


# Next Step Dance Kodiak

## Parent & Student Handbook

2026-2027

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## Welcome to Next Step Dance Kodiak

Welcome to the Next Step Dance Kodiak family! We're so excited to see our returning dancers back in the studio and just as excited to meet the new faces joining us for the first time. This is where friendships are made, skills are built, and memories last a lifetime.

At NSDK, we take our role in your child's life to heart—guiding them, cheering them on, and helping them grow both as dancers and as people. Our goal is to create a positive, inspiring environment where every dancer feels supported and valued.

This handbook is your all-in-one guide for the year ahead. It will help you understand how we do things, what to expect, and where to find answers. Keep it handy, and know that our teachers and office staff are always here to help—whether it's a quick question, a scheduling concern, or just sharing a proud moment. Nothing is too big or too small.

Here's to a wonderful year of dancing, learning, and making memories together!

### Quick Reference Studio Information

**Address:** 1220 E Rezanof Dr, Kodiak AK 99615
**Phone Number:** 907-654-5722 (text or call)
**Email:** dance@nextstepdancekodiak.com
**Website:** www.nextstepdancekodiak.com
**Parent Portal:** https://app.gostudiopro.com/online/nextstepdancekodiak
**Owner/Director:** Mary Beth Loewen

NSDK is committed to providing high-quality classes to enhance the overall development of the student, regardless of age. The highest educational standards are expected from all NSDK faculty members. They are lifelong learners who continue to educate themselves through certification programs, teacher-training schools, conferences, and other learning opportunities.

## Land Acknowledgment

Next Step Dance Kodiak respectfully acknowledges that we live, work, learn, and dance on the traditional land of the Sugpiaq. We respect the cultural heritage, enduring presence, and contributions of the Suqpiaq people, who continue to live and thrive on Kodiak Island, and we honor Elders of the past, present, and future.

# Studio Philosophy

## Mission Statement

At Next Step Dance, we believe that artistic expression has the capacity to inspire and enrich the lives of people of all ages. We provide high-quality instruction to all ages, taught with enthusiasm, and provide students with a safe, accepting, and motivating environment in which to learn and grow. Our instruction emphasizes the importance of correct technique, having fun while building self-esteem and a positive sense of self, experiencing the discipline and freedom of movement, and working as an individual within a group. We expect and encourage kindness and respect to ourselves, our classmates, our teachers, and our dance families. Our staff leads by positive example, and encourages our students to strive for excellence both within and outside the dance studio.

We know a teacher's influence on a student's future, regardless of their age, extends far beyond what goes on in the classroom. Our teaching philosophy is centered on instilling a passion for dance, healthy movement, the performing arts and challenging ourselves while building self-esteem and confidence in every student.

## Core Values

**Community:** As a studio, we create a safe, supportive space for our community inside and outside the studio to grow.

**Kindness:** At our studio, we choose kindness in our words, our actions, and the way we treat each other.

**Excellence:** At our studio, we strive to do *our* best in all things.

**Joy:** NSDK is a happy place for all- parents, students, and teachers!

**Inclusion:** No matter where you come from, when you walk through our doors, you become one of us. We treat every person with care, respect, and compassion, and look for ways to help others feel valued and included.

**Resilience:** We help our students to work through challenges, learn from struggles, keep trying and learning even when things are hard, and grow as people and dancers from that process.

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## Our Expectations for Students & Parents

**For Our Students**
Success in dance starts with a commitment to your classes. Technique is built in class, so arrive prepared, focused, and free from distractions. Use class time to push yourself—dance full-out, stretch farther, refine your technique, and make the most of every moment.

Be open to trying new styles—you may discover a new passion. Respect your teachers by listening to all corrections, whether for you or a classmate. A correction is a sign your teacher cares about your progress—always say "thank you" for constructive feedback. Students who work hard, stay open to learning, and value their teachers' expertise will see the greatest growth.

