

DANCE EDUCATORS OF AMERICA, INC.

CARES

Dance Educators of America has had and is continuing its effort to raise awareness in the dance community about inappropriate behavior and sexual misconduct. Our mission is dedicated to establishing and maintaining a safe environment for all our member dance participants.

Making sure there is no opportunity for inappropriate conduct to occur in any event that is sponsored by Dance Educators of America Inc., or member's club programs, activities and events are one of the most important steps our organization can take to provide a safe environment.

A safe environment for dance participants is also a safe environment for instructors, staff, and volunteers. The welfare of all competition participants is of paramount concern and taking a zero opportunity/zero tolerance approach will also benefit all our member dance studios who work with and for their dance education.

Providing a safe dance environment is necessary to keep yourself safe. If any instructor, member, participant, official, volunteer or staff member is subjected to abuse, whether physical or sexual, it undermines the Dance Educator of America mission.

Unfortunately, societal issues exist in dance, and child sexual abuse statistics are alarming. Inappropriate behavior and sexual misconduct have no place in dance.

Standards of behavior are included in, and provide the foundation for, safe environment/dance protection-related policies.

Critical standards of behavior include:

- Elimination of privacy
- Boundaries if physical contact is a necessary part of the activity
- Limitations on electronic, social and out-of-program interactions

These general standards of behavior shall be adopted and incorporated by

member dance studios and tailored to promote the safest environment possible for their specific activities and events. For example:

Eliminate Privacy - Avoid Being Alone with Child.

Dance is an activity that lends itself to one-on-one situations between an instructor and a participant. Avoid being alone with a child or any group of children in a private setting [e.g., locker room, bathroom, office, vehicle, hotel or residence), and avoid being alone with a child or any group of children in any place that is inappropriate to the instructor-participant relationship. When a one-on-one situation is necessary, such as private instruction, lessons or conversations, conduct the activity within the view and earshot of another adult. Interactions should always be observable and interruptible.

Establish Boundaries for Necessary Physical Contact. Dance creates opportunities for physical contact between a instructor and a participant. Physical contact is acceptable when it is reasonably intended to teach or demonstrate a dance skill or to prevent or lessen injury (e.g., spotting, catching). However, care should be taken to ensure that such contact is not invasive of sensitive areas of the body.

Prohibit Electronic, Social and Out-of-Program Interactions.

Communications and interactions that are inappropriate to the instructor participant relationship should be prohibited. Staff shall not contact participants, including personal contact, email, instant messaging, text messaging, cellular/regular phone calls, social networking pages or other communication vehicles, for any reason not related to instruction required contact. Never communicate one-on-one with dancers outside the presence of others. Always send a copy to the parent/guardian simultaneously.