



*Audition Guidelines
&
Frequently Asked Questions*



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Dedicated to developing the artistic talent of our youth while enriching the cultural growth of our community.

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ABOUT SOUTHERN NH YOUTH BALLET

Established in 1998, Southern NH Youth Ballet (SNHYB) is Southern NH Dance Theater's (SNHDT) affiliated performing company and is a federal non-profit organization. Although connected in many ways, the Youth Ballet is both financially and administratively separate from the school. The performing company is comprised of a select number of students from the school and is intended for the serious student. The Youth Ballet serves as a training ground for the pre-professional student with the intent of promoting and encouraging the knowledge and appreciation of ballet and other dance forms by providing the community with high caliber performances.

HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER OF SNHYB?

By attending the company auditions held in the fall of each year. Participation in SNHYB is voluntary and open to all SNHDT students enrolled in ballet levels 5 through 7. There are no age requirements. **It is very important to remember that SNHYB is designed for the serious dancer.** A commitment of this level is viewed by our staff as **a family commitment.** Participation in the Youth Ballet (if chosen) is a full year's commitment September through June. If you are involved in other activities that meet regularly on Fridays, Saturdays and/or Sundays, you should reconsider auditioning for the Youth Ballet, as the potential for conflict exists.

On rare occasions some students may be invited by the Artistic Director to join the company without an audition.

SNHYB AUDITIONS

All dancers must sign up for the audition in advance. Prior to the audition you must familiarize yourself with these company guidelines, the company calendar and all obligations outlined in this pamphlet. You may have your name added to the audition roster at the studio front desk during regular office hours. Numbers will be issued at the audition. Dancers must arrive at least 15 minutes in advance of the audition and **be accompanied by one parent/guardian.** A meeting will be held during the first hour of the audition to review all information regarding SNHYB and to answer all questions. **Parents/Guardians must attend this meeting.** Students auditioning for the company will be assigned to attend one of the scheduled Nutcracker auditions.

CLASS ATTENDANCE & PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

SNHYB members must attend a minimum of four to five ballet technique classes every week September through June. Appropriate level pointe classes are also mandatory for company and apprentice dancers. Every effort should be made by company & apprentice members to make-up missed classes. In addition to ballet training, all company and apprentice members are required to regularly attend a second discipline such as modern, jazz or tap to ensure the dancers' versatility and prepare them for the eclectic demands of today's dance world. Class attendance is regularly monitored throughout the school year. Dancers not maintaining class attendance and/or not making up missed classes may result in a dancer being removed from choreography or suspension from company performances.

All SNHYB dancers are expected to dance in all performances of *The Nutcracker*, *Spring-Fling* and the *Year-End Evening Performance*.

SNHYB dancers are expected to take their dance training seriously and are required to continue appropriate dance training during the summer months. This is important for maintaining good physical conditioning and to avoid risk of injury.

PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES

The Nutcracker

Historically, SNHYB has been the official *Nutcracker* performing company at the Palace Theatre in Manchester, NH. SNHYB traditionally presents this holiday classic accompanied by a professional live orchestra. SNHYB has been presenting a full-length *Nutcracker* for over 10 years.

Spring Fling

SNHYB has celebrates the coming of spring with a presentation of classical and original works from artists-in-residence and guest choreographers. Classic works have included *Giselle*, *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty* and the comedic ballet *Graduation Ball*. SNHYB also features a number of children's stories Among these are: *Madeline & the Red Shoes*, *Angelina Ballerina The Understudy*, *Fairy Houses – The Ballet* and *The Magic Toyshop*.

Year-End Evening Performance

Along with ballet students from SNHDT (ballet levels 5 through 7), company and apprentice members perform a collection of classical and original works similar to those presented in March. SNHYB dancers are also expected to perform in their second discipline.

♫ CASTING PROCEDURES

Casting is at the sole discretion of the artistic director and/or choreographers and any judges present at auditions. Dancers and their families are not permitted to make suggestions or question the director regarding casting decisions. All dancers are required to learn and dance the parts they are cast in, including all understudy roles. Some consideration is given to graduating seniors for the school's Year-End Performance. However, casting for *The Nutcracker* and *Spring-Fling* are done according to skill level.

♫ WHEN ARE REHEARSALS HELD?

SNHYB rehearsals are held outside of regular class time. These rehearsals are generally held Friday afternoons and evenings, Saturday afternoons and some Sundays. If chosen to join the company, dancers must be available and able to attend **all of the rehearsals and performances outlined in the SNHYB calendar**. In general, rehearsals for various roles are often held on the same day at the same time from week to week. **HOWEVER**, all company members must be flexible to schedule changes, be it a change in day or time.

It is the responsibility of the dancers to check the board regularly for any schedule changes. Schedule revisions are always clearly marked and posted on Mondays or Tuesdays prior to the rehearsal weekend.

Absence from a rehearsal or costume fitting, leaving early or arriving late are all grounds for dismissal from SNHYB. This is **strictly** enforced. The staff of SNHDT and SNHYB reserves the right to dismiss and replace any company or apprentice member at any time without warning and without notification.

♫ WHAT IS THE ABSENTEE POLICY?

