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danceworks INC

Danceworks Studio Student/Parent Handbook

2019-2020

welcome to danceworks

Founded in 1992, the mission of Danceworks, Inc., a 501(c)3 nonprofit, is to enhance the joy, health and creativity of the community through performances, classes and outreach activities that integrate dance and other art forms. Danceworks contributes to Milwaukee's cultural vitality by sparking a lifelong interest and participation in the arts. It is committed to taking arts and arts learning beyond the studio and theatre and into the community by creating work that resonates with diverse groups of people.

We serve more than 60,000 children, adults and seniors each year through:

- Original contemporary performances by the Danceworks Performance Company;
- Modeled after the professional company, Danceworks Youth Performance Company members train all year long and participate in a season of themed dance concerts in Danceworks Studio Theatre, and out in the community;
- Year-round experimental venue for local and national artists called the DanceLAB;
- Weekly dance and dance fitness classes at our downtown studio and at satellite locations;
- Dance and arts programming at schools in Milwaukee and surrounding communities; and
- Dance and arts programming for older adults.

Danceworks' studio philosophy is to nurture and develop the spirit and the body through dance technique, physical discipline and self-expression. Our instructors are experienced professional dancers and dance educators who have the necessary knowledge to teach students of varying ages and ability levels.

Our classes and programs are dedicated to helping every child reach their fullest potential, both physically and mentally. We believe that all children benefit from dance and other arts activities. We strive to create an environment in which each student develops self-discipline, self-confidence and enthusiasm for the performing arts. Danceworks sets class capacities that allow instructors to get to know each student as an individual and to ensure that students receive the personal attention they need to succeed.

Our dance curriculum for children is designed to introduce and practice age-appropriate movement skills, to prepare students for working and functioning within a classroom environment, and to instill a love of dance. It is very important that students are placed in classes appropriate for both their age and ability level.

The student/parent handbook is designed to help answer questions regarding Danceworks classes, policies and other important information, at all of our locations. We recommend that parents become involved in their child's dance education. Please take a moment to look over this important information with your enrolled student. Danceworks staff and faculty will use their best judgement while enforcing all Danceworks policies. If you have any questions, please talk to your child's instructor or contact Danceworks' Director of Education, Amy Brinkman-Sustache.

The studio policies in this handbook will be strictly enforced. Below are some of the most important highlights:

- Respect my instructor and his/her classroom policies.
- Respect my fellow classmates.
- Arrive to each class on time with a positive attitude and ready to learn.
- Attend class on a consistent basis and notify my instructor or Danceworks Education Director if for any reason I will have to miss two or more consecutive weeks of class.
- Follow the proper dress code for the class(es) I am attending.
- Respect the studio/art space and common areas of Danceworks and do my part to keep them clean.

Please make sure all information on file is up to date. Changes to your address, email address, phone number, auto-charge credit card or other information can be made directly on your Danceworks account online, or in person with our front desk staff.

contact information

Danceworks Main Office
1661 N. Water Street
(414) 277-8480 ext. 6007
www.danceworksmke.org

Maryann Walbert, Front Desk Manager
(414) 277-8480 ext. 6007
mwalbert@danceworksmke.org

Gina Laurenzi, Artistic Manager, Danceworks Youth Performance Company
(414) 277-8480 ext. 6003
glaurenzi@danceworksmke.org

Dani Kuepper, Artistic Director
(414) 277-8480 ext. 6001
dkuepper@danceworksmke.org

Amy Brinkman-Sustache, Director of Education
(414) 277-8480 ext. 6002
abrinkman@danceworksmke.org

Deborah Farris, CEO
(414) 277-8480 ext. 6000
dfarris@danceworksmke.org

Parking in Danceworks' adjacent lots is available all day on weekends, but only after 5pm on weekdays. Free street parking is available at all times in front of our building as well as on nearby Jackson St., Van Buren St. and Brady St. There is also limited visitor parking along the east side of the building.

To register, call (414) 277-8480 ext. 6007

satellite locations

Danceworks at the Harry and Rose Samson Family Jewish Community Center (JCC)
6255 N. Santa Monica Blvd.
Whitefish Bay, WI 53217
JCC Phone: (414) 967-8200

Danceworks at the Milwaukee Youth Arts Center (MYAC)
325 W. Walnut St.
Milwaukee, WI 53212
MYAC Phone: (414) 267-2900

communication

The Danceworks staff primarily uses email to communicate information to families. **Please ensure that your current email address is on file with our office.**

We believe that good communication is necessary and very important to your child's progress and overall experience. Always feel free to bring any questions or concerns to our attention.

