

# How Classes are Structured

Classes in the Early Childhood Dance Program are grouped into age-specific levels for 3-6 years olds. These classes meet once a week and last 45 minutes.

Class structure for all levels is essentially the same, with the content based on appropriate developmental skills for the specific age. Each class begins with a brief sharing time and floor exercises that gently stretch and strengthen the young students. These exercises progress in difficulty as students gain flexibility and strength over the years.



Class continues with a center warm-up that includes all of the major muscle groups and is the basis for the barre work taught in ballet class at a later date. From this, students learn correct posture and the placement of the body over the legs. The exercises also teach balance, port de bras (arm movements), and include various types of jumps that are the building blocks for the allegro steps of classical ballet.

The third section of class develops the locomotor skills that form the basis for all ballet steps that travel.



The final portion of class is devoted to developing creative expression and musical awareness. Students participate in a variety of free movement exercises that teach listening skills, rhythm, emotions and relationships to energy, space, level and direction. Young dancers who are consistently exposed to this type of activity in class are generally more creative in their choreographic efforts in later years and are freer in their movement style as they develop. Besides, it's just plain FUN!

Educators now know that training young children in the concepts of movement sequencing, patterning, and spatial relationships lays a strong foundation for the later development of reading, mathematics and other educational skills. Our ECD program works actively in all of these areas.

# Levels

Age range is only a guide. Teachers will place children in the most appropriate level for their personal development.

## ECD 1

### 3 and 4 year olds

Three and four years olds are quite new to learning how their bodies move, as well as how to behave in a classroom. Children in this level are gently introduced to the classroom environment. The stepping stones to skipping are introduced. Characterizations are used to develop both movement quality and imagination.



## ECD 2

### 4 and 5 year olds

This level for four to five years olds reviews the material from ECD 1 and moves on. Students now learn to further control their movement. Skipping is learned first and then other locomotor skills are introduced.

## ECD 3

### 4 - 6 year olds

The program for this group builds on the work done the previous year. They continue to work on the same concepts, but in greater degrees of complexity. Traveling steps across the floor are expanded and often done with partners. Students start learning the concepts of counting music and opposites.



## ECD 4

### 5 - 7 year olds

This level of the program is especially geared towards the more skilled kindergartener as well as first graders who have not experienced a dance class before. All of the concepts in ECD Level 2 and 3 are expanded upon, the quality of execution of exercises is increased and basic ballet terminology is introduced. After completing this level, students will be placed in the Junior Ballet class, ready both physically and mentally to begin studying the beautiful and disciplined theatrical art form that is called classical ballet.

[www.balletyuma.org](http://www.balletyuma.org)

928.314.4762



Yuma Ballet Academy

## 2010-2011 ECD Class Schedule

*All ECD classes are 45 minutes*

### ECD 1

Tuesday 5:30pm  
Wednesday 5:15pm  
Thursday 10:00am

### ECD 2

Tuesday 4:00pm  
Wednesday 6:00pm

### ECD 3

Thursday 9:15am  
Thursday 6:00pm

### ECD 4

Tuesday 4:45pm  
Tuesday 6:15pm  
Thursday 4:00pm

### Saturday Classes

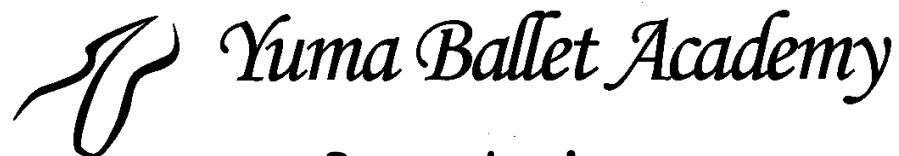
8:45am 5 ½-7 yr. olds  
9:30am 3-5 yr. olds

### To register

Call 928.314.4762 or visit us at

[www.balleteyuma.org](http://www.balleteyuma.org)

3942 S. Avenue 4 ½ East



Yuma Ballet Academy



## Introducing The Early Childhood Dance Program

Our Early Childhood Dance Program (ECD) is specially designed to provide children between three and six years of age with a strong foundation in dance and movement.

### The basic elements of movement and dance are taught:

- Space and how we relate to it, both as an individual and as a member of a group
- The eight basic locomotor movements
- Musical rhythm, beat and time
- Opposites and directions
- Some elementary positions of ballet

### Integrated with these physical concepts are the intellectual concepts of:

- Self-awareness
- Creative expression
- Imagination

### Students also learn the basic of classroom behavior and manners, which remain the same throughout their dancing years:

- How to take turns
- Following another dancer or leading the way
- Waiting patiently
- Working together with others
- Having a positive attitude



All ECD teachers are adults with children of their own and have had extensive dance training, as well as instruction in the ECD syllabus under the guidance of Academy director, Kathleen Sinclair.