COMMUNITY
CODE OF CONDUCT



What is ok?
What is not?
What crosses the line?

And what do we do about it?

Why have a code of conduct?

At Swing Busters, we aim to build a community where everyone feels **respected and as safe as possible**. That's why we have established **principles that we strive to uphold and cultivate within our community**.

By entering the community (by attending classes, festivals, social dances, and other SB events), each of us **agrees to** do our best to follow **these principles**.

These principles apply to all of us **equally** – students, teachers, event participants, school leadership, the Care Team, and artistic or organizational collaborators alike.

At the same time, we recognize that each group has its own **power dynamics** and that each of us carries a different share of responsibility for safety within the community.

Anyone can make a mistake. Let's work together to build an **environment where open communication is part of the culture**.

If someone speaks up that our behavior is not in line with these principles, let's take it as an invitation to self-reflection, not as an attack. Mistakes can happen. What matters is what we do next – **the effort to make things right is key**.

A safer space doesn't just happen.

We create it together.

How can you contribute?

Follow these principles, talk about them with others, and **help spread awareness** to create a safer – and more open and courageous – dance environment.

If you notice behavior that you believe goes against these principles, **try to step in** — whether you're learning to dance at SB, teaching others, or helping organize events.

Offer support to the person who feels uncomfortable in the situation.

If needed, **reach out to a contact person** from our **Care Team**.

Our Care Team is here to listen to you, even if you want to **share your own misstep**, and can offer guidance on possible ways forward.

Each of us has the power to **improve the environment we share** – step by step, dance by dance.

SWING BUSTERS

SB

traffic light

THINGS ARE OK.
EVERYTHING
FLOWS.

GREEN ZONE

We explore boundaries in dance together, communicate them to each other, and respect them.
The school does not interfere – it only supports, advises, and helps when someone asks for it.

THE PRINCIPLES WE WANT TO UPHOLD IN THE COMMUNITY:

CONSENT

1. **Voluntariness**
   - Dance out of your own free choice. You don’t owe anyone a dance. If you don’t want to, it’s okay to decline an invitation. You can also stop a dance at any time.
2. **Boundaries**
   - Practice and strengthen your ability to communicate yur own boundaries.
3. **NO means NO**
   - Respect other people’s boundaries.
   - Remember everyone’s bounaries are different.
   - Learn to accept rejection and **always** respect it.
4. **Declining with care**
   - Being rejected can be hard to process.
   - Approach it with care. You don’t have to explain yourself – it’s enough to say something like: “Not today, but thank you.”

5. **Consent as the foundation of a dance**
    - Genuine consent is:
        - **Enthusiastic** — The response is unclear? Wait for an enthusiastic “yes!” The best dances are with people who are truly into it.
        - **Specific** — Last time you spent half an hour in close embrace? Don’t assume you’ll pick up where you left off. They might feel differently today.
        - **Informed** — Not every surprise is welcome. Fast swingouts? Quick spins? Check whether your partner is up for it.
        - **Freely given** — Without pressure, persuasion or the feeling that "it's expected".
        - **Reversible** — Multiple dances in a row aren’t a given. And it’s okay to stop a dance at any time.
6. **A dance is just a dance**
    - Romantic interest requires consent off the dance floor.
    - Meeting people is part of dancing, harassment is not.
    - Just because someone likes dancing with you doesn’t mean anything more. Not even in close embrace. A dance is just a dance.
    - Who people dance with and in which role has nothing to do with their gender or sexual orientation. Don’t look for something that’s not there.
    - Interested in someone? You can try, but if they’re not showing interest, step back.
7. **Privacy**
    - Personal matters are private.
    - The same applies to dance: film and take pictures with care and never secretely. If someone asks you to delete the material, respect their wish. Hidden cameras and AI glasses do not belong in our community.
    - Never share photos of children without their parents’ consent.