If you have a sensitive matter to discuss with your child's instructor, we ask that you do not stop your child's instructor in between classes or have a private discussion in the lobby.

If you'd like to be in touch with your child's instructor, please contact Danceworks Director of Education, Amy Brinkman-Sustache, and she will be happy to assist in connecting you with your child's instructor.

student or parent complaints

Danceworks encourages feedback from its students and their parents. Employees receiving complaints are encouraged to work directly with the individual lodging the complaint to resolve the matter. Unresolved issues should be shared with the employee's supervisor or the Executive Director.

In limited circumstances, complaints should be forwarded to the Board Chair. These circumstances include only issues involving discrimination, illegal conduct, or threatening or abusive conduct, and the board chair should be contacted only if the matter 1) has not been reasonably resolved by the CEO within a reasonable time or 2) if the matter involves miscon duct by the CEO. Any contact to the board chair should be in writing and must detail the ma tter so that a prompt and complete investigation may be conducted. If contact with the board chair is made, a decision will be rendered as promptly as possible under the circumstanc es.

registration and payment

Students register on a first-come, first-serve basis online at danceworksmke.org, over the phone by calling (414) 277-8480 or in person. A confirmation will be sent via email when a registration is complete. We encourage youth students to register for their class for the full year, September-May. Students who are registered for the fall session will have priority registration for the winter/spring session, but registration is still required. The deadline for priority registration will be emailed to students enrolled in the fall session.

Danceworks has a strict no-refund policy. Students who withdraw from class mid-year are not obligated to pay any remaining balance, but will not be refunded any tuition paid. Refunds are not given for missed classes but students are encouraged to make up any missed classes. Please consult with your/your child's instructors on what class would be appropriate for a make-up class.

Family Discount: A $25 discount will be applied when there are multiple students in a family taking class or for a student who is taking multiple classes. Cannot be combined with any other discount.

Payment Plans: Tuition will be split into four equal payments and your first payment will be due at the time of registration. Remaining payments shall be made by auto-charge on November 11, January 11 and March 11. Danceworks accepts Visa, MasterCard and Discover. Danceworks Registrar, Jolie Collins, will need to be officially notified if special arrangements outside of our regular payment plan need to be made.

Waiver/Release: All youth and adult students must have a signed waiver on file. Students under the age of 18 must have a parent/guardian sign the waiver on their behalf.

Class Cancellations: Danceworks reserves the right to cancel any class that does not meet minimum enrollment. Any tuition paid can be transferred to another class or will be refunded.

withdrawing from a camp or workshop

If a student should need to withdraw from a camp or workshop and we receive notice at least three weeks prior to the start of that camp, a full refund will be issued (less the $25 deposit). Cancellations received with less than three weeks' notice will receive a 50% *account credit*. Credits can be used for any Danceworks class or program and will remain on the student's account for one year from the date the credit is issued. Transferring camp fees from one week to another week is possible depending on availability of the individual week. Advance notice is required to transfer to another week.

scholarships and work study

General Scholarships can be applied for and are available for students of any age, and are based on financial need and merit. Interested students must complete an online scholarship application along with a letter of recommendation and applicable documentation before they will be considered for a scholarship. Students can apply for a scholarship for an individual program or class, or for a full year of programming. Scholarship students and/or families will be required to complete three (3) volunteer hours per scholarship session. For example, a student receiving a scholarship for fall, winter/spring and summer sessions will be required to complete 9 volunteer hours total.

Audition-Based Scholarships will be held twice during each studio season. Danceworks' scholarship program offers unique opportunities for committed dancers to refine their skills, broaden their dance vocabulary and work with Danceworks' highly trained, experienced professional dancers and dance educators. Students with a minimum of three years of dance training in any dance style are eligible to audition.

Danceworks' **Work Study Program** is an hour-for-hour exchange of work for taking class. Work study duties may vary depending on the day and time of the shift, but will most likely include cleaning the studios and common areas at Danceworks, along with some special projects. Shift schedules are flexible and can be arranged to accommodate a work study student's schedule. For more information contact Teresa Drews at tdrews@danceworksmke.org.

dress code

Dance Shoes Required

Ballet shoes must be worn by all students in pre-ballet, creative dance and ballet technique classes. Tap shoes must be worn for all tap classes and combination classes that include tap. Hard sole tap shoes are recommended for better sound quality. Jazz shoes are required for jazz and theater dance classes.

A note on dance shoes: Female students should wear pink ballet shoes and male students should wear pink or black ballet shoes. Tap and jazz shoes should be black for all students.

