

## **Box Five Behaviors**

*By Christine Clayton*

There is more to being a great performer and an outstanding competitor than just practice. While practice is certainly important, there are five things you can do outside of rehearsal that will do just as much good as all those hours spinning your equipment.

### **1. Do your homework**

Literally...do your homework. Most of you high school & junior high students have academic eligibility requirements to meet and parental expectations to exceed. Even if you're already in college, brains need exercise too and more importantly; you'll feel less stressed if you aren't worried about your grades.

### **2. Eat right**

Good nutrition is important. Even with the busy schedules you all have, please make sure you are eating more than fast food and Starbucks. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, get enough protein and work more calcium into your diet than what is found in a Grande Latte.

### **3. Exercise**

I know, you're thinking, "Don't I get enough exercise at rehearsal?" My answer is "No", you never stop training and staying in shape. You should stretch every day. Fit it in right after your morning shower. Make sure you stretch at the end of the day as well...particularly after a challenging practice. You want your muscles to work with you, not against you.

### **4. Sleep on it**

The best way to renew and energize your body and mind is to make sure you get plenty of rest. Take advantage of late call times or school holidays to catch up on your sleep. Resist the temptation to stay up late the night before a competition...remember you can always set the Tivo for Jay Leno.

### **5. Stay organized**

Set a schedule and do your best to stick to it. Create a calendar and write in all your rehearsals, work shifts, family obligations...don't forget sleeping and homework. Always look ahead at least two weeks and be prepared. Talk to your teachers if you are missing classes because of out of town competitions or Friday night shows so you can stay caught up. The more you plan the easier it will be to fit in the unexpected things that come up or, better yet, treat yourself to a night out or a slumber party with friends.

Most importantly, have fun. Enjoy what you do and the people you get to perform with. Have a great season and the best of luck to everyone!