



Seven Ways to Support Your Child in Martial Arts

...And Help Guide Them to Success!

A while back, a parent asked, "What is the best way to support my child in martial arts? What is my role? How do I strike a balance between being supportive and understanding on one hand...and making sure my child shows enough discipline to reach his or her goal?"

That's an excellent question. In this article, I'm going to pass along seven "little pointers" that will help you and your family benefit the most from your child's martial arts training. Chances are, you are already doing some of these things. But it's always good to keep these pointers fresh in your mind, because the way a parent approaches martial arts can often be the deciding factor in a child's success ...

All these pointers boil down to one thing: taking an active role. This is no different than a parent who gets involved in normal school. It's the kid whose parent takes an active role who achieves the most academically. The same idea applies in our academy. So,

here's my first tip:

Tip #1 – Watch as Many Classes as You Can

Listen: I know it's tempting to use your child's class time for a quick break or as a chance to run some errands. We all need a little extra time now and then. But actively watch as many classes as you can. That's because watching your child's class is the #1 most important things you can do to support them. Something magical happens when you watch your son's or daughter's class. They'll glance over their shoulder and see you watching. They'll do their best to impress you. They'll take a greater interest in class themselves and they'll try harder. Your son or daughter feels visible when you watch class. And while we don't recommend that parents give "tips" or "corrections" from the sidelines, your child does appreciate hearing you say "good job!" and seeing you flash a big thumbs-up when they're on the floor (always focus on the positive).



Ms. Lesley Casey
3rd Degree Black Belt and
Owner

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Also, watching class keeps you in touch with what is happening in our academy. You'll hear all the important announcements, get a copy of our newsletter, stay on top of upcoming events and discover which life skills you should reinforce at home (more on that in a minute). And you might be called on to hold bags or get involved in other ways. Keep showing your support and make your presence felt.

Tip #2 - Reinforce Life Skills at Home

By now, you realize martial arts is not just about kicks and punches. Sure, the self-defense techniques are valuable, but we also view them as a way of teaching life skills such as discipline, perseverance, respect, courtesy and leadership. These life skills are everything - it's what sets martial arts apart from every other activity out there. So discuss these life skills at home and reinforce them. For example, at dinner you can say, "What did Ms. Casey say about courtesy today?" or "What was the biggest lesson you picked up in today's class?" You can talk about life skills at the park when observing other children or you can discuss them at the grocery store. Use all these situations outside of our academy as "teaching opportunities" - a chance to drill these positive messages home. If you don't have a lot of time with your child, use "drive time" (to and from our academy) to back up the life lessons we teach in class. Talk about the word of the month (if you don't know what it is, ask us). Ask questions to stimulate conversation and get your little martial artist thinking. Reinforcing the life skills your child learns in class is a great way to support your child's martial arts journey!

Tip #3 - Encourage Practice at Home

I recommend two or three days a week in class for the average student. But like any other athletic activity, your child will benefit from at-home practice. Now don't worry: You don't have to go crazy and

construct your own dojang in the basement or install Zebra mats in the living room. Any open area in the home will do just fine. Or, if the weather is nice outside, have them practice in the backyard or at the park (forms look really cool outdoors!).

A good guideline for at-home practice is a couple hours a week...spaced apart in small sessions. See, studies prove that students retain information better in frequent, short bursts. So instead of a three-hour "marathon training" on a Saturday afternoon, space home practice sessions into short half-hour or fifteen-minute sessions every other day or so. Frequent practice helps develop "muscle memory" and instant recall in any situation.

Tip #4 - Err on the Side of Commitment

Repetition forms the basis for true mastery. This is true on the job, in academics and in any sport, for that matter. Martial arts is no different. Routine in martial arts helps develop a student's "reflexive skills" and the muscle memory I talked about a minute ago (for example, if somebody throws a punch, the student should be able to instinctively block without thinking about it). But - when the repetition part of learning kicks in, a student's feeling of "newness" or "excitement" can start to wane a bit. This simply means they're entering a new phase of their training. It's also a signal you should remind them of the goals they set early on.

