



# The Next Step School of Dance

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*COME FOR CLASS, STAY FOR COMMUNITY!*

## What to Expect on the First Day of Dance Class...

Dear Parents,

We are very excited to welcome your little one to The Next Step School of Dance. We look forward to seeing all of the beautiful little dancers! 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 student 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 environment.

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 will watch them through the window during the first few classes and that mommy won't leave during the duration of the class.

Our classes are 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 in 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 of our younger dancers.

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 child that is upset wait with mom outside at the window until they feel confident to come back in. We know this sounds harsh, but we will make every attempt at calming your child and getting them to join in with the class before we ask them to exit the room. In the past if we let the parent of an unsure child remain in the room we have found that this practice can distract other dancers, and the inability for Mom to leave the room in subsequent weeks, as the child 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 also 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. We do however; offer a Baby & Company class which is a great starter program for a teacher/child/mom involvement.

Lastly, our goal on the first day is to get every child into the class without mom. 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

Thank you!

Julie Schirm

Owner/Artistic Director