



Welcome to Creative Dance!

Welcome to MoCo Arts! We are so glad you have chosen to enroll your young child in a class at MoCo. MoCo Arts' Young Arts program offers a number of classes for children ages 6 months through 2nd grade in multiple disciplines, including dance, theater, and camps. Deciding which class is right for your young child is a big decision; we hope this packet makes it easier. It will also help you become acquainted with the ins and outs of studio life.

The Young Arts classes at MoCo Arts are designed to foster a love of the arts for your child, and to welcome your whole family into our community.

Enclosed you can find out about our experienced educators, learn about new and exciting classes, and discover tips on how to help your child get the most out of their MoCo Arts experience.

If you have any questions, our front desk staff is always ready to help out. Our website, moco.org, is another great resource to find out more about what is going on at MoCo Arts. You can find this Welcome Packet along with any other information passed out in class on MoCo's Parents Page at moco.org/parents-page. Also, check out the Young Arts bulletin board in the lobby for updates on programs for your young child.

Sincerely,

Danielle Fitzpatrick

Artistic Director of Young Arts & CupCAKE Summer Camp

Full Session: August 28, 2023 - January 13, 2024

There are no classes on the following days:

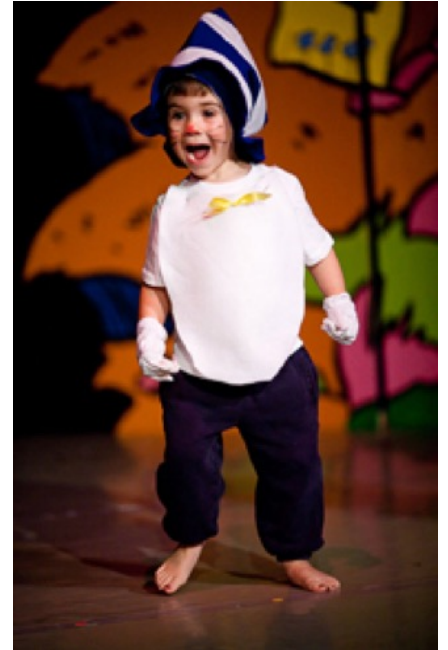
Labor Day: Monday, September 4, 2023

Thanksgiving: November 21 - 25, 2023

Holiday Break: December 18, 2023 - January 1, 2024

Creative Dance Classes:

- Explore creativity, imagination and self expression
- **Lots of chances to make friends**
- Learn the basic dance skills that are the foundation for all forms of dance
- **Age appropriate activities** and dances using a variety of music and props
- Enhances self awareness, control and coordination
- Dance individually, with partners and as a group



Transforming Lives Through Movement and Creative Expression

MoCo Arts | 40 Roxbury Street, Keene, NH 03431 | moco.org | (603) 357-2100 | info@moco.org



Dancers are given a **well rounded instruction** in the basic elements of ballet, tap, jazz, hip hop and modern dance, as well as learning about rhythm, musicality and more. The skills presented in each level are developmentally based and get harder as the child progresses through the levels.

What to Know:

- Whenever possible, parents are expected to **wait in the lobby** during class.
- **Levels are based on the age of your child as of September 30th.** Your child may be in a level for more than one year.
- **Fall semester** focuses on dance technique—basic elements of dance and learning the “language” of dance. It also includes a unit on *The Nutcracker* and features a demonstration class on the last day before winter break.
- **Spring semester** is focused on dance performance—learning choreography, preparing for an audience and participating in our *Creative Dance Festival* in June.
- A **demonstration class** is held on the last day of the fall semester. Families are invited into the studio to see a sample of the work the children have been doing.
- Children need to wear **comfortable clothes** they can move in freely and without distraction.
 - Girls*—black leotard and pink tights (preferred, but not required)
 - Boys*—dark pants/shorts, a white tee-shirt (preferred, but not required)
- **Hair** must be tied back—buns and ponytails are best.
- Ballet slippers or bare feet **only**. Shoestrings should be tucked in or trimmed off.
- No jewelry or toys. No candy or gum.

Babies Boogie, Too!

A dance class for caregivers and their infants 6 to 18 months.

Babies love to clap, wiggle, shake, and move to the music even before they can stand. And neuroscience is just catching up on what we've known for eons: music and movement are good for their bodies and brains which are developing at an incredibly fast rate. Exposure to a wide variety of music while moving with sensory props like scarves, textured balls, and shakers provides a great foundation for babies to learn all kinds of things, from developing the language centers of the brain to building fine motor skills like reaching, grabbing, and grasping. Babies learn to creatively express themselves with confidence, curiosity, and in connection with their caregivers. Plus, class is a great way to meet other families, give yourself a little workout, and dedicate some time to bonding and connecting. We welcome the new youngest members of the MoCo family!

