

Dear Nutcracker Parents, Dancers, and Instructors,

As we approach the exciting Nutcracker season, it's essential to pay special attention to our dancers' foot health. During this time, our young ladies will be wearing their pointe shoes for extended periods each day, which can lead to toe discomfort in the form of blisters, bruised toenails, and ingrown toenails. We want to ensure a comfortable and injury-free experience for all our performers, so please take a moment to address the following foot care matters with your daughter:

- *Proper Pointe Shoe Fit:* Please ensure that your daughter's pointe shoes fit correctly. Ill-fitting shoes can lead to discomfort and injuries. If needed, consult with a professional fitter to confirm the right size and style. (Grace & Pointe or Mazing Dancewear)
- *Toe Nail Maintenance:* Trim toenails carefully to prevent issues. Nails should be cut right to the end of the toes, neither too long nor too short. (See image below)
- *Toe Tape and Pads:* Make sure your daughter has an ample supply of toe tape and clean, durable toe pads to provide cushioning and support.
- *Instructor Guidance:* Our faculty will also offer suggestions and advice to the dancers regarding foot care and footwear during the Nutcracker season. I will also ask my faculty to have the ladies wear their pointe shoes for a portion of each class to help build calluses and tolerance.

Additionally, I'd like to share a personal tip regarding ingrown toenails. While there is some debate on this, cutting a "V" shape into the big toenail can help redirect the toenail's growth away from the sides and towards the centerline, potentially preventing ingrown toenails (see image below). Many professional ballet dancers have found success with this method.



All the best,

Ms. Rebecca