

DANCE est Joie, Inc.

Pre-Company

Handbook 2024-

2025

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Auditions for 2024-2025 DANCE est Joie, Inc Membership

Auditions for 2024-2025 DANCE est Joie, Inc Pre-Company competition team will take place on Sunday, August 4th from 5:00-6:15. All audition events will take place in person at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio. GDDS staff members will be present to execute this event. Audition content is property of DANCE est Joie, Inc. and Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio. This choreography may be utilized for competition routines and performances. Choreography is not to be shared with anyone outside of GDDS.

This group is for dancer's ages 4 and 5 years old. Audition age is based on the dancer's age as of January 1st, 2025. The dancer's age does not determine the group they will perform with throughout the season. All dancers will be grouped into competition dances based on their audition performances. Dancer's with a balance from the previous season are not permitted to audition.

The cost of the audition is \$20.00 per dancer. Acceptable payment methods are listed below:

Venmo: @DANCEestJoie_Inc_GDDS

PayPal: danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com (select friends and family only)

Check payable to Rebecca Bean

Cash is not an acceptable form of payment. Payment is due by Saturday, August 3rd, 2024.

Register for 2024-2025 DANCE est Joie, Inc Pre-Company auditions by completing the following forms:

DANCE est Joie, Inc. Audition Information Form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfQFxiZiYoX0T1yVljeUOX9cul27LC061xQWOTsItCAawyQi0w/viewform?usp=sf_link

AND

Audition Agreement and Waiver:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc7UEV4je5WWVLrt-2-C1Odyv8igudO6_oKAOo0FGITDPVA3Q/viewform?usp=sf_link

Audition Criteria

The audition will include a ballet and tap combination. Each dancer will be assigned an audition number. Completed forms are required before the formal audition. Any dancer who shows up to audition without completed paperwork or unpaid audition fees will not be permitted to audition for DANCE est Joie, Inc. Pre-Company.

Details about the audition criteria is detailed below:

This audition process will not involve numerical scoring of any kind. However, we will be observing each dancer for the following criteria:

Ballet Technique — all technical elements executed correctly with proper leg, carriage and arm placement, fully extending through limbs

Tap Technique — all technical elements executed correctly with proper articulation, weight distribution, control

Ballet Performance — appropriate energy consistent throughout, strong facials and connection and stage presence, awareness of staging and use of space

Tap Performance — appropriate energy consistent throughout, strong facials and connection and stage presence, awareness of staging and use of space

Ballet Musicality — correct counting, staying on tempo, hitting accents

Tap Musicality — correct counting, staying on tempo, hitting accents

Impression — This includes but is not limited to the dancer's presentation and etiquette during the audition. For female dancers, leotards, bra tops, leggings, dance shorts and tights are all acceptable. For male dancers, athletic tanks, shorts and dance pants are acceptable. Hair should be secured away from the face. Dancers should wear style appropriate shoes. Dancers should be attentive, respectful of DEJ staff and other auditioning dancers.

Overall Impact — how each of the above categories blend; is each category equally represented

DANCE est Joie, Inc Pre-Company Competition Team

The pre-company is designed for the joyful dancer who feels excited over new opportunities to perform and gain more skills through participation in local competitions and nearby classes with professional instructors. Our pre-company dancers will need to possess the following:

- Be self-motivated and able to self-evaluate
- Have solid technical and performance skills or desire to improve existing skill set
- Strong desire to grow and develop as a dancer
- Have a sense of humor, bright smile, and positive attitude
- Have respect for the team, staff, and parents
- Show support for the studio and fellow dancers
- Commitment to bettering themselves as a dancer through practicing outside of studio and rehearsal hours
- Has a love for dancing and performance and a desire to share this with others
- Shows interest in being part of a competitive dance team as their involvement and experience grows

DANCE est Joie, Inc. 2024-2025 Pre-Company Required Events

The dance company director will be responsible for submitting registrations and payments for all required and optional events.

