

Effective May 3, 2016



**DWANA SMALLWOOD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, INC.**

2016

**STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK**

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## Introduction

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center Student and Parent Handbook** combines important center and community information and policies. Students attending **The Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center, Inc. (DSPAC)** are expected to behave in a disciplined, responsible, courteous and respectful manner while attending the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center**. Students unwilling or unable to fully commit themselves to the daily regimens, to maintain work habits appropriate for serious students, are advised not to enroll.

## **Vision / Mission**

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** aims to use the arts, primarily dance, as a means to empower youth within New York's inner city communities. We endeavor to mold elite dancers and artists who will be able to develop, grow and compete on the world's stage. The center will be a springboard for creating community identity and encouraging creative activity in neglected inner city areas.

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center's** mission is to use dance as a platform to encourage, inspire, and facilitate the aspirations of young people by engendering within them discipline, pride, determination, humility, respect and an appreciation for the arts. We endeavor to plant seeds of possibility where previously growth and development has been perceived an impossibility.

## **Privacy Policy**

We want to build on the loyal relationship the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** has with its Students and Parents. Our commitment to you begins with respecting the privacy of our students.

### ***Students Privacy Policy***

At DSPAC, student safety is paramount. We will never publish personal information for students of any age. Information provided during class registration will be kept completely confidential. We will never publish a student's first and last name, with the exception of event programs, without receiving prior permission. An example of this case is a student receiving special recognition for excellence. There may be occasions where a student's first name may be used for editorial reasons or to caption a photograph.

We currently employ a few interactive features on our site such as photo galleries, videos, newsletter subscriptions, etc. Students under 13 should not access any interactive portion of this website without first obtaining parental permission. If a child under 13 years of age wants to participate on our

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website, we encourage the student's parents to participate in his/her experience on our site.

## **Arrival & Departure Procedures**

### ***Arrivals***

All visitors (parents/guardians/students) are to enter **DSPAC** via the main front doors. No one will be allowed access to any other entrances within the Center.

All visitors (parents/guardians/caregivers) must check-in at the reception desk to be allowed into any other areas of the Center. **NO EXCEPTIONS!!**

A parent/guardian must always escort a child (ages 3 -11) into the center and directly to their class. When bringing your child into the studio, please make sure their instructor checks them in before you leave. It is important to give the instructor any special information he/she should know about your child at that time.

### ***Departures***

It is the policy of the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** to not release students to anyone who parents/guardians have not included in the Pick-up Authorization Form. All of the precautions for releasing students are to insure the safety of your child and are not meant to cause intentional inconvenience for parents. We very much appreciate your understanding and cooperation with our policies on student pick-up. To better ensure the safety of your child, we are asking that all parent/guardians fill out **DSPAC's** Pick-Up Authorization Form. If changes need to be made to the Pick-Up Authorization Form during the course of the semester, please visit the receptionist to complete a new form.

- If the pick-up person is someone not on your list, we will require a written note be sent in to the receptionist before the end of your child's class with your signature authorizing the non-listed person to pick up. A follow up phone call will be made to parents/guardians confirming all written authorization.
- **DSPAC** does not accept phone call pick-up changes if it will be someone **NOT** on your authorized list. Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately if someone not on your list comes to pick up your child and we have not received a written note with signed authorization.
- Picture I.D. is required for all individuals picking up a child. Please notify the people on your list that photo I.D. will be requested by the instructor or receptionist prior to releasing your child. This also applies to anyone you authorize in a written note to pick up your child.

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- If a spouse or child of a person listed below comes in to pick up your child, we WILL NOT release the child to that person. Your child will only be released to the person named on your list and after verifying the person with their picture I.D.

## Use of Photographs, Video, and Other Media

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** reserves the right to publish photographs of students and occasionally others (who have given permission), on the website, and/or in electronic and print media. Specifically, we limit the use of photographs and video media to the following:

- **DSPAC** social media.
- Editorial content within the website.
- Certain existing and future website features, such as photo galleries and video clips.
- Print media, such as a brochure, or magazine/newspaper item.
- Electronic media, such as banner advertising or email newsletter.

