

ONLINE FORUM CODE OF CONDUCT GUIDELINES

National Dance Education Organization

Welcome to the NDEO Online Forums. We hope the forums will build community and promote networking of dance artists, educators and administrators working within similar interest areas. However, by registering and participating in NDEO Online Community Forum discussions, you accept responsibility to exercise common sense and good judgment in determining the content of postings and the language in postings. Please observe set policies described in Sections II and III of these Guidelines; and know that punitive measures result from not observing set policies (Section IV).

Section 1: General Policies

NDEO is not responsible for any messages posted. NDEO does not vouch for or warrant the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any message, and are not responsible for the contents of any message. Administrators and moderators of this forum will attempt to remove or edit any generally objectionable material as quickly as possible. Everyone using the forums understands that the forums express the views and opinions of the author(s) and not the administrators, moderators or web-master (except for posts by these people). Any user who finds material posted by another user objectionable is encouraged to contact the forum administrator via email. The administrator and moderators are authorized to remove or modify any data submitted to these forums for any reason we feel constitutes a violation of our policies, whether stated, implied or otherwise.

The administrator or moderators of these forums are not responsible for the practices of any user. Remember that all information disclosed in a forum immediately becomes public information. You must exercise extreme caution when deciding content, language, and legality of sharing information BEFORE posting.

This site may contain links to other websites and files. We have no control over the content and cannot ensure it will not be offensive or objectionable. We may, however, remove links to material that we feel is inappropriate as we become aware of them.

The user is fully responsible for any information or file posted to the forum and they must not post any copyrighted material that is not owned by his/herself or the owners of these forums. The user must not post or email members of this forum with any information which is knowingly false and/or defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, vulgar, hateful, harassing, obscene, profane, pornographic, threatening, invasive of a person's privacy, slanderous, sexually-orientated material or any other material that may violate any applicable laws. Infractions of these and other policies set forth in these User Guidelines will result in disciplinary action (Section IV).

The administrator, moderators and web master have the right to remove, edit, move or close any post, topic or thread at any time they see fit following the guidelines outlined below. If violations occur, the administrator, moderators and/or web master will send a private message of warning to the respective user in violation of forum policy.

Use of this forum constitutes acceptance of original Terms of Service, Rules, and Policies. Administrators may change the policies at any time and for any reason, without notice. Continued use of this forum after revisions constitute acceptance of modified terms and policies

Section II – User Policies & Expectations

A. Expectations

1. Courtesy:

a. Please remember that these forums are inclusive of ALL people, and we strive to maintain accessibility to everyone.

b. **Be respectful of all users at all times.** This means please use etiquette and politeness. Treat people with kindness and gentleness. If you do this the rest of the code of conduct will not need more than a cursory mention.

c. **Respect the forum staff.** They provide a service in their free time to keep the forums running efficiently. Occasionally input will be requested from some or all of our members, but in some cases it will not, please respect our decision. Also, forum moderators may edit for content, if you have an issue with our moderation, please contact the forum administrator.

d. There are no stupid questions. You are not a stupid person simply because you do not know how to do something, or do not have the answer to a question. Everyone was a green user at one point in time. Please use the posting board tutorial section or contact a forum moderator or administrator if you cannot find an answer to your question.

e. It is always nice to let the people that help you know that you appreciate their help. It is extra nice if you then share that information to another user that has the same question you just had. If your question is resolved (which is hopefully always the case!), it would be helpful for other users and the people helping you to label which procedure worked for you by quoting or clearly referring to it. Giving feedback as to what procedures worked not only makes the person helping you feel a sense of accomplishment, you will also be helping any other user with your same issue searching for an answer.

2. Effective Communication

a. **Titles:** Try to give information in the title of your post. Instead of using a title like "new question," use a title that is specific, such as, "Resources for teaching creative dance to children." A clear title will attract more views to your thread, as it gives a clear indication of the content of the post to the people that are willing to help you. Ultimately this will allow you to get more help of a better quality. Also, please resist the urge to use a sensationalist, extreme, and flame-baiting title like "I've had it with NDEO!" "I bet you can't solve my problem" or "NDEO sucks". Your problem is important, but so are other people's problems. The best way to get good help is to be specific and unemotional in your original post and its title, as you describe the problem.

