

Youth Dance Company

2025-2026 Handbook

movement & sound
DANCE



Our Dance Company Values

Focused Fun!

Our Youth Dance Company exists to encourage every student to enjoy learning and growing through dance. The “C’s” are guiding principles which are best summed up by one phrase: *Focused Fun*. Each “C” is an important component of our overall philosophy.



Commitment to Artistry

Our first goal is to build an environment where students explore the art of dance to its fullest. Rather than simply focusing on technique or flashy tricks, students gain intangible elements such as self-expression, creativity, and story-telling through movement. We practice this by:

- creating choreography that strives to develop technique, performance, and self-expression
- exposing dancers to professional performances through video and group outings
- sharing dance history
- giving students opportunities to develop their own artistic voice within rehearsals and classes

Collaborative Learning & Continued Growth

Through required ballet, tap, and jazz classes, our company dancers become well-rounded dance artists while learning a unique set of qualities within each dance form.

TAP - Musicality, Rhythm, Sequencing

JAZZ - Style, Speed, Sharpness, Control

BALLET - Placement, Strength, Flexibility, Grace, Balance

HIP HOP - Dynamics, Attack, Personality

LYRICAL/CONTEMPORARY - Emotion, Phrasing, Individuality

REHEARSAL - Teamwork, Memory, Discipline, Performance Quality, Collaboration

The dance competitions we attend provide students with adjudicated performance feedback and exposure to other dancers and choreographers throughout the area. Our in-studio workshop is comprised of master teachers who share their knowledge with an expanded view of what dance is and can be. These opportunities allow students to make connections from outer expression to self-reflection as they continue their journey of growth!

Community & Connection

Dance Company is both a large team and small team all at once. Students build connections with members of their core groups as well as with older and younger dancers in other groups. We also connect with the community at large through:

- local community performances
- raising money for charity through our Spread Kindness Company Showcase
- opportunities for volunteering

Child-Focused Choices

In everything we do, the whole child comes first. Our choices center around choreography and costuming that are age-appropriate and family friendly. We choose dance skills that are safe and developmentally-appropriate. Choreographic choices are based around what is best for our students' growth in the long-term, not what is trendy, popular, or might "win more points."

Challenge

Our choreography is designed to challenge our dancers and push them out of their comfort zones, while maintaining artistic integrity and best-practices for developing skills in proper succession for strength and safety. Dancers work toward a unified group goal of performing clean, energetic, safe, and synchronized dances. Individually, dancers spend time at the beginning of the year creating personalized dance goals.

Celebration!

Lastly, one of the main reasons we created our Youth Dance Company is CELEBRATION! Dance Company gives our students the opportunity to:

- celebrate achievements
- celebrate hard work through fun performances
- celebrate the joy of movement and the joy of moving an audience
- celebrate coming together with friends

Attending competitions is part of dance company, however, we are not in it for the wins or the awards. We are in it for the celebration of how far our dancers have grown and challenged themselves each time they perform!



Dance Company Policies & Requirements



Performances, Competitions, Workshops

Please refer to the Company Activity Calendar for dates and times.

All Dance Company dancers must attend the following events:

- 2 required Dance Competitions
- Spread Kindness Dance Company Showcase
- In-Studio Workshop Weekend*
- In-Studio Dress Rehearsal

Dance Company dancers are encouraged to attend the following events:

- Local Community Performances
- Local Performance at Senior Living Center
- Team Outings to Professional Dance and Theatre Performances & Company Parties

* Dancers who do not attend the In-Studio Workshop Weekend will be required to attend an outside dance convention on their own, in which we would you register for at the family's expense.

Attendance, Classes, & Rehearsals

Our class and rehearsal format differs by age group. Our Explorations and Accelerations level companies will have jazz and tap technique classes that are combined with their rehearsals. We feel that this format will give the dancers the more intensive training that is needed for their levels. See the requirements below:

Elements & Foundations Level

- one ballet class per week
- one tap class per week
- one jazz class per week
- 45 min rehearsal time

Explorations & Accelerations Level

- tap rehearsal + technique
- jazz rehearsal + technique
- one or more ballet classes per week
- two Progressions & Conditioning classes per month

Excellent attendance is important for progress in technique classes and rehearsals. The Attendance policy is as follows:

- Dancers are allowed 2 company rehearsal absences per session (fall, winter, spring). If your dancer has more than 2 absences, per rehearsal, during a session, their teacher will assess whether a private lesson is needed (which will be an additional expense).
- Dancers are allowed 2 absences per technique class, per session. We encourage dancers to do make-ups for all technique class absences, but they must do make-ups for any absences of 3 or more per style, per session. They may also schedule private lessons (which would be an additional expense).

No company rehearsals can be missed the week of competitions or performances unless approved in advance or due to illness. No exceptions! Missing rehearsal the week of competitions or performances without approval will result in your dancer needing to take a private lesson that week at the family's expense.