**For Parents: We're In This Together**
Our programs thrive on a positive atmosphere and strong educational experience for students, parents, and faculty. Cooperation and mutual respect between parents, students, and teachers set an important example for children. Your child looks to you as a role model for how to interact in a professional setting.

Consistent attendance is essential. Teamwork and dedication are core parts of our studio's learning process. While parents and teachers may view a child's progress differently, we share the same goal: to provide the best possible training—physically, mentally, and emotionally—while ensuring dance remains enjoyable.

Your emotional support is just as valuable as your financial support. Encourage your child to do their best at their own pace, regardless of others' achievements. Dance is a personal journey, and no two students progress at the same rate.

At NSDK, we aim to teach life skills as well as dance skills. Beyond technique, dance training builds resilience, fosters teamwork, and shows students what they can achieve through consistent effort—skills that serve them in all areas of life, whether or not they continue dancing.

## Communication

**Phone/Text:** 907-654-5722 — We'll respond as soon as possible.

**Office Hours:** Weekdays 3:00–6:00 PM, Saturdays 9:00–12:00 PM (hours may vary by year).

**Email: Our primary communication method.** Please check it regularly and keep your address current with the studio.

- Add **dance@nextstepdancekodiak.com** to your contacts to avoid spam filtering.
- We can send correspondence to multiple family email addresses upon request.

**Urgent Updates:** For unexpected class cancellations or schedule changes, we will:

1. Post on Facebook
2. Send an email
3. Put a message into parent portals
4. Text and/or call families

**Keep Info Updated:** please ensure the studio has your current mobile number and email address at all times!

## Facebook

Facebook is a great way for us to keep in touch with many families at once, especially in Kodiak. **If you are on Facebook, we encourage you to join our *Next Step Dance Kodiak Current Students* group https://www.facebook.com/groups/nextstepdancekodiak for important updates and announcements. We post everything here!**

Our public page is facebook.com/nextstepdancekodiak. "Like" the page to receive daily updates on studio events, and invite your friends and family to follow us as well.

You are welcome to post questions on our Facebook page and to share information with other families. Often, another dance family may get you the information you need faster than we can!

## Website

Our website is www.nextstepdancekodiak.com News, important parent and student information, contact information, and more are available online 24 hours a day.

## General Policies

To ensure the smooth, safe running of NSDK and an enjoyable experience by all, below you will find our code of conduct. As always, we are open to feedback, so if any of the requirements outlined below are unclear or concerning, please give us a call to discuss further. Following a formal meeting, we do reserve the right to dismiss or take disciplinary action on any students or parents who breach our studio's code of conduct. Parents must remain outside classrooms during all lessons (including private lessons).

- Do not approach teachers or students during class; all messages, food, drinks, or medication must go through NSDK office staff.
- Parents must wait in our designated lobbies or outside the building until classes are dismissed.
- Tuition and costume fees must be paid on time.
- Late payments may incur fees and/or exclusion from performances.
- Unpaid balances may be sent to collections at the client's expense.
- NSDK is not responsible for students before or after their scheduled class times.
- Parents must arrange prompt drop-off and pick-up.
- In emergencies or unavoidable delays, contact the studio immediately.
- Siblings are welcome to visit, but must be supervised at all times in the designated lobbies.
- NSDK may change teachers or schedules at any time during the year.
- In dance rooms:
    - Only water is allowed (no food, other drinks, or gum).
    - No street shoes.
- Respect is required from all students and families toward NSDK staff, teachers, students, and other families.
- Disrespect, defamation, or physical, mental, emotional, or cyber bullying will not be tolerated.
- These behaviors may result in immediate dismissal at the director's discretion.

## Safety

The safety of our families is our top priority. NSDK strictly upholds Child Protection laws and policies in the studio, at public performances, and online (website and social media).

As part of registration, you will be asked to sign a media waiver allowing us to use images and video of your student for promotional purposes. I*f you have concerns, please speak with our reception staff.*

Our directors and staff are committed to using only age-appropriate music and costumes. We avoid songs with sexist, explicit, violent, racist, homophobic, or criminal content, and we do not use costumes that project sexuality or display explicit graphics or text.

