

MOUSE NOTES

Cast A-AM school, Friday evening, Saturday matinee

Cast B-PM school, Saturday evening, Sunday matinee

- Hair—Resist the urge not to fix your dancer's hair like usual in a bun. You may think that no one will see their hair as a mouse. While this is correct in theory, the end results may be a bad outcome. The dancer really needs her hair pulled back away from her face and secure. Just remember, it all needs to fit inside the head piece without looking odd like a huge lump on top of the head. If you have a daughter with lots of hair, practice putting it up so the bun is flatter and more spread out instead of looking like a knot. The main thing is that the hair is secured with plenty of bobby pins and sprayed well with hairspray so that it all stays back and in the headpiece.
- Make-up—Follow Mrs. Lisa's instructions that have been given out on a yearly basis. The instructions include foundation, eye shadow, eye liner, mascara, rosy pink blush, and true red lipstick. *PLEASE use a color stay lipstick that doesn't rub off on our white costumes that we share with both casts. We recommend "Super Stay 24 Color" by Maybelline. The shade is "Keep it red" #035.* The only difference for the mouse is that you need to avoid using any glitter. Right before the performance, add the nose and whiskers with a black liquid eye liner. Remind your dancer not to touch their face or eyes once the makeup is in place. Children seem to forget this at times and make a mess on accident. Keep a container of makeup remover wipes in your bag as well for the smears of lipstick and eyeliner that will happen. This is the best way to correct lipstick mistakes without ending up looking like a clown.*Color Stay lipstick won't smear!
- Bobby Pins—Place bobby pins in a criss-cross pattern (like an "X") above their ears and forehead to keep the headpiece securely in place. We do not want their headpiece to fall off of their head on stage. Please do this for every performance including the dress rehearsals the week before.
- Costumes—Gray Mouse Costume, Colored Vest, Gray Mouse Headpiece, Gray Mouse Leotard and Tights. Always bring the required So Danca split sole canvas ballet shoes with criss cross elastics and no drawstring (with the dancer's name inside the shoes) and an extra set if you have one that fits in the dance bag. Try on the entire costume as soon as you receive it. Do not wait till the week of rehearsal to try it on and then realize that the leotard/tights are too small or large, etc. It is much better to have all these problems solved before Nancy and Lisa have moved rehearsals to the Paramount. Also check the costume over well for any tears or "weak" spots (especially the tail). The seamstress, Claudia Diltz, is always sitting in the Paramount lobby to provide sewing assistance. **Remember to keep the costume and vest in the labeled sack/hanger issued to you at the Paramount as we are all sharing with another dancer.** Communicate with the other mother about where you are planning to put the costume in the mouse area so there is no confusion. Nutcracker is stressful enough without having to search for a misplaced costume. Remember – there is NO eating in costumes. NO gum backstage ever!
- Costume Stuffing—We want our mice to look well fed! Make sure the stuffing is equally distributed and on the inside of the body of the costume by placing a bag of stuffing on

each side of the body and one in the front or the back. **DO NOT OPEN THE LAUNDRY BAGS AND DISPERSE THE STUFFING IN THE COSTUME.** Please keep the laundry bags filled and zipped. Check to make sure that the stuffing is not coming out the legs of your costume as this would be a problem. **Also don't take the stuffing home once Nutcracker week begins because Cast A and B will share that as well.** Be mindful of the needs of the other cast.

- **Emergency Kit**—Every dancer's mom needs to keep a few supplies at hand for any last minute emergencies. I have a bag with a sewing kit with several needles, thread that matches whatever costume my daughters are wearing, safety pins of multiple sizes, tape, and scissors, etc. This will provide you the needed supplies to deal with any tear or mishap that occurs on accident before a performance.
- **Mouse Location** —Instruct your dancer to stay in the first alcove to the left as you walk into the tunnel from the concession stand area before performances. They should not leave this area until a runner comes for them and lines them up to enter the stage. Also, this is the location where the mouse costumes are kept overnight to share between Cast A and Cast B.
- **School Show**—Make sure and arrive early as stated on the Nutcracker information sheet because it is difficult to enter the Paramount when buses are filling the street and so many children are coming in as well. Also, I know that every mother wants to watch her mouse perform but do not try to find a seat for the school shows until all the children are seated. Typically, there are no extra seats except at the very top of the balcony section. You will be asked to move if you sit down in a seat that a school child needs. I would just encourage you to wait in the upper balcony region out of the way until everyone is seated and see what is left over. Please realize that for many children in Abilene and the surrounding areas, this may be their only opportunity to see this amazing performance of the Nutcracker.
- **Dress Rehearsals and Paid Performances**— Don't forget to take a restroom break before you put the costume on your dancer even if she doesn't "think" she needs to do so. Please arrive early so the mice are ready to go when the performance begins. They only have a short time (Party Scene) before they all go on to perform. Remember to refer to the Nutcracker information sheet for Cast A and Cast B performances and exact arrival times. Usually, the information sheet is handed out in class the week before we start at the Paramount and posted on the website. Watch for it and keep it in your purse so you can refer to it for all practices, performances, etc. This will keep you organized about where you need to be and when. Also remember that dress rehearsal means to get ready just like you would for the paid performance—hair, makeup, costume, etc. KTXS, KRBC, etc. and the Abilene Reporter News takes all their pictures the week of dress rehearsals so we want to look good.
- **Curtain Call**—Have your dancer ready several dances (2-3 pieces at least) before curtain call. If they changed out of the costume to sit in the audience, slip out quietly after a dance is completed and return to the tunnel to get your dancer dressed again. I suggest that you leave the tights and leotard on and place a dress or jumper on top if you want your dancer to sit in the audience with you. Just make sure the leotard is covered well. This will make it much easier to change back. **NO COSTUMES IN THE AUDIENCE!**

- Pictures—Morrow Photography will be on site during Nutcracker rehearsal week to professionally capture your sweet mouse in costume.

If you have any questions, please call or text this year's mouse moms:

CAST A –Emilea Flowers 940-200-0740

CAST B-Jackie Zimmerman 325-668-0723