b. **Writing:** Please strive to communicate with other users as effectively as possible. Please try to write your posts in English. We have many users from many different countries that visit here and English is the common language of these forums. When writing a post, please space paragraphs with a blank line in between them for better readability. Please do not write posts in all uppercase letters, as it looks as if you are screaming at the people reading your post. Please refrain from using slang, jargon, texting, or "leetspeak" (in which letters are replaced by numbers). Please do not shorten your words to acronyms or abbreviations. It is very difficult to read and understand. Please use color and font properties for highlighting portions of your text, and not for all of the text in your post. Typos and other errors can cause miscommunication between users on the forums, please preview your text before posting. **Please do not cross post, or post the same thing in multiple locations.**

c. **Images:** Please be prudent in your use of images; they may help to explain something more clearly or indicate a problem you are experiencing better but you have to remember that not everyone has the same bandwidth. If an image is the best way of handling the information, please keep your image to less than 100kb.

3. Forum Usage

a. **Searching:** Searching the NDEO Forums is a quick way to see if someone has had your same question and if it has been answered or if there is already a discussion about the same topic.

b. **Topic Location:** Post in the appropriate section for your topic. For example: First, be sure to use the correct Special Interest Group (SIG) forum. Second, use the correct subheading for the topic you address – i.e., K-12 / curriculum.

c. **Thread Drifting/Steering:** Please keep discussions on topic.

d. **Rallying:** It is not recommended that you attempt to get other forum members to write comments in support of your post/position/etc.

e. **Inappropriate Posts:** If you have found a post that you feel is inappropriate or that violates the forum code of conduct, please contact the forum moderator. Do not attempt to moderate discussions or correct other users yourself.

B. Unacceptable Postings

1. **Personal Information** – You may never post personal information for another person even if it already exists in another place on the web. You may only post personal information for yourself and that is not recommended because all information becomes immediately public. You are prohibited from divulging private information such as your Social Security Number or credit card numbers. You may not divulge login/password information for yourself or anyone else. ***NDEO Moderators and Administrators will never ask you for your password.***

2. **Illegal Activities** - This forum is a place for ideas and constructive participation. It is not a place to violate any laws or to discuss illegal activities. This type of activity includes, but is not limited to: advocating or asking for information regarding software piracy or unauthorized emulators of software or hardware; sharing or distributing viruses, licenses, registration information, software, software keys, or other information designed to do harm to or allow unlawful access to any computer hardware, software, networks, or any other systems; and criminal activities that may include the sale of non-legal items. You are prohibited to link to, or provide information on, sites that promote, endorse, or participate in illegal activities of any kind. Such actions will result in immediate and permanent banishment from this forum and may subject members to appropriate legal action(s), depending on local, state, or federal laws of the respective governance domestic or foreign.

3. **Copyright Infringement.** Articles, texts, and any other information not written by the poster must be properly credited to the author of said work. You are permitted to post articles, so long as they are within the scope of the forum policies. If you did not write the article in question, you must provide the author's name and source of the article (a link will do, where applicable). Posts that do not have proper sourcing information will be removed, at administrator discretion.

a. Any works reproduced here are the sole responsibility of the poster. The poster is responsible for liability or damages that may occur from the illegal use of copyrighted materials. NDEO takes no responsibility for such illegal actions by posters whether intended or unintended.

b. Should an article be contested by an author claiming copyright infringement, the article will be immediately removed from public view during the investigation. If the author is determined to have cause for concern regarding an article, the article may be deleted from the forum and the poster penalized in accordance with forum policies.

c. **Approved way to post an article found on the internet:** Post a paragraph or two, and a link to the source so that people, if they are so included, can click on the link and read the rest of the properly attributed article themselves.

4. **Hotlinking (bandwidth theft)** - Hotlinking is the linking to of images located on someone's server (website), other than your own which results in unauthorized data transfer. All forum members are reminded that using any image or words from another site without permission may violate the host site's Terms of Service Agreement and subject you to possible legal action. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have permission

before using anything from another site for a quote, avatar or signature picture. **Credits must be noted on the posting otherwise they will not be posted.**

5. **Spam** - If a post or thread contains spam (unsolicited advertising) it will be removed from the forum and the poster may be banned. Active users in good standing are allowed to have links to personal sites in their signatures, in their profile, and may post them in threads on occasion as long as the content of those links does not include abusive, obscene, vulgar, slanderous, hateful, threatening, sexually-orientated material or any other material that may violate any applicable laws.

a. Users may post member websites that promote their own program and services for sale or trade. But pay attention to what forum would be most appropriate for that program or service. Something that would appeal to all members should be posted on the Events forum. **If posting on the Events forum, then do NOT post on other forums as this results in an overload of duplicate emails clogging inboxes.**

b. Users may not post advertisements for companies, organizations, websites, or services that are not related to NDEO or the membership of this forum. Key rule of thumb, only post information about dance or dance education.

