

Competition

"I'm not in competition with anybody but myself. My goal is to beat my last performance." – Celine Dion



Dear Parents and Guardians,

This month's topic or life skill is an exceptionally important one:

COMPETITION. The reason it's so important

is because it has a direct and immediate impact on how your children view life. Now, it's true you have a direct impact on everything your children learn and do, but, in this case, you're so actively involved that the positive, or negative, impact can be life changing. So, in addition to some teaching drills for you to practice at home, here are some ways you can reinforce this month's life lessons.

Discuss with your children various situations that may occur in martial arts class, school, or even at home. Below are two examples. The key to learning these life skills at home is in the dialogue you and your children have. For example: "Johnny, I have a question. If you had been working really hard for months to compete in a tournament and you got all the way to the final match, but another green belt won, what would you do? Would you shake his hand and congratulate him, or would you just nod your head and walk away?"

This is when you, as a parent, need to explain that the proper response is to congratulate the other participant. Then ask, "How does it make you feel, knowing you worked so hard but didn't get first place?" Again, the key is how you direct the answer, as there is no real "wrong" answer. Explain how competition is meant to help us grow in a particular event and only determines who is best at a particular point in time. Winning or losing should only help motivate us to work to get better or to stay strong/smart, etc.

Story number two is an example of being on a team in physical education class. Ask, "If you were on a softball, baseball, or soccer team and your team won the game, what would you do after the game?" Ask, "If your team didn't win, what could you do to get better?" Remind them that getting better starts with them, not the team.

As a parent, how do you behave as a spectator? Do you boo or get in the coaches'/instructors' faces? Remember, there are appropriate times and places to discuss questions and concerns, but rarely is it right then and there. Competition is good and the pressure that comes from it also can be good, as long as we don't take things too seriously and realize that competition is not meant to be a long-term judgment, but a short term tool to improvement.

April 2010

Theme
of the
Month

**This month our
weekly lessons
will cover:**

Week One:

"I'm not in competition with anybody but myself. My goal is to beat my last performance."

— Celine Dion

Week Two:

"Winners build on mistakes. Losers dwell on them."

— Arnold Mori

Week Three:

"Winning isn't everything, but wanting to is."

— Vince Lombardi

Week Four:

"A good athlete always mentally re-plays a competition over and over, even in victory, to see what might be done to improve the performance the next time."

— Frank Shorter

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**Master Tony Kook's
North Shore Taekwondo**

**2900 Lonsdale Avenue
North Vancouver, B.C.**

Tel: 604-986-5558

info@northshoretakwondo.com

www.northshoretakwondo.com