When your child reaches this phase, encourage them to stick with it. Remind them of the goals they set and the commitment they made. And, once again, use this as a learning opportunity. Explain to them the importance of showing perseverance and focusing on their goals. Give them examples of how YOU had to persevere to achieve something you wanted in your life. Remind them it's not always "fun" or "exciting" to demonstrate discipline and commitment. However, achieving anything truly great in life will have periods of routine and repetition. Life is not a video game!

How hard should you push? Most parents feel they push "too hard" when in reality, they really don't. I say, "Err on the side of discipline

and commitment". For example, a parent at another school recently said, "I don't push my kid. If he doesn't want to come to class, I don't go". I don't think that's a good policy: it goes too far in the other direction. Why? Because it allows a child's emotional whims to determine their behavior and actions. Explain to your child what would happen if this were applied in other areas of their life: What if they didn't "feel like" brushing their teeth every night? Or didn't "feel like" doing their homework? Or they didn't "feel like" going to college? Or they didn't "feel" like getting a job? What would happen? Help your child understand that the lessons they're learning now carry over into their adult life - and the sooner they start building their "discipline muscles" the easier life will become. (And isn't building discipline one of the main reasons you enrolled your child here, anyway?). Encourage your child to go to class every chance he or she gets. Besides: it's always the one class they don't want to attend that ends up being the most fun!

Tip #5 - Attend a Tournament or Two

If you haven't done so already, attend a tournament or two. Not only is it a lot of fun, but your child will meet new friends, hone their moves against new opponents, take their skills to a new level...and maybe come home with a new trophy to show off to their friends!

Tournaments also rev up a student's motivation level. They act as short-term "mini-goals" which channel a student's focus and direct their energy. Students know they have a month or two to prepare for the tournament, so they work extra hard on their forms, practice their sparring with more gusto and take more pride in their techniques. I suggest families attend at least one or two tournaments to get an idea of how much fun they can be.

Tip #6 - Compete, Don't Compare

Martial arts is tougher than almost any other sport. It's mind, body, spirit, emotion, everything - wrapped up into one. And



Here's a Group of Real Black Belt !

techniques that are difficult to execute look simple from the sidelines. Because of that, in the past I've seen some parents expect too much - especially at the Tiny Tiger level. You can't expect a Tiny Tiger to execute a perfect side kick or jump front kick. In these lower levels, our goal is to make sure your child can follow instructions, develop gross (and some fine) motor skills, increase their confidence, have fun and prepare for the next level. Our Tiny Tigers program helps us build a foundation for later success. It makes no sense for us to refine six or seven-year-old's techniques. There is plenty of time for that later.

So if you feel yourself slipping into the mindset of "my kid's technique should look a lot better", try this: Get out on the floor and try it yourself for one class. Or even just try holding a deep middle stance for a few minutes. I'm serious. If you've never done it before, you'll have a new-found respect for your kid! So don't pressure them when it comes to technique. Keep the focus on having fun, staying committed to their goals and getting to class. It's fine to encourage your child to compete with other kids in class, but don't compare them to others. It sets up unrealistic expectations because every child progresses at his or

her own pace. Appreciate your child's abilities and eventually, they'll hit their stride.

Tip #7 – Take a Cue From Other Black Belt Parents

Finally, understand this: The skills a martial arts student needs to reach the rank of black belt are the same skills a parent needs to guide their child to that same rank: Discipline. Sacrifice. Perseverance. Stick-to-it-ness. Focus. Commitment. Approach other "black belt parents" and ask them how they achieved their goals as a family. What was the journey like? What sacrifices were required? Was it worth it? (I think you know the answer to that one already!). Other black belt parents will help you crack the code on what it takes to get your child to the ultimate level...black belt!

Try these seven tips today and watch your child's motivation and skill level skyrocket!

And finally, THANK YOU for everything you do. The parents here in our academy are the "unsung heroes" of our programs and the driving force behind all the life-

changing success we have in our academy! Enrolling your child in our school is one of the most valuable investments, greatest gifts and best decisions you've ever made for your child's future. Great job!

