

Families dancing with delight at Kids Co-Motion

The act of dance releases abundant energy creatively and spontaneously. Put on music and a young child's physical antics are a pure demonstration of a whole being in exuberant response, not just a body, but a mind, too. The beat of the drum stirs up a bouncing response. Dance, music and song are among the primal expressions to communicate joy and sadness, energy and anger, wonder and victory, friendship and courtship, praise and defiance.

Have you been lucky enough to watch a small child unselfconsciously making up a lengthy dance of spinning energy and merriment, great drama and self-absorption? These are performed for the fortunate adults with gravity or humor, and profound satisfaction. It is a privilege to glimpse a child's growing powers as he becomes increasingly fluent in physical and self-expression.

This is what leads many of us to seek a dynamic class where the atmosphere is geared to foster the special delights of physical motion. Most would agree that being physically at ease is part of feeling and looking healthy. Our job, as parent and teacher, is to ensure the best possible context for a child to enjoy happy learning experiences.

Kids Co-Motion teaches creative movement from early childhood through the school years, and guides the participant in ways which enhance all learning experiences, navigates the hurdles and challenges, helps clarify the many increments of effort and achievement. Sharing these dynamic adven-



Dance class at Kids Co-Motion

tures — good and bad, funny and sad — families who participate in the dance classes know they are providing access to a unique creative experience during this special time in a child's development.

Effective communication, interaction and the ability to make connections, are all essential to learning, and these experiences go hand in hand with being part of a group (class) devoted to acquiring or developing a

particular skill. A creative movement class is not limited to merely the technical skills associated with dance.

The act of dancing invites one to listen carefully to music. The ability to listen carefully is a major skill. At Kids Co-Motion, we call it active listening. We cultivate ability to listen and respond productively to music. Inside each child is a love of dance, a response to music and a love of song, which

when awakened and experienced, stimulates intellectual, social development and physical growth. Kids Co-Motion seeks to provide a special opportunity to learn in a vivid atmosphere of sound, motion, color, music, loving encouragement and curiosity.

In the end, it is how time is spent with a child, rather than in what variety of class you spend that time. But children genuinely need to be active. You'll want to look for activity classes providing a good amount of time for physical activity. And, if you can enjoy and feel compassion for your child's efforts and achievement, you will be successful as you select your child's class. Let's hope each child continues to dance with delight at the prospect of learning.

Extracted from "Dancing with Delight," a guide to ensuring happy learning experiences in childhood classes, by Rebecca Kelly, choreographer and artistic director of Rebecca Kelly Ballet and co-founder of Kids Co-Motion, it is a creative movement program offered in studios and preschools throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn and Westchester.

Michelle Wurf, director of Westchester programs, teaches studio classes in Hastings-on-Hudson, private classes and at preschools throughout Westchester and in Riverdale. Kids Co-Motion classes range from mommy-and-me classes for 12-40 months; creative movement classes for 3-5-year-olds and modern dance for 6-12-year-olds.

Call Wurf at 476-8368 or visit www.KidsCo-motion.com. 