Children and adults should **wear comfortable clothes** for moving. Street shoes are not allowed in the studios. Both children and adults will be sitting, dancing and rolling on the floor, so plan accordingly. **Please leave personal belongings in the lobby**, as young children are curious and will rifle through your bags. Classes run continuously through the fall and spring semesters.





Toddler/Adult Dance Class

With 8-9 week sessions and age appropriate activities, this class is designed for the caregiver (any adult 16+ years old... we often get nannies, Grandparents, and other caregivers) and young children to spend fun, creative and structured time together moving, dancing, singing, and exploring. Adults and toddlers ages **18-36 months** are introduced to familiar songs, dances, games, and props that will foster self awareness, bodily control, knowledge of body parts and how they work, and ways to move through space. Children learn basic dance exercises that introduce rhythm, musicality, and stretching. The use of simple, colorful props allows toddlers to move creatively around the room, expressing themselves and interacting with peers. The class provides a **consistent, safe atmosphere to explore and grow**. Children and adults should wear comfortable clothes for moving. **Street shoes are not allowed in the studios**. Both children and adults will be sitting, dancing and rolling on the floor, so plan accordingly. **Please leave personal belongings in the lobby**, as young children are curious and will rifle through your bags. Classes run continuously through the fall and spring semesters.

Storytime Theater

Musical Theater class for children 4-8 years old! Singing, dancing and acting!

Children create mini musical theater productions, complete with roles, costumes, sets and a final debut in our intimate black box, The Founder's Theatre. The small performance venue comfortably prepares children for larger performances in the future. Children will sing, dance and act in a show. Most, though not all, children will have speaking parts. Children will receive scripts and practice CDs and will be expected to do some preparation at home, in addition to class time. Performing gives your child confidence and esteem, as well as being great fun! The class focuses on the development of teamwork and cooperation as we rehearse for the performance.

Birthday Parties

MoCo Arts offers birthday parties at our studios. Birthday parties can feature dance, theater, or puppetry. Parties are specifically designed to your child's favorite theme...including luaus, princess parties, dinosaur parties, superhero parties, and so much more...whatever your child can imagine! Parties are typically 2 hours long, with one hour of instruction and one hour for cake, presents and socializing. We provide the tables, chairs, games and activities. You provide the food, table cloths, paper goods and guests! Parties can accommodate up to 20 children. We do have a freezer on site for ice cream. Book early to secure your spot!





About the Instructors

Danielle Fitzpatrick

Artistic Director of Young Arts & CupCAKE

Danielle Fitzpatrick, MA BC-DMT has been teaching dance and theatre to people of all ages throughout the tri-state area for more than two decades. She moved to Keene so that she could pursue a Master's degree in Dance/ Movement Therapy at Antioch University, where she is now adjunct faculty in their graduate program. She has taught creative dance, children's theatre, ballet, adaptive dance technique, and dance/movement therapy courses in studio settings, classrooms, preschools, workshops, and at the undergraduate and graduate level. In addition to teaching dance, Danielle is a Board-Certified dance/movement therapist specializing in using dance with elders with neurocognitive disease. Danielle serves as a Chair on the Board of the American Dance Therapy Association. At MoCo Arts, Danielle is the Director of Young Arts, where she uses her extensive knowledge of child development to support our youngest artists in dance, theatre, and camps. Danielle enjoys writing original plays to be performed by the students at MoCo Arts. When she is not sharing her love of dancing with others, Danielle enjoys raising her two daughters.



Carin Torp



Carin Torp has a master's degree in Dance/ Movement Therapy from Antioch University New England and has been working with children and their families in care and/or movement capacities ever since her first babysitting jobs as a teen and also at that time doing ballet with a young child with cerebral palsy. She has a private practice as a dance and movement/mental health therapist, she teaches in the Moco Young Arts program leading a Toddler/Adult dance class and working at vacation camps and CupCAKE. She also plays the piano for the middle-grade choirs of the Grand Monadnock Youth Choirs. She has specialties in attachment and developmental issues and loves to use dance and movement and other expressive arts to deepen connections people have with themselves, their families, and the community as a whole. Carin believes that everybody is uniquely beautiful and strives to help everyone she works with to feel at home in their body; to find the joy we were all born to feel.



