



Canadian Dance Assembly ~ L'Assemblée canadienne de la danse  
55 Mill Street, Suite 312, Case Goods Building, Toronto, ON, M5A 3C4  
tel: 416.515.8444 info@dancecanada.net  
fax: 416.515.9444 www.dancecanada.net

September 7, 2006

Dr. Khristinn Kellie Leitch  
Chair, Expert Panel for the Children's Fitness Tax Credit  
Tax Policy Branch  
Department of Finance  
140 O'Connor Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G5

Dear Dr. Leitch and Members of the Panel,

As the national service organization representing the professional dance sector in Canada, the Canadian Dance Assembly (CDA) wishes to express support for the inclusion of youth participation in all dance forms as eligible programs for the Children's Fitness Tax Credit. CDA's membership includes individual artists, educators, dance consultants, researchers and writers, as well as dance companies, presenters, training institutions and other national, provincial and regional dance service organizations.

Dance is an excellent way for children to improve and maintain physical fitness, overall health and well-being. Numerous studies cite participation in dance as an optimal way to improve cardio-vascular endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, balance and coordination. It not only offers these and other important physical benefits, but, like other creative activities, it also contributes to improved social skills, self-confidence, and academic performance as well as to the development of higher order thinking and problem solving skills. Such benefits have led to the incorporation of dance and other art forms into the learning practices of many provincial school curricula.

In the 2006 budget document, the Government cites the escalating costs of organized sports as a barrier faced by parents in accessing opportunities to engage their children in health-promoting activities. This implies a limited perspective that understands participation in sports as the only way in which children can stay fit and healthy. While sports activities offer many physical benefits, there are various other extra-curricular activities that parents can (and do) enroll their children in that contribute to physical fitness, health and well-being.

It is important that we understand a child's growth, development and health to have many dimensions including the physical, emotional, psychological and creative. Parents should be encouraged to engage their children in a variety of activities that best suit the overall health needs of their children. Activities such as dance, soccer, piano lessons, basketball, gymnastics, drama, and many others are all extra-curricular activity options available to Canadian parents and their children. The Canadian Dance Assembly views dance, in its many forms, as an exemplary fit to the Government's current definition of an eligible program of activity, and wishes to promote its inclusion in this initiative. We would further encourage that this definition be expanded to include a broader scope of activities, both physical and creative, that are beneficial to a child's overall health and well being.

Sincerely,

Shannon Litzenberger  
Manager of Operations  
Canadian Dance Assembly