NSDK is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please avoid bringing valuables to the studio.

Your enrollment paperwork includes a liability statement. Read and sign this before classes begin to ensure you understand the rights and responsibilities of both your family and our studio.

**Parking Lot Safety**

For the safety of all students, enter and exit the parking lot slowly and cautiously. Park only in designated spaces, **leaving the area in front of the porch for immediate pick-up and drop-off.** Children should wait inside for their ride. If parked close to the building or windows, please turn off your engine. Do not allow children to play in the parking lot.

**Emergency Evacuation**

Emergency evacuation routes are posted in all classrooms and the lobby. In the event of an evacuation, students will exit quietly in single file to the designated area, where teachers will take roll. Parents will be notified via text, Facebook message, and post (if internet is available).

- **Tsunami Warning:** Our studio is above the 100' tsunami inundation zone. Students will remain at the studio until checked out by a parent.

**Medical Information**

Inform the director and/or teachers if your child uses an inhaler, requires medication, or has any medical conditions or learning needs. This information, provided at registration and updated as needed, helps us create the best experience for every dancer. All medical and personal details are kept confidential.

## Classes & Class Placement

The studio faculty meets regularly to discuss the students' progress and/or placement. It is our policy to offer appropriate opportunities to every child.

Placement is ***highly individual*** and the factors that go into the decision are complex. Placement decisions are derived from many years of teaching experience. Often a child is placed in a particular group or class where he or she will feel confident, in order to promote the development of self-esteem. Some students who are placed in a higher level become discouraged, only to lose their passion for dance. Others respond to the challenge of being in a class with students who are more proficient by pushing themselves to work harder.

- **Minimum of two years** in each class level, unless otherwise determined by teachers and the director.
- Most students remain in a level for **2–4 years** to build:
    - Strong technique
    - Safe habits
    - Flexibility and strength
    - Performance quality and confidence
- Progression is about mastering correct placement, not just learning steps. Advancing too quickly can cause frustration, injury, or gaps in training.
- Teachers and the director evaluate each student individually to determine readiness for the next level.

**Tiny Steps, Ages 2-4**

Explore movement, balance, rhythm, and memory.

*Tumbling Tots*: 1.5 - 3 years old, with caregiver, 6-8 week sessions
*Wiggles & Giggles:* age 2
*Rhythm & Movement*: 3 & 4 year olds
*Preschool Tumbling*: 3 - 5 year olds,

**First Steps, Ages 5-7**

Students typically come 1-2 nights per week. Even if your budding superstar isn't sure if they like hip-hop, ballet, or tap, we can help find the best fit.

*Ballet*: Intro to Ballet through Beginning Ballet 2
*Tap:* Tippity Tap, Tap 1
*Jazz*: Intro to Jazz, Jazz 1
*Hip Hop:* Hippity Hop, Hip Hop 1
*Acro Dance:* Intro to Acro, Acrodance 1-3
*Musical Theatre:* Musical Theatre 1

**Next Steps, Ages 8-11**

Students typically come 2-3 nights per week to explore all styles of dance offered to find their favorite, building on skills, and discovering how to express themselves through movement.

*Ballet*: Ballet 1-4, Pre-Pointe
*Tap:* Tap 1, Tap 2
*Jazz*: Jazz 1, Jazz 2
*Hip Hop:* Hip Hop 1, Hip Hop 2 *Acrodance and Aerial*
*Musical Theatre*
*Contemporary*
*Specialty Classes*

**Stepping Up, Ages 12+**

Students typically come 2-3 nights per week to explore all styles of dance offered to find their favorite, building on skills, and discovering how to express themselves through movement.

