



COMPETITIVE TEAM PROGRAM

A Guide for Students and Parents

About This Handbook

FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES our school has been a leader in dance education. We believe that our success comes as a result of providing solid training and quality service, along with an underlying belief in the strength of our organization. We have created this handbook to offer our dancers and their parents a clear understanding of their commitments and responsibility to the Competitive Team Program and the school.

➤ **Dates and/or expenses listed in this handbook are subject to change. Please check your email each week for updates.**

For Our Dancers

Congratulations! You have been accepted onto our Competitive Team. The first step to becoming a successful dancer is making a solid commitment to your classes, rehearsals, and performances. Strong technique is a key ingredient and class is where you develop that technique. Come to each class prepared to learn and without personal distractions. Class time is your chance to focus on yourself, so try to leave your concerns or worries at the studio door. True progress is made when you look at each class, rehearsal, or performance as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do. Dance full out, stretch a little further, become more aware of your technique, and make the most of every class.

Respect for the teachers and choreographers you work with, is essential. Listen to each correction given, whether it's directed to you or another dancer. A correction is an honour; it shows you how much a teacher cares about your progress as a dancer. Always say thank you when a teacher or choreographer offers you constructive criticism. Nothing can stop those students who apply themselves in every class and appreciate their teachers' knowledge and experience.

All rehearsals are dedicated to choreography or "cleaning" the choreography. A dancer who misses a rehearsal holds back the progress of the entire group. Repeating the choreography from a previous session for those who were absent takes up valuable rehearsal time, which could result in a performance that is not up to par. When we clean choreography, we may also change it. Dancers who miss a cleaning session may not be properly prepared for the upcoming performance and could end up letting themselves, their team, or the school down.

Performances and competitions are your opportunity to show the world the results of your dedication and hard work. To make the most of this opportunity:

- Be ready to perform at least one hour prior to the scheduled time, unless otherwise advised by your teachers. This means arriving at least two hours beforehand in order to allow yourself time to get ready.
- Be sure you are properly warmed up and in full costume.
- Present yourself in a professional manner, with hair done properly and neatly, costumes pressed, shoes cleaned, and all accessories accounted for.
- Go out there and show the audience how much you love to dance!

➤ True progress is made when you look at each class, rehearsal, or performance as an opportunity to become better at what you love to do.

For the Parents: *“We’re in this together”*

We believe that children’s success depends on the support of their parents or guardians. Because your commitment to the process makes an enormous difference, we encourage you to be a part of your child’s dance education.

Our program relies on a positive atmosphere for our faculty, Competitive Team, and their parents; it promotes a positive learning experience for all involved. Cooperation between all parents is expected. Showing respect for the other parents, along with the students and faculty, makes an important impression on the children. You are a role model for your child in how to interact with others in a professional setting.

Your child’s presence at all classes, rehearsals, and performances is mandatory. The spirit of teamwork and the lesson of dedication are a big part of our school’s educational process. This is a full season commitment for everyone involved.

Parents and teachers may look at a child’s learning from different perspectives. However, they share a common goal: to assure that every child receives the best possible training, both physically and mentally. Mutual respect between our faculty and our dancers’ parents provides the children with the ultimate care and education.

Understanding Dance Education

As a parent, the financial support of your student is important, but of equal—perhaps even greater—value is your emotional support. Encourage your child to be the best that he or she can be without regard to what others may achieve. Dance is an individual art form; each child needs to achieve at a pace that’s comfortable for him or her. No two students will progress at the same rate, even if they experience the exact same training. It’s important to encourage the children to focus on themselves, give their all, and be satisfied with their own accomplishments.

Dance education encompasses far more than technique or the steps your children will learn. We believe the discipline of dance training gives young people a better understanding of commitment by offering them the chance to learn, experience the spirit of teamwork, and understand what hard work can accomplish. Our goal is to educate the minds, bodies, and souls of our students, to teach them the skills needed for a successful life, whether or not they stay involved in dance.

➤ The financial support of your student is important, but of equal—perhaps even greater—value is your **emotional support**.

Class or Choreography Placement

The school faculty meets regularly to discuss the students' progress and/or placement. It is our policy to offer appropriate opportunities to every child.

Placement decisions are derived from many years of teaching experience. Often a child is placed in a particular group or class where he or she will feel confident, in order to promote the development of self-esteem. Some dancers who are placed in a higher level become discouraged, only to lose their passion for dance. Others respond to the challenge of being in a class with dancers who are more proficient by pushing themselves to work harder. Placement is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex. Please see the competitive director if you have questions or concerns about your child's placement.

