

MALAYSIA

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Nurturing Skill Development, Character Building, and Positive Engagement for children.

Thesis for 4th Degree Black Belt Upgrading Test

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17th September 2023

INTRODUCTION

Most of the Taekwon-Do Club has a variety of students ranging from the very young to the older students (age 5 and above).

Young students have different needs to adults and are active in different ways, adult exercise guidelines and training philosophies should not be imposed on children. They could not absorb as much as adult do, but they could remain physically active for up to 30 minutes or more. For the purpose of this thesis, I will focus on our young students from age 5-12.

NURTURING SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Instructor who has their own children class, they have to be done some research or go to social media to find some interesting teaching way or activity for their students to make sure their students won't feel bored and not interesting in class.

As for age 5-12 their attention span is different, the youngest the less attention span they got. But for the physically active is the other way round, the oldest the less active they got. Some of the times, those children have some emotional when they come to class. As for this case, we will try to let the children to cool down and distract them with other things to join in the class and this only use for age 5-6.

As I mentioned above, not only attention span and physically active different, learning to all the children also different. Some of the children are slow learner in their own age, some are very fast learner in their own age. During the class try not to shout at those slow learner children, this will cause their Amygdala (small, almond-shaped structures part of the brain) automatically shut off their learning brain. To not let it happen, instructor have to do it together with the children and also "hands on" while teaching, this must have to repeat again and again at least 4 to 5

times to make sure the children get what we teach. After the repeat if the students know how to do it by their own which means they have got it what we teach. The importance of age-appropriate instruction is to let the child to get in mind which way and direction to go and it will be a very good start for a child, we have to guide them through our instruction step by step to let them know the steps and techniques.

Establishing a safe and inclusive atmosphere for a child to make them feel secure while learning, they will feel safe and won't be too nervous during their first class. Atmosphere in dojang have to be balance in between serious and relax, serious moment is to let the child to know this is learning time and discipline while instructor is teaching, and relax time is a games time together with some physical training, while relax time child will get excited and forgot about safety, instructor must have to remind them every time when games time. Instructor have to adapting teaching techniques to suit different learning styles, we need to find way to figure out how to teach different ages child, for example: age 4-6 child we have to show them more and follow them to do it together and "hands on" until they can do it by themselves, for age 7-9 most of them their observation and listening will be more better than the younger age child, instructor also have to show them about 3-4 times and "hands on" while the child is doing, as for age 10-12 they will be much more better than the middle and younger ages, but still some of this ages child are slow learner and instructor have to alert on it, mostly they will get it after instructor show a bout 2-3 times, but then still have to "hands on" while they trying to do it by themselves.

During class, instructor have to give some activities about fostering a sense of belonging and teamwork among children when they're in the young ages is to let them know how to team up with their learning buddy to complete the missions or problems. Nowadays those children don't know how to solve their problems and teamwork with their learning buddy even the teenagers, most of them are too quiet and self-

preservation. These problems will cause their learning and teamwork in Taekwon-Do, instructor have to give some activities in class like some team building games, solving games in team or personal and so on to let know learn how to cope their learning buddy.

For different ages class we have to integrating fun and creativity into the learning process to let the children remember fast, like using color cone the mark the direction for them, using kicking target for them to kick or punch, or maybe put into a game to let them know how to use it for what they learn. Instructor have to take notes that some child will get over excited in game learning, they will forget they are learning while playing, instructor have to keep remind them and if using game for learning must not take too long on it, children will get distracted and don't want to back to serious mode learning.

For all the ages learner we have to observe they learning situation, instructor have to breaking down techniques into manageable steps for them to let them get it step by step. For example, their first exercise pattern Saju Jirugi 14 steps, for age 4-6 we need to break down the techniques into 2 or 3, and keep repeating step 1 to step 2 or 3 about 4 times by numbers in class and repeat again the same thing about 2 weeks to let them memorize it. For age 7-9 we need to break down the techniques into 1 or 2, and keep the same thing repeat from step 1 to step 4 or 5 about 4 times by numbers in class and repeat again in next class. As for age 10-12 we need to break down the techniques into half which is 7 and 7, keep repeating the first half until they can do it by their own then only teach another half.

