



Assistant Program Handbook

2025-2026

If you have been selected as an assistant, realize that we are placing our trust in you, and your ability to be mature enough to handle the responsibility.

Assisting your dance teacher with younger students is a wonderful way to learn about teaching dance and leadership. The extent of your responsibilities will depend upon your age and your maturity.

Our goal is to make your Center Stage journey the best it can be. Please READ and KEEP this handbook as your tool to keep you organized and informed on our policies and expectations throughout your assisting experience.

Passing on the Passion,

Miss Claudia and Miss Kelly



SUCCESSFUL DANCE ASSISTANTS:

- Have genuine love for children.
- Bring out the best in the dancers they are assisting by motivating and inspiring them.
- Enter the classroom free of personal distraction, giving total focus to the teacher and students.
- Sense and respond to the individual needs of each dancer.
- Always have the welfare of the students in mind.
- Understand that each student is an individual with something to offer.
- Continue their own educational process.
- Believe that teaching dance is about passing on an art form.
- Aspire to be the best helper they can be by making eye contact and anticipating the teacher's and/or dancers' needs without being asked.
- Assisting is one of the BEST ways to help your own growth as a dancer... and the only way to learn how to be an effective teacher in later years.



KEEP YOURSELF INFORMED

We will post our monthly newsletters on the bulletin board and on our website. Please keep up to date with what is going on at the school as parents may ask you questions from time to time. You are our representative. We will do our best to keep you “in the know” of what is happening, but please don’t hesitate to ask if you have any questions.

GOSSIPING

Whether it’s about students, employees, faculty, or the school up the street, gossiping will not be tolerated. When assistants get caught up in this sort of behaviour, they lose respect even from those that they are gossiping with. Be the person who’s too focused on your own success and responsibilities that you don’t have time to gossip with or about anyone.

REPUTATION

We are a community-based business and everyone in our community interacts every day. Not only are you an important part of our reputation, as you are a role model for our younger dancers, but you are also setting a foundation for the way your peers view you in your day-to-day life. Being a role model doesn’t end at the end of the dance class you are assisting. It is an on-going role that plays out in your everyday life, both in and outside of the dance studio.

CONDUCT

All team members must always conduct themselves in a professional manner. Please refrain from smoking or vaping around the studio or at school events. Avoid engaging in undesirable behavior (poor attitude, gossip, being high, drunk or hung over).

Absolutely no social media pictures with younger dancers that you assist or unbecoming/provocative photos of yourself. It is important to hold yourself to a higher standard as you are a role model for many young and impressionable minds.

MISSED CLASSES

We understand that from time to time we all get sick or need a day to catch up on homework. You are responsible for finding a suitable replacement for your classes, should you become unable to attend on a particular day. It is not the responsibility of the office staff to find your replacement. Remember that we are relying on you! If you miss 3 classes, you will be removed from the program.



ASSISTANTS

Are a quiet, vocal/physical partner in the classroom and aid in the instruction of young dancers. Assistants are fully engaged mentally and conscientiously, absorbing pertinent information that will benefit their own current training and future teaching careers.

- Assistants should be prepared for each class by knowing what was taught in the previous weeks.
- Assistants are responsible for individual instruction to students having difficulty with a certain step or concept (as instructed by the teacher).
- Assistants must maintain the order and flow of the class should the teacher be temporarily distracted with a parent, student, or another special circumstance.
- Assistants are able to commence warm-up and take attendance as instructed by teacher.
- Assistants are responsible for leading lines down the floor and demonstrating new steps and concepts.
- Assistants dance one on one with students across the floor and participate in songs and games.
- Assistants are sometimes “buddies” when numbers do not add up for partnering.
- Assistants are often leaders for “following the leader.”
- Assistants give quiet verbal reminders of corrections.
- Assistants are fun, motivated and inspiring leaders.
- Assistants take the initiative. Get the dancers in line to warm-up or begin class right away.
- Assistants - going across the floor, you should be leading a group and not simply counting.
- Assistants dance everything FULL-OUT unless otherwise instructed.
- Assistants should be aware if someone is having difficulty and help them.
- Assistants - AT NO TIME SHOULD YOU BE SITTING!!! (We are very serious about this).
- Assistants - standing with arms folded is unacceptable. Be aware of your body language at all times.
- Assistants - your head should always be in the classroom. Be in the “ready position” for action at all times (refrain from leaning on the barres or against the walls).
- Assistants - refrain from practicing your own dances and steps and checking yourself out in the mirror.