All Combination Classes, Pre-Ballet, Ballet, and Creative Dance

Girls: Black leotard, pink or flesh-tone tights and appropriate shoes for class style. Dance skirt is optional with permission from instructor.
Boys: Solid white t-shirt, black jazz pants or close-fitting sweat pants and appropriate shoes.

Jazz, Contemporary, Tap and Theater Dance

Black jazz pants and a solid-colored close-fitting top.

Hip Hop

Comfortable, non-restrictive clothing and dance sneakers/street sneakers. Sneakers must be carried in and cannot be worn directly from the street to the class. No dresses or skirts. Oversize clothing can be dangerous while dancing and should not be worn in class.

Ballroom Styles

Comfortable street clothing can be worn and street shoes with smooth leather sole. Shoes must be carried in and cannot be worn directly from the outside.

Other Dress Code Requirements

- Dangling jewelry of any kind should not be worn in any class.
- All students with chin-length or longer hair must wear their hair secured neatly in a ponytail away from face.
- Girls with chin-length or longer hair must wear a traditional ballet bun when attending pre-ballet and ballet technique classes level I and up.
- Girls and boys with short hair must have their hair secured neatly away from face. Please do not wear headbands to class as they tend to fall out and become a distraction to the student.

Children's dance shoes and basic dance wear and adult dance shoes are available for purchase at Danceworks' Water Street Location!

attendance policies

A student's progress will depend on regular and consistent participation in class. **Students are required to check in at our front desk before each class.** Instructors of youth classes also take attendance in the classroom. Excessive absences will slow the student's ability to progress and could prevent the student from participating in performance opportunities. Students entering class more than 10 minutes late for any reason may be asked to observe the class rather than participate. Students ages 10 years and older may be asked to take notes while observing class. These notes will be turned into the instructor at the end of class. Decisions regarding this lateness policy will be left up to the discretion of the instructor.

Please do not send your child to class if he/she has an illness that can be passed along to other students. Students are encouraged to make up missed classes in another class of the same age/level. Make up classes must be made up in the same session that they were missed. Please do not plan to make up classes during observation week. Refunds or pro-rated tuition will not be granted for missed classes. Please notify Danceworks' Director of Education if your child will have to miss two consecutive classes for any reason.

Youth classes progress from fall to winter/spring. **Students should remain in the same class for a full year** unless their instructor makes another recommendation and believes more advanced work will be beneficial to the student. Student progress reports will be distributed to the parents in the spring at the end of the winter/spring session. This report will inform parents of their child's progress and achievements and will also make class recommendations for the next session. Questions regarding a student's class level should be directed to their instructor.

Students should only attend/register for classes that are appropriate for their age or dance experience. If you are unsure which class level you/your child should attend, a placement class may be arranged. Class level placement is at the discretion of Danceworks faculty.

class observation

Family and friends are able to watch their dancer in action during the designated **Observation Weeks** in each session. While observing your dancer, please do not distract your child in any way and we ask that you leave the room with any younger children who may be restless or distracting. You will be emailed the dates of Observation Weeks in advance. They typically take place halfway through each session.

studio etiquette and expectations

- Children should never be left unattended in the lobby before, during or after class.
- An instructor must be present in the studio before children are allowed to enter.
- Students are expected to be respectful and courteous while on Danceworks premises. Unacceptable behavior could result in dismissal from class and/or program.
- Family and friends are invited to observe class on the designated Observation Week during each session. We ask that you do not distract your child in any way while observing class and that you leave the room with any younger children that may be restless or distracting.
- Students should arrive for class a few minutes before the class is scheduled to begin to allow time to change and check in for class. For everyone's safety, a student arriving more than 10 minutes late for class may be asked to observe class and not participate.
- Parents must be prompt in picking up students after class and students should remain in the building while waiting to be picked up after class.
- Please do not send your child to class if they have a fever of 100.4 or higher and/or if they have symptoms that are contagious.
- It is the parent's responsibility to notify Danceworks' Director of Education if their child will be missing more than two consecutive weeks of class for any reason.
- Danceworks recommends that students cover dance attire with pedestrian clothing appropriate for the weather while entering and leaving the building.
- Danceworks recommends that students who drive always walk with a friend to and from their car.
- Note the location of all exits and fire extinguishers in case of emergency.
- Danceworks is a smoke free environment.
- Weapons or firearms are not permitted at Danceworks.

behavioral expectations

Danceworks will enforce the following steps with any student who demonstrates unacceptable behavior of any kind, including but not limited to the following issues: chronic lateness or inconsistent class attendance, not adhering to dress code policy, demonstrating disrespect of any kind to a Danceworks staff member, instructor or classmate, or being disruptive in any way during class/rehearsal.

