

Welcome to Akrosphere Aerial & Circus Arts



We are thrilled to have you join our Akrosphere family! We have a bit of information for you that will help you settle in and feel comfortable as your child begins their circus adventure.

Please note that almost all of our communication to families is through emails...keep checking that inbox!

Feel free to email info@akrosphere.com if you have any questions! Email is by far the easiest way to reach us. The lovely and talented Lyndsay Brown is our Executive Administrator and Studio Family Mentor (among many other things)! She is usually the one reading and responding to incoming email. Be sure to shower her with love, as she is an amazing person!

STUDIO POLICIES: Here at Akrosphere, we have many studio policies that help our gym run smoothly. On our website, please notice the [Current Families](#) button. That button is just for you, our Akro-Families! Click it, and you will find links to Studio Policies, our Studio Calendar, your Parent Portal, Open Gym Schedules, and many other things. Please ensure you are familiar with our studio policies.

Find us / Like us / Follow us on Social Media!

[Facebook](#) : [Instagram](#) : [YouTube](#) : [Google](#)

Welcome to your exciting journey through the world of Circus!

CONTENTS

- 3 MISSION STATEMENT
 - Studio Philosophy
 - Company Values

- 4-5 IMPORTANT AKRO-STUFF
 - Email
 - AKRO-App
 - Dress Code
 - Open Gym
 - What to Bring
 - Make-ups
 - Policies

- 6-7 AKRO-TERMINOLOGY

- 8-10 SHOWCASE SCHEDULE
 - Participation
 - Costume
 - Call-Time
 - Tickets
 - What to Expect
 - Students Performances
 - Company Performances
 - Winter Showcase
 - Persistence Period
 - Show Schedule
 - Spring Spectacular
 - Persistence Period
 - Show Schedule

- 11 STUDIO POLICIES

- 12 PROGRESSION PATHWAY

- 13-14 A NOTE ON LEVELING UP
 - Things to Remember in Circus Class
 - Advancement Criteria
 - Want to get better and stronger...faster?

Akrosphere Aerial & Circus Arts: Amplifying the Artistic Voices of Future Innovators

Our STUDIO PHILOSOPHY is founded on 6 things that Akrosphere holds to be true:

- Happiness and fun play a huge part in a successful learning environment. By encouraging friendships and using humor and joy, our coaches guarantee a happy environment for your child.
- Creative exploration is necessary for learning. We encourage our students to think for themselves, taking what they learn and expanding on it, making it their own.
- Our students deserve our best. Our students receive nothing but compassion, kindness and respect from our staff. We serve our students and encourage them to show these qualities toward others.
- Trust is crucial. We are passionate about what we do, and we share that with our students by being honest with them. Through this authenticity, the students develop a level of trust with our coaches. Honest, gentle feedback ensures our students progress quickly and safely.
- There is no substitute for self-respect. We teach our students to respect themselves and others by showing them how to respect their bodies and minds for safe training, plus encouraging healthy acknowledgement of personal growth.
- Make it easy. Parents these days are juggling more than ever. We have seen studios that place enormous demands on families and we know that there is a better way. Through streamlining the processes, we strive to make things easy for parents, which makes it easy for them to love our studio.



Our COMPANY VALUES:

Transparent Trust: We prioritize honesty and clarity with our team, our families, and with ourselves. Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom." -- Thomas Jefferson

Fearless Passion: I cast aside negativity and self-doubt to embrace the adventure of achieving my goals. "People with great passion can make the impossible happen." -- A. Pavitra Chettiar

Bold Leadership: I unapologetically embrace and embody the qualities of my heroes. "Leadership is not a position or a title, it is action and example." -- Cory Booker

Creative Innovation: I will always ask, "What if...?"