DANCE est Joie, Inc. Holiday Party

December 14th, 2024 (Evening event)

(OFFICIAL DETAILS WILL BE ANNOUNCED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE)

DANCE est Joie, Inc. Competition Rehearsals and Dress Rehearsal

January 4th-5th and January 11th, 2025

All solos, duos, trios and group routines will participate in rehearsals and a team dress rehearsal. Group rehearsals will be held in the studio on January 4th and 5th. Rehearsals for solos, duos and trios during the winter break will be determined by the choreographer. A more detailed schedule will be announced as soon as possible. Dress rehearsal for all dancers will take place on Saturday, January 11th, 2025 from 10:00am-6:00pm at Skokos Performing Arts Center. A detailed schedule for these events will be provided in December.

REVEL DANCE CONVENTION — convention only for pre-company

February 28th - March 2nd, 2025

Tulsa, OK

<https://www.dancerevel.com>

Synergy Performing Arts Competition — competition only

April 4th - 6th, 2025

Fort Smith, AR ArcBest Performing Arts Center

<https://www.synergypac.com>

The Dance Effect — competition only

May 2nd - 4th, 2025

Fort Smith, AR ArcBest Performing Arts Center

<https://www.thedanceeffect.org>

Expectations of DANCE est Joie, Inc Pre-Company Members

Rules for a good relationship

When a dancer is accepted into the dance company, the dancer and the parents must make the choice to accept and follow the rules and guidelines set by DANCE est Joie, Inc. These rules are as follows:

Speaking about our studio, a student or our staff in a negative voice puts your child in a tug of war between us and their teammates. Negative conversations inside our school are unacceptable. For every action, there is a reaction. Let's teach our dancers to accept decisions with dignity and grace. By creating responsible dancers, we are also contributing to their growth as responsible human beings. Dance education may not always be a "feel good" experience. To discuss any situation concerning your dancer, email danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com or call the studio to set an appointment. Do not contact a staff member by text message, phone call, personal email or social media messaging accounts.

All GDDS classes and DANCE est Joie, Inc. pre-company rehearsals (solos, duos, trios and groups) are closed. Classes and rehearsals may be viewed from outside the classroom and the viewing windows.

All trophies, videos, audio clips, score sheets and critiques are the property of DANCE est Joie, Inc. Trophies earned for solo performances may be kept by the soloist.

Bullying of a student or a teacher is unacceptable and is grounds for dismissal.

Dancers prepare and rehearse their competition routines with DANCE est Joie, Inc. staff members only, unless an approved guest choreographer is available.

DANCE est Joie, Inc. pre-company members dance exclusively at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio. Participation in school sponsored teams is acceptable.

A completed DANCE est Joie, Inc. Pre-Company Member Agreement for the 2024-2025 dance school year will be required for all dance company members. The agreement will be provided following the DANCE est Joie, Inc. 2024-2025 pre-company team auditions and announcements. The agreement is due by Thursday, August 15th, 2024. Please return agreements in person at Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for all dance classes and rehearsals. We do our best to be flexible and accommodating with conflicts due to school and/or important family activities. However, by becoming a member of a team, you have agreed this is a priority in your schedule. Missed classes for any reason other than illness or family emergency must be brought to the company director's attention at least 24 hours in advance. This can include but is not limited to school events and academics, athletics, family celebrations, etc. Notification of the dancer's absence is acceptable by calling 479-783-7748 during business hours or emailing danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com or graycedewitt@yahoo.com. Texting a staff member is not an acceptable form of communication. Failure to communicate an absence will immediately result in a dancer being required to attend additional Saturday technical class(es) and will count towards the dancer's total absences allowed per semester. Absences due to an illness or family emergency will be excused and won't count towards the semester limit if the dancer can provide documentation that supports the absence. Please do not ask if it is okay for your student to miss a class or a rehearsal. This decision must be made by the parent and dancer. Student absences will be recorded. Details about attendance are listed below:

Studio Class AND Company Rehearsal Attendance: Dancers will be allowed three (3) total absences per dance in each semester. Any additional absences other than the three (3) total absences per dance per semester will require Saturday technical class attendance. Any time an absence occurs, the dancer is responsible to learn what was missed before the next rehearsal, either with a private lesson or from a teammate. If more than 1 absence, excused or

unexcused, has occurred, and the dancer has not met with the instructor/ choreographer or teammate to learn the missed material, it is possible the dancer may be removed from the competition routine. In addition, tardiness is unacceptable. If a student is consistently late to rehearsal, it may be classified as an unexcused absence. Missing the first part of a rehearsal causes the students to become behind on stretching and warming up which can lead to injuries.