RESPECT

8. **Diversity is enriching**
    - We welcome people of any gender identity, sexuality, age, body type and appearance, ethnicity, skin colour, religion, physical ability or dance skill and dance background.
    - Intrigued by someone’s uniquenes? Noticing is natural — but staring is not okay.
    - Keep in mind that different people have different levels of stamina, sensitivity to stimuli, and social energy.
    - People with health limitations like to dance too. Remember that not everyone can reach the same performance level, and it is welcome to slow down or soften your dance because of your partner's needs.
    - Learn to use gender-sensitive language.
        - for dance roles, use the terms “leads” and “follows” (not men and women)
        - try to find ways to include everyone in the way you talk (e.g. don’t default to masculine forms when talking of diverse groups)
        - avoid heteronormative language (assuming someone’s heterosexuality)
9. **Respect for the roots**
    - Respect the Black American origins of these dances and be open to learn about history and context.
10. **Sensitive handling of cultural elements**
    - We are learning to recognize what may constitute as cultural appropriation, e.g. when preparing a costume for a performance or a themed party. Remember that people from different cultures are part of our community — they are not “far away.”

11. **Dance as a dialogue**
    - Neither dance role is superior to the other. They both contribute and look for balance together.
12. **Freedom of self-expression**
    - Dance roles have nothing to do with gender or appearance. If you're dancing with someone for the first time, it's good to ask which role they prefer rather than assuming you know.
13. **Even humour has its limits**
    - Is the joke at someone else's expense? Better skip it then. And if you take the risk and someone doesn't laugh, just apologize – you'll get it better next time.
    - Keep in mind that some jokes, by their nature, create a hostile environment – and those simply don't belong here.

COMMUNICATION

14. **Open communication**
    - We welcome open respectful communication. We don't shy away from difficult topics.
    - If something feels uncomfortable when dancing with someone, try to communicate it directly. Is their grip too firm? Are they holding you too close? Say it.
    - Open communication serves as prevention of "cancel clubs," which do not support a sense of safety.
        - **Cancel club** = gossiping and warning others like "watch out for that person" instead of open communication and direct feedback. We try to avoid these

15. **Feedback**
    - Complex (not only critical), specific, descriptive, non-judgemental, using "I" language, kind.
    - Feedback is part of dance, but there is such a thing as the proper time and place. Instead of surprising someone with feedback at a social dance, it's better to use the space of a class or practice session, where we come with the intention to improve.
16. **Teaching only with consent**
    - There's a difference between communicating your own needs and boundaries, and instructing or correcting someone without consent.
    - Don't let yourself be tutored if you're not interested. Even teachers should not give lessons without consent.
    - Teachers also come to the party to have fun. Tutoring outside classes is not a given, don't expect it.

CONSIDERATION

17. **Fun vs. disruptive**
    - Dance events and classes are spaces for dancing and learning, but also for meeting people and socializing. Sometimes we feel like talking more than dancing – and that's ok. Just be mindful of others (do not do it in the middle of the dancefloor or during instruction in classes).
18. **Hygiene**
    - We all sweat. If needed, bring a change of clothes, deodorant, or a towel. Heading to dance after a full day of coffee and food and don't have a chance to brush your teeth? Pack some gum.

19. **Health condition**
    - Do you have an illness that could affect others' health? Stay home and come next time, or at least wear a mask.
    - Are you in pain or dealing with an injury? Communicate it in advance so your dance partner can take better care of you.
20. **Floor-craft**
    - Be mindful of where you step and kick.
    - Collision? Apologize, even if it was an accident.
    - Airsteps and acrobatics don't belong on the social dance floor but rather in choreographies and jams (and even then they require consent from your partner before you go ahead).
21. **Dancing under influence?**
    - Only if you can do so responsibly – toward others, your coordination, and your spatial awareness.
    - If it doesn't go well and you're unsteady on your feet, ask for help to get home safely.

Thank you for living and dancing these principles with us.
What more can you do?

- If you notice a behaviour that you think goes against these principles, try to intervene.
  Support the person who was made uncomfortable by the situation.
- If needed, get help from a member of our Care Team.

ORANGE ZONE

WE SUPPORT.
WE GIVE
FEEDBACK.

IS A SPACE FOR LEARNING.

Someone has crossed a boundary –
– it's not a "NO GO" but it does need to be addressed.
This is where the school's Care Team steps in to help.
Missteps call for feedback, an apology, and a willingness to make things right.

You don't have to handle it on your own — WE'RE HERE FOR YOU. When can you reach out to us?