Dance Company Participation Options



Required & Optional Company Dance Styles

Every member of our Youth Dance Company will be required to participate in a jazz company dance and a tap company dance*. Our youngest dance companies will begin by learning a jazz dance, and if they are making good progress, they will add a tap dance as well.

*Dancers ages 9 & older with no prior tap experience will not be placed in a tap company this year, but instead will be assigned an appropriate required tap class for the 2025-2026 school year.

Dancers are also invited to participate in the following OPTIONAL dance company experiences:

Musical Theatre Company

Hip Hop Company (invitation only)

Contemporary Company (invitation only)

Acro Company (invitation only)

Solos, Duets, and Trios – these dances have an opportunity to go to an optional 3rd competition

Each optional company listed above will have its own separate rehearsal time in the schedule. Invitation only means that while our dance company accepts all interested dancers, these particular styles have fewer groups and thus are chosen based on student readiness for the style, as determined by the instructors.

Solos, duets, and trios are wonderful opportunities! However, dancers who elect to do these must be ready to learn quickly and be dedicated to practicing at home. The solos, duets, and trios will receive 6 hours of rehearsal time with their choreographer as well as open rehearsal times with other routines and a rehearsal director.

Dance Company Policies & Requirements



Class Etiquette & Attitude Expectations

We expect our company dancers to be role models throughout our studio and within the community. All members are expected to show respect for the studio, teachers, and their fellow dancers. Company members are expected to always be in dress code and to be an example of good classroom behavior.

We love for our dancers to become friends and we ask that all teams remember to be kind and inclusive of their teammates.

Dance Company dancers must be willing to practice at home - outside of their classes & rehearsals.

We strongly believe that dance is all about creating positivity, community, and joy! The competitions we participate in give our dancers performance opportunities as well as chances to receive feedback from other dance professionals. Awards and recognitions are an added bonus, but not our aim or focus. We expect all company members and families to be positive and supportive of each other, to be kind, and to cheer on their teammates. Dancers and their families should treat dancers from other studios in this same manner.

Dance Company Code of Conduct

All dance company members must show respect and kindness to their peers, teachers, and all Movement & Sound staff. Negative and disrespectful talk, as well as gossip and bullying are strictly prohibited. Any kind of threatening behavior or physical aggression will not be tolerated. **Please see the FULL Dance Company Code of Conduct at the end of this handbook, which all dancers and guardians must sign and return to us prior to the beginning of the season.**

Spirit Wear & Team Jackets

All spirit wear and dance company clothing is completely optional. Everyone will receive a complimentary studio t-shirt that can be worn at community events, performances, and at competition award ceremonies. If your dancer already has one, but needs a new size, please let us know. A company jacket is not required, but we've found that many dancers like to get one to show team spirit and pride. It is completely up to you! Jacket and spirit wear order forms will be available at a later date.

Fees, Payments & Approximate Costs

Please see the Company Payment Calendar for details. The competition entry fees, in-studio workshop fees, and company costume fees are non-refundable.



Dancer & Parent Contract - Company 2025-2026

We agree to all policies of the Movement & Sound Dance LLC Youth Dance Company as laid out in this handbook and in any email correspondence. We acknowledge that we must attend all required events, performances, classes, and rehearsals. We acknowledge that we are responsible for completing all payments. All dance company fees are non-refundable.

Dancer's Name:

.....

Dancer's Signature:

.....

Parent's Signature:

.....

Date:

.....

Youth Dance Company Code of Conduct 2025-2026

As a member of our dance company, each dancer represents not only themselves but our team, values, and community. The following Code of Conduct must be upheld at all times, both inside and outside of the studio.

1. Be Respectful

- Show respect to instructors, fellow dancers, staff, and parents.
- Listen actively and follow directions the first time they are given.
- Treat all company property and rehearsal/performance spaces with care.

2. Be Kind

- Support and encourage one another.
- Celebrate others' successes without jealousy or comparison.
- Use kind words and actions in all interactions.

3. No Gossip or Bullying

- Gossip, rumors, or hurtful speech will not be tolerated.
- Creating or spreading negativity within the team is considered a serious offense.
- All team members are expected to foster a positive and inclusive environment.

4. Zero Tolerance for Physical Aggression

- Any form of physical aggression (pushing, hitting, threatening, etc.) is strictly prohibited.
- Physical aggression will result in immediate removal from the team, with no exceptions.

5. Practice Accountability

- Own your behavior and choices.
- If you make a mistake, take responsibility and work to make it right.
- Arrive on time, come prepared, and give your best effort at every rehearsal, class, and performance.

Financial Responsibility

Please note: Dismissal from the team due to a violation of this Code of Conduct may result in forfeiture of any tuition, fees, or performance costs already paid. This includes, but is not limited to, costs for costumes, rehearsals, travel, and competitions. No refunds will be issued under these circumstances.

Agreement & Signature

By signing below, both dancer and parent/guardian acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to follow the Youth Dance Company Code of Conduct. They understand that any violation of this Code may result in disciplinary action, including removal from the team without refund.

Dancer Name (Print): _____

Dancer Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____