

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to a great year of dance and tumble. If you are new to the school or a valued returning student, this letter will bring you up to date on any changes for the fall season. Fall classes begin the week of August 7th. Our staff is here to help and encourage the new student to join in and have fun in this challenging world of dance & tumble! Here are some helpful hints you will need to know to make each visit to our studio a rewarding one for your child.

Selecting the best class time for your busy schedule and being on time each week is important to your child. By missing the first five minutes of class, two problems occur:

First, physically, class is designed from the first minute to warm up, then as we progress, to cool down each muscle group in a correct manner. This promotes a strong body and lessens the chance of injury. Secondly, psychologically, arriving late distracts the mind from the discipline of the work to be learned. I have noticed most young students do not like to be singled out and are embarrassed when late.

It's best for your child to have the security of coming to class knowing what is expected, to fit in comfortably, and to recognize the other students. It's also helpful for us to know if you have decided to cancel your place in class. Our Dress Code can be found on our website at www.lcdanceco.com under the "Classes and Schedules" tab. Proper class attire is important in class. It helps the teacher in evaluating the progress of the student and gives the students a sense of unity as a group. Dress code items may be purchased by visiting our online store. You have the first two weeks after you sign up for classes or the first two weeks of August to purchase your class attire. Visit our website for a link to purchase class attire: www.lcdanceco.com. If you choose not to purchase your class attire through LCDC, please visit our "Classes & Schedules" tab located on our website for class attire instructions. Some classes have restrictions with certain shoes, etc. You can be sized for classwear at the front desk.

All long hair needs to be up off the neck, preferably in a bun for dance classes and ponytail or braid for tumble classes. Keeping a small bag in your dance/tumble tote filled with elastic bands, bobby pins, hair nets, and a hairbrush is an excellent habit to always be prepared for class. Please remove all jewelry from your child before attending class. The less adorned your child is, the safer they will be in a class situation. Food and drinks are not allowed in the dance/tumble rooms. Street shoes are also not allowed in the dance/tumble rooms.

All students are given a general introduction to movement and are allowed to progress at their own pace. The classes are varied and unfold at a quick pace to maintain interest. Children are originally placed in the appropriate age group. As a student is ready to advance, no matter what their age, they are transferred to another level at the appropriate time. In this way the progress of all is not restricted.

Understanding and reasoning out the repetitive training needed for dance and tumble is a big step forward. We have seen students understand the concept of training within a few lessons and are able to move up the levels quickly, others may take longer. Our brains immediately begin to intellectually understand what is needed to accomplish the work but the muscles take intensive repetition to memorize the movement.

What all these children have in common is a desire to dance & tumble. Now they begin the process of gaining strength, endurance, and technique. On the average this takes many years. The training will take

this long due to several factors: The age of the child when he/she begins and the amount of time per week they train.

Ballet Students:

The first half hour of Ballet class is spent at the ballet barre learning the repetitious exercises that strengthen muscles and align the body in preparation for all dance forms. Ballet is the basis of all dance, for without it you may not improve. At ages 7 and up these bodies are still in the physical development stages until 12 when the bones begin to solidify. This is the main reason children should not be allowed to go en pointe until then. When they reach this age and have been consistently in class at two or more times a week for more than a year, their structural strength may be ready for pointe work. Realigning the spine and developing the muscular strength to hold correct placement is a long process.

Tumble Students:

In tumble they will learn stretches, rolls, cartwheels, and so on. Please be aware your child may twist and hurt their necks trying to work around a lump of hair, bulky barrette, or bow on top of the head. All hair needs to be pulled out of the child's face.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS for 6 & under classes:

****PLEASE SEE OUR POLICY HANDBOOK ON INSTRUCTIONS OF HOW TO DROP OFF YOUR 6 & UNDER CHILD****

Baby & Me Classes -

Baby & Me classes are a fun way for a caregiver and their babies or young toddlers to connect with each other in a playful environment with other caregivers and their babies. You get to shake up daily baby routines and interact with others. They also get a chance to get some exercise, and experience first time interactions with other little ones. These classes are a fun learning environment for both caregiver and child. Classes not only stimulate the learning process in the child, but nurture the existing bond between caregiver and child in a way that allows the caregiver to break away from the stresses of parenthood, while learning how to simultaneously play and grow with your child. We will begin to phase out the adults toward the end of the year so that students are ready to start out on their own the following year. This also helps them to be ready to dance or tumble on stage by themselves, if you choose to have them in our end of the year recital.

Twinkle Babies - Ages 2-3

A thirty-minute introductory dance class containing ballet, tap and creative movement. Young dancers will learn the basic steps while learning how to follow direction and imitate movement in a positive environment. Engaging music is used to get these little guys inspired to dance. The use of props such as Twinkle bears and hula hoops, enables the young dancers to use their imagination, creativity and, most of all, have fun!

What to expect on the first day with your Twinkle Baby!

We are very excited to welcome your little one to our Twinkle Babies Dance program. They come into the classroom very slowly, but make the most measurable progress by the end of the year!! We look forward to seeing all of the beautiful little dancers all dressed in pink! We know that as a parent you have a vision for how you think the first day will go. I am writing this letter in order to give you some ideas of how it might go, and how it might not. All children are different and react differently in situations. Usually a brand new 2 year old will cling to mom as they walk in the studio door, as they are unaware of their environment. Everything to

them is new. Please arrive early on the first day in order to get them acclimated to their new teacher and environment.