DUTIES OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM:

- Welcome and greet all parents and students (make eye contact).
- Refrain from gossip and other unbecoming behaviour.
- Watch to see that each dancer finds their respective parents when the class you are assisting is dismissed.
- Treat each student, parent, staff and faculty member with respect.
- Help welcome dancers at the door and exiting to their parents after class.

PROPS AND EQUIPMENT

Take care that all equipment is being used safely (ie. mats and trampolines). They can be detrimental if used carelessly. Please ensure that your dancers are respectful towards the equipment and the facilities. Encourage the students to take pride and responsibility for their dance studio. Ensure that all equipment is properly stored back in its place after use.

WASHROOM BREAKS

All assistants should try to use the washroom before class begins or at the end of their helping period. Your presence in class is very important before, during and after each class with younger dancers. The teacher will rely on you to help the class enter the room, prepare for class by changing shoes, or leading the students to another studio for their next class.

If young dancers need assistance in the washroom, a helper/assistant may enter the washroom to assist under the following guidelines:

- Never be alone with a child in an unsupervised washroom and never go into the washroom with a child and shut the door completely.
- The washroom door must be propped open, and the assistant must stand in the open doorway.
- The assistant should call the child's name if he or she is taking longer than seems necessary.
- The assistant should escort the child back to class.



INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH

The following are types of touch that must be avoided:

- Kissing and coaxing a child to kiss you.
- Extended hugging and tickling.
- Carrying children or having them sit on your lap.
- Being alone with a child.

UNIFORMS

The way you present yourself in the classes that you are being an assistant is very important to us. All assistants should be dressed appropriately to the genre of class. We also ask that you get into the holiday spirit at Halloween, Christmas and all scheduled “dress up” days. The kids get a kick out of seeing you in costume and it adds to the fun atmosphere of the school. Please respect the following guidelines:

Ballet

- Hair must be in a proper bun for each class.
- Bodysuit and skirt or black leggings and Center Stage attire. No T-shirts. Ballet Shoes.

Jazz, Tap, Acro

- Hair must be up in a tidy ponytail or bun.
- Leggings or booty shorts and a Center Stage T-shirt attire.
- Appropriate footwear must be worn for each class.

Hip Hop

- Hair up in a tidy ponytail.
- Center Stage T-shirt attire and sweatpants, harem pants or leggings.
- Indoor, scuff-free runners.

Center Stage crew necks may be worn to class in the winter if you get cold. We expect all of our students to be dressed in uniforms for each of their classes and the example must be set by you (in your own classes as well). You can find our complete uniform policy on the website.



EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In case of fire - Broadway will exit through the fire door in the studio. Terpsichore will exit from the front of the building. The Arabesque studio will exit through the side entrance.

In case of injury - For minor injuries, band aids and cool packs are available. Please notify the teacher of any incident. All injuries and accidents must be documented with the office staff. In the event of a student needing medical attention, please notify Miss Kelly or Miss Claudia in the office so that the student's parents or 911 can be called.

IMPORTANT DATES

Excellent attendance is expected throughout the year; however, the following dates are extremely important to be in attendance as the teacher will most certainly require your assistance in these special circumstances.

Oct 1-Oct 7	Bring a Friend Week (Rec. dancers only)
October 25-30	Halloween Dress-Up Week
December 1-6	Parents Week
December 15-20	Holiday Spirit Dress-Up Week
January 26-31	Pyjama Week
February 23-28	Wacky Hair Week
April 20-25	Prince & Princess Week
June 6	Recital Rehearsals at the River Run Centre, Guelph
June 7	Recreational Recital Shows

GOAL

To be a part of a thriving community and share our common love of dance.

To get exposure to classroom management and hands-on experience with simple tasks. By the end of the year, Assistants should have gained intuition on how to handle these tasks and feel comfortable taking the initiative to complete them. Dancers in their care should both respect them & enjoy their presence in class.