

# Children - Attitudes and their life

Mrs Helen Kettings

---

I am a mother of two Girls that have grown up in a Taekwon-Do Family. We have all done TKD for nearly 11 years now, Mr Neil Kettings being the Instructor and myself the Assistant Instructor. Our Children have been surrounded with this awesome environment, and I know that it has helped our children grow to be the way they are today.

We grew up ourselves being young Parents, firm but fair with raising our two girls, being in control of them at a young age right from the word go was always important. If a Family is to survive there needs to be some Authority, Discipline, and Communication etc.

We have always had a great relationship with Nicole and Natasha, Being open minded and honest with them has helped a lot. Whatever Problems they have ever had they knew that they could come to us and discuss them openly.

Being young ourselves meant that we needed some Discipline ourselves in our lives. We were quite lucky as someone Neil worked with at the time talked him into coming along to check out the new Taekwon-do Club that was starting up. This was Fantastic, we could all go along as a Family, which we did and have never regretted doing so.

So Began our Taekwon-Do Family.

Having our Girls grow up with these surroundings has made me take a look at their lives compared to other children that do not do sport or a Martial Art etc.

We have meet a young boy that like many children has not grown up with any desire to play sport, only if he has to, even walking home from school is a slow drawn out task, as he can't be bothered. He is a very intelligent boy though; sometimes you cannot have it all in a family, brains, and a sporty combination.

The Life style is very different, when asked do you want to play tag with some other children the answer is 'no I would rather watch TV', What about the Trampoline? No lets watch TV! This is quite frustrating. The young Lad is actually quite over weight for someone his age, when ever we talk to him we try and encourage him to do exercise by talking about what sport he could do etc. He would say 'no do not like that'. Yes, we even suggested TKD. He came and watched but was not interested.

This brings me to think about life skills that you need as a child.

Being able to interact, catch a ball, follow instructions, be co-ordinated, confident, social, realize who you are and help you to develop your own Character.

Watching a lot of TV can show you a false world. You need to as a child, get out of that habit, let your imagination grow outside of the lounge where the Play station and TV usually belongs.

There has been a lot of encouragement lately about Family's doing more together for an example Push Play, encouraging everyone to get out and do something together like going for a walk, playing sport and looking at their diet. That is awesome instead of all sitting around watching TV, playing the Playstation etc.

This is where as a Family doing a Martial Art it has been great for all of us. Through our highs and lows at Training and in our own personal lives, we have held it together most of the time. Being mentally and physically challenged all the time, meeting new people from all over New Zealand; travelling to places we had never been before.

Having to show Proper Etiquette, and showing all the tenants of Taekwon-do is a lot to ask of Children, but most TKD Children show these. It also teaches them how to be courteous and respectful and show perseverance, which has a positive effect later in life as we found out when the girls went for job interviews.

Once the employer found out that there was a 10-year commitment to Taekwon-do that certainly had a positive out come. The Employer knew that there was some commitment, and that this person could be relied on and was physically and mentally strong.

Our children were Training with a wide variety of people, which gave them people skills, there were teenagers, University Students, Children and Adults from all different cultures. The positive attitude to life and competitiveness was all around. The 'what are you going to be when you grow up' question that was often asked. That really made them think. Our Instructor at the time Mr Jake Pearson was such a great Role Model to all his students'; he was a fine person to have your Children train with. Mr Pearson left to finish his training to become a Doctor. Our Children were privileged to have been able to train with him, one wanted to become a Doctor just like him, but over time changed her mind. We still see Mr Pearson regularly at Tournaments and seminars etc. and we all have a great deal of respect for him because of what he gave us in our lives.

I would love for this young boy that I have mentioned to be able to experience this kind of childhood that my two girls have. Having something in their lives to keep them occupied has been beneficial; also having a father that is a police officer has kept them away from trouble. Many young teenagers get bored and end up in trouble. Keep them busy and involve them in your life; I think that is where as young parent's we have been lucky.

We were always looking for new challenges. We were the Mother and Father that backed each other up, yet we were the young Happy go lucky Parents that wanted to do the right thing in life, so we were quite strict as well. That is why when we joined Taekwon-do we enjoyed the Discipline ourselves. I think everyone in his or her life needs Discipline.