*Ballet*: Ballet 3 - Ballet 6
*Tap:* Tap 3
*Jazz*: Jazz 2, Jazz 3
*Hip Hop:* Hip Hop 3
*Acrodance and Aerial*
*Musical Theatre 2 & 3*
*Contemporary 3*
*Specialty Classes*

**Stepping Out, Ages 16+**

Classes for teens & adults! No pressure or dress code, just fun! All levels welcome

*Ballet*: Teen & Adult Ballet
*Tap:* Teen & Adult Tap
*Jazz*: Teen & Adult Jazz/Lyrical
*Aerial:* Teen & Adult Aerial Silks
*Specialty Classes*

## Attendance

Your child's attendance in class is very important to their peers and our teaching staff. As a member of the team, it is a commitment for you to ensure your child attends their classes on time each week and attends all lessons planned for them. Each lesson builds on the last, and missing class can leave a student behind both technically and socially.

From February through April, recital choreography is taught and rehearsed. Consistent attendance during this time helps students feel confident for the year-end performance.

If you know your child will be absent for holidays, school trips, or other commitments, please notify us by email in advance. If your child is ill, contact our office as soon as possible so teachers can prepare catch-up plans.

**Tardiness**
Dance and tumbling require a proper warm-up to prevent injury. Students arriving more than 10 minutes late may be asked to observe for safety reasons.

**Weather Cancellations**
NSDK generally follows KIBSD school closures. Decisions will be announced by noon via email, our website, Facebook page, and the school voicemail.

**Makeup Classes**
Missed classes may be made up in a similar class. Please check with the office to find the best option for your child.

## Dress Code

NSDK maintains a dress code to encourage concentration and a sense of inclusiveness (variations in attire can be distracting and contribute to feelings of inequality). Uniformity in dancewear allows the teachers to assess how well the students are implementing the technique being taught, problems with alignment, and other important aspects of dance training.

**Please ensure all parts of your child's dance attire are clearly labelled - individual shoes, socks, underpants…you'll be amazed at the amount of lost property we generate!**

Students should carry their dancewear, shoes, and other belongings in a labeled dance bag. Please print your child's name on the bag as well as on all of its contents. NSDK maintains a dress code to encourage focus, inclusiveness, and professionalism. Uniform attire helps teachers assess technique, alignment, and progress without distractions.

**General Guidelines:**

- Keep dancewear clean and in good repair.

- No watches, jewelry, or safety pins in class.
- Dance shoes are for indoor use only.
- Maintain good personal hygiene.
- Wear cover-ups to and from the studio to keep muscles warm.
- Any color leotard/skirt allowed for rehearsals, privates, and workshops.
- **Baggy shirts, street/school clothes, jeans, or baggy sweatshirts will not be permitted.**

**Class-Specific Requirements:**

Rhythm & Movement
Light blue or pink leotard or skirted leotard/dress, or black shorts with white, pink, or blue dance shirt. Wrap sweater optional. Tights and ballet shoes.

Ballet Boys
Black dance pants or tights, and white shirts, tucked in.

Beginning Ballet 1 & 2
Lavender leotards, with a lavender skirt if desired. Wrap sweater optional. Pink tights, pink ballet shoes. Hair in bun and no bangs.

Ballet 1 & 2
Marine blue leotards and marine blue skirt if desired. Wrap sweater optional. Pink tights, pink ballet shoes. Hair in bun and no bangs.

Ballet 3 & 4
Plum leotards and plum or black skirt if desired. Wrap sweater optional. Pink convertible tights, pink ballet shoes. Hair in bun and no bangs.

Ballet 5 & 6
Black leotards and any color skirt if desired. Wrap sweater optional. Pink convertible tights, pink ballet shoes and pointe shoes if on pointe. Hair in bun and no bangs. Black skirt needed for performances.

Tap
Black leggings, dance pants, or shorts. Navy, black, or marine blue leotard (preferred) or racer-back style tank top or plain fitted t-shirt. Black tap shoes with tan convertible or footless tights, or bare legs. Pink convertible tights are fine if coming directly from ballet class. Hair securely pulled out of face.