Dos and Don'ts

Some parents may compare their child's progress or class or choreography placement to that of others in the program. Watch for this behavior in your children as well, and encourage them to focus on their own accomplishments. Looking to others for inspiration is a good thing; however, a negative focus or comparison distracts from the energy that could be focused on becoming a stronger dancer. In addition, speaking negatively about your child's teachers, fellow dancers, or other parents in front of your child—or other students/parents—could result in problems far beyond your original concerns. Often children will react to their parents in a way that imitates the parent's behavior with other adults or authority figures.

Children learn important lessons from their teachers and parents, acquiring important behavior patterns through their example. Our school's faculty takes that responsibility seriously. It's our philosophy to encourage our students to feel, think, and act respectfully to their peers, the adults in their lives, and themselves.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's dance education, don't panic—and please don't talk only with other parents when questions arise. Make an appointment to speak directly to your child's teachers or the director of the school. *Please conduct all communication through the school office rather than approaching your child's teacher or the director between or during classes or calling them at home.*

If you do request a conference, please listen carefully to what your child's teachers have to say. They spend a significant amount of time with your child and can offer expertise in the field of dance education.

➤ **Class placement of students is highly individual and the factors that go into the decision are complex.**

For Dancers and Parents

Image

The children and parents involved in the Competitive Team participate in many outside activities, each of which becomes a reflection of the school's philosophy.

Please keep the following in mind:

- We never speak negatively about teachers, dancers, or parents from our own or other schools.
- We never create conflict with the directors or judges of events in which we participate.
- We never recruit dancers from other schools.
- The school director handles all communication with the directors of our outside activities.
- No parent or dancer may call or question the directors of any event. If you have a concern, please contact the director of our school.

TIPS: DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Solid black leotard with pink tights for ballet and suntan tights for tap and jazz
- ✓ All team participants must have and wear the appropriate shoes for class.
- ✓ Additional shoe styles may be required for competition; please check with the school office.
- ✓ Hair must be in a bun, bangs pinned back for all classes.

➤ **Competitive Team Dancers are required to dress in full uniform, wear appropriate tights (no holes) and shoes for all classes and rehearsals. Make sure shoes are clean and polished for each performance. Worn tights and shoes must be replaced.**

Classes

All dancers are expected to attend their regularly scheduled classes in addition to all rehearsals and performances. A total of five class days per season may be missed. Any team member with poor attendance will be dismissed from the program. Birthday Parties, sleepovers, etc are NOT valid reasons for missing class.

Dancers will receive a class schedule in September. The program includes ballet, tap, jazz, and production, as well as other optional classes. There may be additional classes, including master classes, in which it is expected that all team members will participate. There may be an additional charge for some master classes.

All dancers must show respect for their teachers and fellow students at all times. Inappropriate behavior could result in dismissal from the program.

Rehearsal and Other Information

Rehearsals are an important part of the commitment to the Competitive Team. All dancers are expected to work hard and arrive early enough to give themselves time to warm up.

Additional rehearsals outside of regular class time may be scheduled at the discretion of the teacher/choreographer. All dancers are required to participate.

Please note that mandatory rehearsals will be held immediately after the March Break and all dancers are expected to attend. **DO NOT book vacations that run past or after March Break.** Dancers that vacation before March Break are expected to attend March Break Camp in order to catch up. All other Team Members are

strongly encouraged to sign up, as we begin competing shortly afterwards. 100% attendance is mandatory from March Break until Recital.

Competitive Dancers are expected to attend all rehearsals during the season. A season starts in September and ends after the Strawberry Festival in July. Dancers who need to be excused are required to notify the school 24 hours prior to the scheduled rehearsal. Any dancer excused from a rehearsal is responsible for learning any missed choreography prior to arriving for the next rehearsal.

All competitive dancers must attend rehearsals in proper dance attire and appropriate shoes. Team members are required to wear their hair (and bangs) pulled back or in a bun for all rehearsals. All classes/rehearsals require a black leotard and tights (no holes).

➤ It is expected that all dancers will be on their best behavior during both class and rehearsals. Work as team players at all times.

Tuition and Expense Policy

Part of the commitment to the Competitive Team is being up-to-date with all accounts related to participation.