Someone is behaving in conflict with the principles we strive to uphold in our community and **does not respond to your feedback** or you feel **unable** to give them feedback yourself.

Have you noticed **gossip** or warnings such as "beware of this or that person" **replacing open communication**? Let us know so we can help clear the air and make sure feedback reaches the right place.

Our Care Team will also listen if you feel that **you have crossed a line** yourself and can suggest possible solutions.

➡ **If the behavior continues after feedback from the Care Team, the situation moves into the Red Zone.**

RED ZONE

THIS BEHAVIOR IS NOT TOLERATED IN OUR COMMUNITY.

The **sense of safety of the affected person** is our top priority. **All situations are handled with their consent.** We consider not only the safety of the affected person, but also the safety of others in the community.

THIS IS A NO-GO.
WITH CONSENT,
WE INTERVENE.

In the most serious cases, or when immediate action is needed to ensure the feeling of safety of an individual or the community, Swing Busters reserves the right to remove a person from an event, a class, or the entire community. This right also applies to situations reported to SB that took place outside SB spaces or online.

TRIGGER WARNING

This includes, <u>for example</u>:

- Physical violence
- Sexualized violence
- Unwanted, non-consensual attention with a sexual undertone
    - including in online environments (e.g., sending unsolicited intimate photos)
- Hate speech (expression that incites violence or denying of rights)
    - queerphobia (homophobia, transphobia, biphobia), sexism, racist expressions, xenophobia, ageism
- Intimidation, threats
- Stalking, following
- Invasion of privacy (e.g. of a phone or a bag, using a hidden camera)
- Theft
- Vandalism – intentional damage to someone else's property

HOW WE NAVIGATE SITUATIONS

IN THE ORANGE ZONE

I want to talk about something I experienced at a dance party.

Thank you for trusting us. I am here for you. Please, tell me more about what happened and how you feel about it.



We consider this a misstep from the Orange Zone. That means we would like this person to receive feedback about it. Would it be okay with you if we spoke to them about it?



Yes, thank you for helping me handle it.

I'm your contact person right now. To make sure the other party also has a contact person who can pass on the feedback, I'll need to share the situation with another member of the Care team. We take everyone's privacy seriously, so I won't inform more people than necessary at this point. Is that ok for you?



Ok,
I understand.

The feedback has been shared and received. Now, let's give this person a chance to apply it. If the behavior repeats, please let me know.



Thank you for helping us prevent cancel clubs* from forming and for giving a chance to open communication.

*Cancel club = gossiping and warning others to "beware of this or that person" instead of open communication and direct feedback.

HOW WE NAVIGATE SITUATIONS

IN THE ORANGE ZONE

TWO CARE TEAM CONTACT PERSONS STEP INTO RESOLVING SITUATIONS IN THE ORANGE ZONE (WITH THE CONSENT OF THE PERSON WHO CAME FORWARD).

DIVIDING ROLES HELPS US ENSURE THE GREATEST POSSIBLE OBJECTIVITY AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT.

EACH PARTY HAS THEIR OWN CONTACT PERSON.



CONTACT PERSON OF THE PERSON REPORTING A MISSTEP

CONTACT PERSON OF THE PERSON RECEIVING FEEDBACK

HOW WE NAVIGATE SITUATIONS

IN THE RED ZONE

I want to talk about something I experienced at a dance party.

Thank you for trusting us. I am here for you. Please, tell me more about what happened and how you feel about it.



We consider this a behavior in the Red Zone. I want to assure you that we take this situation seriously. I believe you, and I'm sorry you've had this experience. What can we do to support you?

I am not sure. I'm afraid of how that person might react if this were handled more formally.



I understand. Your sense of safety is our top priority. Can you think of anything that might help you feel safer right now?

I think I need to think this through.



That’s completely okay. If it’s alright with you, I’d like to share the situation with the person responsible for handling these cases and find out what steps we can take to support your sense of safety without direct confrontation. Would that be okay with you?



Thank you for trusting us.

We handle everything
with the informed consent
of the person who confides in us.

HOW WE NAVIGATE SITUATIONS

IN THE RED ZONE

TWO CARE TEAM CONTACT PERSONS AND ONE TO TWO PEOPLE IN THE ROLE OF SAFEGUARDING LEADS ARE INVOLVED IN ADDRESSING SITUATIONS IN THE RED ZONE. THE SAFEGUARDING LEAD(S) DECIDE ON THE NEXT POSSIBLE STEPS.

