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Weighing the options and thinking about continuing dance studies? Here are some of the benefits of continued dance education:

Every year parents are in a unique position help their children decide to continue dance lessons. I have yet to meet an adult who says to me that they regret giving up martial arts or gymnastics as a kid, but almost every day I hear from someone how much they regret they didn't continue with their study of a musical instrument or with ballet. As a parent, you can play a pivotal role in encouraging your child's interests and talents. In today's fast paced world, we are all encouraged to switch channels as often as possible, and it takes patience and dedication to study an art form. Sometimes people will say they are taking a break. Martial arts and gymnastics can make a great complement to dance. However, it's much harder for most children to return to music or dance due to the challenges involved in these studies. This year I thought I'd write up some of the benefits of continuing dance classes either here or elsewhere. **This season, go to dance performances, watch performance videos, encourage the love of dance!:**

***Grace, self-confidence, and poise.** Ballet is great for this. Ballet is also wonderful for overall coordination and works all muscle groups proportionately thus preventing injury. All who study other dance forms usually take ballet as well due to its benefits.

***Appreciation and mastery of the basics of an art form.** As ballet is an art there is special confidence in its mastery and appreciation is instilled when attending any theatrical performance.

***Appreciation of music and composers** is gained as young dancers work with the great music of the world

***Self-expression.** Young people today have very few outlets for creative self-expression. Sports activities cannot provide this.

***Self-expression in a group context.** In programs with performances, children learn how to work with their individual talents in a group context-a great lesson for later life.

What our program offers which is unique:

***Excellent, highly qualified staff,** all of who have danced professionally and have many years experience teaching children. Other programs frequently place their newest teachers with children.

***The largest space** for children to dance in Berkeley.

***Accessibility.** Ashkenaz is centrally located and near good shopping. Parents are able to observe classes at all times.

***A fresh, non-competitive approach.** Individual attention, nurturing environment.

***Original Choreography**

CLASSES TAKE PLACE AT ASHKENAZ, 1317 San Pablo near Gilman in Berkeley.