"First, think. Second, dream. Third, believe. And finally, dare. It's kind of fun to do the impossible." -- Walt Disney

Important AKRO-Stuff

Email: Please note that almost all of our communication is through email. Parents are responsible for knowing all information emailed to them. Please ensure that the email address info@akrosphere.com is whitelisted / in your list of addresses to prevent our emails from ending up in your spam folder.

AKRO-App: Access class info, bill pay, review sent emails, etc! Be sure to enable push notifications to be alerted for inclement weather updates and studio closures! Available for free at the App Store and Google Play; simply go to your app store of choice and type in "Akrosphere".

Dates to Remember: our entire [Studio Calendar](#) is listed on our website, located in the Current Families tab.

Dress Code: [CLICK for PICTURE](#). Girls are to wear a high-backed leotard (covers the bra line) and leggings that reach the ankle. Boys need to wear a fitted tank or Tshirt and leggings that reach the ankle and a dance belt. (For Cyr Wheel classes, just ask.) We expect all students to be dressed in accordance with their class for safety reasons. For performances we require solid color leotards (tops for boys) and black leggings that reach the ankle.



Also:

- Remove all jewelry. If a piercing cannot be removed, tape it with a bandaid during the class. Small earrings are fine.
- No Zippers or Buttons or Velcro (these tear the equipment.).
- No long nails are allowed on any aerial equipment. It is a safety issue, plus damage to aerial equipment may occur.
- Pull all hair back and secure it out of the face into a ponytail or braids for ALL cirque classes. Hair can easily wrap around the apparatuses and get "stuck", which is dangerous and quite painful. Please do this before class, as we do not provide hair ties.

Open Gym: Open gym is available several days during the week; check our [Open Gym](#) page on our website for the current schedule. Come to any or all of them! Every student in our individual apparatus classes (Level Classes) are encouraged to attend, and it is already included in your monthly tuition. This is a time for students to work on the skills they have learned throughout the week, while a coach is there for supervision. No sign up necessary; simply show up ready to train. The more you work on the skills you have learned, the stronger you will be, and the faster you will progress! At this time, Open gym is not currently available for Circus Kids.



What to bring:

- **Notebooks.** Every student, with the exception of Akronauts, will need to bring a notebook and writing utensil to every class to take notes.
- **Water Bottle.** We require all students to bring a reusable water bottle, and make sure to drink water in your cirque classes.
- **Knee Socks for Trapeze Classes.** For most aerial cirque classes, we ask students to be barefoot. The exception to this is Trapeze, where we ask all students to bring socks (preferably ones that go up past the ankle.)
- **Fitted Running Shirt for higher level aerial classes.** OPTIONAL. For Aerials (especially Level 3 and higher), you might choose to bring a fitted shirt to cover and protect your underarms as needed.
- **Feiyue shoes for Cyr Wheel.** OPTIONAL. Many people prefer to go barefoot on the wheel, but some choose to wear shoes. Feiyue shoes are a cyr industry standard and are available for about \$25 through Amazon. Street shoes are not allowed.
- **Also:** You might also want to bring a protein-rich treat for after class on your way home, to help build muscles. However, please refrain from eating in the gym

Make-ups: Every student is allowed per class:

- **2 make-ups** between August-December
- **2 make-ups** between January-May
- **1 make-up** in June-July.

All make-up classes must be completed by the end of each Training Block.

Makeup classes can be scheduled AFTER there has been a missed class. You may take one (1) make up class per month, meaning if a student misses 2 classes in August, they may schedule 1 make-up class in August, and 1 in September. Simply email us at info@akrosphere.com to schedule your makeup class. Walk-in make-ups are not allowed.

Please note: no make-up classes will be scheduled during Persistence Periods in October-December or March-May, due to showcase preparation.

Policies: We encourage all families to become familiar with all our [studio policies](#). (These are the policies you checked when you signed up online.) You can find them on our website in the Current Families tab..



AKRO-Terminology

Training Block: The way we “break up” time. We have three training blocks per year; one from January-May, one from June-July, and one from August-December.

