



Role and Benefits of Dance in Physical Education

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Introduction

Dancing being an exercise, it improves posture, strengthen muscles and bring out sense of them. Eventually, this state of body and mind eliminates doubts and fears and replaces them with confidence and thus good time

Many new teachers and parents wonder what is dance in Physical Education. Unlike ‘traditional sporting activities’ dance offers a unique educational opportunity. It contributes to physical well-being whilst helping learners to develop a range of essential personal and social skills.

Dance has been a part of the physical education (PE) curriculum in several countries for a long time.

Dance burns calories, strengthens muscles, improves balance, increases flexibility, and gives the heart a good workout. Dance has also been proven to increase cognitive development. Dance is an important part of movement development and social development. Dance is a series of support skills and fitness options that enhance every other activity a person will do. Rhythm and timing are essential in most activities, and cardio respiratory endurance and flexibility are important for maintaining fitness, improving performance, and injury prevention.

Beyond the physical advantages, dance in physical education also provides social opportunities for students to work together in a non-competitive co-ed environment. Finally, we should teach dance because it’s fun and it feels good to move freely, jumping and spinning, leaping and dancing.

Dancing is fun. But unlike certain other fun activities like playing video games and eating cookies, dancing has enormous physical and mental benefits for students’ development. Brain scans in multiple studies opens in new window have shown that dancing involves a complex coordination of several brain regions and can strengthen a range of skills such as motor control, hand–eye coordination, memory, and more.

The physical and mental benefits of dance cannot be overstated. Dance improves cardiovascular health, heightens balance and strength, boosts cognitive performance, and provides stress relief, all with low wear and tear on the body.

Dancing can help your students develop physically, mentally, and emotionally. It's a fun, easy activity to get your students moving and excited, while teaching them exercises they can use for a lifetime.

Learning, thought, creativity, and intelligence don't just come from the brain alone, but from the entire body. Movement combinations increase memory, order, and sequencing skills. Creating dances also increases self-esteem which is so very important to learning. We already witness the need for children to move throughout the day. Having experienced firsthand the positive effects that music and dance have on students' development, I feel it is important for dance to be included in all elementary (and secondary) curricula.

Benefits of Dance

1. Better Brain Health

A study done by *The New England Journal of Medicine* found that dancing can boost your memory and even prevent the onset of dementia. Other studies have also found that aerobic dance exercises can reverse volume loss in the part of the brain that controls memory (the hippocampus), which tends to shrink during late adulthood.

Taking the time to remember steps and the changing movements of a dance is also a great way to challenge your brain, no matter your age. Scientists have found cognitive skills such as planning and organizing also improve with an exercise like dance.

The benefits of dance aren't just physical. Dancers also get a mental workout. Remembering dance steps and patterns gives dancers a memory boost. Focusing on different parts of the body simultaneously also gives dancers a mental challenge. This mental workout helps the mind to stay sharp.

2. Improved Flexibility

The movements associated with dance can increase flexibility and reduce stiffness. Don't over-exert yourself though – even the simple stretches associated with dancing can help ease joint pain and any soreness from other more strenuous exercises.

Another great physical benefit of dance is improved flexibility. Dance enables you to move your body in ways that may not be typical in your day to day life. This allows you to build your range of motion and give your muscles a good stretch. Even if your dance program doesn't start with a warm up stretch, you'll most likely find that after a few classes you're a little more limber than you were before.

3. Minimized Stress

Music can relieve stress; dance can increase levels of the hormone serotonin, which can improve your mood. Dancing can be a great stress reliever. It reduces the levels of cortisol, also known as the stress hormone, in your body while giving you an endorphin boost. Many people leave dance class feeling almost elated. Attending an evening dance class can be a great creative outlet and leave you feeling refreshed and ready for work the next day.

4. Reduced Depression

A study looking at the effects of dance on patients experiencing depression found that those who participated in an upbeat group dance showed the least number of symptoms associated with depression and were more energetic and upbeat as a result.

5. Weight Loss

Increased movement also usually means increased weight loss. A study in the *Journal of Physiological Anthropology* found aerobic dance training can help you lose just as much weight as biking or jogging.

6. Increased Energy

Research from *The Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition* found a weekly dance program can improve adults' physical performance and increase their energy levels.

7. Improved Cardiovascular Health

Of course, the faster you dance, the faster your heart will beat, which can lead to a stronger and healthier heart. An Italian study found that people with heart failure who started practicing waltzing had much better heart health, breathing, and quality of life compared to those who simply cycled or walked on a treadmill.

8. Better Coordination Strength & Balance

Dancing requires lots of fast movement and good posture, which can help you gain better control of your body. Moreover, there are 3 primary planes of motion; unlike simple movements such as walking and cycling, which only involve the sagittal plane of your body, dancing works your body from all planes, which means all your muscles are involved, not just some.

