

THE NUTCRACKER PARENT/VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

General Information

Rehearsal scheduled times are kept consistent to keep a weekly routine for dancers and parents. However, times can change for several reasons. Therefore, we ask that you always check the production board/Parent Portal for changes in rehearsal schedules. Emails are sent as well with updates of any schedule changes. We will update the Parent Portal to reflect changes. If you need any additional information, see the administrative assistant in the office.

As a Nutcracker parent, you are now a **VOLUNTEER** for the largest production we produce each year. You are required to participate as a volunteer, and we offer many ways in which you may be helpful. If you are going to volunteer for duties during a performance, it is helpful to volunteer in that same position at least one night during tech week/production week. This will help you feel more at ease with what will be happening and what your role will be.

***All Parent/Volunteers are required to pass a SLED background check through Ballet Spartanburg BEFORE being allowed to assist in the production. The necessary forms can be obtained, and your completed paperwork submitted, through Ballet Spartanburg's Administration Office. All information is kept strictly confidential.**

Typically, "set places" is 5 minutes before show time.

Dancers need to bring quiet activities to do in the dressing rooms, such as homework, books, card games, sewing projects, small board games, coloring pages (no markers though please).

There is to be no running in the halls/ spinning around in chairs.

Things that you may want to pack for your dancer (**not required, just ideas**): hairspray, bobby pins, hair gel (for wispies), makeup remover/baby wipes, spray deodorant to preserve costumes, sanitary products, Band-Aids, needle/thread, scissors, tissues.

Food in Dressing Rooms: Twichell has a new policy: Non-messy foods are allowed with water only. No soft drinks are allowed. All trash will be picked and put in a trash bag and tied up. Ballet Spartanburg will be fined \$200 per night if the dressing rooms are full of food/trash. We do not want to fund this extra bill! We are VERY SORRY, but this is Twichell's policy, not ours.

Volunteers

Any volunteer whether you are a volunteer for merchandise or backstage, you are asked to be prompt, on time, and to remain at your volunteer position until your designated time to leave. All times may vary.

Merchandise volunteers: All will sign up with **Sign Up Genius**. The Chair of Nutcracker Merchandise will send out a **Sign Up Genius** to secure the volunteers/times. Please note your time to arrive/leave. IF something happens and you cannot show up for your time, please contact your Coordinator ASAP. The Coordinators are different for merchandise and

backstage. PLEASE note who your coordinator is and have her/his number in your phone. Only a few volunteers will handle credit cards. This will be handled by those designated by our Accountant and Executive Director. The Accountant/ Executive Director will hold/keep all monies at the end of each production

Dressing Room Volunteers: For all who volunteer, please remember you are responsible for all dancers in the dressing room as well as your own child. It is so important to keep all dancers quiet and engaged in activity to keep them calm. Keep all dancers in the rooms. No running down/playing in the hallways. Please remember to be on time and remain until ALL dancers have been picked up. We are responsible for their safety, and we take measures to keep all safe. If an emergency happens and YOU must leave your position, contact YOUR Coordinator. All contacts/numbers will be posted in the dressing rooms.

*All volunteers who might be required to escort dancers backstage or help with quick changes should wear black so they will not be seen by the audience.

Security (Hall monitor and Stairwell Monitor) – Hall monitors should walk the hallway downstairs and make sure there is no running in the hallways by anyone. Please also watch for strangers or anyone who doesn't look like they belong and ask if they need help. You may also be needed to go get someone who is upstairs.

Stairwell monitor will sit on the stairwell landing at the door to the stage and make sure student dancers are signed in and out. You will also be given a list of volunteers and ONLY dancers, staff, and the volunteers for that day will be allowed downstairs. **If someone is insistent to go down the stairs, call for the Costume Mistress or Teresa Berline for approval only. No one is allowed downstairs unless they are on the list or approved that day by the Costume Mistress or Teresa.**

Wardrobe / Back Stage Volunteers

Please wear all black for this position so that you cannot be seen by the audience when you are near the wings. If you are a wardrobe volunteer, you are there to make sure the dancers are dressed on time and backstage on time for their part. Please do not stand in front of the black curtains on the side. You will be seen from the audience and will be asked to move. Backstage is not an area to stand and watch the ballet. It is too important to keep clear pathways for the dancers. No one is allowed in the green room with the Costume Mistress unless specified by the Costume Mistress. This area is not an area to hang out in. If you are backstage, you will be helping with props under the direction of the stage manager.

