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5 Things Every Parent Should Know Before Choosing a Dance or Gymnastics Studio

If most dance and gymnastics studios seem to have qualified, friendly teachers, experienced in teaching children and a big show at the end of the year, aren't they all pretty much the same? Does it really matter which place you decide to enroll? Yes. There are 5 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 fine arts program. Here are 5 things that every parent should consider before deciding on a dance or gymnastics studio for their child.

1. What type of floor and apparatus are used?

Dance & gymnastics are very physical activities that require a lot of jumping, which can put stress on bones and joints. Most dance and gymnastic footwear does not provide any cushioning or support, so the shock of the movement can place a lot of pressure on the knees and back of the student. The best way to prevent against potential injury is by choosing a studio with a professional "Floating Dance Floor" and a "Combo Spring and Foam Tumbling floor".

Our "floating" Dance Floor rests on a system of high density foam to absorb the shock and impact of regular dance movement. This benefits students by reducing fatigue and preventing injury that can result from dancing on hard surfaces.

The top layer of our flooring surface is a professional vinyl composite "Marley" floor similar to the surfaces used by the Royal Academy of Dancing in London, England and shows such as Riverdance. This Marley floor surface has a certain amount of controlled slip to allow for sliding in dance movement, but is not as slippery as common floor tiles found in most other dance studios. We also have the traditional hardwood top layer which provides excellent sound for tapping and slide for Ballroom.

Our "Spring and Foam Combo" gymnastics floor is a revolutionary combo spring floor system that combines hundreds of 4" coil springs and 4" foam blocks. The floor provides a combination of performance and protection wherein the steel coil springs provide lift and the foam blocks provide control.

Is your child receiving training in all the apparatus? We have all the apparatus used in gymnastics training, uneven bars, jr. bars, spring beams and training beams, tumble trak, trampoline and floor.

2. What is the size of the class?

If the 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.

Our dance studio limits all of our classes (ages 7 and up) to a maximum of just 12 students per class. Our “Creative Movement” classes (ages 3-4) are limited to a maximum of just 8 students per class, and “KinderDance” classes (ages 5-6) are limited to a maximum of just 10 per class. Our gymnastics classes are limited to 8 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 parts of their child’s costume together. 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 in addition to the recital fee.

Our studio uses our own professional seamstress to sew and alter the costumes (when needed), so parents do not have to worry about any costume hassles. Our studio also does not charge a ticket fee for our year-end show and gives a free recital t-shirt to all registered students. 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 an office manager on hand during all regular class times, so you can get immediate assistance.

5. What safety training does the staff have?

All staff members are CPR and 1st Aid certified and our gymnastics instructors are USA Gymnastics Safety Certified.