Event Attendance: Each dance company member must attend all required conventions, competitions, and additional scheduled performances. Any dance company member who does not attend a scheduled competition, convention or performance will be dismissed from DANCE est Joie, Inc Pre-Company. A doctor's note is required for any illness during a competition or convention that affects a dancer's participation in any or all of the required events. Any dancer with an unexcused absence for a scheduled rehearsal two (2) weeks prior to competition will be removed from the dance for that competition. A doctor's note is required for any illness that affects a dancer's participation during this timeframe.

Being part of DANCE est Joie, Inc. Pre-Company is a team effort and attendance is very important to all members. Dance teachers do understand that they are instructing busy children with many academic and/or extracurricular demands; being a well-rounded individual is important, however, when it comes to participation on a team, in order to continually progress, dancers must be present.

All members of DANCE est Joie, Inc. Pre-Company are required to take weekly technical classes including ballet, tap (and jazz if class requirements are met).

Communication

Communication from parents and students comes through the front desk during class time. Please call the studio (479) 783-7748. All dance company related email communication will be directed to and from danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com. Do not utilize social media apps for communicating with dance staff and choreographers.

Staff and choreographers will post information on our DANCE est Joie, Inc. social media pages. The DANCE est Joie, Inc. Family Page on Facebook is for parents and family members (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc) who play a vital role in your dancer's company involvement and success.

DANCE est Joie, Inc. Pre-Company Expenses

Payment methods

Participating in a dance company is a privilege. Consideration must be given to the cost of such a privilege. All fees, of any kind, must be paid on time. The following are forms of payment for DANCE est Joie, Inc. pre-company expenses:

- Check payable to Rebecca Bean
- Venmo account: @DANCEestJoie_Inc_GDDS
- PayPal account: danceestjoie.inc@yahoo.com (sent as a personal payment; do not send as a payment for goods and services)

I cannot charge competition and convention fees through your dance studio account, which is utilized for payments for regular monthly tuition for classes and rehearsals. Payments for company events and costumes are not recorded as income. For anyone choosing to pay fees by check, my name is listed on the dance company account. These fees are not deposited into my personal checking or savings accounts. If choosing to submit your payment through Venmo or PayPal, please make sure the recipient is accurate. I am happy to send a payment request to ensure your payment is made to the correct party. DANCE est Joie, Inc. will not be responsible for any payments delivered to the incorrect account. Please do not send payments to any instructor's personal Venmo or PayPal accounts. All electronic payments should include "DANCER'S NAME- REIMBURSEMENT-MONTH" in the information section.

Explanation of fees and payment schedule

Competition, convention and group choreography fees will be determined in August, as I will have to wait for each competition/convention to update (if necessary) their fees for the 2024-2025 season. The combined total of these fees is referred to as "event fees".

For company dancers, a total of three \$150 deposits will be due this fall. A deposit is due on September 15th, October 15th and November 15th. Deposits will go towards your dancer's total competition, convention and group choreography fees. Fees for costumes will be factored at a later date. After the start of the dance school year, each dancer will receive a detailed invoice of their event fees and the remaining balance. The remaining balance will be due on January 15th or two equal installments on January 15th and February 15th. Unpaid event fees may result in delaying a dancer's registration in an event until the balance is paid. **In addition, payments not made on time will result in a \$25 late fee per every ten days the payment is late.** Dancers carrying a credit from the previous season will have their credit applied to the total event fees.

The dance company director or Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio will not be held responsible for personally financing a dancer's participation in an event. Registration fees for optional events must be paid in full prior to the director completing the dancer's registration. Dancers pay their own expenses for travel, hotel, and food. An adult must accompany any dancer under the age of 18. All fees are nonrefundable.

Group costumes may include tights, shoes and additional accessories as needed (estimated cost \$85 to \$200 each). Costume fees are nonrefundable. A detailed invoice of your dancer's costume fees will be sent in the winter. Costume fees will be due in two equal payments on the 15th of January and February.

A yearly company membership fee per dancer is due by September 15th: \$85.00 (not factored into your first \$150 deposit). Total payment made on the 15th is \$235.

