

# Dance Class For Children: How It Can Help Them Grow!

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Today dance can positively affect children's self-esteem and poise. Learn how it can help them grow!

We all do it at some point in time. We feel the rhythm, hear the music and before we know it, we are dancing. We may not have the finesse of the ballroom dancer, or the speed of a clogger or the grace of the ballerina, but when you are up and dancing it doesn't really matter.

Children who dance have increased self-esteem, coordination, balance and poise. Dancing cannot only be fun, but educational. Whether you enroll your child in a dance school or a program through the local community center, as long as they are exposed to the feel and the beat, they will have fun.

Lets look at how dancing can help your child to grow. A child's self esteem is enhanced with dancing. In a classroom setting, children are placed by age and skill level. Accomplishing the different positions of ballet or steps and routines in Tap create a sense of self worth for the child. Being able to create moves with the music is a very satisfying event for a young dancer. And dancing is not just for girls. Boys are becoming more active in dancing, just look at all the boy bands and the synchronized dance moves they perform.

In addition to self-esteem, dance can reinforce a sense of pride. A child who wears glasses, has braces, is "pudgy" or maybe a little clumsy will find a renewal in their pride when dancing. When you are on stage or dancing by yourself, you are in a different world. It may not happen overnight, but it does happen.

Grace and poise are two physical benefits of dance, in addition to providing an intense and fun form of exercise. A child in dance learns different positions and steps, which utilize all parts of their bodies. They are educated on proper posture, head and body alignment and moving with their entire body to create a flow of movement. Dance techniques have been used to train professional athletes including football and basketball players to help them develop faster moves on the playing field and allow them to move without injuring their bodies. There is also a great deal of discipline involved with dancing. For the youngest dancers it is less rigid, but as you progress with years of experience, the discipline becomes stricter. Visions of a stern, older woman sitting by the bar tapping a heavy stick come to mind, but it is rarely like that. The discipline will involve positioning, practicing, learning, practicing, respecting and practicing. The longer a child dances, the more respect for others and themselves they will have. Dance has evolved from a thing skinny; pretty girls did in tutus to an active and recognized sport.

Not every child who dances when they are young will go on to become professionals, or even continue to dance into their middle and high school years. But the majority who has danced at some point in their lives will tell of the fun and the discipline. The feel good rhythm that moved their feet then, continues to course through their veins today. Once a dancer always a dancer.

By: Bobbi Jo Innamorato Williams