While we hope you allow images to be used for the aforementioned uses, Students and/or parent/guardian of a student(s) may opt out of print publication, inclusion in website content, or both. If students and/or the parent/guardian of a student(s) wish to opt-out of inclusion in any form of media, please indicate such request on **DSPAC's** photo release form.

*We will never sell, share, or distribute photographs to any third parties or publish a photograph in print without express prior permission.*

## Reserving your Spots

Classes at the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** are filled on a first come, first served basis, with priority extended to re-enrolling students in good standing. Programs have limited capacity and it is important to complete the registration process in a timely manner to reserve a space. Please visit [www.dwanasmallwoodpac.org](http://www.dwanasmallwoodpac.org) to review the required registration steps. Students wishing to secure a spot at **DSPAC** must pay a non-refundable registration fee for each student.

## Tuition and Payments

### **Payment Terms**

Tuition is paid on a pay-in-full basis or in installments per request. Installments payments are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

### **Late Payments**

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A late fee of no less than \$25.00 will be assessed for payments over five business days past due. If payment is past due students may not be permitted to attend class.

## ***Withdrawal Policies and Fees***

Once a student has registered, he/she is responsible for the payment for the entire semester. All withdrawal requests must be written and submitted to the DSPAC receptionist.

For students who register **prior** to the start of the semester:

Withdrawal requests made prior to the first day of the semester will receive a refund equal to one-hundred (100) percent of paid tuition. Withdrawal requests made within fourteen (14) calendar days from the first day of the semester will receive a refund equal to seventy-five (75) percent of paid tuition. Refunds will not be issued for withdrawal requests submitted more than fourteen (14) calendar days from the first day of the semester and the student will remain responsible for full payment of tuition fees for the semester.

For students who register **after** the start of the semester:

Withdrawal requests made within fourteen (14) calendar days from the Registration Fee payment date will receive a refund equal to seventy-five (75) percent of the paid tuition. Refunds will not be issued for withdrawal requests submitted more than fourteen (14) calendar days from the Registration Fee payment date and the student will remain responsible for full payment of the tuition fees for the semester.

***All registration fees are non-refundable.***

## **Dress Guidelines**

Students are expected to follow the following dress code in dance classes.

<b>Ages 3 – 6</b>	White tank leotards
<b>Ages 7 – 11</b>	Turquoise tank leotards
<b>Ages 12 – 18</b>	Brown tank leotards

### ***Ballet***

#### **Girls**

- Colored leotard (as per age group), pink tights (must cover the feet), and pink ballet slippers

#### **Boys**

- White fitted tee shirts, white leotard, black tights, and black ballet shoes.



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## **Modern**

### **Girls**

- Colored leotards (as per age group), black footless tights, bare feet.

### **Boys**

- White fitted tee shirts, white leotard, black footless tights, or black biking shorts, bare feet.

## **Jazz/Tap**

### **Girls**

- Colored leotard (as per age group), black jazz pants, and black jazz shoes.

### **Boys**

- White fitted tee shirts, black jazz pants, and black jazz shoes.

## **Hip Hop**

### **Girls & Boys**

- Colored tee shirt, sweatpants or blue jeans any style and sneakers. (NO sagging jeans, tee shirts with explicit writing or images that include direct or indirect references to violence, profanity, sexual issues, alcohol, or drugs) Please use sneakers that haven't been worn outside.

## **African**

### **Girls**

- Colored leotard (as per age group), black tights or black biker shorts, lapa (provided by **DSPAC**), bare feet.

### **Boys**

- Fitted white tee shirt, white leotard, sweatpants or jazz pants, bare feet.

## **Gumboot**

### **Girls**

- Colored leotard (as per age group), loose sweatpants or blue jeans any style and gumboots.

### **Boys**

- Fitted white tee shirt, loose sweatpants or blue jeans any style and gumboots.

## **Salsa/ Afrofusion/ Musical Theater**

### **Girls**

- Colored leotard (as per age group), jazz pants with (black character shoes for salsa and musical theater only).