DANCE est Joie, Inc pre-company members will be responsible for ordering an official dance company warm up jacket and dance bag. The estimated cost is \$120-\$175 for both items. The total of each item is dependent on the number of items in our order. Dancers will be sized for their jacket at the end of the audition class.

A \$10.00 administration fee will be due for each convention, including dancers who are on scholarship at convention. An additional \$5.00 administration fee will be added per competition

routine, including dancers that have received a scholarship or participation credit. This fee will be factored into your overall fees due. This fee applies to all required and optional events.

An example of total event fees due for a DANCE est Joie, Inc. 2023-2024 dance company member performing in two group routines and attending all four required events is listed below. This example does not include any of the fees associated with competition costumes or team uniforms, optional events or fees for solo, duo or trio routines. Please recognize that some of these do not apply to pre-company members.

Member fee \$85
IX Convention \$345
BYB Hip Hop Holiday WS \$25-\$30 HDJ
Convention \$295
HDJ Competition Group Routines \$60 x 2
Inferno Competition Group Routines \$50 x 2
Stage One Competition Group Routines \$60 x 2
Synergy Competition Group Routines \$60 x 2
Choreography Fees minimum \$100
Administrative Fees \$11 per event

*Fees are subject to change for the 2024-2025 dance school year

DANCE est Joie, Inc. Routines

DANCE est Joie, Inc instructors and choreographers

Rebecca Bean
Emily Wright
Jayci James
Franco Baleto
Kayli Sossamon
Kameron DeWitt-Elkins
Robbi Martin

Choreographers will make all decisions concerning the dance competition piece. This includes, but is not limited to music, dance style, costumes, props and the placement of the dancer in the dance. Choreographers will also choose the “emotional execution ” and facial expression expressed in each dance piece. Parent recommendations will not be considered.

Group Dances

Pre-company dancers may participate in small groups, large groups, lines and productions. Dancers will be leveled into competition groups and dance classes according to audition evaluation, technical evaluations, previous dance experience, work ethic, studio attendance, and age. Decisions are not based on a dancer’s physical appearance. Each dancer will be assigned ONE group dance. The rehearsal cost is \$35.00 or \$50.00/per dancer/per competition dance/per month. This rehearsal fee will be added to your monthly tuition expenses due on the 1st of each month beginning September 1st, 2024 and ending May 1st, 2025. All groups perform in recital in May 2025. A company celebration will be held in the Skokos Performing Arts Center Green Room between the matinée and evening shows. All company members and families are invited to join!

Rehearsals for group dances will begin the week of August 19th, 2024. This rehearsal fee will be added to your monthly tuition expenses due on the 1st of each month beginning September 1st, 2024 and ending May 1st, 2025. Rehearsal fees for January are \$50.00 per dancer per competition routine to account for the additional rehearsal times scheduled to occur during this month. Each group competition routine will rehearse for 30 - 45 minutes per week during the 2024-2025 dance school year.

Choreography fees for group routines

What is the choreographer fee? Your choreographer will create an original piece of work con-

sisting of dynamic and complex dance steps that is designed specifically to the personality, abilities and technique of the dancer. In addition, it includes choosing and editing the music to competition limits, selecting the costume and working with the dancer to transform the piece into a finished and stage worthy product.

Group routines: \$50.00 per dancer per group routine. This applies to routines taught by GDDS/DANCE est Joie Inc. faculty. This choreography fee will be factored into each dancer's overall fees due.

Fundraising Opportunities

A fundraising committee will be organized for any member of DANCE est Joie, Inc. who chooses to participate. Co-directors will be selected to direct this committee and will communicate with the dance company director about fundraising events and opportunities. Funds earned will be applied to the account of the contributing dancer only. Funds will not be divided amongst company members.

Appearance and Image Use

Each dancer must adhere to Grayce DeWitt Dance Studio's dress code. Please visit www.idancewithgrayce.com for details. Dancer must wear hair in a style long enough to conform to a slick bun. Dancer must be capable of changing his/her own costume during performances and competitions.

