

THE BENEFITS OF DANCE IN SMALL CHILDREN

We all know that children naturally love music and dance. This is because they naturally communicate their emotions including fear and excitement through movement— therefore moving to music is natural for most young children. When it comes to children’s development, music and dance are very important to the future abilities and attitudes they will develop. Parents should continue to encourage them by getting them involved with experiences that include the arts. Kids need to have experiences that are active in music so they experience and participate in order to further healthy development. Allowing children to have these experiences in an atmosphere that is relaxed along with their family is the best way to encourage this type of development. The most important factor to us is that the children have fun and enjoy themselves – however there are many benefits.

Dance encourages mental and emotional development; enhances motor skills, increases flexibility and helps develop muscles. It can help intellectual growth and the development of self-confidence and self-esteem. It can also help to develop spatial awareness. Under the age of three most children will be too young to have ‘formal’ dance lessons, but that does not mean that they can't dance. Any movement to music can be expressive. These young years are so important and skills taught now are building blocks for the rest of their life. Research proves there is a strong link between involvement in the arts and increased educational achievement. In fact, one study showed that “students who participate in the arts are not only more likely to participate in a math and science fair, but also out-perform their peers on the SATs by 87 points”. These educational benefits are gained by students regardless of their socioeconomic status. It is also said that they will have better attention spans, be creative problem solvers and more well-balanced and adjusted. Dance is even being used as a method of treating social, emotional, physical and cognitive problems. Throughout the ages people from many cultures have used dance to express powerful emotions, tell stories, celebrate and maintain communal bonds. Dancing harnesses this power of movement in a comfortable setting and uses it to promote personal growth, health and well being. Dance goes beyond language and culture. Quality dance programs for children are based on the premise that the body and mind are interrelated. Many dance therapists believe that mental and emotional problems are often held in the body in the form of muscle tension and constrained movement patterns.

Conversely, studies have shown that the state of the body can affect attitude and feelings, both positively and negatively.

<http://www.earlychildhoodeducation.co.uk/benefits-movement-dance-classes.html>