# The AI Edits & Digital Likeness Playbook



**Saying yes to an edit is not saying yes to a likeness**

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# Why We Made This Guide

Scroll through any dance feed this season and you will see them. Dancers on a glowing stage, names in sparkly lettering, posters that look like they belong in a movie theater. They are fun, and families are proud to share them. Most of the people making them are creative folks with a good tool.

This guide is not here to talk you out of any of that. It is here because the tools behind those edits have changed faster than the questions parents ask about them.

A few years ago, changing a photo meant cutting a person out and pasting them somewhere new. Today, software can study a photo and make new images that still look like the same person, in a pose or a place that was never photographed. How well it works depends on the tool and the photo. But a recognizable result no longer needs a long training process. Sometimes one clear picture is enough to start.

That changes what saying yes means. Agreeing to a fun graphic is one decision. Agreeing to let someone build and reuse your child's face is another, and most of us never realized we were being asked.

Each section ahead covers one piece of the picture and ends with something you can do this week. One section is just for parents, because this is a family decision.

# 1. Editing a Photo Is Not the Same as Making One

Most photo edits change something that already exists. Swap a background, add glitter, drop in a name, brighten the colors. The dancer in the finished picture is the dancer who was in the photograph, and nothing appears that the camera did not see.

Generation is a different job. Newer tools can take a photo as a guide and produce a new image of the same recognizable person: a different pose, a different costume, a stage the dancer never stood on. Nobody photographed that moment. The software made it.

On a finished poster, the two can look exactly alike. You usually cannot tell from the graphic which one happened, and a good-looking result tells you nothing about how it was made.

Most editors use ordinary tools and never generate anything. Many use AI features for harmless jobs like cleaning up a messy background. None of that is a problem. The useful question is which kind of work is being done with your child's photo, because the answer changes what you are agreeing to.

**Actionable step:**

Before you send a photo to anyone, ask one plain question: "Is this a standard edit, or do you use AI to generate new images from the photo?" Write down the answer.



# 2. One Photo Can Be Enough

There are two ways a tool can end up producing someone's likeness, and parents tend to picture only the harder one.

The first is reference-based generation. The software looks at a photo and uses it as a guide to make new images that try to keep the person recognizable. Some tools can work from a single clear picture. No special training is required.

The second is custom adaptation. Someone feeds a set of photos into a system so it learns one particular face and reproduces it more consistently. That takes more photos and more effort, and the results tend to be steadier.

Here is the part that surprises people. You do not need the second route for a likeness to be misused. The first can be enough, because it needs so little to get started.

Two fair notes. Results vary a great deal by tool and by photo, and one picture does not guarantee a perfect or lasting copy. And sending a photo to an AI editor does not automatically mean it is used to train that company's main model. Retention, training rights, and deletion depend on the specific product and its settings, so the honest answer for any tool is to read its terms.

**Actionable step:**

Pick one AI tool your family has used or heard about. Open its privacy and terms pages and find out how long uploads are kept and whether you can ask for them to be deleted.



# 3. Two Kinds of Consent

When a parent says "sure, go ahead," they usually mean one thing: you may make this graphic. That is specific consent. It covers one photo, one result, and one purpose.

The second kind is much bigger. It would cover making new images of your child, keeping the photos to make more later, or using them to build something that can recreate a face on demand. Nobody asks for that permission out loud. It tends to get assumed because the first yes was given.

Consent to edit a photograph is not the same as consent to recreate someone's likeness.

Keeping the two apart is easier than it sounds. Say what you are agreeing to, in writing, in a sentence: "You may use this one photo to make one graphic for Maya's page." Then say what you are not agreeing to: "Please don't generate new images of her or keep the original after delivery."

That second sentence can feel formal for a dance poster. It takes ten seconds, and it shows you how someone handles a request. A good editor says "of course." Someone who bristles has told you something too.

Trust is another factor, consent and agreements are only as good as honesty to honor that consent on both sides. What people do after they have your images is harder to track. Be sure you can trust the person you’re giving conent.

**Actionable step:**

Write a short copy-and-paste note that says what you allow and what you don't. Save it in your phone and send it whenever someone asks for a photo.

# 4. Follow the Photo: Where the File Actually Goes

When you send a photo to an editor, it feels like a handoff between two people. Often it is a chain.

The picture lands in someone's messages. Then maybe in their phone's cloud backup. Then possibly in one or more AI services, and in an app that adds the lettering. At each stop a copy can be stored, and each service has its own rules about how long it keeps things and what it may do with them. As the sender, you can see the first link. You usually cannot see the rest.

None of that means something is wrong. It means that "who has my child's photo?" often has a longer answer than "the person I sent it to."

Some files matter more than others. A photo that is already public is already copyable by anyone. The added exposure comes from higher-quality originals, extra angles, photos that were never public, and the details that travel with them, like names, handles, studios, and schedules. A collection of those says more than any single post.

So the useful moves are to send as little as you can and to ask how it will be handled. Both are easy.

**Actionable step:**

Before you send anything, ask: "Who else will handle this file, and how long do you keep it?" If the answer is vague, hold off, or offer a different photo.



