



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Physical Activity: DANCE

While participants are dancing, they are getting lots of health benefits. The information in this packet details those benefits; from the muscles dance develops to the way it makes people feel.

This packet supplements what you will be doing during dance. You do have to get participants to recognize that this activity is great for their physical and emotional health, but you can do that in the way that best works for your group and you. These materials offer lots of different ideas for incorporating the health components into your already fabulously planned session.

Read the Facilitator's Guide in order to understand Frost Valley's physical activity initiative, to effectively use the materials in your session, and for ways to encourage physical activity among your participants in and beyond Frost Valley.

This chart, also featured in the Facilitator's Guide, highlights each of the sections in this module. This can guide you in selecting what to focus on during the session.

Description	Gives a profile of dance's health benefits
Type of Activity	Explains how dance is aerobic and strength- and bone-building
Where It Fits within the Recommended Amount of Physical Activity	Points out where dance fits within the suggested recommended 60 minutes of daily exercise
Parts of Body Used	Names parts of the body that dance uses
Muscles Affected	Names the specific muscles that dance builds
Health Benefits	Lists dance's overall health benefits
How It Makes You Feel	Explains dance's positive emotional benefits
Suggestions for Ways to Incorporate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Day 1: Offers suggestions for introducing dances' health benefits during the first day of the session• Following Sessions: Gives lots of ideas for reinforcing participants' knowledge of dance's health benefits during the remaining sessions
Some Fun Ideas	Offers ideas for games and other activities that build participant awareness of dance's health benefits
Interesting Facts	Generates interest in dance
Evaluation	Presents a modifiable questionnaire about participants' views on dance and about whether they will continue beyond Frost Valley

DESCRIPTION

Whether it's ballet or hip-hop or jazz, dancing is great exercise and emotionally beneficial, too!

Dance, which has aerobic and anaerobic qualities —and can be a low-, moderate-, or high-intensity activity — will get the heart beating faster; increase flexibility, agility, coordination, and balance; tone muscles; build strength; extend your range of motion; and greatly improve your mood.

Dance is rhythmic and uses varied tempos and quality of movements, from sharp and quick to soft and flowing. With its myriad styles that require different postures and moves— high kicks, leaps, jumps, lifts, quick turns, lunges—dance uses muscles and parts of the body in a variety of ways. Dancers routinely warm up and stretch, especially before they start dancing. Overall, dance is an ideal full-body workout.

What's also great about dance is that it can be done solo, with a partner or in a group. And, if you are not into sports, you can dance instead — or combine dance with sports as it builds athletic ability. (In fact, some pro football players take ballet to enhance their coordination, balance, and flexibility to improve their performance during a game.)

Dance is an art form that, at any level of experience or skill, and is a vehicle for expressive communication, interaction, and communication through movement. It generates an appreciation for music, song, and rhythm and builds visualization skills, as well. It is also said that dancers tend to be disciplined, focused, and high achieving.

The Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing lays out 10 reasons to participate in dance:

- Keeps the body and the brain active, vital for people of every age
- Improves strength and flexibility, which helps keeps muscles and joints healthy
- Is a great hobby that leads to meeting new people and making friends with a shared interest in dance
- Helps people learn about their bodies, especially posture and balance
- Helps to reduce stress levels
- Offers insight into other cultures, either through the dance style or by meeting people from different cultural backgrounds
- Can lead to new career opportunities
- Increases self-esteem and confidence through mastering new skills
- Offers a creative outlet for people to express their personalities in a safe environment¹

TYPE OF ACTIVITY: Aerobic and strength- and bone- building

Dance requires pacing and continuous exertion, which makes it a great cardiovascular exercise. Because dance can shift among different types of movements, speeds, etc., it can be considered aerobic or anaerobic. Many forms of dance are similar to interval training (alternating high-intensity exercise with recovery periods).

Dance builds strength by forcing the muscles to resist against a dancer's own body weight (isometric). Stretching is also important in dancing because it warms up the muscles beforehand, relaxes the muscles afterward, increases flexibility, lessens the risk of injury, and reduces soreness.

