



## Inclusivity & Special Needs Accommodations

**Dancing with Class** believes in the *powerful therapeutic benefits of dance* and strives for 100% inclusivity of students with all types of special needs. In particular, here are examples of our experience and approach with some of the most common needs we encounter through our work:

**ADHD:** ADHD children typically thrive in dance class as permission to move is often a key to school success for children with this diagnosis. Classes are run in a structured way, with expectations spelled out clearly and plenty of space for student input and creative self-expression. Our classes often become a favorite part of school for ADHD children.

**Autism:** We have many success stories of autistic children experiencing great joy, success and growth in the program. As needed, the instructor can help these students acclimate by allowing them to observe before participating, or inviting these children to dance with them or an aide before attempting to dance with peers. Because the class is run with a highly predictable and scripted pattern of social interaction, Autistic children typically thrive in our classes.

**ESL:** Because dance is largely a visual learning process, language barriers are generally not a huge challenge to overcome. Aides are welcome to assist or provide translation as needed.

**Hearing/Sight Disability:** Preferential placement in the classroom or the option to dance with an aide can help make this go smoothly, as well as prompting other students to be considerate and accommodating of the physical challenge when partnering hearing or sight disabled children. Partner dancing can be a really fun and rewarding experience for both the abled and disabled partner in these situations.

**Physical Mobility Impairments:** When possible, wheelchair-bound students or students with other physical mobility impairments are able to participate alongside peers with modifications to choreography made to accommodate their mobility challenge. In our Dance-Off events, we have had wheelchair-bound students compete with able-bodied partners and achieve great success and inspiring performances.

**Cultural/Religious Considerations:** Any children who are not allowed to dance, or not allowed to *partner* dance due to a cultural or religious reason, are offered options to participate in the class in other ways, with parental consent. They can help by running the music (class DJ) or be assigned other special tasks to help the class run smoothly.