Contemporary
Black leggings, dance pants, or shorts. Navy, black, or marine blue leotard (preferred) or racer-back style tank top or plain fitted t-shirt. Contemporary 3 may wear any color. Half sole

shoes, foot undies, or bare foot (no socks) with tan convertible or footless tights, or bare legs. Pink convertible tights are fine if coming directly from ballet class. Hair securely pulled out of face.

Musical Theatre
Black leggings, dance pants, or shorts. Navy, black, or marine blue leotard (preferred) or racer-back style tank top or plain fitted t-shirt. Black jazz shoes with tan convertible or footless tights, or bare legs. Pink convertible tights are fine if coming directly from ballet class. Hair securely pulled out of face.

Jazz
Black leggings, dance pants, or shorts. Navy, black, or marine blue leotard (preferred) or racer-back style tank top or plain fitted t-shirt. Black jazz shoes with tan convertible or footless tights, or bare legs. Pink convertible tights are fine if coming directly from ballet class. Hair securely pulled out of face.

Acro, Tumbling, & Silks
Shorts-style unitards (biketard) or leotard, or tank top or t-shirt & dance shorts. T-shirts must be fitted and able to be tucked into shorts for safety in spotting, and so students don't get distracted by loose clothing when working upside down. No jewelry, especially bracelets and necklaces, as they can get caught on fabrics with spotting and in silks.

Hip Hop and Boys Funk/Jazz Class
Any color: dance tops such as tank tops or fitted t-shirts, and athletic pants, dance pants, or leggings. Shoes worn for Hip Hop must be clean, dance-class-only black Converse style "tennis shoes." (Does not have to be Converse brand.) Black jazz shoes for Boys funk/jazz classes. Long hair in ponytail, bun, or braids.

**Borrow Bin:**
*The dress code is mandatory to participate in class. We have borrow bins for both shoes and clothes at the studio.* ***If your child forgets their dance clothes,*** *they will be able to borrow appropriate clothing or shoes and parents will be notified.*

## Registration & Tuition

Before lacing up those tap shoes, it's important that all students and/or parents – whether returning or new - fill out and sign your registration paperwork so we can ensure we have the most up-to-date contact details for you. This information includes your registration form, media release form (so we can show off photos and videos of our amazing dancers in and around the studios), and liability contract.

NSDK does require a credit or debit card on file for registration. Our annual registration fee is $40 per student and covers the cost of our online registration system, email server, website, insurance, and so on. Registration fees are not refundable with the exception of

preschool students who are determined to be unready for dance and *may* receive a credit for the following season.

We encourage students and families to explore different dance styles. Existing students may schedule a trial class in a new style, provided space is available. Contact us to arrange a quick meeting and secure your spot.

**Tuition and Expense Policy**
Tuition is based on the season regardless of how many weeks are in a given month, and includes rehearsal and performance times as recital approaches. Tuition payments average out to four classes each month. We offer a multiclass discount for students taking 3 or more hours of dance or tumbling per week. The discount increases with additional classes. ***Overdue fees will accrue a late fee of 10% per week that it is past due and if fees remain unpaid in week 4 of classes students will not be permitted to participate in their lessons.***

***Please note:*** All students are invoiced based on a monthly basis so your invoice will be the same each term unless you change classes. If you decide to withdraw from classes mid-term for any reason, you will still be charged for the entire month. If a class is missed, we offer makeup classes for that absence. Refunds will not be issued for missed classes due to cancellation due to weather or public holiday –we will always endeavor to arrange make-up lessons for classes cancelled by NSDK or will offer an alternative class.

**Automatic Monthly Billing**
Our most popular payment method is automatic monthly billing to your credit or bank card. Charges are processed on the 1st of each month (or the 2nd if the 1st is a Sunday). You'll receive an email notification one week before billing.

Weekly payment plans may be available—check with the studio office. We also accept cash or checks if received by the 2nd of the month. Please write your child's name in the memo line of checks, and request a receipt for any cash payment.