Utilizing visual aids, demonstrations, and interactive learning is good for children in class. Utilizing visual aids is for them to see what is going on while in class, to let them know all the techniques they learn is useful. Most of the time instructor or assistance instructor need to have a few demonstrations for children to visual instead of listen in class, and also after the demonstration we have to interactive with the children while

they're learning, so that children can know how to use it correctly and safety.

As I mentioned above, to make children every time get interested come to class, we have to incorporating games, drills, and exercises for skill development. Incorporating games is to let children learn techniques while playing games instead of only visual and listen, drills is for them to train all the techniques they have learn and use out during sparring, and exercises is for them to train their stamina and to stay healthy. These all is a basic for children who learn Taekwon-Do.

Not only teaching skills, techniques, drills or exercises, we also have to encouraging them to active participation and motivation in all the event. Instructor have to encouraging students to join more tournament to visual others people learning skills, techniques, and experience, not only that as an instructor have to motivate students more to let them feel that they can do it. Motivation is not only do it during tournament, in class also they need motivation to continue the class. Some children will give up easily during class, we have to encourage them every time and motivate them to keep learning.

CHARACTER BUILDING

Character building in Taekwon-Do is a good connection between themselves and others, this also is to let the children have instilling discipline and respect in class or outside the class. Instilling discipline and respect not only they learn in class, in their own house their parents also have to give a good example for them to learn how to discipline themselves and respect people. In class instructor have to be a good example for their students to know what is discipline and respect, some might can't get it at first, especially those younger students. At their age 4-6, their world is like very happy and no worries, so this is the time to let them learn what is discipline and respect.

Teaching and embodying the Taekwon-Do tenets and philosophy for children will be sort of difficulty to let them know, unless we show them and remind them every time in class. As an instructor, Taekwon-Do tenets must have to follow and give a good example for students to follow. In my class I will ask my students to memorize Taekwon-Do tenets and student's oath, is to let them know what should do what should not and also a reminder for myself be a good example for them. Philosophy in Taekwon-Do will be difficult for age 4-12 children, but in my class, I will give them some theory about Taekwon-Do to know somethings except only learning techniques.

Implementing age-appropriate behavior management strategies for a new instructor is a very hard tasks, they have to research how to handle different ages children in class. Instructor need to have a strategy to manage children implementing age-appropriate behavior so that they can have discipline in class. For example, strategies to use for children is to know what they are thinking, try to talk in their way and make friend with them, in that moment we can let them know what happen to their behavior and implementing appropriate behavior to them to correct it by themselves. In this case, we try not to force the children what to do or scold them, children have their own thinking, we just let them think that their bad behavior is it good or bad and explain to them.

After the implement appropriate behavior to the children, cultivating self-discipline through goal setting and rewards is a good encourage for them. As in my class, I will get them some small goodies for them as a reward when they have a good self-discipline through goal setting. For example, I will give a task for my students (age 6-9) that they need to know all the hands techniques by 3 weeks without my showing. If most of them can do it they will get rewards from me, but those who can't do it, I'll keep their reward and encourage the children then ask all the training buddy to do it together with the children that who can't make it, this is the teamwork for them to build from younger age. But as for the

reward, we can't give it every time, they will take for granted and it will spoil them. They will not happy and get emotional in class, reward need to give it in surprise without them know, instructor need to have a good observation and knowing your students well.

As above I mentioned, implement appropriate behavior for children is to building respect for peers, instructors, and oneself, if the children do not have a good behavior, their peers won't respect them, even look down on them. To build respect for peers, instructors, and oneself, I have taught my students to have a good behavior and manner, for example, I will remind my students when enter to dojang must bow and greet to the person in dojang not matter is their peers or instructor, slowly they will get respect from their training buddy.

