

# DANCE NORTHSIDE NEWSLETTER

TERM 1, 2023

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# Upcoming Events

## MINIS & KIDS DISCO



**Who:** Dancers aged 3 - 8 years. Current, new, visiting, and returning students all welcome!

**What:** A dance party, with plenty of fun to be had and friends to be made!

**When:** Saturday 18th March, 2pm - 3pm

**Where:** Dance Northside studio, Kaleen Community Hall

**How much:** \$10, plus bring cash to purchase snacks at the canteen

**REGISTER HERE:**

<https://www.trybooking.com/CFYFR>

## WELLNESS AFTERNOON FOR GROWN UPS

**Who:** Anyone aged 18+ -- ALL WELCOME!

**What:** A relaxing 90-minute slow-flow yoga class, followed by the opportunity to connect with other adults in the Dance Northside community over some fresh fruit and herbal tea. Bring a yoga mat (if you have one), blanket, and pillow.

**When:** Saturday 18th March, 3:30pm - 5:30pm

**Where:** Dance Northside studio, Kaleen Community Hall

This event is **FREE** for currently enrolled Dance Northside students and members of their household (eg. parents, partners). Guests (eg. friends or extended family of currently enrolled Dance Northside students) and new or returning students are also welcome to attend for the price of \$29.

**REGISTER HERE:** <https://www.trybooking.com/CFYFF>



## JUNIOR PYJAMA PARTY

**Who:** Dancers aged 9 - 11 years.  
Current, new, visiting, and  
returning students all welcome!

**What:** An evening of fun and  
friendship with dancing, games,  
craft, and snacks. Wear your PJs  
and bring a blanket and pillow!

**When:** Friday 24th March, 5:30pm  
- 7:30pm

**Where:** Dance Northside studio,  
Kaleen Community Hall

**How much:** \$19



**REGISTER HERE:** <https://www.trybooking.com/CFYGH>

**We hope you can  
make it and  
look forward to  
having you there!**

# SEEING THE VALUE



Our studio values are Kindness, Respect, Community.  
But what do these words mean, and how do they  
translate into practice?

We consider it important to articulate our values clearly,  
so they can be understood and shared by everybody.  
We also want to highlight some of the ways we manifest  
Kindness, Respect, and Community through tangible  
actions – proving our words are far from empty.

At Dance Northside, we purposefully create and actively  
maintain a culture of kindness and respect. Among our  
staff, students, and their families, we foster community  
by emphasising connection and putting people first.  
We truly live by our values: they inform everything we do.

Alongside this, we are following the National Principles  
for Child Safe Organisations declared by the Australian  
Human Rights Commission and the Council of Australian  
Governments, with which our values are aligned.

With this values-guided approach, we're proud to be  
leading a cultural shift within the dance industry that is  
seeing child safety and wellbeing take precedence.





# Kindness

Kindness means prioritising the health and happiness of our dancers, teaching in a way that supports their physical and mental wellbeing. We take a holistic approach to dance education that does not impose unrealistic expectations of perfection on students, striving instead for enjoyment, increased confidence, and a positive body image. At Dance Northside, the dancers' role is not to actualise the vision of teachers and choreographers; rather, the job of teachers and choreographers is to meet dancers where they are at and serve their individual needs. More than just bodies, we see dancers as human beings with hearts and minds that must be nurtured. Students are supported to become the best version of themselves as people and as dancers, and not made to compete against others.

**The value of  
Kindness is  
aligned with  
Child Safe  
Organisations  
Principle #1:**

*“Child safety and  
wellbeing is  
embedded in  
organisational  
leadership,  
governance and  
culture.”*



## In practice:

- Corrections are given gently, while also highlighting what the student is doing really well.
- All new students aged 8 and under are sent a welcome video from their teacher before their first class, to help reduce any anxiety they may feel.
- We hand out cards with positive affirmations written on them, to help support dancers' mental health.
- To audition for the Performance Team, students are not asked to present solos; instead, auditionees learn routines together as a group. This puts less pressure on students.
- Students do not undertake exams or any other form of assessment. Their level is instead determined by their age, meaning students dance alongside peers in a class that matches their stage of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development. This keeps dance recreational.
- We avoid language that reinforces gender stereotypes and the notion that one's worth is defined by one's appearance. For example, staff are trained not to comment on female-identifying dancers' clothing (i.e. 'what a pretty dress!'), instead asking them about their thoughts, interests, and activities (e.g. 'what are you looking forward to doing on the weekend?').
- Our teachers will never, ever yell at or criticise students.
- We do not enter our dancers in eisteddfods; competition has a place elsewhere, but not in the arts (especially when it comes to children).



# Respect



Respect means recognising and protecting every individual's right to learn dance in a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment.

A major aspect of this is bodily integrity and autonomy. Our students are never forced to do anything they are not physically capable of doing or don't want to do. We model consent, teaching children that they have authority over their own bodies.

Another way we show respect at Dance Northside is through our commitment to age-appropriate music, choreography, and costumes: we will never encourage children to look, dress, or dance like an adult.

