: Grades, Rehearsals, Performances, Social and Family Events

We found these “stress-minimizing” suggestions helpful in staying on top of everything that needs to be done.

1. Stay organized. Invest in an inexpensive monthly planner and I encourage you to write everything down.
2. We will keep in contact through email communication. There will be information that you need: rehearsal times, performance times, and Competitions and social events
3. Time management is a “biggie.” If you do not already budget your time wisely, this is a great time to begin and practice time management. For example, suggest to your dancer that he/she take advantage of time between school and classes to knock out some of the shorter homework assignments. Their wise management of time will become a major asset when things become the busiest.
4. Encourage your dancer to keep up with her/his schoolwork and not get behind in school work.
5. If your dancer receives a failing grade, they become ineligible to perform. This is a major disappointment, especially at competition times, when they have put so much time and energy into learning, practicing and polishing routines.

## **UP AND DOWN WE GO**

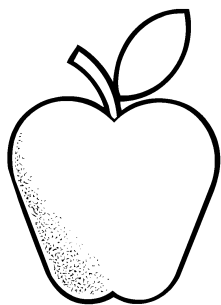
### Dealing with Moods

1. Support your dancer, and encourage her/him to keep going when the “going gets tough.” The toughest times are in January right before dance competition season and again during Nationals and Bootcamp.
2. Expect mood swings, especially during competition season when they work so hard and there is so much to do. The dancers get very tired and cranky!
3. Encourage your dancer to work as “part of the team”.
4. Encourage your dancer to be constructive and positive in her ideas and suggestions; offer encouragement and support to team members.
5. If your dancer does a solo, let her/him lead you in how to give them support. Some like to be left alone, others need their parents close by.
6. A special tip for parents of dancers who do solos: they never start working on their solos as soon as we think they should!!
7. **Remember to listen before reacting.** Sometimes your dancer just needs to vent and ramble. Take time to listen and nod. Ask a few questions and try not to be judgmental of the situation. Later, go back and ask them about the situation. You may find out that she has completely forgotten about it, or like often “it was no big deal.”

## **EAT AN APPLE INSTEAD...**

### Keeping a Healthy Dancer

1. Make sure your dancer eats healthy food and takes vitamins, especially during the dance competition season.



2. They need to drink a lot of WATER - don't live on sodas. NO Soda's during comp season.
3. Your dancer needs to get plenty of rest when they can. This is true all the time, but especially true during competition season.
4. Encourage your dancer to learn to listen to their own body. Our bodies can tell us if what we are doing is not right. If something does not feel right or pulls, work with it. Soak in a tub. Warm up before dancing or jogging. If the pain persists, mention it to Ms. Dana. This especially is helpful during competition season. We do not want any pulled muscles or torn knees when we are heading toward the end of season.

## **DO WE NEED ALL THIS STUFF??**

### Costume Tips and Handy Stuff to have in a Dance Team Bag

1. Order extra tights. **HINT:** To become the greatest mom in the whole world, follow these steps: (1) stash these items away and don't tell your daughter you have them. (2) let her panic for a few minutes because she can't find her tights, or her whatever. (3) Take a deep breath, pull out the extra item and just smile. (4) you are sure to receive a hug and a kiss. **NOTE:** This does not guarantee that this same thing will not happen next week... but be thankful of what you have today.
2. Put your name or initials with permanent marker on the tag inside **everything that you have bought:** shoes (all of them), tights, leotards, t-shirts, sweatshirt, special undergarments, & solo costumes, etc.

The Dance Team Bag is an amazing thing. You thought it was just something else to purchase. In fact, at times, it contains your dancers life. Occasionally, take a trip through it. Look for all those notes about events and the calendars she meant to give you. During your dance team life, this bag will go almost everywhere she goes with everything he/she needs in it.

1. This dance team bag is washable. Make sure it dries completely before re-packing. After a few rehearsal and competition these bags can get a little stinky. Or at least spray it monthly.....
2. Essential items for the dance team bag: rubber bands, band-aids, hair brush, Kleenex, feminine products, deodorant, scented body spray, container of bobby pins, safety pins, hair nets, dance team makeup, hair spray.
3. Several handy things to also keep in the dance team bag (these are all optional): plastic bag or small towel, Tylenol, Band-Aids; bottled water, extra pair of socks, extra pair of tights, & a disposable camera. Valium for mom...lol

## OTHER STUFF YOU WONDERED ABOUT

### More FYI for Moms and Dads

1. Come to as many competitions as you can. Believe it or not, the dancers look for you. It means a lot to them if you are there, even though they never mention it.
2. Plan to attend dance competitions after the new year begins. Bring the families-grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts, uncles, cousins...everybody!! The dancers love to know you are all out there watching them dance their hearts out!!
3. Purchase In-Step Dance attire. Wear them to all In-Step Dance Events and Competitions. This helps to promote team spirit. It's great to help find each other in large crowds at Competitions and your dancer can always find you when they need more money. **HINT:** Every competition sets up tables for selling merchandise.
4. Solos are optional but worthwhile, if your dancer is interested. Doing a solo can become expensive. Each competition has an entry fee (\$50-\$80) and they can enter up to 3 solos per competition as she/he wishes, or as you have the \$\$\$. In addition, she must provide her own costume. The costume can be as extravagant or plain as you wish. She does not have to have a different costume for each contest. Borrowing a costume from a former or current team member can be an alternative to buying one.
5. Take lots of pictures. Capture the moment on film, then share them with others. You will have no trouble getting the dancers to pose for you. These are some IMPORTANT camera tips that come from experience: But do not take pictures or video while the dancers are on stage at any competition. Most Competitions Do NOT allow any cameras in the theatre at ALL so please abide by all rules.

- Bring lots of extra film
- Put the film **in** the camera for both still and video cameras
- Charge the battery for the video
- Check the battery in your still camera
- Take off the lens cap
- Get double prints made when developing (one for you & one for the scrapbook/year-end video)

So I hope this little manual helped you out before the BIG competition Day! Be sure to always have a smile on because it makes you younger.....lol!

Positive attitudes is a must and always be on time.

## In-Step Dance Rocks!