### **Boys**

- White fitted tee shirts, white leotard, black jazz pants, and (black jazz shoes for salsa and musical theater only).

## **Hair**

### **Girls**

- Long hair must be in a bun and pinned away from the neck and face.



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- Short hair must be neatly trimmed and groomed

### **Boys**

- Short hair must be neatly cut without designs, braids, ponytails, or mohawks.
- Long hair must be pinned away from the neck and face.
- Facial hair must be minimal, trimmed, and neatly groomed.

### **Undergarments**

#### **Girls**

- Nude bra and thong if necessary.
- Must be concealed under clothing.

### **Students may NOT wear:**

- plastic pants,
- over-shirts,
- head scarves,
- dangling jewelry,
- sweat clothes, or other extraneous or concealing garments,
- facial rings,
- body piercings,
- dangling earrings (small studs are permitted).

Students with minor injuries may wear close-fitting leg warmers (pink for girls, black for boys) at barre only. The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** reserves the right to dismiss any student for disregarding the strict dress code.

In situations when students are not dressed in preparation for dance class, students must be dressed in a manner that reflects the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center's** vision and mission, demonstrates respect for themselves and the community, and promotes focused teaching and learning. Therefore, clothing must completely cover the chest, stomach, back, and buttocks at all times.

### **Clothing must not:**

- Contain writing or images that include direct or indirect references to violence, profanity, sexual issues, alcohol, or drugs.
- Reveal undergarments including halter-tops, tube tops, off the shoulder shirts, spaghetti straps, or pajamas.

Students who do not follow these guidelines or who do not follow reasonable standards of decency in their choice of **DSPAC** attire may be asked to change clothes, be sent home, and/or receive dismissal. Repeated or intentional violations will result in further discipline including expulsion.



## **Nail Polish and Jewelry**

Absolutely NO jewelry or nail polish will be allowed on performance days. This includes ALL styles of earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and rings. All artificial nails and nail polish must be removed for performance. Students who do not follow these guidelines will not be permitted to perform.

## **Students' Use of DSPAC Costumes**

During different times throughout the year for productions, performance and classes, students will use **DSPAC** costumes. All students will have scheduled fittings that they are required to attend. Costumes and rehearsal clothing used in classes or performances will never go home with students. Students are expected to take great care of **DSPAC** costumes and return them to their appropriate hanger when through after each use. The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** reserves the right to charge families for repairs or replacements of costumes that are mistreated, damaged, or lost.

- Students should not eat or drink in costumes, with the exception of water.
- Students should promptly report all needed repairs to **DSPAC** staff.

## **Attendance and Tardiness**

Students are expected to arrive at the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** with sufficient time to properly prepare for the start of their dance classes and rehearsals. In the interest of injury prevention, **DSPAC** reserves the right to bar any student who arrives to class late, from participating in the class other than as an observer seated inside. To minimize absences, parents are urged to take lessons and rehearsals into consideration when scheduling appointments and when planning family vacations. A student will be excused from class or rehearsal only in the case of serious illness or injury or genuine emergency.

A student's absence must promptly be reported to the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** office at 718.443.9800 or via email at [info@dwanasmallwoodpac.org](mailto:info@dwanasmallwoodpac.org) with the subject line: **STUDENT ABSENCE**. The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** reserves the right to dismiss any student with unexcused absences or on leave from **DSPAC** for five or more class days.

## **Private Lessons**

Students may opt to schedule private lessons with an instructor at anytime with the **DSPAC** receptionist or online. Students wishing to drop or change the duration of their private lesson, must drop or change within the first two sessions. No lesson changes will be made after the first two sessions. Notification of any withdrawal or change must be made in writing to receptionist.



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## Class Observation

Parents, guardians, and relatives of students are invited to view classes during designated Observation Days.

Photography and videography are strictly prohibited during class and rehearsals. This includes the use of smart phone recording devices.

## Rules of Conduct

Students and parents are expected to be respectful and polite to one another as well as to **DSPAC** staff members. Any rude or aggressive behavior from students or parents will not be tolerated. Any use of offensive language or harassment of **DSPAC** staff members will result in a student's dismissal without a refund. Students are expected to act respectfully towards fellow students, visitors and staff members. All members of the community should speak courteously to each other at all times.