Skill Surge: This time period occurs toward the beginning of each Training Block where the focus is on acquiring new skills and technical prowess in current skills.

Proficiency Poll: Very important for students to attend! In roughly the second week of each Skill Surge, coaches run through the curriculum for the previous level and the current level with students. This way, the student learns what physical vocabulary they are missing, and what needs attention (things like straight legs, pointed toes, not struggling through the inversion, etc). Students write these down in their notebooks to use as a focus in Open Gym, along with whatever new skills they are learning.

Choreography Countdown: The part of each Training Block where the focus is on using their new skills in phrases, learning new transitions, and creating complete acts to be performed in our Showcase.

Summer Skill Slam: Another student favorite! The special Training Block over the summer where students get to learn things not taught throughout the year. Examples are things like swinging skills on Trapeze, orbiting skills on Silks, using a butterfly lift for Lyra, or working on duo or crossed wheel in Cyr Wheel.

Patch Week: This is a time when all students new to Akrosphere or all students moving up into the next level receive their official Akrosphere Patch for that level. (Think of it like a karate belt!) Patches may be worn on jackets, gym bags, anywhere you want to put them!

Social Media Week: This is a time when students bring cell phones into the gym with them. Along with the regular curriculum, the coaches teach students about the correct way to film for social media (how to honor the source, what to post / not post, how to “hide” their wraps, etc). The final 10 minutes of training time is allotted for students to film themselves and each other. Handouts are given to each student with the tags for Akrosphere’s social media.

Show-and-Tell Week: A week when classes perform for each other the last 10 minutes of class. A “practice run” of performing in front of other people before the upcoming bigger performance.



Picture Day: A day built into our schedule for a professional photographer to come in and photograph our students doing the circus apparatuses they love. Watch your emails for sign-up dates.

AKmē Instant Circus Performance Company: The pre-professional company at Akrosphere. Auditions are every August and January, and company members perform in festivals and shows around Atlanta, with occasional performances in places like Las Vegas, Dallas, Charlotte, and the like. Company members also have their own high-level showcase twice per year.

Bring-a-Friend Week: A student favorite! Special times when students can bring a friend with them to their circus class. Special partner warm-ups and stretches and activities happen in classes, plus the students think about skills in a new way when they get to teach (coach-guided) basics to their friends!

Break: A time period when the gym is closed and no classes or open gyms are happening. We schedule our breaks alongside the Fulton / Forsyth school districts, and also along the recommended specialized training intervals for circus artists and athletes. (A break is recommended at specified times to keep the body healthy and not overwork muscles, joints, and the like.)

Winter Showcase & Spring Spectacular: The twice yearly performances by our students. Our gym magically transforms to a 200-seat black box theatre with full lights and sound.

Persistence Period: A short time period before a performance in which no drops or changes in classes may occur, to be fair to all students working toward the upcoming performance.

Call Time: The time your student is expected to be at Akrosphere before the performance. This allows students to warm up and have some time on equipment so they are not performing “cold”.

Show Time / Curtain: The time the performance actually begins.



Showcase Schedule

PARTICIPATION: All students are expected to participate in our Student Showcases. This is an exciting and rewarding experience when students demonstrate their talents and abilities. Performing in this manner develops confidence, self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment.

COSTUME: We ask girls wear a solid color high-back leotard and black leggings that reach the ankle. Boys can wear a solid color tank / Tshirt and black running tights.

CALL TIME: Call times are 90 minutes before each showcase. Please arrive at or slightly before your call time on your appropriate day.

SHOWCASE TICKETS: 2 tickets to your performance for each class day taken are included in your tuition each session. If you take two classes on Monday and two classes on Tuesday, you will receive 2 tickets for Monday and 2 for Tuesday. Additional tickets may be purchased for \$10 each. In addition, 4 discounted tickets are available to each family for the in-studio Company Performances; discounted tickets are \$5 each. Additional tickets may be purchased for \$15.