Dance builds bone (and bone mass) because the dancer stands on the floor. It can also be a high- and low-impact weight-bearing exercise because the legs support the entire body.

WHERE IT FITS WITHIN THE RECOMMENDED AMOUNT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Dancing can fulfill a portion or even all of the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity, especially because of its aerobic qualities. It also meets the three-day-a-week requirement for strength- and bone-building exercise.

PARTS OF BODY USED	MUSCLES AFFECTED (See <i>Terms to Know</i> in Facilitator's Guide)	HEALTH BENEFITS
Dance can use all parts of the body, but certain muscles are generally emphasized: legs, back, arms, lungs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nearly all major muscles, which will be used at different times and/or differently depending on the type of dance• Core muscles• Heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improves posture• Improves balance and coordination• Develops core strength• Strengthens muscles and bones• Boosts cardiovascular system• Reduces stress• Strengthens heart and lungs• Improves motor fitness• Helps hand-eye coordination• Aids memory and nervous system through memorization and performance of varied dance steps

HOW IT MAKES YOU FEEL

- Reduces stress
- Enhances self-awareness and self-expression through movement
- Heightens intelligence (dancing, it seems, prepares the brain for learning!)
- Increases confidence of physical ability
- Generates happiness and creativity

SUGGESTIONS FOR WAYS TO INCORPORATE

DAY 1

1. When introducing dance, begin by asking participants:

- Who likes to dance? Why do you like to dance?
- What kinds of dancing do you do?
- When do you dance? Have you danced in a class or at an event, like a wedding or cultural ceremony? Have you been a student in a dance school?
- Is dancing good exercise? Why or why not?
- What parts of the body do you think get the most benefit from dance?
- How does dancing make you feel?

2. Point out that dance is a great physical activity and that it also makes you feel good in many ways. Build on what participants noted about its benefits. Share other benefits with the group.

3. When modeling the basics of new dance styles, have participants, as they follow your lead, identify which parts of their bodies are most engaged in each dance. Have them compare and contrast dance steps.

4. Introduce a chart or journal that participants can use to log their dance and fitness (physical and mental) progress during the session. For each new dance skill, step, move, etc., they learn, they can: identify what parts of their bodies get the most impact/benefit or have become stronger or more flexible; describe their feelings during dancing; note what aspects of dance (breathing, turning, balance, coordination, etc.) they have improved in; and so on.

FOLLOWING SESSIONS

1. Have participants do different stretches for the entire body that will get them warmed and loosened up. Participants can tack this stretching time onto their recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.

2. After each session, encourage participants to participate in strengthening, stretching, and aerobic activity to improve either aspects of their dance skills or their overall fitness for dance (Cross-training, in moderation, is good for dancers). Types of training are likely to be different across dance styles. In

general, some good exercises include running, spinning/cycling, weight training, yoga, Pilates, swimming, and core work.) At the start of each session, ask participants questions like:

- What activity did you do? How long did you do it?
- With dance and your other physical activities, do you think you did your 60 minutes' worth of daily exercise?
- How do you think this exercise/these exercises will help you improve your dance skills?

3. During the last session, hold a "Dancing with the Stars" event, where participants can dance alone or with others to demonstrate a style they learned or a dance they created. They can talk about their dance choice, how they feel they have improved, how dance has affected them physically and emotionally, etc.

SOME FUN IDEAS

1. Encourage participants to try a new activity at camp and to compare it with dance.

2. Participants can do "flash mob" dances at various locations around Frost Valley. They can do a dance they learned during a session or choreograph a dance. Count this movement as part of their 60 minutes of daily physical activity.

3. Participants can organize a variation of an event called Dance Mile (<http://thedancemile.com/>) and engage the entire camp in a fun physical activity.