Each dancer must purchase necessary dance shoes according to the 2024-2025 shoe dress code. Do not purchase new shoes until our shoe dress code has been announced or ask in advance if needed. Shoes may be purchased from The Red Shoe Dancewear Boutique in Bentonville, Arkansas or other dancewear retailers.

A dance company member's image may be used in a professional layout for promotional purposes.

Use of the DANCE est Joie, Inc. logo or name on any apparel or merchandise must be approved by the studio owner and director before purchase or production. Use of the DANCE est Joie, Inc. logo or name for the purpose of fundraising must be approved by the studio owner and director. DANCE est Joie, Inc is a not for profit organization. Use of the DANCE est Joie, Inc. logo or name may not be used for personal gain outside of dance company expenses.

Until the competition season is complete, following Synergy Performing Arts Competition in Fort Smith, do not post videos of competition routines to any social media platform, website, etc. Pictures may be posted.

What to Expect at Competitions and Conventions

What is a dance convention?

Dance conventions are events that consist of many different classes from many different choreographers and master teachers that are usually well known in the dance world. During a dance convention, you can expect to build friendships, adaptability skills, confidence, resilience and strength as a dancer.

What is a dance competition?

Competitive dance is a widespread sport in which dancers perform dances in any of several permitted dance styles—such as ballet, contemporary, jazz, hip hop, lyrical, modern, musical theatre, tap, and improvisation before a common group of judges. It is important to understand that the "competition" aspect of being a member of a DANCE est Joie, Inc. company member should be considered a "performance" opportunity. Competition results are strictly a subjective opinion, and each dancer's growth should not be completely gauged by their scores or achievements at competitions. It is important to keep competition experiences positive, and most importantly, be proud of the growth and development that takes place within your dancer.

Team members are not in competition with each other. Students are encouraged to strive to improve themselves and to work to their full capacity. Each dancer is uniquely different, each with their own strengths and their own weaknesses and each brings their own talent to the team as a whole.

Advice from veteran dance company parents and dancers

Dance competitions and conventions are incredibly fun and a great team and learning experience for your dancer. There is potential to earn awards and scholarships, but the primary focus should be to have fun and grow as an individual and team. Not everyone gets the opportunity to learn from these outstanding teachers!

For out of town events, you are not required to stay at the event's host hotel, however, this tends to be a convenient option for dancers and attending family members. Book lodging as early as possible. If choosing to stay at the host venue, ask about group rates being offered for dancers. Some hotels have refrigerators. Be sure to ask for one when placing your reservation, as it's not standard in every hotel or room. If choosing valet parking, be prepared for the valets to be very busy when the event's closing show ends. While it is a convenient option at times, this can be a hectic and time consuming process.

Don't hesitate to travel or share a room with other company members and families. Splitting costs can be very helpful.

Schedules for competition and convention events are usually available on the company's website 7-10 days prior to the scheduled event. When the schedule is available, print a copy for you and your dancer, or take a photo on your phone. It's possible that dancers will need to miss school or a portion of their school day on the Friday of the competition weekend if it's necessary for events to take place on Friday. Unless a dancer is scheduled to participate in any Friday events, you are not required to be at the event until Saturday morning. If you feel there is a possibility your dancer will perform early on Friday morning (this is common for soloists), consider booking a room for Thursday night as well. Once the event schedule is released, you can update your reservation. Events will end on Sunday afternoon after the company's closing show.

Convention classes will begin in the morning and last into the afternoon, similar to a regular school day. Dancers should bring all of their dance shoes and sneakers safe for dancing. Encourage your dancer to dress in layers. They will be cold, then get hot from dancing, and then cold again. Dancers are required to participate in all classes and auditions. Dancers will receive a convention wristband, which allows them into all convention events, and an audition number, which is worn during all classes. Aside from scholarships from auditions, some scholarships and acknowledgements based on the instructor's observations are awarded as the event's closing show. Don't sweat this part of the convention experience-remember to always have fun!

Dancers will have a scheduled lunch break. It's very unlikely you will have time to leave the event venue for lunch. You're encouraged to plan ahead for meals for your dancer and family members. Snacks and water are a must, especially to keep your dancer fueled for an evening of dance competition after a full day of convention classes! Send your dancer with a lunch box or small ice chest so they can snack in between classes. Choose healthy and nourishing snacks and meals. Most of the dancers like to eat lunch together in the convention rooms. They love to hang out together! I try to look at it as a great team bonding experience and memories to be cherished. Additionally, bring breakfast foods that can be eaten in the room before going to classes and water bottles that can be refilled.

