

Keshet's M3 Program **Movement + Mentorship = Metamorphosis**

There are three stages to Keshet's M3 program – Introductory, Intermediate, and Advanced. Keshet currently reaches approximately 100 incarcerated New Mexico youth per year in the Introductory and Intermediate levels; and approximately 10 students per year in the Advanced level. Participating students track a 28% improvement rating on math, literacy and science skills based on pre- and post- tests; a 20% reduction in conflicts with other inmates and staff compared to non-participating inmates; and 0% recidivism rate for students who complete all levels of the program as compared to the 50% state juvenile recidivism rate within the State of New Mexico.

Introductory: Keshet uses dance to teach math, science, literacy and conflict resolution skills to males and females through a credited class within the high school on-site at the State Youth Detention Center

Intermediate: Students who complete the Introductory Class can choose to move into the Intermediate phase considered “pre-release.” In this phase, programming is customized for each student to span the remainder of his or her sentence (ranging from a few weeks to a multiple years)

Advanced: Upon parole/release, Keshet customizes a new track of programming to support the process of parole and reintegration. This programming varies widely based on parole circumstances, geography, etc.

While the M3 Intermediate and Advanced Levels are highly customized to the student/s and the situations, the M3 Introductory curriculum addresses six main subject areas by pairing a style of dance with an academic or social skill topic. The six units are structured as follows: modern and math; improvisation and science; ballet and grammar; jazz and self-esteem/mood; partner dancing and social relations/conflict resolution; and hip hop and poetry. Each unit uses movement to explore the subject matter kinesthetically allowing time for discussion, creative explorations, problem-solving, and group dynamics.

For example, the math unit develops a “math warm-up” in which the full warm-up sequence is developed collaboratively using math concepts to explore and define movement. Leg swings are at acute or obtuse angles; movement patterns take geometric pathways; bodies shift directions at varying degrees within a circle from 0 to 360; etc. The math unit also includes collaborative choreography exercises in which a particular number of dancers (for example, eight) must enter the space at different times, reaching a point in

the music after 96 counts. Shifting 96 to 12 sets of 8 or 24 sets of 4, the 8 dancers work to develop movement patterns to enter the space through division and multiplication along with creative problem solving necessary to reach their end goal. Basic grammar lessons include exploring an understanding of word classes (i.e. nouns, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, etc.) and integrating these various types of words into choreography. Each student is assigned the “role” of one of these types of words – one student is a noun, another an adjective, etc. How will a noun and an adjective relate to one another? Where are they in space related to each other? Where and when do other parts of the sentence enter the piece of choreography? From this exploration, writing exercises occur in various topics. One example is goal statements. Utilizing the grammar lessons developed through movement, students apply this knowledge by writing out goals for themselves – where do they see themselves in five years or ten years? After writing and sharing the statements, each student transforms their goal statement into movement, embodying the imagery they expressed in their written work. These movement phrases are then taught to the entire class, with each student taking the role of leader/choreographer and directing the class to understand the movement of their goals. Once the entire class has learned all movement phrases of each person’s goals, this full collection of movement is transformed into a complete piece of choreography.

For more information on the Keshet’s Arts and Justice Programming, the M3 Curriculum specifically, and/or if you are interested in bringing Keshet teaching team to your organization to support your dance faculty’s process of implementing this curriculum, contact: shira@KeshetArts.org