WHAT TO EXPECT: Shows last approximately 60-90 minutes.

- **STUDENT PERFORMANCES:** The first half of each show will consist of performances from our studio classes. Then those students will be allowed to come into the audience to watch the second half. The second half of the show will be select performances by Company Members of AKme Instant Circus, the performance company at Akrosphere.

WINTER SHOWCASE: December 4-9, 2023

PERSISTENCE PERIOD: OCTOBER 1 - DECEMBER 17.

*During this time, no drops or changes in classes will be allowed,
to be fair to all students performing in group numbers.*

SHOW SCHEDULE:

MONDAY December 4

5:30pm call time; 7:00pm show.

PERFORMING:

All Monday Silks Classes
All Monday Lyra Classes
All Monday Cyr Wheel Classes

TUESDAY December 5

5:30pm call time; 7:00pm show.

PERFORMING:

All Tuesday Silks Classes
All Saturday Silks Classes
All Tuesday Sling / Net Classes
All Tuesday Rope Classes
(Circus Kids perform on Saturday)

WEDNESDAY December 6

5:30pm call time; 7:00pm show.

PERFORMING:

All Wednesday Sling Classes
All Saturday Sling Classes
All Wednesday Silks Classes
All Wednesday Trapeze Classes
All Saturday Trapeze Classes
All Wednesday Duo Aerial Classes
(Circus Kids perform on Saturday)

THURSDAY December 7

5:30pm call time; 7:00pm show.

PERFORMING:

All Thursday Silks Classes
All Thursday Sling Classes
All Thursday Cloud Swing Classes
All Saturday Cloud Swing Classes
(Circus Kids perform on Saturday)

SATURDAY December 9

9:30am call time; 11:00am show.

PERFORMING:

Homeschool Class
All Circus Kids Classes
*(Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
and Saturday Circus Kids Classes
all perform on Saturday)*

SPRING SPECTACULAR: MAY 6-11, 2024

PERSISTENCE PERIOD: MARCH 1 - MAY 18.

*During this time, no drops or changes in classes will be allowed,
to be fair to all students performing in group numbers.*

SHOW SCHEDULE:

MONDAY May 6

5:30pm call time; 7:00pm show.

PERFORMING:

All Monday Silks Classes
All Monday Lyra Classes
All Monday Cyr Wheel Classes

TUESDAY May 7

5:30pm call time; 7:00pm show.

PERFORMING:

All Tuesday Silks Classes
All Saturday Silks Classes
All Tuesday Sling / Net Classes
All Tuesday Rope Classes
(Circus Kids perform on Saturday)

WEDNESDAY May 8

5:30pm call time; 7:00pm show.

PERFORMING:

All Wednesday Sling Classes
All Saturday Sling Classes
All Wednesday Silks Classes
All Wednesday Trapeze Classes
All Saturday Trapeze Classes
All Wednesday Duo Aerial Classes
(Circus Kids perform on Saturday)

THURSDAY May 9

5:30pm call time; 7:00pm show.

PERFORMING:

All Thursday Silks Classes
All Thursday Sling Classes
All Thursday Cloud Swing Classes
All Saturday Cloud Swing Classes
(Circus Kids perform on Saturday)

SATURDAY May 11

9:30am call time; 11:00am show.

PERFORMING:

Homeschool Class
All Circus Kids Classes
*(Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday,
and Saturday Circus Kids Classes
all perform on Saturday)*

Studio Policies

All our policies are listed in full on our website. Here are some links so you can quickly look up what you wish to know!!

We encourage all our families to read all studio policies in full!

