**Self-Defense Cycle:** Important Info & Reminders for Parents and Students

The new learning cycle begins on Monday.  The students will be learning self-defense techniques rather than kata.

The information below does NOT pertain to the Little Dragons. The Dragons are also in a self-defense cycle, but they do not work with each other. They work on their techniques with instructors and assisting CIT members only.

**The information below pertains to Basic, Intermediate, Advanced & Black Belt students.**
You may notice a change in the instructional tone during the self-defense cycle.  With the exception of students in the Leadership program, the self-defense cycle is really the only time that students have close physical contact with each other.  It is important for the students to be listening carefully to the verbal instructions and attentively watching all demonstrations of the techniques at all times.  This serves two purposes – to learn the techniques and to avoid injury while practicing the techniques (safety is paramount).

As instructors, we take this cycle very seriously.  Although many school districts promote a "Zero Tolerance Policy" with regard to bullying, the behavior continues and it usually happens at times or places when adult supervision is limited. If they find themselves in a bullying situation, we instruct our students to use their words, walk away, and let the adults in charge know what happened (mom, dad, recess aide, bus driver, teacher, etc.).  However, we also want them to learn how to protect themselves if there is no other option or available assistance.

We know from our oldest son's personal experiences that learning these techniques and developing the muscle memory, so you don't have to think about what to do if you find that you need to defend yourself, is extremely valuable.  That is why we have the students repeat the techniques as many times as possible during class. We believe that *repetition is the motor of learning* and we want our students to develop that muscle memory.

**Please encourage your child to focus in class and treat learning self-defense as seriously as learning kata.**  Although our older son (Sensei Robert) performs kata with grace and precision, it wasn't his kata that helped him when he was bullied - it was his ability to use the self-defense techniques that he practiced over & over again in the dojo. He was able to defend himself without having to stop to think about what to do or how to do it. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to talk to us.

**Reminder... please leave all jewelry, watches, Fitbits, etc. at home.**
Best Regards,
Sensei Fran, Sensei TJ & Sensei Aidan