In an effort to offer all young people the opportunity to experience the Competitive Team, we offer a tuition discount over the comparable number recreational classes. Tuition is due by the 1st of each month, payable by post-dated cheque or pre-authorized credit card. **No exceptions will be made to this policy.**

LEVEL	TUITION (Due the 1st of each month)
Registration	\$25
KinderComp <i>1.5 hrs. per week: KinderComp Technique & Choreography</i>	\$99/ month + HST
Mini Competitive Program <i>2.25 hrs. per week: Ballet, Jazz Technique & Choreography + \$29/month each additional class</i>	\$149/month + HST
Part Time B Competitive Program <i>3.75 hrs. per week: Ballet, Jazz, Production + \$29/month each additional class</i>	\$179/month + HST
Part Time A Competitive Program <i>5.25 hrs. per week: Ballet, Jazz, Production, 1 additional discipline + \$29/month each additional class</i>	\$199/month + HST
Full Time Competitive Program <i>Minimum 6 hrs. per week: Ballet 2x per week + unlimited competitive group classes</i>	\$249/month + HST
Solo <i>(Full Time Team Members only)</i>	\$79/month + HST
Duet or Trio <i>(Full Time Team Members only)</i>	\$49 per month, per dancer each
Additional Small Group	\$39 per month, per dancer each

➤ Entry fees for competitions or conventions are due upon receipt of invoices.

➤ All costume balances must be paid for in full upon receipt of invoices.

The Focus Is Not Simply on Competition

Since it is our goal to instill a passion for performing rather than merely the desire to win awards, Competitive dancers have performance opportunities other than competitions. They perform at the Santa Claus Parade and our Christmas show in December as well as the Strawberry Festival in July. When we have the opportunity, there are demonstrations at local schools and other similar performance opportunities. We believe the lessons learned through concert performances are just as valuable as the competition experience.

Our solid reputation for quality reflects our attitude toward competition and our goal to develop in each student a genuine respect for dance as an art form. We consider participation in competitions not simply part of our students' training as dancers; it's also an important part of how we influence them as people. With the right focus, the experience gained in competition can be an excellent source of self-confidence. If the dancers feel good about a performance and understand that they become better each time they go onstage, they are truly growing through the competition experience. Hitting that stage and doing the best they can is what it's all about; whether they win—or which award they win—is secondary.

Through participation in competitions, we hope to instill in our students an appreciation for other dancers and schools. We are not out to beat anyone; instead, we hope to motivate both students and faculty by exposing them to the highest caliber of talent available. Only then can we produce the best dancers and teachers possible. For us, competition is an education!

➤ We believe the lessons learned through concert performances are just as valuable as the competition experience.

ABOUT COMPETITIONS

Attendance

When a competition runs over the entire weekend, we expect our Team Members to attend the full event when they are competing on a particular day. We work as a team, always available to support each other. **All dancers are required to attend the adjudications for their dances.**

Independent Entries

No dancer may compete in any competition as an independent entry without the permission of the school director.

Preparing for the Stage at Competition

Once you have your dancer in costume, hair and makeup we ask that you please leave your dancer to rehearse with the competitive or dance director. The distraction of an audience can make it difficult for dancers to focus where they need to, before their performances. Avoid planning dinners or other social events with your dancer during a competition as extra rehearsals may be called.

Cash Awards

All group, duet or trio monetary awards will be used towards the purchase of props, etc for the team. All solo monetary awards from competitions will be payable to individual dancer in the form of a scholarship for the following summer training fees. In the event that a dancer does not attend, scholarships will be forfeited.

Showcase

Prior to competition season, we stage a competitive team rehearsal and showcase. This is a full day event for the dancers. It is an opportunity to stage all of the dances on a full-size stage for both the dancers and the teachers/choreographers.

The day culminates in a recital-style showcase performance of all the competitive dances. This is the only opportunity for family and friends to see all of their dances in a single performance-albeit in rehearsal mode.

All families are required to purchase a minimum of 6 tickets at \$25 each to cover the costs of the rehearsal showcase (cash or cheque only).