TUITION AND PAYMENT POLICIES

[Rates](#)

[Payment](#)

[Money Back Guarantee](#)

[Trial Classes](#)

[Dropping a Class or Camp](#)

[Registration / Equipment Upkeep Fee](#)

[Late Fee](#)

[Injury Policy affecting Class Participation](#)

CLASS POLICIES

[Dress Code](#)

[Bring to Class](#)

[Observing a Class](#)

[Arriving Late to Class](#)

[Make-up Classes for Absences](#)

[Private Lessons](#)

[Open Gym](#)

SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICIES

RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND STUDENTS

[Calendar](#)

[Inclement Weather](#)

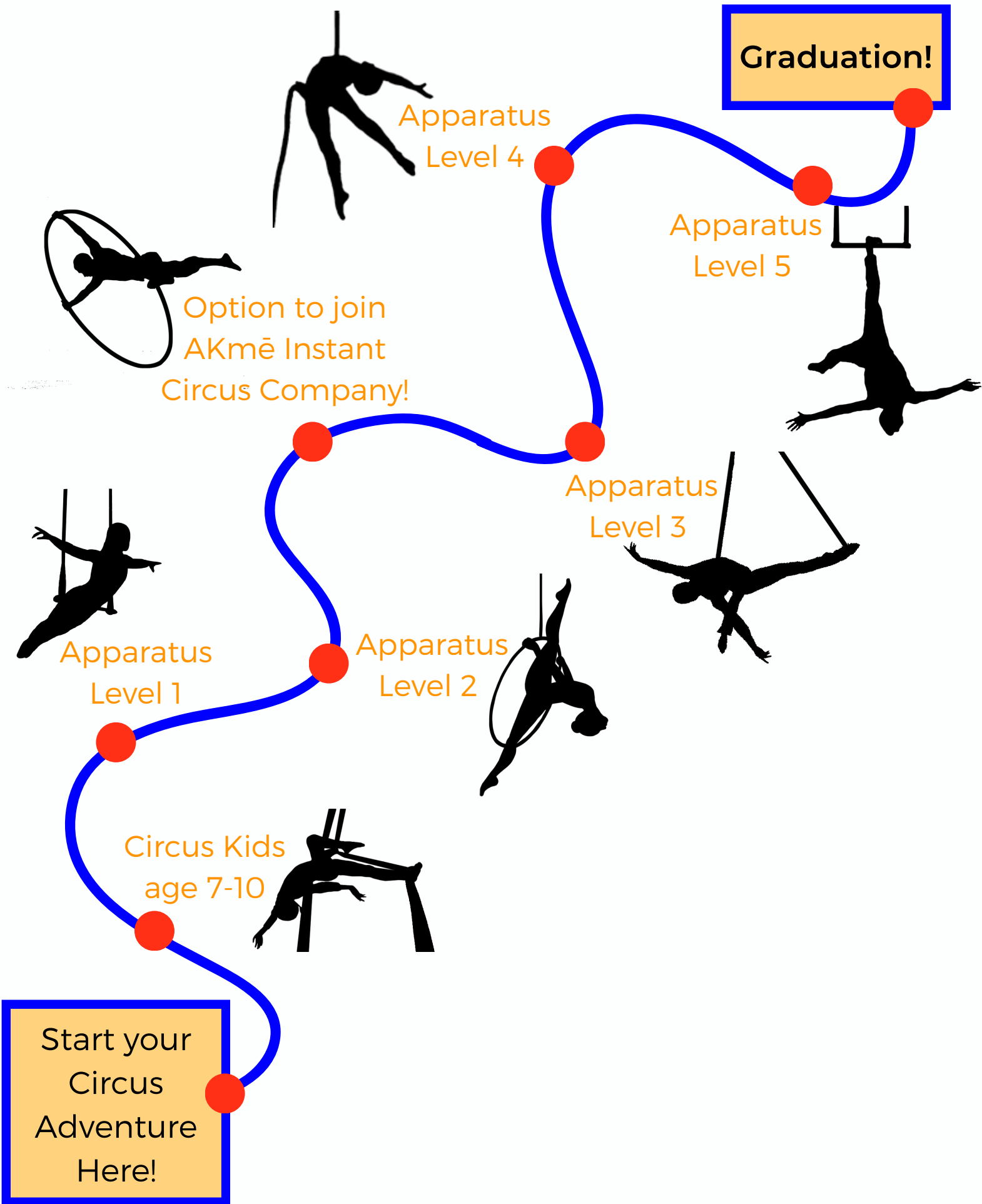
[Other Specifics](#)