In our life character building and ethical values is a very hard thing for us to learn it, character building and ethical values not only learn it from school, parents also had the job to teach and guide them. As in Taekwon-Do, instructor not only teach them appropriate behavior and respect, also need to teach them about integrating character education within Taekwon-Do lessons. Integrating character education is about appropriate behavior and ethical values, as this school might teach them some of it, but mostly those children won't get it in mind. But in Taekwon-Do, instructor must have to tell and teach them clearly about it so that they won't misuse Taekwon-Do in the public.

As ethical values we need to let them know what is promoting empathy, sportsmanship, and integrity, Taekwon-Do is a martial art and I mentioned above we also need teamwork in it too. Every lesson, instructor have to promoting empathy to their students, lead and guide them how to be a sportsmanship and integrity, the best way to let those juniors learn and get example is from their instructor and seniors. Integrity in reality, we have seen many people don't have the integrity on many things even they are instructor or seniors, but we do not want our students to have this bad behavior and character.

As we do not want the bad behavior happen, instructor sometimes need to sit down with students to have facilitating discussions on moral dilemmas and ethical decision-making. Some students might too young to understand what is decision-making to them, but we need to let them have a try to make it unless they tell us that they can't make it. A discussion on moral is a good learning way for children to know what they learn from school and Taekwon-Do, so that they won't have a bad attitude and behavior in their life.

Encouraging community involvement and service-oriented activities for those young students will be a difficult task for them to involve, most of them are too shy or maybe too active but introvert. As instructor have to slowly encourage them to go out see the other places and get some community involvement such as joining tournament, as for teen students age 13 and above encourage them not only join tournament, also encourage them to join courses or motivation camp. As I say, motivation camp not only for teen students, younger students also can have a small camp for them to get involve with other instructor's students.

Nurturing Confidence and Resilience in most of the children they lack of it, nowadays those children like to play with their phone and don't like to join others people hangout or communicate. Children lack of communicate is just because they lack of confidence, in this way instructor have to taught some good combination of physical activity and mental discipline for them to learn, if taught correctly it will be a huge benefit to children.

After building up their confidence, they only have the faith to do every task that have given. A small celebrating achievement and setting individualized goals for a child is a big encourage for them, so that they have the target and knowing what they are going to do next or improving themselves. As for individualized goals, for a child age 4-6 years old they might not know what it is, instructor can give them a small goal for them to do it every time they come for lessons. For example, today goal

is to learn 2 techniques and can do it by themselves. Week by week give different goal for the students until they can know their own goal to keep learning.

After they have set their own goal for themselves, developing a growth mindset is a starting for them to accept and embracing challenges when they on the way to their goal. Some might halfway lose their confidence or faith; instructor have to encourage them every time they fail or some obstacle they are facing during the way to their goal. Everyone knows there is always a challenge when we want to achieve on something we want, and that's why confidence and support is more important for us even a child.

Not only give them confidence and support, we also need to teach them mental resilience techniques and coping strategies when they facing obstacle or problems. Mostly when problems come, we will feel desperate and annoying, in that moment we can use some resilience techniques to solve it, like we need to walk away for a few minutes from the place that make you desperate, take a deep breath to cool down yourself and think what should do. As this method, is useful for instructor who are getting angry. We can't shout at a child when they learning, because they really can't understand and shy to tell out, instructor have to try to talk with them in their way to find out the problems. Children as age 7-12 years old also might having problems while learning, instructor try to use some resilience techniques to help them go through the problems and teach them some coping strategies on it. For example, walking stance is two lines, we can ask them to check on their legs is it within their shoulder. L stance need to let them know the front knee facing in front and back legs facing to the side and need to sit backwards. Instructors either have to draw a line on the floor or maybe use some colorful cone to make a mark for their students to learn slowly. As for the hands techniques, instructors have to use a target to show them where to punch, where to block and what is the purpose of

those techniques for. Example, like raising block, instructor have to tell the students this to block where and the hand have to put which part and how high should block, so as lower block as well, instructor must show them a few times until they get what you teach them. As the hand crossing, instructors have to tell them why cross inside instead of outside, the power is different with different techniques, most of the children will get confuse with it even adult.

