

4 Things Every Parent Should Know Before Choosing a Dance Studio

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

What Type Of Floor Is Used?

Dance is a very physical activity that requires a lot of jumping, which can put stress on bones and joints. Most dance footwear does not provide any cushioning or support, so the shock of dance movement can place a lot of pressure on the knees and back of a dancer. The best way to prevent against potential injury is by choosing a studio with a professional "sprung floor". A sprung floor is a dance floor that rests on a system of high-density foam, to absorb the shock of jumping.

The top layer of the dance floor is also an important factor. A vinyl composite "marley" floor is accepted worldwide as the best surface layer for recreational to professional dance. Facilities such as the American Ballet Theatre and the Boston Ballet School all use marley floors as their dance surface. A marley floor allows dancers to slide, with a degree of "controlled slip", but is not slippery so there is less risk of slips and falls. Not all studios use professional marley floors because of the expense involved and usually opt for a regular floor tile for a studio floor. All of our floors at Littleton Ballet Academy are sprung and topped with marley.

Will My Child Really Be Receiving Quality Training?

Not all training is the same! Some students may spend lots of time in classes but not be receiving quality training that will prepare a dancer for the future. Technique takes time to develop properly and our faculty spends lots of time focusing on correct ballet technique from the very beginning so that dancers do not develop bad habits. There is nothing more disheartening than finding that a student does not have solid training after spending years (and money!) in dance classes. All of our teachers are committed to preparing our dancers in case they decide to pursue a career in dance. And if they decide not to dance in college or professionally, at the very least they have spent time developing beautiful technique, an appreciation for the arts, and have had a chance to study a disciplined art form that will help with their academic studies as well. We follow a well-rounded curriculum based on all of the best schools (rather than following just one specific technique) because this helps to create well-rounded dancers which is what directors of professional companies and college dance programs look for when auditioning dancers.

What Are The Extras Required For The School Performance?

Most studios put on a show in a theatre at the end of the year. Students that perform in the show must have a costume for each piece they perform in which can be costly. Some studios may require parents to sew their child's costumes or they must find their own seamstress to do the sewing. This can be inconvenient and frustrating for parents who are busy or can't sew, and the costs of students dancing in lots of pieces can easily add up.

Our studio has an extensive wardrobe of beautiful costumes (many handcrafted by professionals) that we use for performances. All of the altering and sewing will be taken care of by our staff so parents do not have to worry about any costume hassles. For all of this our students are charged only one small production fee, regardless of how many pieces a student is dancing in. Parents will not be faced with any extra work or expenses. Our focus is in providing students the opportunity to have lots of opportunities to perform rather than be limited by potential expense.

Will I Be Able to Get Immediate Assistance?

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 registration, schedules, or questions even if a teacher is occupied in a class. Our studio has office staff on hand during all regular class times, so you can get immediate assistance.