Given the communal nature of the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center**, student are encouraged to exercise discretion in the manner in which they display affection. There should be no inappropriate displays of affection.

## Staff Only Areas (offices or lounge)

Some areas of the building, including offices, the staff lounge and stairwells are to be used by **DSPAC** staff members only. Students are not permitted to be in the Administrative Office area or any roof areas without express permission from a staff member. Please obey posted signs. Any student discovered in any of the Staff Only Areas of the building, without express permission, may be subject to suspension or expulsion from the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center**.

## Gum Chewing

At **DSAPC** we have a strict policy prohibiting gum chewing. This policy is in place to ensure an environment where all can take pride in the up-keep and cleanliness of our community. There will be no gum chewing allowed in **DSPAC**. This includes before, during and after class. This policy will extend to all **DSPAC** trips to the theater and other outside performances.

## Smoking Policy

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** is a non-smoking facility. In accordance with the City of New York Code, smoking is banned in all workplaces, hence creating a healthy environment for workers, and their customers. The law also prohibits smoking within twenty feet of the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** building entrances. Please obey posted signs.

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## Cell Phone Use

Cell phones must be turned off during dance classes, rehearsals and performances unless otherwise specified by an instructor. Phone calls can be made only in the Reception area, or in the stairways. Students may text, provided they are not in a scheduled class at that time. Students may not use their phones in the studios.

Students are not permitted to leave classes to take phone calls. Please be mindful of the time before making or receiving calls on your phone. In case of an emergency, calls to students can be made via to the Reception Desk. **DSPAC** staff will retrieve the student or relay the message.

If a student is using their cell phone improperly, they will first receive a warning. Subsequent infractions will result in confiscation of their cell phone during class, to be returned to the student at the completion of the class. Repeated offenses will warrant confiscation by a staff member and retrieval by a Parent or Guardian only.

Students are encouraged to read or engage with others while waiting in the reception area for class.

## Use of Electronic Devices

Students are prohibited from using ALL electronic devices while in the studio during class time. This includes but is not limited to cell phones, music devices, gaming systems, and video/digital cameras. **DSPAC** reserves the right to confiscate any and all devices during class, to be returned to the student at the completion of the class.

## Inclement Weather – DSPAC Closings

**DSPAC** considers the New York City School District in its decision concerning closings due to inclement weather. **DSPAC** is not responsible for classes canceled as a result of extreme weather conditions or other circumstances beyond our control. Schedule changes due to inclement weather will be posted to the **DSPAC** website and sent to parent/guardian emails on file.

## Lost and Found

Lost and found items brought to the reception desk will be held for a reasonable amount of time. If not claimed, items will be sent to local charity organizations. Students are asked to mark all belongings with their names in permanent ink. Valuables and large sums of money should not be brought to **DSPAC**. The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** assumes no responsibility for loss or theft of dance clothing, pointe shoes, books, laptops, electronics, or other personal items that are left unattended.



## Hands-On Approach

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** strives to offer teaching that is individual and “hands-on”. It is appropriate for a member of the faculty to manually and physically position a dancer to expound a point of instruction or to pinpoint an individual flaw in his or her technique. The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** neither condones nor tolerates any touching of students by instructors that is harmful, professionally reckless, or that violates generally accepted tenets of propriety. Before enrolling your child, please consider that it is the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** policy to correct students and provide them with constructive criticism in support of artistic growth.

## Substance Abuse Policy

The consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited regardless of the student’s age or age of a guest. Violation of this policy may lead to immediate dismissal, as well as being reported to proper authorities. If you are of age and distribute alcohol to a minor, this will also lead to immediate dismissal from the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center**, as well as being reported to the proper authorities.

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** forbids the sale, possession, consumption, and storage of illegal drugs and/or controlled substances (as defined under applicable federal state law). Any evidence of the above will result in immediate dismissal for **DSPAC** as well as be turned over to proper authorities. Any and all types of drug paraphernalia are also prohibited and will be confiscated and turned over to the proper authorities. Immediate dismissal from the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** will follow.