As I mentioned above, supporting children is to give them a confidence in their learning and living life. Even we need to supporting children through setbacks and failures, tell them it is ok to fail on something. I have an experience on my student, she had a demonstration for her school sport's day on behalf Taekwon-Do, she tried twice on her power breaking, but fail to break it. She was like desperate and feel ashamed, because there is so many people looked at her on that day. After the demonstration, I walked over gave her a hug and told her it is ok to fail, we train hard for next time, no need to feel ashamed on it. Some children might think setbacks and failures is like the end of the world, but think the other side, if we don't have setbacks and failures, we don't have the improvement in our life. As I always tell my students every time in class when they doing some tasks that given, it is ok to fail as long as you enjoy the moment and learn from your mistake and improve it.

POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT

Parental Involvement and Communication for instructor and parents is a must, so that children in dojang or in school or home we know what they are doing. Parental involvement and communication are a hard task for some instructor, they have to deal with those parents and students, not all the parents are easy to deal with.

As I mentioned above, not all the parents are easy to deal with, so that instructor have to establishing effective communication channels with

parents. For some new parents they don't like to share much their children's things to other people, even their children are learning from us. We have to slowly to establishing connection with the children and then slowly to the parents, not too fast to try to get close with them, they might get scare with it. We can through their children learning progress or telling them their children in class how are they going to make the parents feel comfortable with instructor, then only slowly we go in some effective communication channels with the parents.

The effective communication channels with parents are educating parents on the benefits and expectations of Taekwon-Do training, instructor can't put much expectation on a child, it is because the learning progress depend on the children who are learning is a fast learner or slow learner. We can let the parents know what they have learn in the class and how their children in progress, so that the parents know their expectation on their own children. All parents want their children to be the champion, they put all the expectation on their children, some of the parents don't know their children good on studies but not on martial art or sports. So, an effective communication channels with parents are important, but some parents can't accept and did not know their children are slow learner.

In that case, instructor have to encouraging parental support and involvement in their child's progress, so that let their children know their parents are with them when they facing difficulty. A parents encourage is more powerful than instructor, because parents are living with them, to bring up them since baby. Children are more reliable parents more than other people, unless they had a bad environment and education. I have seen a super supportive parents from my students, some of my students went to tournament for the first time, their parents really support since day one training class for tournament. They follow us to our tournament venue, helping around, shout for every team member who are fighting in the ring. This supportive not only their

children can feel it, their children's instructor, seniors and peers also can feel the support from the parents.

As all the supportive and encouraging from the parents, we also can feel the addressing parental concerns and fostering a collaborative relationship. Their supportive, encourage and concerns will let instructor and parents to a good relationship. Fostering a collaborative relationship not only to build up relationship between instructor and parents, also with their children when they at home or school. Nowadays parents are busy earning money and on phone all the time, this cause overlook their children learning and growing progress. Some might say earning money for their children is more important, but the children need concern, encourage and support from them. Some parents do not want to support their children to tournament or some event, it is because they do not want their children to injured or maybe bother, they working life. This will cause the children lose their confidence and interest in learning. Parents and instructor have to have a good fostering collaborative relationship so that the children can have support from both and continue learning.

Learning Taekwon-Do is a safety and risk martial art, instructor have to tell the parents about the learning of safety and risk management in Taekwon-Do. Taekwon-Do have a lot of flying kick, jumping kick, sparring, self-defense, and so on, while training all these we will try to train it in the safety way not to hurt our students. The risk is we have train on power breaking with our hands and legs, if use if wrong way it might get a broken hands or legs. Sometime things happen in accident, we did not expect it, and this is the risk for us. As for younger students, we only teach them basic techniques, and slowly teach them jumping around to learn how to do jumping kicks.

Taekwon-Do have safety and risk management in it, but we as an instructor have to ensuring a safe training environment for the students, so that the parents would not feel unsecure to let their children learn

Taekwon-Do. Young students might have more risk than the teen students, because most of the young children their balancing and legs muscle can't support their weight and they do not know how to focus to balance. As this case, instructor have to lead them to the wall to support themselves while doing those balancing training. For those children class, instructor have to alert the surrounding have no dangerous stuff such as dumbbell, knife, and so on, make sure all the students are in the safe place while training.

