

# BIG STEPS

*Little Feet*

## CASE STUDY NEISHA 12YRS

When she was 4, Anita's daughter, Neisha, did ballet at a more formal eastern suburbs ballet school.

"While she did enjoy it, I felt the process was somewhat rigid for preschoolers who just want to dress-up, dance, spin, leap and get lost in the music and their dreams," says Anita. "This became particularly obvious at the end of year concert when we were expected to attend many long rehearsals only to find our daughters in very plain costumes and only dancing on stage for 5-10 minutes!"

A friend told Anita about **Big Steps Little Feet** and its philosophy of encouraging individualism through creative expression. This approach was a better match with what Anita was looking for, and so she booked Neisha in.

"Through **Big Steps Little Feet**, I've seen my daughter flourish as a fit, healthy, graceful and confident young girl," says Anita. "Neisha enjoys her own freedom of expression within the context of classical ballet. Her core is incredibly strong, aerobically she is fit and the ballet is keeping her flexible as she gets older."

Ballet has very much become part of Neisha's identity. Physically she is poised and elegant in her stance and movement. Anita also believes it helps Neisha focus on other life skills – both academically and on other co-curricular activities.

"Ballet has definitely shown Neisha the benefits of practice – and hopefully this will help with all sorts of life challenges in the future," says Anita. "I'm sure the choreography helps her engage both sides of her brain, which must be a good thing for her cognition. Emotionally, she is more confident through having to perform in exams and at the concerts, and particularly in the last few years as a solo performer."

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For Neisha, there are many aspects of ballet she enjoys. "I love the fun, friendship and the concerts because they are always different," she says. "I love getting to wear beautiful costumes and learning new dances. I feel free when I do ballet. It takes my mind off things I am worrying about and makes those worries seem not as big when I have finished dancing."

Anita comments that the inclusive philosophy at **Big Steps Little Feet** removes any over aggressive competitiveness about roles for the concert and also between the parents. She enjoys the fact that everyone works as a team to get the job done and there are no 'prima ballerinas'!

"I am incredibly proud when I see Neisha perform," says Anita. "I always become teary and emotional at the concerts when I see my 'baby' poised, elegant and confident on stage. And we also love seeing her spontaneously leap, pirouette, pointe and glide around the living room at any time of the night and day!"



a time to DANCE, a place to PLAY...  
a moment to MAKE MAGIC HAPPEN

★\* *leading the way in creative ballet for young children*

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