



JUNIOR TEAMS
Parent / Athlete Handbook

2022/2023 Season

#DiscoverYourSpark

SparkJrPrograms@gmail.com



SPARK Mission & Values

At SPARK, our mission is to foster excellence, develop strong and consistent dancers, promote self-esteem, understand the mechanics behind the movement, and instill a solid work ethic.

We believe in making dance team training accessible to all ages and levels. Our primary focus is on the technique and mastery of fundamental skills necessary to succeed in any dance team program. In addition, SPARK hopes to instill confidence, enthusiasm, and a sense of community within each dancer.

Our Middle School programs are designed to help junior dancers in grades 6-8 develop the necessary skills and technique they will utilize as they transition to their high school dance teams. Within our Middle School Programs we promote school spirit and involvement, teamwork, dedication, and respect; as well as learning effective technical skills, time management, and accountability, all to help dancers learn how to become a valuable team member and to create a successful and meaningful experience!

Parent/Athlete Expectations

General Program Expectations

Though SPARK is a separate entity of local school districts, we strive to mimic the academic and behavioral expectations outlined by each team's "feeder" high school dance team. We are committed to developing strong athletes with a sense of school spirit and pride while teaching athletes to be upstanding individuals. Within our SPARK Junior Teams, we expect athletes to put forth their best effort in all areas of life including:

1. Academics & school
2. Behavior in school & in the community
3. Relationships with peers, teammates, and adults
4. Practices, games, competitions, performance, etc.

If it is deemed that an athlete is not exhibiting positive behaviors in one or more of the above areas, the coaches and parents will work together to redirect the athlete toward a more positive set of behaviors. If the athlete's behaviors become disruptive or detrimental to other members or the team as a whole, it may result in the athlete's dismissal from the team.

Program Fees

Payments are due by the 15th of each month with the exception of your first payment (due at the time of registration). The cost per month is as follows:

- Registration - \$225
- September - \$225
- October - \$225

- November - \$225
- December - \$225
- January - \$225

The monthly cost is all inclusive of program needs, excluding a few necessary items that families must purchase independently. These items include:

- Team Uniform/Costume
- Team Backpack
- Practice Shoes
- Poms
- Team Jacket
- USASF Membership Fee

All payments will be made through our website via GoMotion. We do not mail invoices or statements. All account information and charges can be accessed via your GoMotion profile. All payments are run on an auto-pay system and a valid card is required on file at all times. A \$25 late fee will be applied to your account if payment is not received within 7 days after the balance is due.

Communication

Coaches will send out a weekly TWIP (This Week in Poms) to team members and parents, detailing practice times and locations, practice apparel requirements, event/performance details, and any other important information for the week. Any major calendar changes will be emailed out by the coaches immediately.

All parents & athletes/dancers will be required to download the BAND App for team communication. BAND is a free app that will serve as a platform for program announcements and for team communication. It will be the athlete's responsibility to check the BAND app for any and all communication sent out by the coaches.

Email will be the primary form of communication between coaches and parents. Coaches are only available for extended communication by appointment. If an extended discussion with coaches is required, please email coaches to request time. Emails are checked by coaches and SPARK admin frequently. Responses from coaches can be expected within 48 hours. Responses from SPARK admin can be expected within 72 hours. If a quicker response is necessary, please notify coaches by direct message using the BAND app and coaches will do their best to respond as soon as possible.

Code of Conduct

Respect should be given to coaches, instructors, teachers, peers, and others at all times. Inappropriate language and/or behavior will NOT be tolerated and will be addressed with both the athlete and their parent(s) as needed.

SPARK Junior Team members are expected to maintain a positive and appropriate social media presence. Inappropriate language, pictures, videos, comments, or other forms of "posting" will NOT be tolerated and will be addressed with both the athlete and their parent(s) as needed. Social media sites may include but are not limited to:

- Instagram
- Tik Tok
- Snapchat
- Facebook
- Twitter

The use of alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs (including but not limited to vaping), on or off campus, will NOT be tolerated and as such may result in immediate removal from the program. Decisions regarding such violations will be made by the coaches and administration, and are FINAL.