Dancers and/or parents who are aware of a potential date of conflict will be given the opportunity to submit a date/time to the director and panel of judges **at the time of company auditions**. This may be done by filling out a Date of Conflict Submission Form. It will be reviewed prior to the audition class and will then be either **accepted** or **declined** as an excused absence. Dancers/parents will be notified prior to the class if this date of conflict is **declined** or **accepted** as an excused absence. If declined, the dancer must then decide **at the time of the audition** if they will be able to participate (if chosen) in the SNHYB season. Please note that family vacations that conflict with the SNHYB calendar are viewed as a date of conflict. As previously stated, all dancers must be available and able to attend **all rehearsals & performances outlined in the Youth Ballet Calendar**.

Dancers will be replaced if an absence from rehearsal due to illness or other emergency is viewed as hindering them from participating in a given production. Southern NH Youth Ballet reserves the right to dismiss a company or apprentice member who has falsely presented or intentionally withheld a date of conflict.

♫ WHAT ARE THE COSTS INVOLVED?

All Youth Ballet company and apprentice members are responsible for:

- A non-refundable audition fee due at the time of auditions.
- An annual production fee due **at the time of the audition**. See insert for the amount.
- Company dancers invited to attend the annual RDA Northeast festival are responsible for the cost of a festival "kit" fee.
- Apprentice dancers invited to attend the annual RDA Northeast festival are responsible for the cost of a festival "kit" fee and all other related costs associated with festival attendance.

IMPORTANT: In an effort to keep all out-of-pocket expenses for dancers and their families to a minimum, the following policy has been set forth by the SNHYB Board of Directors. A dancer may fulfill her/his production fee obligation and/or festival fees, in whole or in part, by obtaining donations to SNHYB from individuals or businesses. For every \$2.00 obtained in donations, \$1.00 will be credited toward the dancer's production fee and/or festival fees. Dancers and their families are advised to plan carefully and well in advance when seeking donations to offset company production fees and festival fees. All deadlines set forth must be observed.

In addition, the Board of Directors may provide scholarship assistance to a dancer who demonstrates special financial need.

Company and apprentice members do not purchase any costumes for SNHYB productions. Dancers are responsible for their own leotards, tights, shoes and undergarments.

☞ FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

As a non-profit organization, SNHYB relies heavily on fundraising events to support its endeavors. Parents/guardians of all company & apprentice members are asked to participate as volunteers in SNHYB's annual Valentine Gala & Benefit Auction. Areas where help is needed will be made available at the fall auditions. Families are also required to garner donation items for the event auction.

☞ REGIONAL DANCE AMERICA

Southern New Hampshire Youth Ballet is a performing member with Regional Dance America Northeast. Regional Dance America (RDA) is a national organization of pre-professional dance companies divided into five geographic regions. Its purpose is to encourage and develop young companies with high artistic standards, and to offer the directors, choreographers, teachers and dancers additional opportunities to perform and study with different master teachers and choreographers, and to make contacts within the professional world of dance.

Evaluated in 2005, SNHYB is the first company from New Hampshire to be accepted into this prestigious group. In the spring of each season, dancers from SNHYB travel to participate in a three-day festival with other member companies where they attend master classes and participate in nightly performances.

Participation in the RDA Northeast festival is optional and by invitation of the artistic director only. Invitation to attend the annual festival is based on consistent class attendance, dance ability, character, conduct and performance throughout the year. Among the Youth Ballet dancers invited to participate in the annual Northeast festival, a select number are chosen to perform works to be presented for adjudication. Dancers selected to perform adjudication works are required to attend all rehearsals. Not all dancers invited to attend the annual festival are selected for works that are being adjudicated. It is the sole decision of the RDA Northeast festival adjudicator as to the arrangement and selection of works to be performed by member companies at the upcoming festival.

☞ WILL I SIGN A CONTRACT?

Yes, if chosen as a company or apprentice member of SNHYB, parents and dancers will be required to sign an official agreement with the Youth Ballet to ensure that both parties understand the commitment and obligations outlined in this pamphlet. Specific dates will be set aside in the fall for the discussion of contracts.

☞ RECOGNITION OF ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE

On more than one occasion, SNHYB has been recommended by repetiteurs of the George Balanchine Trust (including Darla Hoover and Deborah Wingert, both formerly of New York City Ballet) to be granted permission to perform Mr. Balanchine's ballet "Valse-Fantaisie." Dancers from the Youth Ballet had the distinct honor of performing this renowned ballet in 2001, 2002 and 2007. Ms. Hoover and Ms. Wingert worked closely with the dancers to stage this ballet.

Dancers from Southern NH Youth Ballet have also garnered the interest of many renowned choreographers who have staged original and classic works for SNHYB. Among them are: Chiara Ajkun, founder and co-artistic director of Ajkun Ballet Theatre in New York City; Peter Pawlyshyn, Director of Kansas City Ballet School; Kitty Seale, Artistic Director of Alabama Dance Theatre; Lynn Cote former principal dancer and resident choreographer for The Washington Ballet and Jeremy Collins, former principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre and San Francisco Ballet.

SNHYB dancers have participated in many prestigious programs across the country, including Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, School of American Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Miami City Ballet, Houston Ballet, Harid Dance Conservatory, the Rock School of the Pennsylvania Ballet and more.

Graduates of SNHYB have been contracted with professional companies including The Joffrey Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, Richmond Ballet, Ballet Austin, Sacramento Ballet, Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago, Phantom of the Opera Touring Company and The Radio City Music Hall Christmas Spectacular.