c. Users may not post solicitations for money. This includes banners - in entries or signature lines - that solicit, or link to a site that solicits, for money or the raising of funds for any cause, pay-per-click links, and links or advertisements that do similar. This policy will be construed to cover site or site addresses that either redirect (for any purpose) or are found to be malicious or cause disruption, intentional or not, of the end-user; normal technical issues, such as outdated browser software, are not considered disruptive in nature (unless technical issues are exploited, such as security flaws of outdated browser software).

d. Members who use the email function of the board to send out solicitations can be banned immediately. This includes collecting member email addresses for the purpose of soliciting or scamming the membership. Continued violations could result in notifying the member's internet service provider.

6. **Use of the word "free"** - Please refrain from posting a message or replying to a thread offering any item, program, or service for "free" and asking the reader to reply to the forum post in order to obtain such item, program, or service. Use of this word can cause an overwhelming number of forum responses. Suggested alternatives include the word "discount" or "special offer" with directions for the reader to click on an external link to learn more about the specific opportunity.

7. **Excessive Posting** - Excessive posting is not allowed. Please give your fellow members time to respond, and try to think about your topic and include all relevant information in a single post. People who spam the forum with a considerable amount of posts will be suspended or banned immediately - no warnings.

C. Unacceptable Language

1. **Profanity:** Remember that the forums are used by people of all age groups and of all tolerance levels regarding profanity usage. When in the forums, please try to keep your language polite and courteous and refrain from the usage of profanities. Profanity/swearing is not allowed, and under no circumstances will we allow any profanity to be directed toward another person.

2. The **use of Special characters and other methods to bypass the use of (curse) word on this forum is unacceptable.** This includes using *(or other characters/symbols) in place of another letter normally in that bad word. If you type (for example) *ss, and ass is on the list, you will receive a warning.

3. **Adult Content:** Messages containing sexually oriented/violent/illegal dialogue, images, content, or links to these things are prohibited from being posted.

4. Flaming and condescending messages: It is prohibited to post messages that personally attack, call people names, or otherwise harass another forum member (or any person or group). Such messages will be removed at the moderator's discretion. If the thread is flame-bait, appears to be intended to start an argument rather than enhance discussion, it will be removed without notice. Any users who continue to post in this manner or engage in other questionable practices, like trolling, posting in an attempt to engage people in an argument, may be subject to more serious sanctions.

5. Baiting - Any post that, in the sole opinion of the administrators, has the appearance of being designed to entice a specific negative response shall be considered "baiting" and is inappropriate for this forum. Violations of this can result in warnings being issued to the offending member. Pointing out someone's inaccurate statement is ok, if done in a respectful manner. Debate is encouraged. Arguments are not.

6. Harassment - If you feel you are being harassed on this forum, take the issue up with the offender in private email. If it continues, publicly ask them to stop, on this forum. If a person is harassing you repeatedly, please notify a moderator or admin. The person doing the harassing will be spoken to first. If the harassment continues, that person will be warned, then banned. If the Administration sees post content that they feel is "attacking" or harassing other forum members, they will be warned once, then banned. If a member is being attacked by another member, the member being attacked must report it, if they feel it warrants intervention. We will not accept reports on behalf of another member. This forum is no place for personal attacks. There is no reason why a person cannot come here and feel safe, knowing that they aren't going to be repeatedly harassed. This is an equal opportunity website.

D. Consequences

Users who do not observe the above policies will be subject to the following consequences:

1. **First offense:** Warning. The member being warned will be notified email.

2. **Second offense:** Suspension of 2-7 days, depending on the severity of the offense. In instances of severe, extreme, or persistent violations, the user may be removed indefinitely from forum privileges. The member will be notified via email.

3. **Third Offense:** Indefinite Suspension and revocation of their NDEO membership.

4. **Recourse**

a. If the member in question feels they have been wronged on any violation, a written appeal should be forwarded to NDEO staff who will establish a committee of three to investigate the charge and a majority vote determines outcome.

b. The web-master, administrators and moderators of this forum will preserve forum content when possible. However editing, locking and deleting content may be necessary and if so will be done at the discretion of the web-master, administrators and moderators when the forum code of conduct has been violated.

c. If you feel someone has violated the NDEO Online Community Forums Code of Conduct you may open a complaint with NDEO Staff.

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