If you're scared about falling when you're older, dancing may ease some of those worries as well. A study in the *Journal of Aging and Physical Activity* showed that tango dancing can improve balance amongst older adults.

9. Improved Social & Emotional Health

A dance class is a great way to make new friends and branch out socially! Having positive relationships is a major contributing factor to better mental health – it **can** increase feelings of happiness, reduce stress, and even lead to a stronger immune system.

Another wonderful benefit of dance is an increased social connection. Both solo and partner dance can be a great way to meet new people. It can establish connections if you just moved or relocated. Even if you've lived in the same place a while, dance can be a great way to meet people outside of your social circle.

10. Higher Self-Esteem & Confidence

Studies show that dancers tend to report higher levels of self-esteem and more confidence. One of the biggest benefits of dance is increased confidence. Learning and mastering a new skill, in general, is great for your confidence. It can give you a sense of accomplishment and pride. Dance also has the added bonus of learning to move your body in beautiful new ways.

Dance can be beneficial for people of all ages. Many forms, such as ballroom dancing, can be tame enough for people with limited mobility or chronic health issues, while other forms can allow kids to express themselves freely, let out their energy, and practice discipline by memorizing and learning certain steps.

Dance classes have long been a favorite for people looking to get into shape and increase their overall health and well-being. Many gyms across America are offering and beginning to provide their clients with dance-related classes. There are many different styles of dance, each with a unique culture and style. No matter what style you choose, there are several proven benefits to picking up dance as a hobby.

11. INCREASED PHYSICAL STRENGTH

Perhaps the most obvious benefit of dancing is increased physical strength. Dancing can be an enjoyable way to get your body moving and keep your heart racing. Dancing is one of the few activities that offers a full body workout. Dancing allows you to work your legs, core, and arms all at the same time. Dancing provides a high-intensity, low-impact workout without the monotony of counting reps or doing sets.

12. IMPROVED HEART AND LUNG HEALTH

Dance also improves your heart health and lung capacity. Your heart rate and breathing rate both increase while dancing. There are many long term health benefits to getting an extra cardiovascular workout. Keeping your body active can help to keep yourself young and fight the aging process.

13. IMPROVED BALANCE AND SPACIAL AWARENESS

Improved balance and special awareness can also be a byproduct of dancing. Dancing requires a bodily awareness that helps to improve these skills. Being more aware of our bodies can make us more aware of the

ways our bodies move within a space. The focus on good posture and core strengthening in dance can improve your balance.

14. STRONGER BONES AND REDUCED RISK OF OSTEOPOROSIS

Dancing is one of the best ways you can prevent and even treat osteoporosis. Weight bearing exercises, or forms of exercise that force your body to fight against gravity, have been shown to be effective ways of strengthening your bones. The increase in strength and balance can also help to prevent falls and broken bones.

15. HIGHER RATES OF SUCCESS FOR GETTING IN SHAPE


Many people who join a dance class with the intent of getting in shape find that they have higher success rates than those who just hit the gym. Part of this may be the network of other dancers you connect with when you dance, and another part could just be pure fun.

Dance has always been a part of human culture, rituals and celebrations. Today, most dancing is about recreation and self-expression, although it can also be done as a competitive activity.

Dancing is an enjoyable way to be more physically active and stay fit.

Many Health benefits of dancing

Dancing can be a way to stay fit for people of all ages, shapes and sizes. It has a wide range of physical and mental benefits including:

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- improved condition of your heart and lungs
 - increased muscular strength, endurance and motor fitness
 - increased aerobic fitness
 - improved muscle tone and strength
 - weight management
 - stronger bones and reduced risk of osteoporosis
 - better coordination, agility and flexibility
 - improved balance and spatial awareness
 - increased physical confidence
 - improved mental functioning
 - improved general and psychological wellbeing
 - greater self-confidence and self-esteem
 - better social skills.

General tips for dancing

If you are thinking of taking up dancing, suggestions include:

- Wear layers of clothing that you can take off as your body warms up.
- Do warm-up activities before you begin a dance session.
- Drink plenty of water before, during and after dancing.
- Make sure you rest between dance sessions.
- Don't push yourself too far or too fast, especially if you are a beginner.
- Wear professionally fitted shoes appropriate to your style of dance.
- Perform regular leg-strengthening exercises.
- Move as fluidly and gracefully as you can.
- Cool down after a dance session, including stretching.

Conclusion

There are so many reasons why dance is important to the health and development of our young people. Above all, children need to move! Any way to get kids moving on their feet is a must (especially in a digital era).

Dance burns calories, strengthens muscles, improves balance, increases flexibility, and gives the heart a good workout. Dance has also been proven to increase cognitive development. Current research documents the importance of exercise on the brain and supports what dancers have always known – the body and mind are connected in vital ways.

Utilizing dance in academics also helps children develop skills that are necessary for learning such as creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration. Through the creative process, students are encouraged to use their imagination, collaborate with their peers to solve problems, and discover multiple solutions to challenges.

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