



## Dance and Performing Arts - Policies and Information

Welcome to The Connection's Dance and Performing Arts Program!

As the Fall Session begins, we look forward to having our students in class and sharing in our love of the Performing Arts.

Please read all of the following very important information below and save it as a guide.

Please contact Dance and Performing Arts Director Jessica Fascenelli Weisenbach with any questions or concerns.

Jessica.Fascenelli@TheConnectionOnline.Org OR (908) 273-4242 ext. 129

### Meet our Staff:

Laura Noesner has been teaching at The Connection for six years. She teaches both youth and adult classes. Performing has been in her blood since her very first dance class at age two. She is very excited for this coming year and can't wait to get everyone as excited about dance as she is.

Greg Yang has been training in ballroom dancing since the inauguration of the ballroom program in The Connection in 1998. He also extensively trained at the Nash Dancenter and the Rogers Dance Center. Greg has taught beginner and intermediate classes in all styles. He is also currently the moderator of the Dansomanie (Chinese Edition), a France based online international ballet forum for balletomanes worldwide.

Madeline Gould has been dancing for sixteen years and this is her fifth year teaching. She specializes in ballet, but has also studied and performed lyrical, jazz, and tap. She has attended the Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet summer intensive, the Joffrey Ballet School, the New Jersey Ballet School and the New Jersey Dance Theatre Ensemble.

Marta Jaremko has been teaching belly dance at The Connection since 2006. She teaches all levels. Before coming to The Connection, Marta was studying massage and teaching dance in Portugal. She is also a certified massage therapist.

Bianca Miele has taught at The Connection for eight years. She teaches adult dance and fitness classes including Jazz and Tap along with Zumba Fitness. In her youth, she studied with the Namar School of Dance, as well as musical theater at Worth-Tyrell Studios in Morristown, NJ. Bianca currently dances and performs with Studio 509.

Leslie Reynolds has been teaching Dance, Pilates, and Barre at the Connection for the past 3 years. She is a Pilates Academy International certified Pilates instructor. She is a lifelong dancer who danced in a ballet performance company throughout her youth.

Jessica Fascenelli Weisenbach, our Director, has been dancing for 25 years. In her youth, she danced competitively and also studied and performed many styles of dance through college. Jessica has a BA in Dance Education from Montclair State University. Jessica is also the coach and choreographer for our competitive dance team where she has won several entertainment, creativity, and choreography awards. In addition, she is the Director of our Dance, Theater, and Specialty Summer Camps. She looks forward to another exciting year filled with dance, theater, and lots of fun! \*Jessica will be on maternity leave this fall. More information to follow.

Nicolette Vassallo will be teaching at The Connection for her third year. She has danced competitively for over 13 years. Specializing in tap dancing, Nicolette has taken many workshops from some of the best in the industry to keep growing her technique and knowledge of the style.

Heather Denges has been working at The Connection for 17 years. In that time she has taught dance, gymnastics, and fitness to students of all ages. Heather has a BFA in Musical Theatre from East Carolina University and has performed locally for many years.

Sydney Little is joining us for her second year and has a BA in Dance Education from Montclair State University. Sydney has over 6 years of experience teaching ballet, tap, jazz, lyrical/contemporary, and hip hop. She looks forward to sharing her love for dance and learning with some smiling new faces!

Assistant Teachers – Giulia Buckley, Emma Dark, Danielle Kipness, Julia McGrath, Libby Miller, Maya Ramachandran, Claire Shubeck, Julia Speer, and Madison Stewart.  
You may find our Assistant Teachers in our parent/child, preschool, or younger school aged classes. Our assistants are all dancers or former dancers who love working with children and helping in our dance classes.

Kristin Russell grew up as a competitive dancer since she was 2. She has worked at The Connection for 19 years teaching youth and adult dance, working in many other departments.

Kristin holds Bachelor's degrees in Elementary/Special Education & Psychology as well as a MA in Special Education and a post MA as a LDTC.

Shelby Effron will be teaching for her fifth year at The Connection. She has been dancing since the age of 3 and has a BFA in Dance from Montclair State University. She currently teaches youth classes in ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop, and gymnastics.

In addition, Shelby is our Dance Team Assistant Coordinator and Assistant Director of Dance, Theater, and Specialty Camps.

Lisa Buckley has been working at The Connection for seven years and teaches youth and adult dance. Prior dance experience includes attending School of the Garden State Ballet as well as performing classics such as Concerto Barocco with their Youth Company.

Jana Huba graduated in 2003 from Vibhuti Yoga School, completing Kripalu Yoga professional training. In 2004 she completed The OM Shree OM teacher training Program of children's yoga. In addition to yoga, Jana has been teaching a variety of parent/child, youth, and adult classes, and working birthday parties for the past 13 years at The Connection.