Most conventions will require you to purchase an observation band if you would like to observe your dancer in their convention classes. You are not required to watch your dancer in their convention classes. If you are observing classes, bring a light jacket or a small blanket if you get cold easily. Observation bands are not required for the competition or the closing show. If you feel comfortable with it, send a camera or device with your child to take pictures. They will want pictures with their teammates and their convention teachers.

When considering expenses for weekend events, you may want to factor in extra money for professional pictures and videos. Occasionally, we are able to work our group rates, but the rate can vary from \$80-\$200 per dancer depending on the number of people participating in the deal, the number of dances your child is in and which company we are working with. Also, companies sell merchandise such as pants, hoodies, sweatshirts, tanks, etc. There's always so much to choose from!

Watch YouTube tutorials for instruction on applying competition makeup and false eyelashes. A list of makeup must-haves is listed below:

Eyes and eye area: neutral colored eyeshadows and liners, mascara, false eyelashes and eyebrow powder/pencil. While some eyeshadows will have a shimmer, do not use any glitter. Do not wear body glitter. Female dancers will wear false eyelashes.

Face: foundation, setting powder, blush, bronzer

Lips: Maybelline SuperStay Matte Ink Liquid Lipstick in "Voyager"

Create an emergency kit for competitions, performances and recitals. This can include double-sided tape, bobby pins, hair nets. Craft boxes are great for storing these items! If you are in multiple dance routines, you may benefit from having a "Dream Duffle" or similar bag to organize, carry and hang costumes. Label everything! This includes but is not limited to your shoes, costumes, accessories, garnet bags, duffles, dance bags, etc.

Competitions are fast paced and fun! Wear comfortable shoes! You are allowed to leave your seat between routines. It's understood that your dancer may need your assistance in the dressing room. A detailed costume checklist for each routine will be provided by the dance company director prior to each competition. It never hurts to be prepared! Always bring back up items just in case: tights, hair stuff, undergarments, black dress socks (boys). It's better to have it and not need it. Bobby pins and safety pins are a must because something always needs to be pinned down. A lint roller and portable steamer are great items to have in your competition survival kit!

Competition awards can be very confusing, as each company has their own name for each adjudication award, overall awards, etc. Details about awards and scoring are usually available on the company's website or in the program book (if you purchase one). Awards ceremonies are usually held a few times throughout the competition, and are the MOST FUN time of the weekend! Students are required to wear their team jackets on stage for all award ceremonies they attend. They are required to attend all award ceremonies that apply to their routines, but students often like to go on stage in support of others. Awards are the time to hoot and holler (parents and dancers), take pictures and sit back and relax. The most important thing to remember about awards is that all scores are the opinions of 3 or 4 judges. It's important that we acknowledge and congratulate every dancer and studio. Good sportsmanship is a must! Clap for your teammates and dancers from competing studios. Overall, we are all working towards the same goal-bettering ourselves through dance education and performance! When awards are complete, don't rush off! We always like to take group photos and don't want anyone to be left out.

Advice for parents of male dancers

Make sure to bring hairspray, gel, a comb and a water bottle to the dressing room. The boys in the dressing room tend to show off for each other and have a big party so it will probably need to be fixed prior to going on stage. You have to be proactive and make sure to find out where and when to meet. It is often necessary for a mom or sister to go into the girl's dressing room to check the status, location, etc. The boy's dressing room tends to be nowhere near the girl's dressing room. It is your (parent's or dancer's) responsibility to make sure they are ready and meet the female dancers backstage, on the red carpet for pictures, warmup area, etc.

Communication is key! A meeting spot and time will be determined by the choreographer/director for routines including our awesome male dancers. Always pack extra black socks, brown socks, whatever is needed. They seem to disappear. Bring plenty of safety pins for pinning costumes. Male dancers will need to wear stage makeup. Get a masculine bag for stage makeup. It is easy to find a shaving kit type of bag. There's nothing like a mom

bringing a floral makeup kit into the boy's dressing room.