

Youth Dance Weekend 2008

Discussions focused on building dancer skills

Original Post: <https://youthdanceweekend.org/resources/bread-butter/>
(Reposted on the CDSS website with permission)

FROM THE YDW ORGANIZERS:

During Youth Dance Weekend 2008 we had a great discussion about a wide range of issues related to youth involvement and leadership in dance and music. We brainstormed a long list of questions together, wrote them up on large sheets of paper all around the room, and then spent a while walking around and writing down our individual ideas and suggestions.

The exercise was meant to start discussion about these various topics. There are a lot of great ideas here, and not everyone agrees about every answer. Some of the topics overlap in interesting ways. We hope you'll take what you can from this brainstorm, try it out in your community, and keep talking with others about what works. You can leave comments at the bottom of each topic page, where it says continue the conversation...Enjoy!

HOW TO HELP A COMMUNITY OF BEGINNING DANCERS ADVANCE TO A HIGHER LEVEL OF DANCING...

- Workshop – beginners and intermediate. Have caller focus on one aspect of dancing for the evening.
- Start dance 1/2 hour early and advertise specifically for new people.
- Have more dances
- Invite experienced friends to help out, even if they have to travel a bit.
- Develop core repertoire (=favorite dances)
- Invite them to special events (balls) in other communities
- During the break, play with people to show new moves and practice thins in a supportive environment
- Praise improvements in the dancing of an individual
- bring college dancers to festivals and dances other places

HOW TO WORK WITH PERPETUAL BEGINNERS?

- Don't. They are a force of nature and there isn't much you can do. They are still welcome!
- Give them tips on how they might do particular things better. Don't try to change them all at once.
- Stay patient, but don't let them push you around.
- Ask callers to highlight one particular figure/step mid-dance.
- Take the initiative to focus some attention on one beginner from one experienced dancer. Introduce them to your experienced friends. Taking the time to be honest with them on what they need to improve and what they're good at and helping them.
- There was a workshop on this very topic recently. Keep your eye on the CDSS Newsletter for more info
- Offer suggestions on "ways to have more fun"