# 5. Popularity Is Not Transparency

When a trend takes off in the dance community, it tends to feed itself. A page invites dancers to send photos. A few post their results. Their friends see it, the page looks established, and more dancers send photos. Each step makes the next one feel safer.

That loop is how plenty of perfectly good creative pages grow. It is also a loop that never answers the questions that matter. Lots of friendly faces tell you a page is popular. They do not tell you who runs it, which tools it uses, or what happens to the photos afterward.

Popularity is not the same as transparency.

Look for what a real business does without being asked: a named person or company behind the account, a way to reach them outside Instagram, a plain explanation of how the work is done, and a willingness to talk with a parent. A page with all of that can still be a poor fit for your family. A page with none of it, and cagey answers when you ask, deserves a second look.

Direct messages need their own note. If an unknown adult is writing to children for photos instead of to their parents, slow down no matter how fun the project sounds. Move the conversation to a parent, or end it.

If you want a second set of eyes on an unfamiliar request, Dent's Lead Screening & Assistance service can review it with you before you reply.

**Actionable step:**

Before sending to any page, look for a named person or business and a way to contact them outside Instagram. If you can't find either, keep the photo.



# 6. Seven Questions to Ask Before You Send

Here is the short list. Save it in your phone and use it any time someone asks for a dancer's photo.

- Who runs this page, and is there a real person or business behind it?
- Is the request coming to a parent, or straight to the dancer?
- Which tools will see the original photo, and are other services involved?
- Are the original and finished files stored? For how long, and can you ask for them to be deleted?
- Is the photo used for this one graphic only, or can it be reused or used to make other images?
- Can the tool's provider use uploads for training or product improvement? What do its current terms say?
- Will the dancer be tagged by name or handle, and can you opt out of public sharing?

You are not looking for perfect answers, only for answers. A creator who has thought about these will respond in a minute or two. One who says "don't worry about it" either has not thought about it or would rather you didn't.

**Actionable step:**

Copy these seven questions into a note on your phone titled "Photo requests." Send them to the next person who asks, before you send a photo.



# 7. Send Less, Share Smarter

The safest photo to send is one your family already thinks of as public. A few habits keep it that way.

• Send an image you are comfortable having out there for good. Skip extra face angles, private photos, and full-resolution originals unless the project truly needs them.
• Leave out birth dates, locations, schedules, and contact details. A graphic does not need them.
• Ask for a one-use agreement and a deletion step in writing. If someone will not explain how they handle files, that is your answer.
• Have a parent handle the conversation and approve the final result before anything is posted.

One honest limit: a photo that is already public can be copied by anyone, and declining to send it by DM does not undo that. This is a good reason to keep your best work somewhere you control. A portfolio on Sitelink.Pro gives a performer a professional home that does not depend on any single social account, so the work people should see is easy to find in one place.

**Actionable step:**

Choose one photo your family would be fine seeing anywhere. Make it your go-to image for any request, and keep the originals in a private folder.



# 8. Parents: Keep the Conversation With the Adult

Parents, you are the right person to say yes or no here, and often the last to hear that a request was made. Many of these messages go straight to the dancer's own account, where a friendly offer from a popular page can feel like an honor.

Tell your dancer before anything arrives that photo requests go through you. Make it a no-blame rule. The point is not to catch anyone out. It is to make "check with a parent" the easy default, the way it already is for a studio photo order.

Talk about it as part of the craft. We've spent years teaching young performers to protect their personal information online. We're only beginning to teach them to protect their digital likeness. You can say that out loud, and you can say you are learning it together.

Then agree on a few family rules:
• Photo requests from any account go to a parent first.
• We ask the seven questions before anything is sent.
• We only send photos we would be fine seeing posted anywhere.
• If a message feels pushy or strange, we talk about it, and nobody loses a phone for telling us.

That last rule does the most work. A dancer who expects help brings problems to you early. A dancer who expects punishment hides them.

And one rule for you: enjoy it. Most of these projects are just fun. Your job is to stay in the room when the decisions get made.

**Actionable step:**

Hold a ten-minute family talk this week. Agree on four rules, write them down, and post them where everyone can see them.



# 9. Know Your Plan Before You Need It

Most families will never need this page. Having it ready still helps, because the middle of a stressful moment is a poor time to make a plan.

If something does go wrong, such as a threatening message, an image of your child that was never taken, a demand for money, or pressure for more photos, the order is simple:

• Stop engaging. Do not argue, negotiate, or send anything else.
• Save what you can: account names, links, dates, and the messages themselves. Screenshots work.
• Report it on the platform where it happened.
• Consider contacting law enforcement and filing a report with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's CyberTipline at CyberTipline.org.
• Do not forward or repost any exploitative image, even to warn others. Passing it along can cause more harm.
• If anyone is in immediate danger, call emergency services.

Authorities have documented AI-generated sexual imagery involving minors, including altered images used for extortion. That is a real risk in general. It is not a statement about any creator or page. Knowing the steps takes the panic out of the first hour.

The best plan is the one you made earlier, which is why the rest of this guide comes first.

**Actionable step:**

Save the CyberTipline address and these first steps in your phone notes today, before you ever need them.