Safe training environment also include teaching proper warm-up exercises and injury prevention techniques, so that students won't get hurt while doing some improper warm-up. A simple warm-up for students and add in some drills during warm-up section, make sure all of the students are warm then only start to do all those flying or jumping kicking or stretching. Some case was like, the students did not get enough warm-up and get muscle or ligament tear, this is what parents does not want to happen. Instructor have to do some research for proper warm-up exercises and injury prevention techniques and apply it in the class, but need to aware of the young students when doing all the exercises.

Except teaching a proper warm-up exercises and injury prevention techniques, instructor also have to implementing age-appropriate sparring rules and safety measures to their students. As for age 4-6 years old, instructor have to give them target training for sparring training before facing an opponent. Right before the sparring section start instructor have to tell them the sparring rules which part is the scoring point and which part is forbidden, and also need to let them know the safety measures too, so that would not have any injury happen. For all the ages students, we need to have a section call target training before start sparring with real opponent. This is to train them to kick on the right point and correct way to do it and prevent injury, target training can let students to know which techniques and some drills that can use in

sparring. Students might have some that don't want to get themselves injure and reject to do it or maybe avoid it, instead of target training, instructor can make sparring training section into game activity. Game activity such as let them pair up and tell them the rules that only can touch not push or punch, then can have a few rounds with it, students will like it and let them learn how to spar during the game.

As I mentioned above, Taekwon-Do will have safety and risk also injury during our training or tournament. An emergency preparedness and first aid training for instructors is a must, at least instructors have to know how to do a basic first aid before the risk or injury getting serious. Instructors need to have an emergency preparedness in class, need to alert in every thing happen in class. If small injury that instructors can handle then we do not need to call an ambulance, but if the injury is serious, first instructors do not panic, make things clear and call ambulance if needed. Instructors have to go for a first aid training if have the chance, because first aid can help up to settle some small injury or cuts rather than doing nothing and panic.

Coming to the conclusion, summary of effective teaching strategies for Taekwon-Do classes for children will need a lot of energy and research more before start the class, make the class more interesting and fun for them to enjoy while learning. Talk to children in their way, make friends with them, do everything together with them in numbers, involve yourself more with them to let them know they are now alone and give them support all time.

The impact of Taekwon-Do on children's holistic development is to let them know how to self-defense when they get bully or someone catch them, children nowadays reaction are slow, so when people attack, they do not know how to defense it. Taekwon-Do not only for children to know self-defense to protect themselves, it also can make them grow stronger, build muscle during training, then they can be more tougher and confidence. Children learn Taekwon-Do since younger age is good

to train them discipline, behavior, respect people in their life, when they grown up can be a better man in anything.

As they learning since they were in younger age, when they grow up, they might want to be one of the instructors to teaching younger children like their instructor too. The role of instructors in shaping the future of young practitioners, instructors have a good example for their students, their students in future they also can be a good instructor and teach a new batch student. Instructors have to train their students to have a sportsman spirit, when they become an instructor, they will know how to lead their own students in their way and better than their instructor.

Above I did mention to do more research before class week, instructor also have to future research directions and areas for improvement in teaching children. Children need more attractive and interesting activity to get their attention in class while learning, and the children will slowly get interest in Taekwon-Do. Not only let the class more interested and attractive, it also helps instructors to have improvement in teaching children. Sometime instructors out of idea how to teach their students, they can do some research and think out of the box instead of follow the rules, but some of the teaching way is useful then can keep remain for few weeks. Some hands and legs techniques instructors can teach them correctly, if not all their techniques gone wrong.

This thesis offers valuable insights and recommendations for instructors teaching Taekwon-Do classes to children. By understanding child development, creating a child-friendly learning environment, employing effective instructional methods, instilling discipline and respect, building character and ethical values, nurturing confidence and resilience, involving parents, ensuring safety, and managing risks, instructors can provide young learners with a rewarding and enriching experience. Through and tailored teaching, Taekwon-Do can become a vehicle for children's skill development, character building, and positive

engagement, ultimately contributing to their overall growth and development.