

## Is My Child Ready At Age 2 ?

We are so excited that your dancer wants to begin dance but want to make sure you make an informed decision. Not all children are “ready” at the same age. There is a 50/50 chance that your 2 year old child will actually go into the room and stay in the room long enough to learn something. Two is the youngest age that can benefit from our pre-ballet/pre-jazz technique program. This is not creative movement. This class does not work for all students. Parents need to go into the program knowing that starting at 2 is an “option,” but it is not a “must.” A child can start at age 3 or 4 and still be successful as a dancer. Year after year we see the same thing; many 2 year olds attempt the class but only half of the little ones that attempt the class are actually “ready”.

### How do I know if she’s “not ready”?

If she’s not ready, you will know it. Those students who are not ready will cry and refuse to go into the dance room. Or they will reluctantly go into the room and then cry out loud. If your child is always crying when she is dropped off at pre-school, day care and gymnastics, then odds are good that she will come in crying here too. In this case, it would be better to wait a semester. We are not a childcare facility. **Parents cannot drop off a crying child or put a crying child in the dance room or expect a crying child to stay in the dance room.** We have a limited amount of time to teach technique, and our time must be spent teaching. We will make every effort to make the class fun and to change focus frequently. We realize that short attention spans are normal at this age. A crying child distracts and upsets the other students, so the crying child must leave the class.

**We require that you have your dancer participate in a “no obligation” trial class for \$15.00** So if you are interested, register and pay for the class to hold your spot, then on the first day of your class, we will consider it a “trial class” and if it does not work we will refund all but \$15.00 of your tuition. Then you can try again next semester without paying another registration fee.

### Our policy is:

1. Parents are **not allowed** to put the child into the classroom **while she is crying**.
2. Parents will be asked to come inside the dance room and get the child if she is crying loud enough for the teacher to hear her during the class.
3. Our teachers do **not** pick up or carry students.
4. A child who is disrupting the class must be **removed by the parent**.
5. A child who lays on the floor and will not get up must be **removed by the parent** (for her own safety and the safety of others).
6. After the parent has talked to the child and the child is **calm**, she may re-enter the room up to 3 times during that subject.
7. If the child leaves the room a 4<sup>th</sup> time or if she is sent out of the room for the 4<sup>th</sup> time, she must **observe in the observers area** until the next subject is started.

8. As stated on the registration form, a parent or guardian **must** remain present during the entire 2 year old class.

9. **Registration is non-refundable**, even if she is “not ready.” Keep the leotard, play in it at home and try the class again **at the beginning of each new semester** until she is ready to try dance. For some, the magic age is 3, for some the magic age is 4, for a few, the magic age is indeed 2 but more often than not, the 2 year old who is ready is actually closer to 2 1/2.

### **Age 2 Pre-Ballet/Pre-Jazz Curriculum**

The curriculum for age 2 is developmentally appropriate for the muscle, bone and brain development of a child who has turned 2. We will not accept children younger than age 2. This is not creative movement. In Pre-Ballet, the mother will be able to enter the dance room with your child, take off your shoes and sit at the side. They can give you a quick hug and then get back to dancing. Your child will learn basic stretches done in a correct way that will lead to greater flexibility, strength and turn out all of which will be necessary for Ballet as your dancer matures. We will have fun songs and listening exercises disguised as games. Young dancers will do exercises that:

- ⌘ teach class rules and class etiquette
- ⌘ enhance focus and learning to follow directions
- ⌘ increase memorization skills
- ⌘ develop motor skills
- ⌘ increase muscle strength and coordination
- ⌘ increase flexibility and body placement awareness

Dressing your child appropriately for class and showing up on time greatly adds to the chances of this being a positive day for your child. The added distraction of having hair in her face, jewelry on or being the only one not dressed right sometimes leads to an emotional meltdown that could have been avoided by advance planning on the parents part. Having to wrestle away a toy or poofy skirt just before entering class doesn't set the stage for a good mood...better to leave the toys and poofy skirts at home. (Note: Age 2 does not wear any kind of skirt during class. If you own a plain black non poofy skirt you may wear it as a cover up on way to class and on the way home but NOT during class. If this is going to be a fight, just leave the skirt at home.)

A child on a sugar rush will not do well in class. The short sugar high is followed by hours of lack of focus, extremely low energy and non cooperative behavior. If you are going to feed your child donuts...WAIT UNTIL AFTER CLASS!

10. **We will refund your tuition for the rest of the classes in the current month** if you have not attended them and **IF** you fill out the **Add/Drop form**. This will also stop your monthly automatic debit. You will need to re-enroll if you decide to try it again next semester; however, you will already have the leotard and will **not** need to pay a Registration Fee again as long as you return within the same school year.

### **If it Does Work**

Keep in mind that the child may choose to dance here in the studio but not on the stage at recital. So with that problem in mind, we will have frequent informal “mini-performances” during the last 5 minutes of class on our little stage so that the students can get used to being in front of an audience. Take advantage of these fun little no-stress “performances.” Bring your camera or your video camera frequently, so that you catch these fun little on-stage moments at the studio. It is best to not take flash

pictures during regular class because the flash is distracting. Let them focus on dance to the best of their ability without any added distractions.

### **Attire**

Be sure to wear your black studio leotard and light pink tights. Little ones tend to try to wear something different which we do not allow because it is distracting during class. If you can't find the black leotard that you got from us, then you could get a plain black leotard from somewhere else or get a new one from us. Those who are not dressed in a black leotard will only be allowed to observe the class.

### **“Mommy, I gotta go!”**

When one has to go, they all have to go. Please take your child to the bathroom before you leave home and don't supply a drink in the car. Also be aware that 10 minutes of exercise plus any kind of juice (especially apple) will send your little one into the bathroom to set up camp. So if you want your child to spend more class time dancing and less class time on the potty, you may need to change what you are eating for breakfast or what you are drinking in the car on the way to dance class. It is best to bring a water bottle and keep it hidden until the water break, which may be in the middle of class or at the end of class. There is no reason to be drinking before class, but if they see it, they will want it.

Also, if they need to wear Pull Ups, then do. Better safe than sorry. We really don't care. If they are not 100% potty trained and you usually have them wear one at home, then go ahead and wear one in dance. By the time they are in Kindergarten, no one will remember how old they were when they got potty trained.

If they are not wearing a Pull Up, be sure and have a conversation with them. Tell them if they really do have to “go,” they can leave class and run to the bathroom. They don't have to tell the teacher. We know that once they admit they need to go....time is an important factor.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, feel free to email us at [officemanager@stephaniesdancestudioone.com](mailto:officemanager@stephaniesdancestudioone.com) or stop by the studio.