



It sharpens focus for kids with ADHD

All martial arts emphasize concentration, so they might seem an unlikely sport for a child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Yet some experts say the highly structured approach and repetitive patterns of movements (called kata) actually help ease symptoms of the disorder. "Impulse control is a huge challenge for these kids," says Richard B. Coolman, MD, a developmental-behavioral pediatrician at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose, CA.

"In martial arts classes, they learn to focus, clear their minds of distractions, and take control of their body movements." The environment can be a nurturing one for kids with ADHD if the philosophy of the training center is noncompetitive. "These kids are always being told they're doing something wrong," says Coolman, "but in martial arts, they aren't graded or criticized. They're not letting down a team if they lose focus. They're simply encouraged to give their best effort."

It empowers mothers and daughters

"Most women experience a feeling of vulnerability at some point in their lives, but once a woman is properly trained in martial arts, she knows she can defend herself," says Kyosah-Nim Holmes, director of Kwon, Jae-Hwa Taekwon-do school located in the upper eastside of Miami.

Learning defense techniques is one of the most common reasons parents enroll daughters in martial arts classes, says Kyosah-Nim Holmes. "In the past, girls were discouraged from being assertive, but now moms and dads say they want their daughters to be able to protect themselves."

"The moves for escaping someone's hold on you seem so simple, yet they're extremely effective," Holmes says. "Knowing that our children have these skills gives parents and me tremendous peace of mind."

Picking the best martial art

Each martial art emphasizes different skills and goals. TaeKwon-Do relies on balance and agility rather than on size and strength. TaeKwon-Do develops stamina and cardiovascular health. Tae kwon do offers fancy footwork and acrobatic kicks that are fun to learn and uses a variety of blocks, strikes, evasions, and throws.

For more information or schedule an appointment visit: www.taekwon-domiami.com or call 305 759-6672

We are located at 542 N.E. 82nd Street Miami in the Upper EastSide.



Kick Together!

Family martial arts classes boost confidence, improve fitness and cement family bonds.

When Kc Holmes, signed up for her first Korean karate class at the age of 23, she never dreamed that her passion for martial arts would be so infectious. Today, Kyosah Nim, Kc Holmes, 3rd Dan with over 20 years of experience spends the week at her martial arts training hall (or dojo) teaching others The Korean Art of Self-Defense and centers her and her families vacations around national and international Korean karate events. "It's a fun activity that helps all of us stay in shape, feel connected to one another, and see different parts of the world while building lifelong friendships" says Kyosah-Nim Kc Holmes.

Martial arts have become a family affair—for moms, dads, and children of all ages. Today, almost half of the sport's 6 million participants are kids between the ages of 6 and 17, and women comprise one-third of the student body, according to the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association. There are hundreds of styles of martial arts, such as kick-heavy Korean karate known as Taekwon-do, which an opponent may be held or thrown. TaeKwon-Do delivers a great workout and is good for self-defense. But those aren't the only reasons families sign up.

Martial arts are booming because they offer something for all ages. They help preschoolers develop social skills and improve their attention spans; they give grade-schoolers and teenagers a confidence boost while teaching self-control; and they leave parents with greater stamina, improved endurance, and a trimmer, toned body. "We've seen remarkable changes in the kids' attitudes and confidence levels," says Kc. "Our introverts, now jumps at the chance to talk in front of people."



Looking for a reason to tell your family to kick butt? Here are three great ones.

It helps [bullyproof kids](#)

Bullies often torment kids who unknowingly send messages that make them become targets. "It's in the way they stand, their posture, their lack of eye contact," says Robyn Silverman, PhD, a child development specialist and director of character development at EEMA Fitness and Martial Arts in South Weymouth, MA. In martial arts classes, participants are constantly challenged and then praised for doing their best. That builds confidence, says Silverman. "Kids learn that their bodies and minds are strong, powerful, and worthy of respect," she says. "Once a child discovers this, his whole attitude shifts. He carries himself with an ease and assurance that tells bullies to move on."

Because martial arts are generally noncompetitive—kids set their own pace for earning stripes and belts—classes provide a safe environment for kids with fragile egos to heal and become stronger, mentally and physically. They learn to look aggressors in the eye, to think through hostile situations calmly, and to take a positive, no-nonsense stance when threatened.

Bullies benefit, too—and not because they learn to kick harder. A 2001 study published in *Adolescence* found that violent behavior decreased among middle-schoolers when they were taking martial arts classes, while their confidence levels rose. "Bullies act the way they do because they have low self-esteem, poor social skills, or little respect for themselves or others," Silverman says. The focus on respect and courtesy within martial arts sends the message that you don't have to be mean to earn a person's respect.

For more information or schedule an appointment visit: www.taekwon-domiami.com or call 305 759-6672

We are located at 542 N.E. 82nd Street Miami in the Upper EastSide.