Activity Agenda (subject to change)

DATE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	TIME
SEPTEMBER 8	FIRST DAY OF CLASS	STOUFFVILLE ACADEMY	4:00 PM
DECEMBER 6, 2014	SANTA CLAUS PARADE	TBA	2:00 PM
DECEMBER 20, 2014	CHRISTMAS SHOW	19 ON THE PARK	TBA
JANUARY 20, 2015	COMPETITIVE COSTUME BALANCES POSTED		
THURSDAY, JANUARY 29	SHOWCASE TICKETS AVAILABLE	STOUFFVILLE ACADEMY	5:00 PM
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7	REHEARSAL & SLEEPOVER	STOUFFVILLE ACADEMY	DROP OFF 2 PM, PICK UP 9 AM
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9	COMPETITIVE COSTUME BALANCES PROCESSED		
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20	COMPETITIVE ENTRY FEES POSTED		
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28	COMPETITIVE SHOWCASE	AJAX	TBA
MONDAY, MARCH 9	COMPETITIVE ENTRY FEES PROCESSED		
MARCH 16 – 20	MARCH BREAK PROGRAM	STOUFFVILLE ACADEMY	10:00 – 4:00 PM
MARCH 27 - 29	COMPETITION 1	OSHAWA	TBA
FRIDAY, APRIL 10	DANCE RECITAL TICKETS ON SALE	STOUFFVILLE ACADEMY	6:00 PM
APRIL 10 - 12	COMPETITION 2	BARRIE	TBA
SUNDAY, APRIL 19	RECITAL PHOTOS	STOUFFVILLE ACADEMY	TBA
MAY 1 - 3	COMPETITION 3	AJAX	TBA
TUESDAY, MAY 19	SATURDAY RECITALS FINALE REHEARSAL	COUNTRY DAY PAC	TBA
WEDNESDAY, MAY 20	SUNDAY RECITALS FINALE REHEARSAL	COUNTRY DAY PAC	TBA
FRIDAY, MAY 22	DRESS REHEARSAL	COUNTRY DAY PAC	4:15 PM
SATURDAY, MAY 23	RECITALS	COUNTRY DAY PAC	TBA
SUNDAY, MAY 24	RECITALS	COUNTRY DAY PAC	TBA
MAY 28 – 31	COMPETITION 4	BLUE MOUNTAIN	BOOK NOW – CODE GRP107544
JUNE 26-28	STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL	TBA	TBA
JULY - AUGUST	SUMMER PROGRAMS (REQUIRED)	STOUFFVILLE ACADEMY	10 AM – 4 PM

- Please attend all meetings and read all newsletters and postings to keep updated about any additional commitments.

Competition Entry Fees

Budget approximately 45 – 50 per group entry fee, per competition and 75 – 90 per solo, duet or trio.

- Entry fees will be posted to family accounts February 20, 2015 and will be processed to credit cards/bank accounts March 9, 2015 (Most competitions are open to the public at no charge.)

Costumes

Costume payments are the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian. One Costume is required for each dance Team Members perform in. The average cost of a costume is \$199 to \$249 + HST. A deposit of \$110 per costume is due November 10. The balance due for costumes will be processed February 9, 2015. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**

If a Competitive Team dancer is dismissed from the program, an understudy will replace him or her. The student leaving the team is expected to turn in all costumes to the school office; they will be returned to the student after the last performance of the season. There are no refunds on competition or costume fees.

TIPS: COSTUME COMMON SENSE

- ✓ All jewellery /piercings MUST be removed (no exceptions), except for team jewellery. Do not pierce anything after Christmas break.
- ✓ Double check that ALL Costume pieces and accessories are packed before and after each performance
- ✓ Always have a second pair of tights available.
- ✓ Place costumes in a garment bag for travel.
- ✓ Carry hats in a hatbox or container to prevent them from damage.
- ✓ Hang and press (carefully) costumes before each performance.
- ✓ Place your name in all costumes and shoes.

TIPS: COMPETITION DANCE BAG CHECKLIST

- ✓ Costumes (take care, as above)
- ✓ All accessories
- ✓ Dance Shoes
- ✓ Extra Tights
- ✓ Hair Spray & Gel
- ✓ Hair Donut (If needed)
- ✓ Hair & Bobby Pins
- ✓ Hair Net (to match hair colour)
- ✓ Hair Brush
- ✓ Makeup Kit & Brushes
- ✓ Safety Pins
- ✓ Clear Nail Polish
- ✓ Band Aids
- ✓ Needle & Thread

Summer Dance Program

The Summer Dance Program is a mandatory activity for all Competitive dancers.

Summer training allows for a more intensely focused instruction period, where dancers can work on moving forward both technically and artistically. KinderComp, Single, Mini & Part-time Team Members are required to train for **one** week over the summer and Full Time Team Members are required to train for **three**. *Please note: Dancers who wish to be eligible for Solos, Duets and Trios must be Full Time Team Members.*

➤ All Summer Program tuition is due upon registration.

A Final Note

WELCOME TO THE COMPETITIVE TEAM! We look forward to an exciting, rewarding season!