4. One way to measure the amount of daily physical activity is by counting the number of steps taken in a day. On average, there are 2,000 steps per mile (about 30 minutes of continuous activity). Participants can calculate the number of steps they have taken during dance using the number of minutes they have participated in it. In dance, the comparison looks like this:

DANCE	10 min	15 min.	20 min.	30 min.	60 min.
# of STEPS	1,271	1,906	2,542	3,813	7,626

Fifteen minutes of dance is just under a mile's worth of steps. There are recommended guidelines for the number of steps that constitutes moderate to intense top physical activity and can add up to the recommended 60 minutes of daily activity. For young people, 9,000 steps is the magic number.

Participants can chart the steps they have taken in a day, including during dance, general walking (using a pedometer), and other activities. Post the Step Conversion table on page 12 of the Facilitator's Guide for participants to see, and/or distribute it for them to refer to at the end of each day. Have participants share their step rates, looking at increased activity, the effect on their bodies, etc.

5. A variation on step-based measurement of physical activity: 2,000 steps equals one mile; 10,000 steps is five miles. Post the Mileage Conversion Chart on pages 13-15 of the Facilitator's Guide for participants to see, and/or distribute it for them to refer to at the end of each day. Have participants share how many steps they took/miles they covered.

6. In small groups, participants can choreograph (compose steps and moves for a dance) dances that they then teach to the rest of the participants. The "choreographers" can make up the steps as they go along or work on certain steps of specific dance styles. Those learning the dance should be aware of which parts of their body are getting the most physical benefit.

DANCE: Interesting facts

Dancers are elite athletes as well as artists. They follow a rigorous training regime and must stay in top condition, just like professional athletes such as basketball or hockey players. Professional dancers have extraordinary flexibility, great muscular strength, and both physical and mental endurance. They train and practice every day for an average of six hours. Many dance cross-train with cardio exercise, weight lifting, yoga, and/or Pilates to improve their physical fitness and technique.ⁱⁱ

In December 2014, the NaeNae, a highly popular, easily modifiable celebratory dance, was invented by Atlanta quintet WeAreToonz. The group also made an official song to promote the dance, called "Drop That #NaeNae."ⁱⁱⁱ

In 2013, Beberly Devers from New York City became the youngest salsa champion at the World Latin Dance Cup in 2013, just weeks after her sixth birthday.^{iv}

Among the most popular dance styles to do are contemporary, ballet, jazz, tap, hip-hop, and ballroom.

EVALUATION

1. How FUN would you say dance is? Choose the number that shows what you think.

3 = A lot of fun **2** = Pretty fun **1** = A little fun **0** = No fun

2. How HEALTHY would you say dance is? Choose the number that shows what you think.

3 = Very healthy **2** = Pretty healthy **1** = A little healthy **0** = Not healthy

3. Which parts of your body would you say got the best workout from dance?

- Legs
 - Hips
 - Shoulders and neck
 - Lower back
 - Heart
 - Lungs
 - Whole body
-

4. How often might you participate in dance again at Frost Valley? Choose the number that shows what you think.

3 = Very often **2** = Pretty often **1** = Rarely **0** = Never

5. How often might you participate in dance again after leaving Frost Valley? Choose the number that shows what you think.

3 = Often **2** = Sometimes **1** = Not very often **0** = Hardly ever
(everyday) (once a week) (once a month) (once a year)

ENDNOTES

ⁱThe Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing, “Why Dance?”,[Internet - WWW, URL] <http://www.dance-teachers.org/dance-styles/the-benefits-of-dance.aspx>, 2009.

ⁱⁱ Arts Alive, “Facts about Dance — Did You Know?” [Internet - WWW, URL] <http://www.artsalive.ca/en/dan/dance101/facts.asp>, 2015.

ⁱⁱⁱ Zeichner, Naomi, “Everything You need to Know about the NaeNae” [Internet - WWW, URL] <http://www.buzzfeed.com/naomizeichner/nae-nae-dance-how-to#.ap7gYd4G>, 24 March 2014.

^{iv}Santana, Katherine. “These Adorable Kids are KILLING It in Salsa Competitions Worldwide” [Internet - WWW, URL] <http://www.cosmopolitan.com/entertainment/news/a42758/salsa-dancing-kids-duo-cute-adorable/>, 01 July 2015.