

Youth Dance Weekend 2008

Discussions focused on young callers and musicians

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!

IS ENCOURAGING YOUNGER DANCERS/LEADERS/MUSICIANS MORE IMPORTANT THAN GETTING NEW DANCERS FROM ANY GENERATION?

- No. What is important is to foster leaders/dancers of quality regardless of age.
- Yes. New perspectives/ideas. Longevity of dance life.
- Right now, probably more important w/aging of dance community – need balance.
- If indeed the youth component of dance communities is underrepresented and “wilting” in some way, then it is more important to cultivate that aspect than others. However, it is also important to still have that youth component integrated into the general community.
- This is a really tough question...it's definitely important to break down barriers between generations. Youth participation is great, but older dancers may be overwhelmed and feel excluded if the emphasis is all on youth.
- circle mixers, unannounced.
- (someone drew a frowning angry face)

HOW DO YOUNG/NEW PERFORMERS GET GIGS?

- Friend
- recommendations to musicians/dance organizers
- Friends with
- musicians/callers
- Do guest calling
- spots or sit in with experienced band
- Find a mentor
- Callers/musician
- networks so they can swap gigs
- Networking at
- breaks/festivals
- Play or call at
- small, “struggling” dances – to get experience and let people
- see that you know what you're doing

- Email/call every
- organizer you can. Cold call. Introduce yourself.
- Start your own
- dance
- Take workshops
- to network with other callers or musicians
- Join discussion
- groups/online communities
- Book a tour For
- yourself in a region where people don't know you – if you email
- and say you're a caller/band on tour they're likely to book you, but
- make sure you're good enough to get asked back
- Get dances from
- experienced callers at dance weekends – word circulates, and people
- you don't know will start approaching you and going, "so, I hear
- that you call, and there's this opportunity..."
- Open band once a
- month where some experienced musicians get paid to teach new
- musicians how to build tunes and drive a dance. Then organizers can
- consult with open band leaders about who is ready to get booked
- And call at open
- mic nights
- Separate open
- band and open caller times to help things go more smoothly