

# **Four things every parent should know**

## **Important things to consider when choosing a dance studio**

by Maryanne Maloney  
Studio Director

If most dance studios seem to have qualified, friendly teachers, who have 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 which place you decide to enroll at? Yes. There are 4 main things that can make a huge difference in the quality of instruction your child receives, the amount of extra work and hassles the parent must deal with and the overall enjoyment and satisfaction of being involved with a dance program. Here are 4 things that every parent should consider before deciding on a dance studio for their child.

### **Are the teachers really qualified?**

Did you know that it takes absolutely no certification or proof of education for a person to open a dance studio in Arizona? It is imperative that you look into the qualifications of the dance instructors. Many studios are operated by teachers who have no certification, no formal education, have not been tested in any subjects of dance, and do not continue to train.

At Take Five Dance Academy, many of our teachers have university degrees, specializing in dance and theater and/or are certified by such dance organizations as Dance Masters of America. In addition, all of our staff have had numerous performing experiences. Take Five teachers are chosen not only for their qualifications but also for their ability to relate to the typical needs of our students. We do not hire "student teachers." You will not find a 16-year-old in charge of teaching dance classes. Only adults teach our classes.

Our teachers are required each year to continue their dance training to further their dance education, as well as to stay up to date on all new dance styles. Dance is a constantly changing art form. Keeping on top of all trends and keeping in strong physical condition is essential for all great dance teachers.

### **How are the facilities set up?**

Take Five Dance Academy occupies a large, air-conditioned facility, which separates the 5 dance rooms and music room from the office, 2 lobbies and restrooms. Many studios are set up so the customer walks directly into the dance room upon entering the studio or has to walk through a classroom in order to use the restroom. This can cause unnecessary distractions, and greatly hinder the progress of a dance lesson. At our school, we offer observation windows and benches, so parents can still view a lesson without disrupting it. Restrooms and water fountains are conveniently located outside of the classrooms while all business can be handled in the office area without interfering with class progress.

### **What are the "extras" required for the year end show?**

Most studios collect a recital fee from each dancer in addition to their costume and ticket fees. Some studios may require parents to find their own costumes or even sew their child's costume. In some cases parents have had to pay extra money and find their own seamstress to do the sewing. This can be frustrating for parents who are too busy or can't sew.

At Take Five Dance Academy there is no recital fee. Our staff collects the costume payment and handles all of the purchasing of costumes and accessories. Parents are only required to purchase tights and shoes, which can be conveniently done from our school.

In addition, Take Five Dance Academy gives each audience member a full color, souvenir program book, which includes pictures of each dance class performing.

### **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 class. To have a good experience, it is important to choose a studio that can assist you with details such as schedules, tuition or costumes, even if the teacher is occupied in a class. Our studio has knowledgeable, helpful office staff on hand during regular class times so you can get immediate assistance.



### **LARGEST DANCE SCHOOL IN WEST VALLEY**

Take Five Dance Academy has qualified adult teachers, a 10,000 sq. ft. facility, and their office staff is available Mon.-Thurs. 10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Fri. 10:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m. and Sat. 9:00 a.m.-Noon.