

Introduction

At Momentum School of Dance, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all students. This Safe Touch Policy outlines appropriate and necessary physical contact in the context of dance instruction, with special attention to the unique requirements of acro dance, while prioritizing the physical and emotional well-being of our students.

Purpose of Physical Contact in Dance Instruction

Physical contact may be necessary for the following purposes:

- **Safety:** To prevent falls or injuries during challenging movements, especially in acro dance where spotting is required.
- **Alignment and Technique:** To guide correct body alignment, posture, or positioning.
- **Support and Spotting:** To assist in executing lifts, tumbles, or other physically demanding techniques safely.

Guidelines for Safe Touch

1. Consent and Communication

- Instructors will explain the purpose of physical contact before initiating it and seek the student's verbal consent whenever possible.
- Students are encouraged to voice concerns or discomfort at any time.

2. Professional and Respectful Touch

- Physical contact will be limited to areas necessary for instruction and safety, such as arms, shoulders, back, legs, and feet.
- Instructors will avoid sensitive areas, such as the chest, groin, and inner thighs, unless necessary for safety (e.g., during acro spotting) and will proceed with heightened sensitivity and professionalism.

3. Spotting in Acro Dance

- Instructors will receive proper training in spotting techniques to ensure the safety and comfort of students.
- Spotting will be conducted in a manner that minimizes discomfort and respects personal boundaries.
- Verbal instructions will accompany spotting to guide the student and reduce reliance on touch.

4. Parental Awareness:

- Parents will be informed about the need for physical contact in acro and dance instruction upon registration.
- A copy of this policy will be available on our website, and any questions or concerns will be addressed promptly.

Student Empowerment

- Students will be educated about the role of physical contact in dance and encouraged to advocate for their comfort and safety.
- A "no-touch" option will always be available for students who prefer to learn without physical contact. In such cases, instructors will provide alternative verbal or visual guidance.

Instructor Training and Accountability

- All instructors are required to complete training on safe touch practices and spotting techniques. All staff hold valid Enhanced DBS certificates and appropriate safeguarding qualifications.
- Regular evaluations and feedback sessions will ensure adherence to this policy.
- Any concerns or complaints regarding physical contact will be taken seriously and addressed promptly through a clear reporting and resolution process.

Reporting Concerns

Students and parents are encouraged to report any discomfort or concerns about physical contact to the studio director. All reports will be handled with confidentiality and respect, ensuring the safety and trust of all parties involved.

By implementing and adhering to this Safe Touch Policy, Momentum School of Dance aims to provide a secure environment where students can learn, grow, and thrive in their dance journey.