Getting our Black Belts was an amazing experience. We are all Black Belts, Neil, Nicole and I are 2nd Dan's and Natasha is a First Dan.

Doing a Martial Art for a child can be interesting as we also found out when the girls were challenged. One time at the school playground a boy had been tripping everyone up, just being a bully! Until he tripped up Natasha, she gave him a reaction punch, which sent him off with a bleeding nose. Never again did he trip up anybody at that playground!!

The other incident was when Nicole was walking home from school and a big girl was walking right in her face making her walk backwards up a hill. She gave Nicole no option but to defend herself with a punch to stop her from coming towards her –that worked and she was never hassled again. She had a comment from a shop owner who had been watching and was worried about what was going to happen that she did the right thing to defend herself, as she had no option.

We do not tell our girls to go out and beat people up but if you are in a situation that you have to defend yourself then do what is needed.

The Girls self control was tested at school when they both had to do Karate at High School. This was part of the School curriculum. The Style was quite different to Taekwon-Do. They both met the challenges as the Instructor referred everything they did to them and Taekwon-Do. They both did well compared to the girls that have not done a Martial Art before, as they are used to doing these strange things with each side of the body. They found it quite easy but needed to still concentrate and show self control especially when some of the techniques seemed so strange compared to Taekwon-Do. They both were able to help other students with the in sight they had even though they did not really like it!! (Karate).

A Teachers' trust in Nicole saw her taking some self-defence at school when a teacher was not there. This gave Nicole a chance to show some real stuff not just kick him in the balls. Please excuse that but that was what a Teacher was teaching the girls!! That was mostly all that she said. As Nicole was not shy, she thrived on being able to take some of the class at school. She was used to getting up in front of people as she had done at Taekwon-Do for example.

Last Year Nicole was trying to figure out what she wanted to do with her life after finishing seventh form. She ended up getting a very good job at an insurance office and she has been there almost a year now. She is the junior person there but in the short space of time, she has ended up being the first aide person, and the only one with a first aide certificate. She was also nominated an award for Best Team Captain, getting her team at work to do the pedometer step challenge. She shows great leader ship skills and enjoys a challenge.

Hanging in at school is quite challenging, the pressure is on to make up your mind as to what you are going to do with your life. You basically have to decide before you leave the seventh form what you want to do and who really knows what they want.

Unfortunately, our children are living in an environment that you have to look good, really good on paper no matter what your life skills or people skills are like. As long as you have clocked up a huge debt and wasted 3 years of your life studying only to figure out when you get into a real job (if there are any in your city) that you actually don't want to do that anyway!! This is not always the case, but it used to be so easy to get a job years ago, but now the pressure is on ...all the time. Even getting their driving licence, how many stages? How much money? How many fines are they going to clock up having friends in the car when they are not supposed to? Of course, some will do this. I remember getting my Licence it was so exciting but not so drawn out and costly. This world is all about how much????

So with this constant pressure our children are always under, there still needs to be some discipline, Mental and Physical to keep them in line, since they like to push the boundaries (if they have any). Hey, if we all followed the rules imagine what a disciplined world we would have!! But that isn't the case, we need to build our children up so in life they can handle failing, handle not getting that job, accept that \$400 fine they receive for driving with friends in the car, accepting responsibility for decisions that they have made, which may have been the wrong one at the time. We all make mistakes. Nevertheless, blaming the world and having a staunch naïve attitude is not the answer, we need to take responsibility for our own actions and try to improve ourselves. So many people have an excuse or try to blame something or someone else for what they have done. We have to live with those decisions that we make in life.

Having boundaries set and discipline at home, with Parents being in control, (not the teenagers) is a healthy way to have a relationship with your children, saying no every now and then is a good thing too. I have seen too many Parents trying to be Friends with their Children and that does not always work very well. We are close to our girls but like I said at the start that we are firm but fair, we talk openly and involve them as much as we can.

I have really enjoyed growing up myself with having a Family at a young age as we did. We all helped each other through a lot of trying times not everything was rosy as I may have made it sound. We have all experienced four Family members passing away in the last 10 years and not to mention a Cancer scare with Neil about 2 years ago. They were all trying times but as a strong Family, we are still soldiering on and enjoying life. Therefore, my suggestion to Families, young children, teenagers, and Adults is please enjoy life and find something you enjoy doing in your life, GOOD things take time, so persevere and do not give up!