

Hustle at RS

Code of Conduct

We created this code of conduct for our community because we want to keep Hustle at RS inclusive, welcoming, and safe for all. It may sound formal, but it's really just creating a common language for us to all enjoy Hustle as our community grows.

Hustle at RS Dance Society is a **safe place where everyone is welcome, regardless of gender identity, race, country of origin, physical appearance, ability, age, religion, sexual orientation, or dance level.**

The following is a code of conduct that all dancers, no matter how novice or experienced, must follow when participating in classes, sessions, and events organized by Hustle at RS Dance Society.

1. Safety and Comfort

- a. Psychological safety: Our classes, sessions and events are opportunities for dancers to learn new skills, meet new people, and practice hustle in an environment that feels safe, fun, and welcoming for everyone. Be aware of the energy you bring to Hustle at RS events and the space you take up. Be observant and respectful of those around you and pay attention to non-verbal cues such as body language and posture. If you are unsure of how to proceed with your partner or others in the space, ask!
- b. Physical safety: Ensure you are aware of your dance partner's physical condition. We recommend asking them how they are feeling. Maybe they will tell you that they are tired or healing from an injury. Always dance to the level of the less-experienced partner in order to avoid injuries and to ensure your partner is feeling comfortable and safe. Be considerate of your partner at all times, and **never** use force to get your partner to complete a move. Also note that our summer space, Robson Square, has concrete floors and requires more consideration around the type of leading and following one does. I.e. it is not as easy to complete multiple turns.
- c. Consent: Consent and respect is imperative in this community for everyone to feel safe and welcome. Anyone can ask anyone else to dance, regardless of dance role or skill level. Likewise, anyone can also respectfully say no to an invitation to dance without obligation or excuse. If it's not a clear yes, then consider it a firm no. In addition, there are different ways of connecting physically in a social dance (i.e. open connection, close connection). Do not assume that just because someone engages in close connection in a dance with one person, they are comfortable doing that with you too. **Always** ask for consent when it comes to close connection and advanced moves (i.e. dips) and do not lead or attempt advanced moves without explicit consent, and the skillset to do so.

- d. Community Safety: If you witness a moment that makes you feel uncomfortable, we empower you to check in with the people involved. If that doesn't feel easy, ask a friend or stranger to come with you. We'd much rather you apologize for misreading a situation than risking the safety of another person. Let's normalize safety check-ins! If you have been made to feel uncomfortable, please know that you are not imposing on anybody's evening by speaking up. The community is here to support you. If you don't know the Hustle at RS organizers or Board of Directors, ask somebody nearby and they will likely be able to identify one of us. We can also be reached by email (hustleatrs@gmail.com) and Instagram (@hustleatrs).

2. Space and Place

- a. Winter classes and sessions - Victoria Drive Community Hall: We are guests at Victoria Drive Community Hall. Keep your belongings in designated places (on tables or chairs) and tidy up after yourself. Wear clean, indoor shoes when taking classes and practicing during the open sessions.
- b. Summer classes and sessions - Robson Square: Hustle at RS is intertwined with the Vancouver street dance community, and Robson Square is home to Vancouver street dancers. When attending classes or practicing at Robson Square, share the space with the other dancers and be mindful of your presence - physical and audio.

3. Dance Manners and Etiquette

- a. Levels: As mentioned above, dance to the level of your partner, especially if they are a beginner. This means avoiding complex patterns that may overwhelm someone who has just taken their first, second, or even third hustle class. Your partner is the second half of a partner dance in which the two of you can have a conversation to music through movement.
- b. Social dancing = social dancing: "As dance instructors often preach, while social dancing please don't teach" (borrowed from the wonderful Jennifer and Stephen Dancey). The social dance floor is meant for social dancing. So when it's an open session, just have fun! It's generally unwelcome to give instructions, teach, or correct your partner while social dancing (unless, of course, your partner is doing something that could potentially injure you or others). At the end of the dance, you can ask your partner if they are open to receiving feedback, but don't expect them to say yes and don't give unsolicited advice.
- c. Take care of your partner: Leads, take care of your partner on the dance floor by leading them to a safe space on the floor when beginning a dance. Look to where you are sending your partner when you are doing turns or cross body leads so that no one gets hit or stepped on. Make your partner feel comfortable so that they leave the dance floor feeling good about themselves and you as a dance partner. People talk to each other and tell each other when they had an enjoyable dance with someone, but especially when they

had a less than enjoyable dance with someone. Consider what kind of partner you want to be known as.

- d. Take care of yourself: Follows and leads, you may stop dancing with a partner at any point if they are not respecting your request to stop any behavior that is making you uncomfortable. Don't feel like you have to endure a dance until the end of the song if you are not comfortable dancing with that partner.