It is perfectly normal for a very young dancer to have a bout of separation anxiety. Separation anxiety is one of the most common issues on the first day. You may overcome this by explaining to your child before they arrive that “mommy won’t leave the studio while you are in class.” Our Twinkle Babies Dance class is designed as a teacher/child class. Our policy is that all parents need to be in the waiting room when class is in session. We also need to keep the door to the studio closed during class in order to avoid any wandering dancers. We will work with you and your child to achieve success in bringing happy dancers into the classroom without mom. This is a gradual process for most babies.

Have you ever noticed that when one 2 year old begins to cry, the others follow suit? We have observed this as well and it is why we need to have any crying child wait with mom outside at the door until they feel confident to come to class or back in class. We know this sounds harsh, but we will make every attempt at calming your child and getting them to join the class that we possibly can, before we ask the mom to come. Sometimes the child is actually upset just being in the room, so you may calm them down more effectively outside. It’s important that the parent offer only love and support to a child in this state. In the past we let the parent of an unsure child remain in the room with the child; however, we found that this practice can distract other dancers, and the inability for Mom to leave the room in subsequent weeks, as the child has learned, “my mommy stays with me”.

Most of the time our little dancers come into the room right away and never look back. Sometimes our little dancers aren’t ready for a teacher/child class. As parents, we won’t know until we try. Please remember that it sometimes takes a few weeks in order for the child to warm up to the idea, even if they LOVE to dance. A 2-year-old dancer will decide on their own within three or four lessons to participate. It is totally normal for the dancers to not dance on the first day and it WILL get better. Sometimes it takes a few weeks. Also, a young dancer will sense a parent’s frustration and disappointment, which will turn the dance studio into a negative place. It’s important to remain loving and supportive toward the dancer.

Lastly, our goal on the first day is to get every child into the class without mom and without crying. If we have done that we have succeeded. Please don’t be alarmed if your child just stands in her hula hoop and stares at the teacher jumping up and down. They are simply observing their environment. They will dance when they are ready!!! We hope you all have a positive experience at our studio. Please don’t hesitate to call us if you have questions or concerns.

Twinkle Stars Dance - Ages 3-4, 4-5 & 5-6

An age-specific 45 minute class containing ballet, tap and jazz/creative movement. The purpose of the class is to introduce young dancers to the three styles of dance and inspire movement and creativity within a positive environment. Dancers will also learn basic steps and terminology in all three styles. For example, all dancers will learn what a “plie” is and how to demonstrate one. The use of fun, age appropriate music engages the young dancers’ minds and bodies. The use of props such as hula hoops for the “freeze dance” makes the end of class the most fun! Placement Notes: Twinkle Stars Dance 3-4 students must be at least 3 1/2 years old.

What to expect with a 3-6 year old dancer:

The beginning dance student’s interest in dance is emotional. They have seen dance everywhere in movies and shows of all kinds. But what they have seen is the finished product. It looks so effortless and easy. What the student must realize is these dancers have had many years of training! The dance teacher’s job is to teach the reality of dance. The hard work , the dedication, the repetition of steps, the aches, and the

triumphs. In the first lesson the new student begins to realize they are not going to magically dance when we first put on the music. In fact, what they are asked to do is not even near their conception of 'dance.' This adjustment manifests itself in various ways depending on the child's age and reaction to new situations or change. A child might demand aggressively "But when do I get to dance?" Some come totally prepared in mind and body, willing and ready to learn. Then we have the shy one who hangs back. Many want to join in, but their fear stops them. Our success with this type of child begins with the parent leaving the room. Now the child may relate to us as we encourage the student to watch class. In this way, seeing how and what is expected of them, eases the fear of unknown. It is never "you have to do this with us" rather "sit with me, watch, and see if you want to try this." Within five minutes this child usually joins in. In this class the instruction is informal yet structured. The program is basic technique, with the presentation of the material, ballet and jazz, changing each month. Because the young body is still developing, we do not allow any stress on the bones or muscular structure. There is no demand of detail or precision. Parents, if your child is upset the first few weeks of class you do not need to exit the changing room. Instead, you can stay and wait and watch class while holding your child at the door. Most students want to join back in. Please wait until the music has stopped. You do not ever want to send them in during an exercise.

There are a few things I would like to go over with you to make sure that the rest of this year runs as smoothly as possible for you and your children:

Most communication will be through e-mail. This includes: reminders of holidays and special events, if a teacher is sick and class is canceled, and so on. This is the most efficient way of communicating. *So please check your e-mail weekly, if not daily!*

If you have a concern that you would like to talk to an instructor about personally, please feel free to schedule an appointment with our front desk or send us an e-mail and we would be glad to help you.

We accept checks, cash, debit or credit cards. The use of a debit or credit card will require a 4% fee for swipes and 5% for keyed in transactions to your total bill. Please clarify on all checks your student's name and what you are applying your check towards. Sometimes grandparents and other family members who are paying for a child's fees have a different last name; therefore, we are unable to connect the check to a student. If you are paying with cash, please put it in an envelope with your child's name written on the outside.

It is with great excitement that you and I can look forward to many rewarding years of dance and tumble for you child. It is the special friendships developed, the discipline learned for all walks of life, and experience gained which will benefit your child for the rest of their life.

Thank you for choosing LCDC and we are so happy to have you part of the family!

Sincerely,
Lindsey-Claire Hutchins
Owner