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## POLL #1

What would be the biggest hindrance to bringing more movement and kinesthetic learning into your Early Childhood setting?

1. Lack of experience with movement
2. Lack of space in your facility
3. Difficult to justify spending time on it
4. Children wouldn't want it
5. I already use movement and would like to learn more about it

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## Poll #1

There is no "correct" answer to this question, of course!

This is a framework for today's discussion. I will give you many reasons why movement is beneficial to young children.

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# WHAT IS DANCE?



- DANCE IS AN ART FORM WHOSE MEDIUM IS THE BODY IN MOTION AND STILLNESS.
- DANCE CROSSES MANY BOUNDARIES; IT IS A CREATIVE ART, A PERFORMING ART, AND A VISUAL ART
- IT IS AN ATHLETIC ENDEAVOR AS WELL AS AN ARTISTIC PURSUIT

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# WHAT IS CREATIVE DANCE/CREATIVE MOVEMENT?

Any type of dance that uses movement and its elements as a means of communication and expression. Creative dance is age-appropriate and enriching for young children.



Like music, art, or drama, dance has basic elements, or building blocks:

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## The Four Basic Elements of Movement

- The Body
- Space
- Time
- Energy

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# The Body



- Body parts and the range of motion in each one
- Body awareness (sense of balance, shape and orientation in space)
- All the large and fine motor skills the body can execute

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# Space



- Level
- Direction
- Floor pattern
- Size
- Personal space vs. shared space

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# Time



- Speed (tempo)
- Stopping and starting
- Rhythm (how time is divided)

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# Energy



This element encompasses the use of energy, or force, to create specific movement qualities

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## POLL #2

In a 2010 Global CEO study, what was the ONE crucial quality CEO's cited as the most important factor for future success?

1. Proficiency with technology
2. High IQ
3. High EQ
4. Creativity
5. None of the above

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Answer to Poll #2:

# CREATIVITY!

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# Benefits of Dance in the Early Childhood Environment

- 1. Physical Development
- 2. Accessibility
- 3. Social and Emotional Development
- 4. Creativity
- 5. Kinesthetic Learning




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## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Guided movement activities develop:



Controlling our bodies as we go up and down

- Balance
- Coordination
- Strength
- Body control



Let's try to balance

Age-appropriate large motor skills

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## POLL #3

Study in NE Journal of Medicine of leisure activities and dementia, showed the only exercise associated with lower risk of dementia is:

- 1. Walking
- 2. Dancing
- 3. Group exercise class
- 4. Swimming
- 5. None of the above

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# Answer to Poll #3

"Dancing was the only physical activity associated with a lower risk of dementia."

Two more recent studies highlighted in *Time Magazine*, "Dance Like Your Doctor is Watching: It's Great for Your Mind and Body" had similar outcomes.

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## ACCESSIBILITY

**Movement Activities can be done in any space, large or small**

**Very little equipment is needed. A small tambourine or drum, and/or recorded music, are helpful but not required**

**Most movement activities can be modified to allow all children to participate**



Dancing in a small space



Wheelchair dance class



Dancing in a large space

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## Social-Emotional Skill Development

**Self-discipline, setting goals, and working toward goals**

**Body awareness, spatial awareness**

**Self expression, awareness of emotions**

**Individual and group problem-solving skills**

**Cooperation and taking turns**

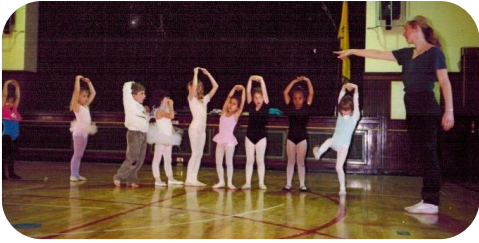
**Impulse control and delaying gratification**

**Listening to and following instructions**



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Horizontal lines for writing answers.



Listening to and following instructions; taking turns

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# CREATIVITY

As this generation of children prepares to enter the global workforce, it is crucial to:

Teach them to look at problems in new ways

Nurture critical thinking skills

Help them to learn collaboration and cooperation in finding new solutions

Dance and the other creative arts can be used to develop these important skills



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*The man who has no imagination has no wings.*

— Muhammad Ali

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## Kinesthetic Learning

Dance is basic to learning. Children learn most readily from experience. John Dewey understood this when he asserted, "Action is the test of comprehension" (Dewey, 1915).

To learn by "doing" and to act on knowledge is the basis of kinesthetic learning.



Making letter shapes

Source: National Dance Education Organization

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## Kinesthetic Learning

Kinesthetic learning is becoming more widely understood through the work of Jean Piaget (1896-1980), Howard Gardner (1944- ), and other cognitive theorists.



More Letter Shapes

Dance, in particular, integrates kinesthetic learning with understanding.

Preschool children do not conceptualize abstract processes (Piaget). They primarily learn through physical and sensory experiences.

Source: National Dance Education Organization

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### Using Movement to Teach Math Concepts

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**Teaching ECE Math Using Movement**  
3 Activities\*

- 1. Streamers**
- 2. Squiggle, Jiggle, Freeze, Repeat!**
- 3. Name that Shape, then Dance!**



\*Lessons from "WeTHRIVE Active Education Early Childhood" pamphlet

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## 1. Streamers!

- **Materials needed:** Streamers (cloth or crepe paper, enough for 1 per child)
- **Time:** 15-30 minutes
- **Addresses:** Equal distribution of objects



**Dancing with streamers**

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## 2. Squiggle, Jiggle, Freeze . . . Repeat!

- **Materials needed:** Blackboard and chalk, or dry erase board and markers
- **Time:** 10-15 minutes
- **Addresses:** Representing quantity using symbols



**Dance Freely for 7 Counts**

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### 3.Name That Shape, Then Dance

- **Materials:** Large shapes, 1 of each: circle, triangle, rectangle, square — large enough to be seen by all children during the activity
- **Time:** 10-15 minutes
- **Addresses:** Identification of common two-dimensional shapes



**Triangle!**

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### Using Movement to Teach Early Literacy Concepts

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Teaching ECE Language Arts  
Using Movement  
3 Activities\*

1. **Make That Letter Shape!\***
2. **“Run” Rhymes with “Fun”\*\***
3. **Read and Dance\*\*\***



\*Lesson from "From A to Z with Energy!"  
 \*\*Lesson from "One, Two, What Can I Do? Dance and Music for the Whole Day!"  
 \*\*\*From "Expressing Creativity in Preschool"

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## POLL # 4

Once again, there is no correct answer.

But has your answer changed since you took the same poll at the beginning of this webinar?

What changed, and why?

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### My TOP 10 Reasons for Offering Dance to Young Children

1. Activities are multi-layered (physical, creative, kinesthetic learning, and more)

2. Children can discover a new way of expressing themselves

3. Dance has anti-aging benefits

4. Dance is part of the education of the whole child

5. Social-emotional and classroom management benefits

6. Inclusion/Accessibility

7. Physical Benefits

8. Nurtures creativity in children

9. Dance is good for your brain!

And . . .

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## 10. Dancing is fun!



**Cincinnati Ballet CincyDance! Outreach Program:  
Flash Mob Dance in Washington Park,  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
1500 Third Graders, May 2015**

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Website: [www.movingislearning.com](http://www.movingislearning.com)

Facebook: Moving Is Learning

Instagram: @conniebdow

Twitter: @cbergsteindow



MOVING IS  
LEARNING!

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