Order of Scenes

Scenes		When dancers should go up
Act I		
Street scene		
Party scene		10 minutes before performance start time

Cherubs		Grandfather dance in Party scene
Battle		When Cherubs are on stage
Snow		
Intermission		
Act II		
Angels		Before intermission is over
Sheep		When Arabian is on stage
Mother Ginger		When Chinese is on stage
Curtain Call		When the finale is happening

Soldiers/Mice

The soldier/mice dressing room is cold, so you might want to consider wearing a jacket.

The soldiers and mice do not have to get dressed right away – they can go to the restroom right as the show begins, and then get dressed.

When the cherubs go up (approximately 15 minutes before they go upstairs to line up in the stairwell, have the soldiers line up in the hallway near the stairwell to check, head to toe (or toe to head, as the case may be):

- ❑ Note: soldiers who are horses will have their horse and cape up in the quick-change area behind the stage. They need to go up a few minutes earlier to get into their horse part. Send their adhesive cheeks up with them (sometimes a quick-change person will run down and get them in advance.)
 - Also instruct the horses that when they come off the stage, they need to keep going into the back hallway, however tempting it is to stay on the stage and watch. The horse costumes are cumbersome, and there just isn't that much room backstage.
- ❑ The "tread" part of the socks goes on the bottom of the socks (sole of the feet).
- ❑ Ballet shoes: the ties should be tucked in (or they can be cut off, but that doesn't allow for future growth).
- ❑ Socks: socks are supposed to look like boots and should be below the kneecap and should be straight.
- ❑ Cummerbunds: should be straight.
- ❑ Hats: make sure they are on straight and square.
- ❑ Cheeks: ask the dancers if they have sensitive skin. If they do, put their cheeks on last. Cheeks do not have to be saved from show to show.
- ❑ Makeup: make sure it's not smudged. (Note that boy soldiers' eyeliner goes about ¼- 1/2" below the eyelash line – lower than for the girl soldiers).

Soldiers can queue up on either side of the steps (or both if absolutely necessary), but they need to be aware that other dancers are coming off the stage and needing to come down the stairs.

The soldiers' guns will be in a box at the top of the stairs, and they can get them right before they go on stage. Otherwise, it's easy to get poked with a rifle . . . and a dropped gun is very loud!

The soldiers should not put their hats on until they line up in the hallway (they are hot and can get easily squished!

Angels

When the angels go backstage, station one volunteer on each side of the stage at the curtain entrance closest to the back part of backstage (farthest from the stage), and well hidden, with two of the garlands, one in each hand, for the angels to grab when they come off stage and need them to quickly get back on the stage. (Sometimes Mr. Carlos assigns dancers to hold the garlands).

Party Girls

Dancers' hairbow should be on top of their curls facing back. The bow should be visible from the front but should not be on top of the head. Pantaloon and crinolines have a string in the waist, these must be tied tight enough that the pieces don't fall off on stage. Dress bows should be neat and not floppy. The Costume Mistress will check the bows and will be happy to show you how to tie bows.

Cherubs

Cherubs must leave their pink leotard in the dressing room each night. The "dress" will be pulled up once the wings are on. Remind cherubs to watch for their wings so they don't bump into each other or the doorways, etc. and cause them to become misshapen. Please try to avoid bending the wings, they are very old and may break. If the wings need to be fixed, please find the costume mistress or a wardrobe volunteer for help.

Sheep

Sheep are in Act II in the Land of Sweets. Sheep should have a sock on each hand. These costumes pick up lint easily so please check them before they go in the wing.

Mother Ginger

Mother Ginger is always the last dance in the Land of Sweets. Dancers should come up to the stage with enough time to get under the skirt before "Mother Ginger" is set in the wings.

After each show, every dancer needs to hang up their costume.

After the last performance on Sunday, each dancer will be required to report to The Costume Mistress to check in all parts of his/her costume.

Please pick up your child promptly at the end of rehearsals/performances.

Dismissal for rehearsals

Dismissal times vary according to what scene your child is in and depending on the length of time required to change out of their costume.

Dismissal for performances

Act 1 lasts approximately 45 minutes, and Act II lasts approximately 50 minutes.

We have in the past allowed the students who are in Act 1 to go up to the balcony to watch the ballet if there are seats. We have had a few problems with cell phone usage and trash on the floor in the balcony of which Twichell complained that we were not adhering to their policies. We cannot allow this to continue happening. We will post on the door going to the balcony if we will be able to allow dancers (who must sit with a parent) to watch the second act. We are sorry for this inconvenience!

Dancers in Act II need to be picked up promptly after the show. Please let someone know if there is an emergency that will cause you to be late picking up your child.

Cast Party

The Cast Party will need a Chair. Any volunteer who signs up to help with the cast party can also head up the party. The Chair will send out an email to all who signed up to help with the party and head up the food. All parents who bring their children to the cast party are asked to stay and help clean up after the party. The Cast Party Chair will determine the location and time.