

Options For the Young Dancer

Dancers who begin classes at the Stites Center typically participate in Creative Movement classes for 2 to 3 years and Studies In Movement for 2 to 3 years. In each year of Creative Movement and Studies In Movement, the curriculum evolves to meet and challenge the skill level of the dancers, and dancers continue their explorations of movement concepts. Each time a dancer explores any given dance concept, they are given the opportunity for repetition mixed with novelty, making the experience enjoyable as well as educational. **Each time a concept is revisited, dancers come to the experience with a different level of understanding than previous explorations, and therefore gain and demonstrate a higher level of comprehension and execution.** This combination of new skill introduction, skill development, exploration of movement concepts, and repetition of both concepts and skills mixed with novelty occurs in *all dance classes, all dance styles, and at all levels from beginning to advanced*, including Creative Movement Studies In Movement, Pre-Ballet, Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Baton, and Gymnastics. *Just because the name of the class has not changed does not mean that the class itself has not progressed to the next level.*

After dancers have gone through the Creative Movement at ages 3, 4, 5 & 6, and the Studies In Movement I & II Program for Kindergarten through 3rd grade, there are several options for dancers.

Ballet classes are offered at the pre-ballet level as well as ballet classes for dancers with little or no dance experience. Dancers may start these classes as young as Kindergarten and continue all the way through the professional level. In addition, we offer ballet classes for older dancers with little or no dance experience.

Tap and **jazz** combination classes are offered for young dancers ages 3rd grade and up. No experience is needed to enter these classes. These classes emphasize tap curriculum, a wide array of jazz styles (character jazz, hip hop, ethnic dance, etc.), and a continued development of creative dance concepts and skills. A perfect stepping stone into the jazz and tap classes!

There are several different **jazz** classes offered. Character jazz classes are for students as young as 3rd grade. Theater and traditional jazz classes are offered for older and more experienced students. Although hip hop is integrated in the jazz curriculums, hip hop specific classes are also offered. Character jazz classes can be used simply to gain appropriate skills for school involvement (plays, dance team, etc.), dance enjoyment or pursuing a dance career.

Tap classes are offered for the beginning through advanced levels. Dancers do not need to have any experience and may begin when they are in the 3rd grade.

Baton classes are offered for 2nd grade & up. Baton classes offer a variety of optional performance opportunities including parades, exhibition performances at baton twirling contests, and holiday shows.

Gymnastics is also a class choice for young dancers. These gym classes are recreational, not competitive. Gymnastics is also part of the Creative Movement and Studies In Movement I & II curriculum.

THE NEXT STEP

Students in middle school, high school and beyond have a wide array of superb jazz, modern, tap, hip hop, Middle Eastern, singing, drama and ballet classes to choose from. These classes are very technical and are stepping-stones into the professional world or excellent preparation for school plays, dance team and rally.

CROSS TRAIN

Dancers are very much encouraged to take multiple classes per week and train in many different styles of dance. For example, dancers who take ballet 2 times a week could cross train by taking a tap and/or a jazz class once a week. A jazz dancer is encouraged to take ballet and tap. *Cross training fully develops dancers' skills by strengthening their preferred style of dance.* Professional companies also value dancers who are versatile in their style and forms of dance. NOTE: To be involved in pointe classes and the intermediate and advanced tap and jazz classes, Stites students are required to have at least some cross training (see curriculum handbook for detailed information).

INSTRUCTORS & CURRICULUM

For more detailed information on class curriculum and instructors, please find the Curriculum Notebook and Instructor Portfolio compiled for in-studio use. Some of this information is also available on our web site: www.stitesdance.com. Stites is proud to be able to offer classes for young dancers through the adult and professional levels. The instructors are truly dedicated to each dancers progress and always carefully monitor their development. If a dancer is in an inappropriate class, the teacher and director (Shanon) confer and find a good placement.

Regardless of one's reason for being involved in dance, Stites has choices for each individual. The sky is the limit!