

## **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 where you enroll your child? 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 "sprung" or professional floor. A professional floating floor is a dance floor that rests on a system of high-density foam such as the one in studio 1 at Arts in Motion. Studio 2 and 3 are sprung in a different way: our "sprung" floors are built on a basket weave design sub-floor that allows for shock resistance.

### **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. With our pre-school classes (ages 3 – 5) we limit all of our classes to a maximum of just 8 students per class. The Beginning Dance classes (ages 6-8) are kept at a maximum of 10 students per class. Our studio limits all the rest of our classes (ages 8 and up) to a maximum of just 12 students per class.

### **3. What are the "extras" required for the year-end show?**

Most studios put on a year-end show in a professional theatre. Students that perform in the show must have a costume for their dance number. Some studios may require parents to sew their child's costumes, or pay extra and the parents must find their own seamstress to do the sewing. This can be inconvenient and frustrating for parents who are busy or can't sew. Most studios also require parents to purchase tickets for the recital performance night. Our studio pre-orders costumes and students rent them, keeping the cost low. Our younger students (3-5) purchase their costume and the studio always orders costumes that can be worn in class so students get the most use out of them. If any alterations are necessary parents can take their costume to Sofia's Tailoring and Alterations in Ann Arbor or Ypsilanti and the studio will cover the cost. Our studio also gives each parent 2 free tickets for our year-end show. This way you as a parent will not be faced with any extra work or expenses.

### **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 has office staff on hand during regular class times, so you can get immediate assistance.