Teachers at Dance Northside earn their students' respect through trust, instead of demanding it through fear. They know being afforded that respect is a privilege, and understand they must work to keep it.

Our students and staff choose to work to the best of their ability, out of respect for themselves and each other. We value the time we have been gifted with our dancers, so we strive to deliver a quality dance education. Likewise, students try their hardest in every class.

## **The value of Respect is aligned with Child Safe Organisations Principle #2:**

*"Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously."*





## In practice:

- When being offered a sticker at the end of class, students are asked where they would like the teacher to place it (on their hand, t-shirt, water bottle, etc.).
- Our Minis class playlists include the song 'Boss of My Own Body' by Teeny Tiny Stevies.
- If it is necessary for a teacher to make physical contact with a student for the purpose of giving a correction, helping with a costume, providing first aid, etc., they always ask the student's permission first, explaining what they would do and why; if the student says no, the action is not taken.
- Students are instructed to keep their hands and feet to themselves and stay within their own 'safe dancing space'.
- Our teachers learn and remember students' names.
- The message and themes of the songs we use are appropriate to the students' age, and we never use songs that contain swear words or derogatory language.
- We don't enter competitions – adults judging children on their performance and appearance doesn't sit well with our child-first approach.
- There is an Acknowledgement of Country displayed in our studio, on our website, and at the bottom of our emails.

# Community

Community means connecting with each other through a shared love of dance. Our main purpose is to help students form friendships, find a place where they belong, and feel confident to be themselves. In this way, we create a network of mutual support. At Dance Northside, everyone knows they are important and valued. Students and their families have the opportunity to voice what they need, and these needs determine the direction of the studio.



**The value of Community is aligned with Child Safe Organisations Principle #3:**

*"Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing."*







## In practice:

- Staff are trained to follow a procedure for how to welcome new students, ensuring they are greeted, familiarised with the studio, and introduced to other members of the class.
- Every student receives a birthday card.
- We run social events such as discos and movie nights, where students can connect with their peers in a relaxed setting.
- Adults classes regularly go out for dinner together with their teacher.
- Parents and carers are invited to attend wellness events at the studio, where they can get to know other Dance Northside families.
- Every week during term time, we publicly acknowledge and celebrate a 'Legend of the Week' who has modelled the Dance Northside values and/or shown improvement in their dancing.
- Classes come together for an informal performance during their last lesson of the term, in which they present what they have learnt to their peers and families as a way of celebrating progress.



- We maintain an open door policy, meaning parents/carers are welcome to watch the class.
- Many of our teachers have grown up through the studio, starting out as students.
- Dancers are often given a say in the songs we use and the costumes they wear.
- We survey families to get their preference regarding how we do things. For example, we asked the parents/carers of our Minis for their thoughts when we were considering changing the format of our annual concert for this age group (having them perform at the studio in a more child- and community-focussed setting rather than in a professional theatre).
- Classes and events are offered based on community interest, gauged through surveys.
- Teachers take the time to learn about their students, asking a getting-to-know-you question at the beginning of every lesson.
- Our assistant teachers are student leaders who have been empowered to serve as role models within the studio community.



# 2023 Performances

**Coming soon...**

*Ours*

An in-house showcase of choreographic works created and performed by the Dance Northside Performance Team -- including pieces the students have put together themselves.

Please come along to enjoy the show and support our clever and hardworking dancers!

**Friday 31st March, 6pm**

**Dance Northside studio,  
Kaleen Community Hall**



**\$10 tickets on sale now!**



**Book here:**

**<https://www.trybooking.com/CFZRV>**



The date of our mid-year showcase for 2023 has been set! It will be held on **Saturday 1st July** at The Playhouse, Canberra Theatre Centre. We're thrilled to be able to provide our students with the opportunity to perform at this amazing venue.



We aim to make the concert experience enjoyable and stress free for everyone involved. Students are encouraged to simply have fun and do their best. The choreography our teachers create is designed to be achievable, so dancers feel confident performing it on stage. We keep costumes and hairstyles simple, while makeup is optional and only needs to be minimal.

Concert preparation begins in Term 2. We'd love for your dancer to join us! Why not enrol for the remainder of Term 1? It'll secure your place in the mid-year showcase, and allow your dancer to start developing skills and building confidence now!





We're also planning an in-house concert at the end of Term 4. This will bring the studio and wider community together to celebrate the year's achievements. It's always a relaxed and joyful occasion!



Since the child's wellbeing is always front and centre at Dance Northside, our Minis (3.5 - 5 years) classes and Kids Dance Fundamentals will only participate in the community concert and not the mid-year showcase. We believe this is the most age-appropriate performance opportunity for our newest and youngest dancers.



Please also note that Little Leapers, Beginner/Intermediate Acro, and Adults Zumba are play-, technique- or fitness-focused classes, so they will not perform in either concert.



With these two different concert formats, we hope all students feel there is a performance opportunity that's right for them. In both cases, performing is completely optional, so dancers are also welcome to attend classes in Terms 2 and 4 without participating in the concerts.

<https://www.dancenorthside.com>

