

Episode 22: Flight or Fight Response

Clip: Leap of Faith

Activity: Safe Dance Spaces

Theme: Health and Wellbeing

1. As a class, view the clip, *Leap of Faith*, where Tara is recovering from an injury. Injuries can occur anywhere and they often happen at home, in the classroom and in the dance studio. There are things that students can do to reduce the likelihood of injury simply by looking around, identifying risk factors and either eliminating them or reducing their impact. For instance, a cord reaching across a floor may be a trip hazard. To reduce the likelihood of someone tripping and falling, you could move it to a better location, change the location of your activities, and draw attention to the danger by “roping it off” or taping it down to the floor. Ask students to look around the classroom to identify trip hazards. Discuss what you could do to minimise risk.
2. Introduce the topic of safe spaces for dance. Ask students to consider:
 - a. What are the different types of dance surfaces and how safe is each?
 - b. Which is the best surface for a dance floor? Why? What are the characteristics of this surface?
 - c. What surfaces are dangerous or unsafe to dance on? Why? What are the characteristics of these surfaces?
 - i. Dangerous flooring includes
 1. concrete
 2. a very hard floor with no “give”
 3. slippery or wet surfaces
 4. uneven or sloping surfaces
 5. surfaces that have gaps, protruding nails, staples, splinters
 6. surfaces with obstacles that will restrict movement or may cause injury if a student collides with it (i.e. posts)

- d. Other space considerations
 - i. Spaces should be appropriate for dance. A mirror is not necessary and may at times be an unwanted distraction. There should be enough space for each dancer, generally one metre square is enough room for travelling across the space and up (for leaps, etc.).
 - ii. The temperature should be between 18–21°C and the space should be well lit and well ventilated.
3. The dance space checklist is a good start to being safe and productive in class. Distribute **Student Activity Sheet E22.1: Safe Dance Space Checklist** and have students complete the safety check.

Prior to using your dance space, roster the students to perform the studio preparation tasks listed. This task will take 15 minutes. On a designated date, students are responsible for checking the safety of the dance space. Students complete a checklist and report any OH&S issues to the teacher. As directed, they can carry out basic tasks to ensure a safe dance environment for the whole class.

Download

- Student Activity Sheet E22.1: Safe Dance Space Checklist

Useful resources

- [Ausdance Factsheet 7: Safe Dance Floors](#)
- [Ausdance Factsheet 13: Safe Spaces for Dance](#)
- [Ausdance Factsheet 18: Occupational health & safety for the dance industry](#)
- [Ausdance Safe Dance Reports](#)
- Howse, J & Hancock, S, *Dance Technique and Injury Prevention*, 2nd ed, A & C Black, London, UK 1992.
- Arnheim, D, *Dance Injuries: Their Prevention and Cure*, 1991 3rd ed, Princeton Book Company, Pennington, New Jersey, USA.



NAME:

Student Activity Sheet: E22.1 Episode 22: Flight or Fight Response

Activity: Safe Dance Space Checklist Clip: Leap of Faith

Safe Dance Space Checklist (For Students)

	YES	NO
Are the emergency exits clear of obstruction?		
Is the dance space clear of obstruction?		
Is the dance space clear of tripping hazards?		
Is the floor free of dirt?		
Is the floor free from any water/liquid spills?		
Is the floor in good repair?		
Is there ventilation available (open/able windows)?		
Is there a working heater?		
Is there a working cooler/fan?		
Is there adequate natural lighting?		
Do the electric lights work?		
Is the necessary equipment available (e.g. sound system, barres, mats)		
Is the equipment in working order?		

(You may add any other issues you notice in the extra lines above)

Report any OH&S issues urgently to your teacher and then carry out any basic tasks as directed to rectify the problem/s.

Basic tasks may include:

- Sweeping the floor
- Cleaning up spills
- Turning on the lights/heater/cooler/fan
- Helping to set up barres/stereo
- Helping to clear obstructions
- Helping to clear tripping hazards

Record the tasks you performed to ensure a safe dance environment and the date.