The Reluctant Dancer

Dance class may be the first time children separate from their parents. New places and people can be frightening until the child becomes comfortable in class. For this reason, parents are not invited into the classroom unless absolutely necessary. Many children take the first few classes to watch or participate minimally. This is normal. As long as they are learning, there is no problem! Other children may take several weeks to get used to the class.

Though your child may feel safer with you in the room, remember that you are a stranger to all the rest of the children in the class. You may cause the other children to feel shy in your presence, so parents are encouraged to wait in the lobby. Imagine we asked you to get up in front of your peers and "dance around." Many of you would probably refuse, or shrivel up with embarrassment. It is not easy to get up in front of others and move freely and uninhibitedly. Yet, that is what we are asking our children to do!

So, what do you do if your child is nervous or scared?

- Watch other children in other classes, especially the older dancers.
- Come early and look around. Give time to transition.
- Encourage your child to teach YOU the dances, so they get used to dancing with and without you.
- Make a plan with the child for each lesson—"5 hugs and a high 5 and you can go in to the class all by yourself. After class, we will..."
- Set a time for hugs/kisses before/after class.
- Explain what dance class will be like before coming.
- Let the child determine how class can feel safer—a teddy bear; a special outfit to make them feel stronger; time with the teacher, etc.
- Value this dance of independence for what it is!

When you come up with a plan, let the teacher know. We want to support your child's success in the classroom!

A Smarter Kind of Dance

The well-planned creative dance class not only prepares your child for their physical future, it also builds strong minds and teaches essential life skills.

- Activities frequently offer **problem solving** opportunities. Given multiple options about how, what and where we will dance, the students practice decision making.
- Dancing a choreographed piece requires an ability to remember and predict a sequence or pattern of movements. **Sequencing** is essential to understanding mathematics, science and reading!
- The dancers learn **good listening skills** and proper classroom etiquette. They learn how to move safely with other children and to be aware of their personal space. The child that performs becomes more comfortable in front of large groups, **building confidence**.
- Dancers learn to appreciate their own individuality, **boosting self-esteem**. By learning to respect their own ideas and bodies, they learn **respect and tolerance** for others, too.
- **Dancers learn the importance of practice and hard work.** Dance can be a lifetime development. Overnight success is very rare! Instead, **perseverance and dedication** are the tools of the trade.



- Creative Dance is a **well-rounded** introduction to all the elements of dance. Our curriculum also introduces vocabulary and skills that are specific to dance technique. Dancers learn that there are many different styles of dance that appeal to the many different types of people in the world.
- One of the most important life skills that a dancer learns is the ability to work independently and in a group. Dance *IS* a team sport! **Cooperation and collaboration** are important elements of the dance experience.
- An important message is woven throughout the curriculum: **every dance and every dancer is special and unique!**

Why Do You Call It Creative Dance?

Preschools and kindergartners are designed for the mind and body of a young child; so are our Creative Dance classes! Our Creative Dance curriculum is designed just for young children at one of the most vital stages of their development. At such a key time, don't you think they deserve a class made just for them?!

Educators know that most little children are not ready for highly focused "subjects" while sitting at a desk for 6 hours until they are around 8 years old. The same goes for dance. Our Creative Dance classes offer a broad variety of experiences featuring all the elements of dance. When a child turns 8, they are often mentally and physically ready to explore one discipline in a more focused and in-depth way.

At preschool, children learn the basics of math, science and reading. While they learn to build with blocks, they learn about weight, force and levers. But would you call that "Physics class?" Not likely. Likewise, though the young dancer is learning fundamental dance techniques, we would not call it "ballet class." Most ballet classes are very structured, with dancers working for 30 minutes or more while standing at the barre. The 8 year old loves this intense study; preschoolers would just get bored.

In Creative Dance, the emphasis is on the enjoyment and expression of dance—the actual experience of moving and dancing—instead of rote exercises. Too often, we have heard stories of children at other dance centers who were thrust into technique classes too early and quit before they were ready to fully appreciate the classes. They weren't able to make the connection between the dance class drills and the art of "dancing." It reminded us of the 6 year old who memorized the multiplication table before he even understood addition.

Some studios offer "Baby Ballet" to introduce the children to vocabulary and steps that they will encounter in ballet class. Our curriculum introduces dance vocabulary that is common to many forms of dance and lays a strong foundation for tap, jazz, hip hop, ballet and modern dance. Just as you wouldn't send your little child to a school that taught only math (what if your child was destined to be a famous writer?!). It is important to send your child to a dance school that introduces all the types of dance.

