

Why All Children Should Take Martial Arts

There are so many reasons why practicing martial arts is a great activity for people of all ages, but I'm just going to tell you about a few of them here. We're going to look at how martial arts provides self-defense, self-esteem, and a fun, healthy workout for anyone who participates.



Siouxland girls warming up before a practice.

Self Defense

Martial arts is great for teaching kids how to defend themselves. It's like having medical insurance. You hope you never need it, but you're happy to have it when the need arises. Mixed Martial Arts Champion and teacher, Sifu Romain, likens the practices they hold as possible scenarios kids may face in real life. "When practiced enough, the student can recall and instinctively respond if he/she finds themselves in a dangerous situation. If they are in that difficult situation, he will have more self-confidence since he's better prepared to handle it."

Self-Esteem

A child that has a lot of self-confidence is less likely to be bullied (Burrows 2011). Several studies conducted in the mid-2000s found that kids who practiced martial arts had higher self-esteem than those who weren't part of an organized activity (Foster 2007, Prince 2006). Martial arts can give you or your child the confidence you need to reduce the chance of being bullied but it has other effects too. For example, students practicing martial arts typically report feeling happier and had improved school work when compared with other peers their age (Twemlow, Sacco & Fonagy, 2008). Also, this same study found that students who struggle explaining themselves verbally reported more confidence after practicing martial arts over a two month period.



At this MMA club a student practice a proper leg kick.

A Fun, But Healthy Workout

Yes, you can have fun and enjoy a healthy workout while practicing martial arts. One of the reasons why people quit at their fitness programs is that they get bored. That's what happens when some people join a gym and plan to do the same thing over and over again. With martial arts you are constantly practicing and learning new skills. This will relieve boredom and your desire to stop training. Also, your body will continue to burn calories effectively during this kind of work. In fact, the average person burns around 400 calories or more when practicing (Aisnworth & Haskell, 2000).

Martial arts are exercises that children, adolescents, adults and seniors can practice regularly. It is an activity that can continue throughout life and will help kids with self-defense, self-esteem, and stay in shape. Children won't outgrow the ability or desire to practice martial arts as they get older. It is a lifestyle rather than an exercise.