4. Consumption of Alcohol while Dancing

There are times when hustle sessions will take place in spaces or venues where alcohol is available for purchase, or you are welcome to BYOB. Know your limits and don't use alcohol consumption as a tool to try moves you've never tried before. If the dance floor happens to be concrete, be even more mindful of how you dance to keep things as safe as possible for yourself and your partner.

5. Body Awareness

- a. Body Odour: We all have it, we all have to deal with it. However, with hustle being a social dance where we sometimes don't have too much space, things can definitely get smelly. Wear deodorant. Heck, *bring* extra to classes, socials, and events. While you're at it, a sweat towel and spare T-shirt can feel like a metaphorical breath of fresh air.
- b. Room to Dance: Arm styling and traveling moves take up a lot of space. Be mindful of those dancing around you, and the amount of space you have to style (also see "Dance Manners and Etiquette").

6. Our Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy

Definition of Harassment & Sexual Harassment

Harassment is any behaviour, whether physical, verbal, written, or otherwise, that is unwanted and unwelcome, and may offend, or humiliate, an individual. Harassment can be discrimination or abuse of various types. Often, harassment persists beyond the first incident and happens on multiple occasions. One time incidents may also be considered harassment.

Sexual Harassment refers to unwelcome sexual advances, comments of a sexual nature, requests for sexual favors, and harassment or comments about an individual's gender, all of which create a hostile dance environment. *(Please see Appendix A of this document for an extensive outline of what Hustle at RS Dance Society considers to be Sexual Harassment)*

If someone says they do not want to dance, and you insist on touching them, pulling on them, pressuring them, etc, **then it is harassment**. We have a legal and moral obligation to prevent harassment, especially since we are leading a partner dance community where touching is pertinent to the dance.

Hustle at RS Harassment Policy

As experienced dancers, we know it can be difficult as a beginner to remember all the things to keep in mind while dancing. However, we feel that consistently educating students on proper hand placement and dance etiquette in our weekly classes provides a proactive and fun approach for newer dancers to learn and incorporate these nuances.

For more experienced dancers, we can practice enthusiastic consent to set an example for newer dancers. I.e., “Yes, I’d love to dance!” as opposed to “um okay”. Ask before you try a complex move. We can also practice saying “No”, “Stop”, and “I don’t like that”.

In situations where a dancer comes forward with allegations of harassment, the steps the Board will take are as follows:

1. We will speak to the individual(s) in question and get a sense of why they did something to make the dancer uncomfortable. This will not be done accusingly, this can help inform us if any of our classes or instructions were not clear, and if we as instructors need to revise the educational, proactive approach to consent.
2. If deemed to not be accidental, we will inform the individual that this incident is going to be recorded in a report log. This will serve as their first warning. We will continue dialogue with the individual in order for them to recognize and acknowledge the action(s) they took that made the person uncomfortable or unsafe.
3. Should another dancer come forward with allegations against the same individual, and should the individual already have one existing report, The Board can take action regardless if the incident is deemed anywhere from low to high severity. Our priority is to protect the victim. The actions taken can be anywhere from a warning to a short-or-long term ban from classes and sessions.
4. In cases of high severity, the Hustle at RS Board retains the right to remove and ban the individual(s) from all current and future hustle events, regardless if they have received a warning already or not.

How to Report a Case of Harassment or Sexual Harassment

If you or someone you know has experienced harassment or sexual harassment, please speak with any of the Hustle at RS Board of Directors. If you don’t know the Hustle at RS organizers or Board of Directors, ask somebody nearby and they will likely be able to identify one of us. We can also be reached by email (hustleatrs@gmail.com) and Instagram (@hustleatrs).

We will work with you to ensure that you feel safe, heard, and advocated for throughout this process. This means any of the following:

1. You may wish for us to facilitate a conversation between you and the accused.
2. You may wish to remain anonymous when we speak with the accused.
3. You may wish to simply inform us and prefer that we do not bring this issue up with the accused.

We are happy to honour your decision through this process and will ensure to keep communication open.

Appendix A - Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment

What counts as sexual harassment? Sexual harassment may (according to the European Human Rights Commission) include:

- staring or leering
- unnecessary familiarity, such as deliberately brushing up against another person (i.e. deliberately touching lightly while passing the other person), or unwelcome touching suggestive comments or jokes
- insults or taunts of a sexual nature
- intrusive questions or statements about your private life
- sending sexually explicit emails or text messages
- inappropriate advances on social networking sites
- requests for sex or repeated unwanted requests to go out on dates; and
- behaviour that may be considered an offence under criminal law, such as physical assault, indecent exposure, sexual assault, stalking, or obscene communications.