By growing and developing both the mind and body in Creative Dance, the child becomes increasingly coordinated, self controlled and focused. Each level of Creative Dance prepares them for the rigors of technique class, in the same way that preschool gets them ready for reading, math and science.



How To Register

To register for classes fill out the **Class Registration Forms** located on **MoCo's website**.

Class Registration must be filled out prior to attending class. If you have any questions about classes, please give us a call at (603) 357-2100. Class Registration Forms must be filled out once per school year. *Please fill out a new set of paperwork for 2023-2024.* **You may drop off your registration paperwork at the front desk, email us at info@moco.org or mail your paperwork to the address below:**

MoCo Arts
40 Roxbury Street
Keene, NH 03431

Payment in full or the setup of a payment plan is required upon registration. Tuition assistance is available for all classes and camps at MoCo Arts. Please **fill out MoCo's Tuition Assistance Application and turn it in with your Registration Forms** if you need assistance. The front desk staff will gladly work with you to create a payment plan. Accepted methods of payment include: Cash, Check, Credit/Debit Card

MoCo's front desk staff is here to help with any questions or concerns. Give us a call at (603) 357-2100 or email info@moco.org. We can't wait to see you in class!

MoCo Arts Identity

Welcome to MoCo Arts! Established in 1991, MoCo Arts is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, multi-arts educational organization located in downtown Keene offering dance and theatre classes for children ages 6 months to 18+ years and multi-arts vacation and summer camps for students ages 4 through grade 12. As part of the educational process, MoCo Arts provides professional-quality performance experiences for students and family-friendly performances for audiences of all ages throughout the year. MoCo Arts is inclusive and welcoming to all, regardless of social, and current or past financial background, and provides up to \$79,000 in tuition assistance per year. MoCo has never turned a child away because of a family's lack of ability to pay. MoCo Arts is sponsored in part by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, the New Hampshire State Council on the Arts, and the National Endowment for the Arts. To learn more about MoCo's mission and ways you can support the organization's work in arts education, please visit moco.org, contact (603) 357-2100, and/or MoCo Arts, 40 Roxbury Street, Keene, NH 03431.

MoCo Arts Mission

Transforming Lives Through Movement and Creative Expression

MoCo Arts Vision

MoCo Arts will be recognized as a leader for developing creative and performing arts education, which guides youth towards achieving personal excellence. We foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the importance of the arts and enhance the quality of life for all throughout the Monadnock Region.



2023-2024 Performance Season

Fall Dance Performances

The Nutcracker

School of Dance

Performance: December 15, 16, 17 2023

Fall Young Arts Performances

Curious George

Storytime Theatre

Performance: January 14, 2024

Fall Theatre Performances

Winnie the Pooh Kids

Elementary School Musical Theatre

Performance: December 3, 2023

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever: The Musical JV

Middle School Musical Theatre

Performance: December 10, 2023

Moriarty's Daughters

Middle School Play

Performance: November 19, 2023

The Prom: School Edition

High School Musical Theatre

Performance: January 20 & 21, 2024

Radium Girls

High School Play

Performance: January 7, 2024

Spring Dance Performances

Time to Dance

School of Dance

Performance: March 23 & 24, 2024

Alice in Wonderland

School of Dance

Performance: June 1 & 2, 2024

Spring Young Arts Performances

Creative Dance Festival

Performance: June 8 & 9, 2024

Puss in Boots

Storytime Theatre

Performance: June 15, 2024

Spring Theatre Performances

Finding Nemo Kids

Elementary School Musical

Performance: April 14, 2024

The Bugs

Middle/High School Play

Performance: April 7, 2024

Sister Act Jr.

High School Musical

Performance: May 4 & 5, 2024

Annie Jr.

Middle School Musical

Performance: May 11, 2024

Tickets for MoCo Arts black box, The Founder's Theatre, performances can be purchased by visiting MoCo at 40 Roxbury Street, Keene, NH or calling (603) 357-2100. All online ticket purchasing through Eventbrite is for MoCo's livestream events only. **Shows held at the Redfern Arts Center at Keene State College** can be purchased by calling (603) 358-2168 or by visiting keene.universitytickets.com. Tickets to MoCo's performances are nonrefundable. Please arrive at least 10 minutes prior to show time. There will be no late seating. Please call for handicapped seats.

Photos of performances are available by Steve Holmes Photography.

Digital downloads of each MoCo Arts performance are available on MoCo's Vimeo Channel.

DVDs of performances are available at the MoCo Arts front desk. DVDs by Keeneonline.

Visit moco.org/performances for more information.