Attendance

Athletes/dancers are expected to arrive to ALL practices on time. Practice schedules/calendars will be given to teams at the beginning of the season and coaches will do their best to adhere to these schedules for the entirety of the season. Please know that changes/conflicts do arise and coaches/SPARK admin will communicate these as soon as reasonably possible. As such when changes arise, coaches will make reasonable effort to work through obstacles with athletes/dancers.

Attendance is crucial within each of the SPARK programs. If an athlete is going to miss a practice for whatever reason, it is the parent's responsibility to email the coach so that they are alerted of the absence. Due to an emphasis on commitment, failure to maintain a ninety (90%) percent attendance rate may result in the suspension from upcoming competition (or performances), or if necessary, suspension from the team.

General Program Rules

Appropriate footwear (jazz shoes, pirouettes, sneakers, or other) should be brought to every practice and shoes must be worn at all times. Hair should be secured back, out of the face, and off of the neck by the start of every practice. Cell phones and any apple/smart watches should be turned on silent and should remain put away during all practices. Texting will not be permitted during breaks. In the event of any outside emergency during practice times, please contact the coaches directly. ALL jewelry should be removed prior to the start of practice. No food, gum, or drinks other than a water bottle are permitted during practices. Athletes may bring a snack to eat outside of the practice area if necessary. Athletes are to respect the practice space and surrounding area, and should not leave trash or other items in any space.

Events, Performances, and Competitions

All team events, performances, and competitions are considered mandatory unless otherwise expressed by the coaches. If for any reason an athlete/dancer is unable to attend an event or performance, coaches should be notified well in advance.

Athletes/dancers are expected to arrive at the designated time before each performance and/or event. Athletes/dancers should arrive ready in their uniform (or other designated apparel) and

should have hair and makeup done unless otherwise instructed by the coaches. Uniforms and/or costumes should only be worn for games, competitions, or other team events, as instructed by the coaches. Care and upkeep of uniforms and/or costumes is the responsibility of the parents/guardians/families. Respect should be given to all hosts, game officials, other teams, etc. at all times. Poor sportsmanship is unacceptable and may result in being pulled from a performance.

COVID Acknowledgement

SPARK will continue to follow all CDC Guidelines regarding COVID. In addition, we continually monitor county, school district, and specific school guidelines, and will continue to communicate and follow all appropriate rules and regulations as they are set. If at any time you have questions regarding current regulations for the team, please reach out to your coaches or to Antoinette Golesh at SparkJrPrograms@gmail.com.

Staff Training Acknowledgement

All SPARK staff including coaches and instructors are thoroughly vetted prior to being hired. Once hired, all coaches and instructors are required to complete SPARK's rigorous training program which is specifically designed to provide our staff with the appropriate skills, knowledge, and tools that they will utilize as they step into their specific roles. Additionally, SPARK's training program includes extensive lessons on injury prevention, general safety, and technical accuracy to ensure all staff are capable of the job. Each of our coaches and instructors are CPR/First Aid certified. In addition, we require our coaches to register and gain coaching eligibility through USASF which requires a background screening and SafeSport training each year. Similar to a dance or gymnastics studio, our coaches and instructors are employees of SPARK and are expected to act within SPARK's employee code of conduct. If at any time you feel that a coach's behavior is inappropriate or unacceptable, please reach out to Antoinette Golesh at SparkJrPrograms@gmail.com.

****PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THE FOLLOWING PAGE TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE TERMS & EXPECTATIONS DETAILED ABOVE****

PARENT & ATHLETE CONTRACT

I/we have read, understand, and accept the SPARK Junior Program rules and policies as outlined above. I/we will assist in every way to see that these rules and policies are upheld. If I/we have any questions regarding the terms outlined above, I/we will contact the coach to discuss and receive clarity on the situation. I/we understand that failure to adhere to the rules and policies outlined above allows the coaches to enforce the consequences they determine appropriate.

By signing below, I/we acknowledge our commitment to the SPARK Junior Program and I/we are committed to all practices and events for the 2022-2023 season.

Athlete Name: _____ Grade: _____

Athlete Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date: _____