**Reimbursement from AKTeach and Other Homeschool Programs**
Families will be billed monthly to the credit or debit card on file. We are happy to provide invoices as needed for your reimbursement for Alaskan home school programs.

**Other Scholarship Opportunities**
Many Alaska Native tribal organizations (Koniag, Sunaq) offer scholarships for their members. Migrant Ed might also be an option. NSDK offers a limited number of tuition scholarships each year, which are supported by donations from NSDK families, and proceeds from flower/photos/ t-shirt sales.

**Termination of Enrollment**
In certain circumstances, when it is in the best interest of one or more students, it may be necessary for the school owner or director to terminate a student's enrollment. Every effort will

be made to correct a problematic situation before terminating enrollment. Reasons for termination of enrollment include the following:

- Disruptive or dangerous behavior by students or their parents
- Abuse of other children, staff, or property
- Inability of NSDK to meet the child's needs

**Additional Fees**

Tuition does not include the registration fee, dancewear, shoes, costumes, rehearsal fee, recital tickets, private lessons, or special events.

## Performance

A big part of dance training includes learning through performance. Dance is a performance-based art, and we strive to give our students as many opportunities as possible. Beyond preparing dancers for a possible career, performing builds confidence, public speaking skills, teamwork, and social ease—benefits that carry into school, college, and future careers. However, performance on stage is always optional, and your dancer will be fully included in their classwork even if they choose not to be part of the performance.

The rehearsal process develops memory, discipline, and cooperation as dancers work together toward a shared goal. And for many students, performing is the highlight of the year! If the Gerald C. Wilson Auditorium is unavailable, we will find creative ways to keep our dancers performing.

**Winter Show Date:** December 11-13, 2026

- Winter shows: *Opt-in (no later than September 30th)* — registration required for younger dancers

**Spring Show Date:** May 15–16, 2027

- Spring recital: *Opt-out (no later than December 31st)* — all students included unless they would prefer not to perform.

**Recital Fee**

- $60 Recital Fee will be charged to your card on file October 15th for Winter Show (If Participating)
- $60 Recital Fee will be charged to your card on file January 15th for Spring Show (Unless Opted Out)

**Costumes**

We carefully select high-quality, age-appropriate costumes for each class. Costs include accessories such as hats or gloves.

- Younger students: ***approx***. $100 each
- Older students: ***approx***. $115 each (soloists/small groups may be more)
    - The first ½ of Costume fee(s) will be charged to your card on file October 15th for the Winter Show (If Participating). The balance will be charged November 15th
    - The first ½ of the Costume fee(s) will be charged to your card on file February 15th for the Spring Show (If Participating). The balance will be charged March 15th

No cancellations or refunds once orders are placed (per manufacturer policy)

Students enrolling after December 15 may order costumes until March 10 if available, with full payment due at order time.

# Other Information

**Privacy**
We collect only the information needed to provide services, manage enrollment, and process payments (e.g., name, contact details, medical info, and payment details). Your information is stored securely and accessed only by authorized personnel. We never sell or share information, except when required by law or for debt collection with proper confidentiality protections.
To review or update your information, contact our office at **907-654-5722**.

**Lost and Found**
Label all clothing, shoes, and personal items. We do our best to return lost items, but we cannot be responsible for belongings brought to class. Labels make it easier to reunite items with their owners.

**No Smoking or Alcohol or Firearms** For the health and example of our students, smoking and alcohol use are not permitted on NSDK property. No firearms, concealed or otherwise, even with a permit, are allowed within NSDK.

## A Final Note of Sincere Thanks

*You made it through this whole packet*?! Thank you so much, both for reading, and for being part of NSDK. We believe in kindness, community, and creating a place where all our students are accepted, challenged, loved, respected, and nurtured. Please help us to create a wonderful space for everyone in our studio family and our larger community, through feedback, suggestions, help, and enthusiasm. We know that dance lessons are life lessons, and we look forward to learning with you! Thank you for choosing to be part of our studio family. We feel lucky to have you with us, and we look forward to an exciting, rewarding season!