[Warnings, Suspensions, & Dismissals](#)

BEHAVIOR POLICIES

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES

Akrosphere Progression Pathway



A Note on Leveling Up

Here at Akrosphere, we hold ourselves to high standards. Our leveling system is significantly more difficult than most other leveling systems in the Southeastern United States. Why do we do this? Because many of our students are striving towards careers in the circus arts with international companies and schools.

What does this mean for you? Well, for example, it may take longer to get out of Level 1. Our leveling system remains compliant with the international standards of levels at facilities like National Circus School of Montreal, National Circus School of Quebec, National Institute of Circus Arts in Australia, and the like.



The following is a typical progression for students:

- Level 1: 1-2 years of circus training on your apparatus at a serious facility.
- Level 2: 2-3 years of circus training on your apparatus at a serious facility with a general understanding of the discipline, technique, and form.
- Level 3+: 4 or more years of circus training on your apparatus with heavy emphasis on the discipline, technique, cleanliness, and form

You may move faster than this; if so, congratulations! But please do not be discouraged if it takes a while to move to the next higher level. We promise our coaches will continue to challenge you and give you new information at your current level until you are ready to move to a different class.

THINGS TO REMEMBER IN CIRCUS CLASS:

Learning circus arts is incredibly hard. A skilled performer will make everything they do look easy—that's their job. However, that can make it confusing for you, the student, because everything feels hard. That's just how it is. If circus was easy, it wouldn't be so cool.

Circus class is not a contest. Everyone has different strengths, and learns at a different pace, and some people pick up new skills quicker than others. Don't sweat it. Open gym is included in your tuition, so use it to practice!

The most important thing to get out of a circus class is accomplishing your own goals. It doesn't matter what those goals are; to just have fun, to get strong, to have a "cool hobby". Just remember why you're doing what you're doing. Don't get discouraged if it takes longer than you'd like...keep a positive attitude and love the journey!



Advancement Criteria

At Akrosphere, we look at much more than just “ticking skills off a list”. In addition to a student being able to complete everything in the Level curriculum, they must also demonstrate...

- **Flexibility:** Particularly important for aerial and acrobatics acts and apparatuses
- **Strength:** Increasingly important as students move into more difficult skills, partner- or team- based acts, and contemporary circus solos that are longer in length
- **Artistry and Form:** It's not just “can you...”, it's also “how”.
- **Commitment and Healthy Attitude:** Being present with a good attitude goes a long way at Akrosphere!

Want to get better and stronger...faster?

- Anything physical that you can do outside of class, including cardio, will help you. Cardio helps your stamina so you don't “fall out” toward the end of class!
- Circus work really targets the upper body and core, so putting your focus on building strength in those areas will help your training immensely. For core work, hollow body holds, crunches, or leg lifts will help you. For upper body, pull-ups are hands down the most helpful training you can do. (If you can't do pull ups, try negatives, or horizontal pull-ups under your dining room table!) Having a pull-up bar in a doorway at home is pure gold when it comes to building that aerial strength!
- Make sure that every exercise you do has proper form and engagement to prevent injury. Stretching at home will help you as well. Balancing both strength and flexibility keeps your body healthy.
- Write down all the exercises and stretches you learn in class in your training notebook. Then you can do them at home.
- If you are a student in our level classes, then come to Open Gym! It is a great place to practice those skills (remember it takes 10,000 hours to be a “master” at something!). Open gym is also a wonderful time to do some strength training on your apparatus...think Lyra pull-ups, or no-legs rope climb (for you crazy strong types!).