1. ***First incident:*** a verbal warning will be given to the student and they will be allowed to continue to participate in class/rehearsal.

2. ***Second incident:*** a student may be asked to sit out and observe class/rehearsal. The length of time that the student is asked to sit out will be determined by the instructor.

3. ***Third incident:*** a student may be asked to leave the class/rehearsal. His/her parent or guardian will be contacted and a meeting will be set to address the issue.

weather-related cancellations

If classes are cancelled due to inclement weather, Danceworks will post a message on the outgoing message of the general voicemail at (414) 277-8480 (x 6007), on the home page of the website at www.danceworksmke.org and on all social media. Weather-related cancellations will also be posted on Channels 4 and 12 during regular television programming as well as on these local channels' websites. Students paid in full will be permitted to make up this class in another class within the same session, but no refunds will be issued.

lost and found

Please mark all dance attire, shoes and dance bags with your student's name in indelible ink. **Items that are found that are marked with a name will be kept in the Danceworks office for one week.** Items that are not marked will be placed in the lost and found. Unclaimed clothing items will be cleaned and donated to Goodwill.

Water Street: Lost and found is located in the back hallway by the dressing rooms.

JCC: Any items left behind will be kept in the cabinet in the studio. Please talk to your child's instructor if your child is missing any shoes or clothing.

Any items found on-site at a performance or rehearsal will be brought back to Danceworks' Water Street location.

studio showcase and other performance opportunities

Danceworks' annual showcase performance takes place at the end of the winter/spring session. We encourage all youth students to be a part of this performance; however, participation is not mandatory. A $30 showcase fee per class or $50 for two or more classes is required. More details will be emailed to you in advance of the showcase.

Students who have missed more than 20% of the session's classes may not be allowed to participate in the annual showcase as recommended by their instructor. Any student in threat of not meeting this requirement will be notified at least one month before the show. A final decision regarding the student participating in the showcase shall be determined and communicated to the student/parent at least two weeks before the show. It is mandatory that students attend the last three weeks of class leading up to the showcase performance, as well as the dress rehearsal.

One complimentary ticket to the showcase performance of your choice is provided to volunteers.

On occasion, our studio classes are invited to be part of the Danceworks Youth Performance Company Halloween, winter holiday and spring concerts. There is no fee required to participate in these performances and participation is optional.

Please note that the showcase and DYPC performances are ticketed events and everyone attending must purchase a ticket.

The 2019-20 studio showcase performance will take place on **Saturday, June 13, 2020** at the South Milwaukee Performing Arts Center.

private lessons

Private lessons are available in a wide range of dance styles and levels. All private sessions are with a qualified member of the Danceworks faculty who specializes in the dance style requested, and can be scheduled on- or off-site. Lesson material is based on your individual needs and moves at a pace that is comfortable for you. Private lessons can be scheduled as a single class or on an ongoing basis. Contact Danceworks' Director of Education, Amy Brinkman at (414) 277-8480 ext. 6002 or abrinkman@danceworksmke.org.

get your party on at danceworks!

Celebrating a big event? From birthday to bachelorette party, anniversary outing to a fun night out with friends, there's always a reason to party! We have some spectacular party packages to choose from, with convenient à la carte add-ons to make your or your child's event one to remember. Contact Danceworks' Facility Coordinator, Teresa Drews at (414) 277-8480 ext. 6006 or tdrews@danceworksmke.org.

studio and theatre rentals

Looking for a rental space for your upcoming performance, rehearsal or class? We have two dance studios available to suit your needs – one doubles as a black box performance space. Contact Danceworks' Senior Director of Programs, Kim Johnson at (414) 277-8480 ext. 6018 or kjohnson@danceworksmke.org.

volunteer opportunities

Join our Danceworks team by volunteering as an usher at one of our many performances, supporting our community programming, or lending a hand with various administrative projects. By volunteering, you can be the driving force that connects creativity and community through dance and other arts. Danceworks is truly thankful for the support and time given by all of our volunteers who help us fulfill our mission daily.

If you are interested in learning more about Danceworks volunteer opportunities, please contact Danceworks' Development and Volunteer Coordinator, Maggie Seer at (414) 277-8480 ext. 6008 or mseer@danceworksmke.org. Please know that many volunteer opportunities are offered on an as-needed basis, but there are also opportunities for on-going volunteer work.