-- Ms. Casey

July 2009 Parent of the Month!

Mr. & Mrs. Nowak

An Example of a Parents Who
Are Setting a Great Example for Others!

With our focus on the role parents play in martial arts, this month I want to highlight parents who do an amazing job of both supporting our academy – as well as their children. Their names are Andy & Michelle Nowak and they are the proud parents of Katie, Daniel & Steven Nowak. Their children are all black belts in our academy. Let's congratulate them on being chosen as this month's Parents of the Month!

Now, the Nowak kids didn't have any experience with martial arts before joining our academy. They are one of our original families that joined us the first month we opened Casey's ATA BBA back in September of 2004. But he dove in, learned everything he could and educated himself on what it was all about. In the process, he has made some amazing contributions to our school. Here are some of the ways he has made a big impact here at Casey's ATA BBA:

- 1.) Andy and Katie both belong to our Leadership Program and are invaluable as instructors
- 2.) They are also active in our Academies functions
- 3) They present themselves as goodwill ambassadors to the academy and often refer other families/children to our academy.



July 2009 Parent of the
Month:
The Nowaks

Here are some interesting facts about the Nowak's that you might not know:

- 1.) Michelle is a Special education teacher.
- 2.) Andy is a pharmaceuticals representative
- 3.) All the kids are involved in other sports but are committed to still fitting taekwondo into their schedule

What advice would they give to other parents? Well, as Mrs. Nowak says, "your child must be consistent in their attendance, if their priority is to advance in rank"

What Mr. Nowak most likes about our programs is: "the structure for adults". The goal setting and role models provided for the younger students:.

Would the Nowaks recommend our program to others?

"ABSOLUTELY".

Finally, what changes has he seen in your son or daughter since they started?

Mr. & Mrs. Nowak both stated that their children "are physically stronger, more focused and their Black Belt Attitude of Yes, Ma'am/Sir is very much a part of their vocabulary".

I guess that sums it up: commitment, sacrifice and dedication.

Let's all congratulate the Nowaks on being chosen as Casey's ATA Black Belt Academy's Parents of the Month for July 2009!

Great work!

July 2009 Calendar of Special Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 CLOSED FOR THE 4TH	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 BRIDGEPORT TESTING AT BRIDGEPORT ACADEMY	17 MORGANTOWN TESTING AT MORGANTOWN ACADEMY	18 KIDS DAY 10-2 MORGANTOWN HIGH STREET
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 WEAPONS CAMP 9-1
26	27	28	29	30	31	

July 2009 Special Announcements:

SUMMER CAMP DATES

SATURDAY, JULY 25TH

WEAPONS CAMP
K4K & ADULT
9am – 1pm

****deadline July 14th****

MONDAY AUG. 3 – 7

9am – NOON
ADVANCED TRAINING CAMP
(learn one form in a week)

****deadline July 15th****

SATURDAY AUGUST 8TH

SUMMER PICNIC – BOTH ACADEMIES
AT CHESTNUT MTN. RANCH

FRIDAY, AUG 14TH

6pm – 9 pm

GLOW IN THE DARK SJB (Bridgeport)

****dealine Aug 1st****

SATURDAY, AUG 15TH

6pm – 9pm

GLOW IN THE DARK SJB (Morgantown)

****deadline Aug 1st****

Welcome to the Family! New Members and Upgrades

NEW MEMBERS:

Brock Price
Sean Robinson
Alexis Whistner
Colten Walls
Drew Korner
Shelby Shuman
Nicole Schumacher
Christopher Schumacher

UPGRADING STUDENTS:

Nicholas Marrero
Abbie Alfred
Nevada Wilson
Scott Cummins

Congratulations to all new members as well as upgrading members!

Student Birthdays for July!

