

What to Expect for Your Starlight Baby

Starpath Dance Academy is so honored to teach dance to your little one! Like with any “first,” there is a lot of excitement and some anxiety around this dance class, and we want it to be a comfortable and welcoming experience for everyone — dancers, parents, and teachers alike. To make this possible, I will meet with dancers and parents in the lobby on the first day to introduce myself and meet my newest Starlight Babies. From there I ask that you stay in the lobby and allow your little ones to join hands and enter the dance room.

Often, the Starlight Baby class is the very first time our two-year-olds are away from their parents and with a group of other babies that look just like them. Besides this, there is a nice lady asking them to do new things with their hands and feet. Sometimes this can be overwhelming — understandably so! We might see a baby cry or not want to let go of their mom during the first week or two; we may see some babies be okay but not move during class. All of this is normal and okay and not an indication of whether dance is right for them. That being said, I will let you know if I think your little one needs some more time, but this is rarely the case. If your dancer cries during class, we will allow them to see you in the lobby if necessary.

Entering into a dance room filled with Disney music, dancers will feel excited to see what is ahead. Some dancers will be apprehensive, and there may even be a tear or two, but that won't stop us all from having a magical experience. There are many techniques to getting dancers more comfortable with their environment including using teddy bears, standing within hula hoops or having help if needed. It is very important that all Starlight Baby dancers are wearing the proper attire on their first day — a pink leotard and pink tights (pink skirt is optional) with their buckled, patent leather tap shoes and full-sole pink ballet shoes. Please have your dancer wear all of their attire except the shoes to the dance studio. Allow yourself five minutes before class starts to get your dancer settled and put on their tap shoes. We recommend bringing a bag to store the dancer's ballet shoes, and allow them to bring it into the dance room. We also recommend telling them that you will be watching from the lobby.

The Starlight Baby class begins with 15 minutes of tap dancing — babies love the special sound these shoes make and are amazed that they control that sound! We will start off with an upbeat warm-up and do some fun hops and marches across the floor. Dancers will stay in the dance room with me to switch their shoes at about the halfway point. They will receive help putting on these new shoes. We ask that parents do not come in and students do not go out in order to keep the classroom flow intact. The second part of class is ballet, where students start

dancing like princesses and ballerinas as they learn first position and how to pli . As the dance year continues, dancers will become more and more comfortable, learning more dance skills and starting to learn short dance routines.

These 2-3 year-old dancers tend to be the stars of the recital in their adorable costumes on stage! I will be there to help them remember their dance — some students will follow me to a tee, some won't even need my help, and others may just look out into the audience. No matter what happens on that stage, being up there is a HUGE accomplishment for anyone, but especially for the 2-3 year olds! This magical moment of seeing your child on stage for the first time will be a forever memory that you will always cherish, and I am honored to be a part of that experience.

Leaps of love,

Lindsey