

6 Things Every Parent Should Know Before Choosing a Dance Studio

If most dance studios seem to have friendly teachers, experienced teaching children and produce a 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 at? YES. There are 6 things that can make a huge difference in the:

- Quality of instruction and safety your child receives
- Amount of extra work and stress the parents must deal with and
- Overall enjoyment and satisfaction of being involved with a dance program.

Here are the 6 things that every parent should consider before deciding on a dance studio for their child.

1. Is my child's teacher (or Dance Studio Director,) licensed, accredited and/or professionally trained?

Most parents are unaware that anyone (even unlicensed,) may open a dance studio. For any haircut or manicure your technician must be licensed. Isn't our children's education as important? Check to see where and with whom your child's dance teacher studied. Have they studied Anatomy, Movement Education, Physiology, Music, Kinesiology (how the body moves,) Child Psychology and Development, Early Childhood Education or Teacher preparation? Has the teacher attended any specialized teaching courses, granting a license to teach children? Is the teacher recognized by any professional organizations?

Beware of dance studios that employ teenagers to teach their Children's classes. Unfortunately, that is often the "norm" for neighborhood schools.

The Royal Academy of Dance (London) and Dance Masters of America and Dance Educators of America are wonderful resources. Dance Educators of America's Teacher Training School Graduates are also respected.

2. What type of syllabi (or guide) is taught at the school? Will he/she progress?

Starting your child in the right school is as important as planting your seeds in the best soil. "Recreational" programs are wonderful, but would you want your child to take music lessons without learning music theory or the ability to read music? Recreational programs that are also educationally professional are more "cost effective" for parents.

The Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) is an *internationally* accredited program taught in 85 countries worldwide. The RAD program has 10 levels designed especially for children and 6 professional vocational levels of study. Royal Academy Ballet Classes are "fun" where students also enjoy a rich education of music, dance history, culture and professional terminology. At *Stars on 9 Dance Center* every Ballet class enjoys this technique in 4 class divisions:

- **Classical Technique** (This is the technique at the barre and center familiar to most parents.)
- **Free Movement ~ Lyrical** (This teaches students beautiful & expressive hands, arms, poise, spins and "flowing" suspended moves.)
- **Rhythm and Music** (Students learn musical notation, rhythmic patterns & *how* to listen to music.)
- **Character Dance** (Ballet originated in the little European villages. In the RAD program, students learn the Russian, Hungarian, Polish, Greek, Italian and Irish national dances.)

Students at *Stars on 9 Dance Center* progress through:

- ❖ 16 Ballet levels
- ❖ 21 Tap levels
- ❖ Many styles of Jazz: Contemporary, Lyrical & Hip Hop
- ❖ Musical Theatre Arts

Beware of Dance studios that do not teach barre and center technique as a standard of excellence. That is where students gain strength, balance, coordination, agility, flexibility, poise, grace, musicality, timing, proper alignment, placement and balance.

Learning to "love to dance" is the special gift we share.

Stars on 9 Dance Center (302) 855-9595 www.Starson9.com

3. What is the size of the class?

If a dance 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 organize and make sure each student understands the concepts and instructions. A smaller class size also allows our teachers to ensure that students are not developing bad habits or improper technique.

Stars on 9 Dance Center small pre-school class size assures that fundamental concepts are being demonstrated, taught, explained, reviewed and practiced.

4. Is the focus of the school on “competition,” “winning trophies” and preparing for the annual recital or production?

Competitions involve extra classes, rehearsals, and costumes with extra expenses. Often, students are asked to endure humiliating “auditions” to be “accepted into the company” requiring students be the same size, same weight, wear the same wigs and make-up (even matching eyelashes). Competitive students learn one dance per year, perfecting this for many months for a few judges to critique. Then, (without parents & students even realizing it,) almost every entry (school, dancer and song,) “comes home with a winning trophy” “qualifying” to return for *more* competitions!

“Recital schools” rarely teach technique and often start teaching their one dance in the Fall (or January), and the entire year is focused on perfecting that one dance. Will your child be learning “how” to dance or just one dance?

At **Stars on 9 Dance Center** students can expect to learn several dances each year. As students develop stronger technique, they combine these progressions with stage formations and patterns.

5. Is the Dance Center conveniently located?

Stars on 9 Dance Center is centrally located in the heart of Sussex County, Delaware and easily accessible on Lewes Georgetown Highway (Route 9) on the westbound side.

Near: ♦Dupont Highway (Route 113) ♦Harbeson Road (Route 5) ♦Coastal Highway (Route 1)

Towns NORTH of <i>Stars on 9 Dance Center</i>		Towns SOUTH of <i>Stars on 9 Dance Center</i>		Towns EAST of <i>Stars on 9 Dance Center</i>		Towns WEST of <i>Stars on 9 Dance Center</i>	
Milton	Felton	Millsboro	Omar	Hollyville	Prime Hook	Hardscrabble	Philips Hall
Ellendale	Frederica	Shortly	Roxana	Lewes	Jimtown	Laurel	Mission
Federalburg	Bowers	Mission	Delmar	Rehoboth Beach	Beltown	Seaford	Cannon
Oakley	Milford	Shortly	Gumboro	Slaughter Beach	Nassau	Delmar	Greenwood
Greenwood	Camden	Wood Branch	Selbyville	Bethany Beach	Marshtown	Bridgeville	Oakley
Farmington	Dover	Phillips Hill		Long Neck	Harbeson	Frankford	Farmington
	Jefferson Crossing	Dagsboro		Angola	Oak Orchard	Wood Creek	Harrington
		Frankford				Bethel	Felton
						Hollyville	Federalburg
						Ellendale	Jefferson Crossing
						Shortly	

6. Can I get immediate assistance and positive customer service?

In many studios the teacher (or owner) conducts classes and does administration. By trying to do two jobs at once, the class may suffer as the teacher uses class time for customer service issues, or the studio may have no customer service available if the teacher is in class. To have a great experience, it is important to choose a studio that can pleasantly assist you with the little details like scheduling, missed lessons, purchasing dancewear, and is willing to answer questions. Remember, when you’re interviewing a pediatrician, the office staff plays an equally important role in each visit. Choose a team of dance professionals who take the extra step to smile, “make your day,” and get to know and care about your child and your family.

Stars on 9 Dance Center “family friendly” office staff is on hand during all regular class times, for your immediate assistance. Parents/ Guardians are always welcome to observe the progress of their child at designated Observation Weeks.

Learning to “love to dance” is the special gift we share.

Stars on 9 Dance Center (302) 855-9595 www.Starson9.com