DIVIDING ROLES HELPS US ENSURE THE GREATEST POSSIBLE OBJECTIVITY AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT.

EACH PARTY HAS THEIR OWN CONTACT PERSON.



CONTACT PERSON OF THE PERSON REPORTING BEHAVIOR

CONTACT PERSON OF THE PERSON LEARNING ABOUT ITS CONSEQUENCES

What does our Care Team look like?

COMMUNITY CARE TEAM

These people are the top board of our Care Team, handling cases that take place over a longer period of time or are of a more serious nature.



ZUZKA (SHE/HER)



DAVID (HE/HIM)



MARŤA (SHE/HER)
Care Team coordinator



ÁŇA (SHE/HER)



FRED (HE/HIM)

Their roles are partially interchangable, so that they can support each other as well as avoid conflicts of interest. In Red Zone cases, the role of safeguarding leads falls to people from this group but you might also meet them in the role of a contact person.

What does our Care Team look like?

EVENT CARE TEAM

These people are wherever you need them – helping you sort out immediate issues at events and usually your point of first contact. You can recognise them by glowing bracelets and they're there for you.

Who are they?

Anyone who wants to help and has attended a Care Team workshop. It's teachers, students, organisers, DJs, photographers… and **it can be you too**.

Don't worry, we'll teach you everything and won't ask you for too much of your time. All you need is a willingness to help and one weekend to learn how.

If you want to actively help us build a safer space, sign up!

Meet the Community Care Team



ZUZKA (SHE/HER)

BZZZUZA@GMAIL.COM

Zuzka is a long time swing dance teacher who is interested in psychology and regularly practises solving conflicts both at home with her kids and in her work.

She's calm and empathetic and her goal is for everyone to feel safe in the swing community and know someone is there for them.

Meet the Community Care Team



DAVID (HE/HIM)

DAVID.KOZAK@SEZNAM.CZ

He’s been dancing swing for almost 20 years and has gone through many dance schools, classes and festivals. He knows the swing community with its joys and troubles inside out.

He works as a lawyer and is a registered mediator. He’s used to looking for solutions that respect everyone involved, ideally before a little thing becomes a big issue.

In the Care Team he’s involved in dealing with serious transgressions against the Code but he’s also there for anyone who needs advice, help or just an ear to tell about the relationships in our swing community.

His favourite dances are Lindy, Balboa and Blues.

Meet the Community Care Team



FRED (HE/HIM)

FLOWTHER1@GMAIL.COM

Fred has been teaching swing for a while now. In the meantime, he has been educating and advocating on the topic of safe spaces for many years, and also in conflict resolution and communicating for example through non-violent communication practice.

In the Care Team Fred aims to promote trusting relationships through empathy and listening. He would like to help our dance scene be communal and supportive to everyone.

Meet the Community Care Team



ÁŇA (SHE/HER)

ANNA@SWINGBUSTERS.CZ

Áňa is one of the founders of Swing Busters.

Her vision of the Prague swing community has always been an open scene for everyone where no one has to be afraid to be themselves and where we can share the joy of movement, music and community.

That's why she's the main influence behind the Code of Conduct and safer space initiative.

Meet the Community Care Team



MARŤA (SHE/HER)

MARTINAGALA@SEZNAM.CZ

She's been dancing since autumn 2021 and she's gradually got from dancing to organising too. She likes being part of a community and helping create an environment where people feel comfortable and safe and like to come back.

She's part of Swing Busters' event production team, coordinates the Care Team and takes care of our DJs.

During the day she works at a tax office, so her life is a sort of mix of spreadsheets, laws and swing.

Thank you for helping us create a safer and more courageous dance space!

- We care about creating a space where we feel welcome and respected.
- We care about improving our skills in communicating our boundaries.
- We care for the dance space so that it is safer – – and more courageous.

Your Swing Busters Care Team



This Swing Busters Community Code of Conduct
is based on the Community Code of Conduct
of the Brno school Swing Wings,
taken and adapted to our needs
with their knowledge and consent.