

## Suggested Local Petition Guidelines



1. Discuss the local petition information you have downloaded (including 2 blank signature pages) with several other interested adults; try to involve at least two parents whose children attend a local dance studio. Make sure everyone reads the petition and the accompanying articles carefully. Set a tone of respect and education as you pursue involving others in this petition.
2. Get at least 25 signatures on your local petition before you present it to a dance studio owner. Call a dance studio owner and set up a specific appointment time to talk about this petition.
3. Print out the supporting petition documents including the article, “Recital Revelations: When it Comes to the Over-Sexualization of Young Girls, We Are the Problem” and the article, “The sexualization of children and adolescents epidemic” from our online toolkit. Have these in hand for your meeting in case the dance studio owner is not familiar with the articles. During the appointment time:
  - a. Start out the conversation with positive comments about dance and appreciation for the particular dance studio that you are discussing.
  - b. Ask the studio owner if they have read the article and research about dance that you are concerned with. If the answer is no, give them time to read it. If the answer is yes, ask them what they think about the petition and the research.
  - c. Engage in a personal conversation with them and ask if they would consider making sure that they do not allow children under 12 to present dances in adult costumes, lyrics and choreography. Present the signed petition to them showing that others in the community support your effort.
  - d. Join YPAD ([ypad4change.org](http://ypad4change.org)). Encourage and educate dance studio owners to be certified by YPAD. Studio certification will provide age appropriate standards for safety in children's dance. YPAD is a national organization advocating for age-appropriate healthy standards in dance.
  - e. Whether or not they agree with these standards, be respectful of their perspective. If they are not sure about what you have communicated, give them the time to reflect. Pursue a follow up meeting to answer questions. Sometimes all someone needs is time and education to change their mind.

4. Contact your local newspaper and ask them to write an article about this dance studio; include the petition, the research on this issue, and the [soultolechoerography.org](http://soultolechoerography.org) website so others can sign the petition. Make sure that the local article directs the readers' attention to the dance studios that agree with the petition. If it is hard to get a response from a reporter, submit a letter to the editor sharing this information.
  
5. Let the local petition creator at Soul to Sole Choreography know about what's happening in your town by emailing Mary Bawden at [mary@soultolechoerography.org](mailto:mary@soultolechoerography.org). Together, we can make a difference! Let's put an end to the creation of adult, sexual choreography, lyrics and costumes for children under 12.