Taina Bey is a graduate of Smith College where she received a BA in Dance and a minor in Africana Studies. She began her dance training at a young age and has studied a variety of techniques. Taina has studied contemporary and somatic dance overseas in Berlin, Germany and performed in a residency with Pilobolus Dance Theater. In addition to teaching dance, Taina is our Special Events Coordinator.

### Upcoming Events:

- **The Connection Dance Team Fundraiser Performance** – Sunday September 9<sup>th</sup> at the Somerset Patriots Ballpark
  - Contact Jessica for tickets. Proceeds go to the team's scholarship fund.
- **Parent Observation Week** – November 4<sup>th</sup> – November 10<sup>th</sup>
- **Dance & Performing Arts Recital** – Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup> 2019 (Dress Rehearsals Thursday, June 6<sup>th</sup> OR Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup>)
  - Recital information will be available in late March 2019

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### Safety Rules:

- Please familiarize yourself with our drop off and pick up guidelines. Note that no preschool aged students will be permitted to leave the classroom unattended. In addition, no school aged students will be permitted to leave the classroom unattended until the signed form is returned to the instructor.
- Please **DO NOT** enter the room until the instructor opens the door at the start of class. Absolutely no one (students, parents, caregivers, siblings, etc.) are permitted to be in the room without the class instructor.
- There is no food, drink, gum, or candy permitted in the room except for water.
- Parents, caregivers, and siblings may only observe class when invited to do so by the instructor and on designated observation sessions.
- Please refrain from taking pictures and/or standing at the window/door as it is extremely distracting for the dancers and instructor.
- No running in the classrooms – especially in tap shoes.

### Helpful Hints for Children’s Classes:

- We find when dropping off your child it is best to leave promptly. That way the student can get acclimated in the class and will usually feel more comfortable as the class progresses. We will always do our best to calm any child who is upset, and will bring them out to you if we are unable to calm them.
- Please take all children to the bathroom before the start of class.

### Program Evaluations:

- Please look out for our Dance & Performing Arts Program Evaluations. They will be handed out at the conclusion of each session. They are important to help us continue to improve our program.

### Student Evaluations:

- You asked... we listened! Optional student evaluations will be available. They will be offered in the Late Fall and Spring sessions. Please look out for a flyer with more information.

### Parent Observation Week:

Our children’s classes will have a parent observation in the Fall and Winter Sessions. Please look out for a flyer with specific dates.

### Attire:

- Dance attire can be purchased at Accents Dancewear in Berkeley Heights
- Hair should be securely pulled back away from the face using a hair tie
- Combo classes - shoes (labeled with their name) should be in a bag and brought in to the room at the start of class. Preschool tap shoes w/o ties preferred
- Dance bottoms can be any stretchy material that allows for free movement
- NO crop tops or dangly jewelry are permitted in class
- **Acro-Tumbling** – leotard
- **Ballet** – Pink(f), black(m) ballet shoes, leotard, tights
- **Ballet/Jazz** – Ballet OR Jazz shoes, leotard, tights
- **Ballet/Tap** – Ballet AND Tap shoes, leotard, tights
- **Ballet/Tap/Jazz** – Ballet OR Jazz shoes AND Tap shoes, leotard, tights
- **Ballet Body Sculpt** - clothing that allows free movement
- **Ballroom Dance** – Dance/Jazz sneakers or Ballroom dance shoes, no street sneakers, clothing that allows free movement
- **Barre Sculpt** – Clothing that allows free movement
- **Belly Dance** – Bare feet and a hip scarf (recommended), clothing that allows free movement
- **Dance Foundations for Special Needs** – Clothing that allows free movement
- **Hip Hop** – sneakers, fitted top, dance bottoms
- **Hip Hop Flip Flop** – Sneakers, fitted top and dance bottoms, bare feet for “flip flop”
- **Itty Bitty Ballet** – Ballet shoes, leotard, tights
- **Jazz** – Jazz shoes, leotard/biketard OR fitted top, dance bottoms
- **Lights, Camera, Action!** – Shoes and clothing suitable for movement
- **Lyrical/Contemporary** – Half soles, leotard, tights
- **Lyrical/Jazz** – Lyrical or jazz shoes and clothing that allows free movement
- **Movers & Shakers** – Clothing that allows free movement
- **Princess Ballet** – Ballet shoes, leotard, tights
- **Tap** – Tap shoes, leotard/biketard OR fitted top and dance bottoms
- **Tap/Jazz** – Tap AND Jazz shoes, leotard/biketard OR fitted top, dance bottoms
- **Tutu Tumblers** – Ballet shoes, leotard, tights
- **You & Me Dance** – Ballet shoes, leotard, tights (recommended)