7/1 Justin Johnson	7/17 Nevada Wilson
7/3 Amy Patterson	7/19 Triston Lane
7/4 Justin Bennett	7/19 Sofia Horstman
7/4 Madison Starcher	7/20 Sean Woodland
7/5 Noah Spencer	7/22 Cherise Starcher
7/6 Sean Kyle	7/25 Daniel Barr
7/12 Brendan Arbuthnot	7/25 Tori Grazulis
7/12 Chantz Blosser	7/30 Craig Dombrowski
7/13 Jared Smith	7/31 Logan Cottrell
7/13 Jeff Patterson	
7/15 Christopher Kocher	
7/17 Dylan Weimer	

It's time for... **TAEKWONDO TRIVIA**
Test Your Martial Arts Knowledge...and Win!

Student Name _____

According to the main article:

QUESTION #1: What is the #1 thing you can do as a parent to support your child in martial arts?

- ___ a.) Purchase new sparring gear every two months
- ___ b.) Watch as many classes as you can
- ___ c.) Learn all the forms yourself
- ___ d.) All the above

QUESTION #2: Reinforcing the life skills at home...

- ___ a.) Drives home these positive messages
- ___ b.) Is difficult in a noisy grocery store
- ___ c.) Makes up for missed classes
- ___ d.) None of the above

QUESTION #3: Practice at home should be...

- ___ a.) Performed only on Zebra mats
- ___ b.) Avoided if lightning is flashing outside
- ___ c.) Done in short, frequent sessions
- ___ d.) Done in long, "super-marathon" training sessions

QUESTION #4: Repetition is a core part of martial arts training and...

- ___ a.) Induces a calm state of mind
- ___ b.) Is not generally required prior to the rank of black belt
- ___ c.) Helps a student "answer up" quickly in class
- ___ e.) Forms the basis for mastery

QUESTION #5: Our Tiny Tigers program...

- ___ a.) Trains six-year-olds to execute flawless outer crescent kicks
- ___ b.) Builds a foundation for later success
- ___ c.) Is only for kids with a "10" on the Whamond flexibility scale
- ___ d.) Reduces aggression
- ___ f.) All of the above

Don't forget! Any student who answers all the questions correctly (without help from an adult) wins a \$5 Karate Dollar towards their next testing, something from the pro shop or tuition! (Note: one Karate dollar per purchase, please).

Referral Reward Program

I'd like to thank those of you who have participated in the Student Referral Program! Marketing for new students costs us tons of time, money and energy. Like any business, we need new students to stay in business. Over the years we have found that looking for new students takes away from the time we would rather be spending with you and for you and teaching other students!

If I've already helped you or your child with Tae Kwon Do instruction, then you know how well I serve my students. When you refer your friends and relatives to us, everybody benefits. We can serve you and your kids better. You receive a nice gift. And we assure that we'll take the very best care of any friends or family that you refer our way! For more information about our referral reward program,

just give us a call at: (304) 282-1664. It's a great program where, as our way of saying "thanks", we send you a token of our appreciation for recommending us!

Also: If you would like any of your friends, coworkers, relatives, business acquaintances, etc. to receive a FREE subscription to this newsletter, please call me at the same number: ((304) 282-1664. We'll also send them a note with their first issue telling them that you suggested they receive this newsletter, and to contact us if they would like it to stop at any time. If you enjoy this newsletter, share it with people you know, with no hassle for you!

July 2009 Special Offer Just for Parents Here at Our Academy!

Parents-Only Special: One Week FREE Trial!

You've supported them. You've coached them. You've driven them to classes. You've taken them to tournaments. Now it's YOUR turn to join your kids out on the floor and try martial arts yourself! The benefits you'll get are endless: Build your strength. Improve your cardio fitness. Lose weight. Take your fitness to a new level. Discover self-defense secrets. Free yourself from daily stress. Make new friends. And finally, share an activity with your child that will make them proud of YOU! Join our elite club of parents who are all kicking together and sticking together for a one week FREE TRIAL! See me now to get all the details! Besides enrolling your child here, it'll be the best decision you've ever made!

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216 East Main Street, Bridgeport, WV
(304) 376- KICK