## Disciplinary Process

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** reserves the right to discipline students for any infraction of the expectations and policies outlined in this Handbook. Disciplinary action may result in fines, community service, and depending on the degree of the infraction, detention, suspension, or dismissal from the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center**. Generally, the **DSPAC** staff will respond to infractions in the following fashion:

### **Minor Infractions**

- **First Offense:** Verbal warning
- **Second offense:** Parents will be notified. The student (and parents) may be asked to meet with the Director to discuss the situation
- **Third offense:** Expulsion

The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** is not required to provide prior warnings to students and may, in its sole discretion, advance disciplinary action to more severe actions, including immediate expulsion.



## **Major Infractions**

Respect for the law, as well as a genuine concern for the physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of all its students, motivates **DSPAC's** policies. Major infractions typically require thoughtful consideration of all issues therefore; decisions regarding these infractions may not be immediate.

- If a student uses, possesses, or is under the influence of controlled substances, unauthorized prescription drugs, abuse of prescriptions drugs, illegal drugs, or alcohol, or possesses drug/alcohol paraphernalia during the day, on **DSPAC** property, in locations within sight of **DSPAC** property, during **DSPAC** sponsored activities or programs, or while representing the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center, Inc.** in any capacity, the student will be suspended. Any of the activities above will be treated as a major violation not only of **DSPAC** rules, but also of state and federal laws. **DSPAC** reserves the right to require the student participate in counseling and/or drug/alcohol rehabilitation as a condition of that student's return to the **DSPAC** community. A student who commits a second drug or alcohol-related offense will typically be expelled.
- A student may not use tobacco products within three blocks of **DSPAC** at any time.
- Violence, threats of violence, possession of weapons or instruments used in a dangerous fashion, and harassment of others are major **DSPAC** infractions and may result in the suspension or expulsion of the students involved. This includes a threat of violence or any harassment that occurs using social media (i.e. cyber-bullying).
- Appropriating, stealing, or causing willful harm or damage to the property of another person or of **DSPAC**, or willfully engaging in conduct that results in damage to the property of another person or of the school, is prohibited and will result in suspension or expulsion. Students will be responsible for any damages incurred.
- Any student whose actions tarnish the reputation of **DSPAC**, jeopardizes the safety, order, and discipline, or social cohesion of the community, or whose behavior serves as a negative influence on **DSPAC** or other students, regardless of where or when those actions occur, including on social media websites, may be subject to suspension or expulsion at the discretion of administration.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

Every **DSPAC** student is expected to behave in a disciplined, responsible, and courteous manner when on **DSPAC** premises. The Director reserves the right to suspend or expel a student at any time whose attitude, class attendance, work habits, or overall conduct, does not live up to **DSPAC** standards of excellence. The **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts center** also reserves the right to dismiss any student who has a medical condition that places him/her or his/her classmates and staff at risk. At the time of suspension or expulsion, the student's parents or guardians will be notified and a conference will be scheduled.

In the event of an expulsion or dismissal by the Director, all tuition paid to **DSPAC**, on behalf of a

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discharged student, is forfeited by the student.

## Handbook Affirmation

I, \_\_\_\_\_(print your name), have read the **Student and Parent Handbook** and I understand what is expected of me as a member of the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** community. I affirm that I will strive to abide by these principles and guidelines for conduct in all my endeavors.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Statement of Responsibility

I, \_\_\_\_\_(print your name), have read the **Student and Parent Handbook** and the information printed above. I understand and have discussed with my child that s/he will be expected to conduct her/himself in a disciplined manner while enrolled in **The Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** Program. I grant **The Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** permission to act on my behalf in safeguarding my child's health and safety. I understand that all dance fees paid to the **Dwana Smallwood Performing Arts Center** on behalf of student(s) are forfeited by the student(s) if and when he or she is expelled from the Dance Program. I understand I am responsible for all applicable fees, as outlined on the Registration Form

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date