



## **SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS**

### **SAFE PRACTICE POLICY**

Martial Arts are activities where safe practice is essential to help prevent injury. Children\* are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as described below. (\*also includes Adults at Risk)

#### **1. Warm-ups**

All activities should first include a thorough warm up which is appropriate for the activity taking place. To help reduce the risk of injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity.

#### **2. Martial Arts involving throwing, grappling and strangling.**

The risks include but are not limited to falling on unsuitable surfaces; landing on the head; damage to the joints from locks; strangulation.

Kids – 4 to 7 years program

Throwing and grappling doesn't exist in the syllabus and isn't taught to this age range.

Two methods of "releasing" from a choke are taught, but in both instances, the hands of the instructor or training partner are placed on the shoulder's rather than around the neck.

This method allows the techniques to be taught safely without the need to for students to be held by the throat.

Juniors – 8 to 12 years program

Throwing and grappling doesn't exist in the syllabus and isn't taught to this age range.

Two methods of "releasing" from a choke are taught, but in both instances, the hands of the instructor or training partner are placed on the shoulder's rather than around the neck.

This method allows the techniques to be taught safely without the need to for students to be held by the throat.

Seniors – Teens and adults

Methods of “release and counter” are taught via various scenarios of “victims” being held by the neck, body or arms (grappling). However, due to the absence of a matted floor, all options taught require both “attacker and defender” to remain on their feet throughout and hence throwing is not an option.

### **3. Martial Arts involving strikes, punches, and kicks.**

The risks include but are not limited to concussion (brain injury) from heavy blows to the head; damage to internal organs and joints from heavy blows; injury from inappropriate stretching and other exercises.

Alton Taekwon-Do has its own policy on contact levels for sparring. But due to variations in rules, it is sometimes necessary to change “tac” when attending external events hosted by other clubs, groups and associations.

Kids – 4 to years programs

Punching, striking, and kicking is limited to soft pad work only, with pads being held by instructor’s or their team. This age range never engage in any form of sparring.

Juniors – 8 to 12 years program

Students in this age range engage in soft pad work, but also semi-free and free sparring. Wherever possible, juniors engaged in sparring activities are paired up with others of a similar weight/height and are required to wear “approved” sparring equipment which consists of...

Head Guard

Gum shield

Gloves

Groin protector (males)

Shin guards

Boots

Sparring is simply a game of “tag”. No one gets tagged so hard in the school playground that they are hurt, and likewise no one should be tagged so hard in sparring that they get hurt. This form of sparring is referred to as semi-contact.

Contact to the face, side and top of the head is permitted, providing head guards and gum shields are worn, but contact should be extremely light.

Both male and female combatants work together, but whenever possible they are separated.

All sparring activities are monitored by the instructor and/or their team and at least one first aid trained person is in attendance.

Should any head contact occur that is deemed excessive, parents should be informed when collecting their child from the session regardless of any steps or treatment

given.

Seniors – teens and adults

Students in this age range engage in soft pad work, but also semi-free and free sparring. Wherever possible, students engaged in sparring activities are paired up with others of a similar weight/height and are required to wear “approved” sparring equipment which consists of...

Head Guard

Gum shield

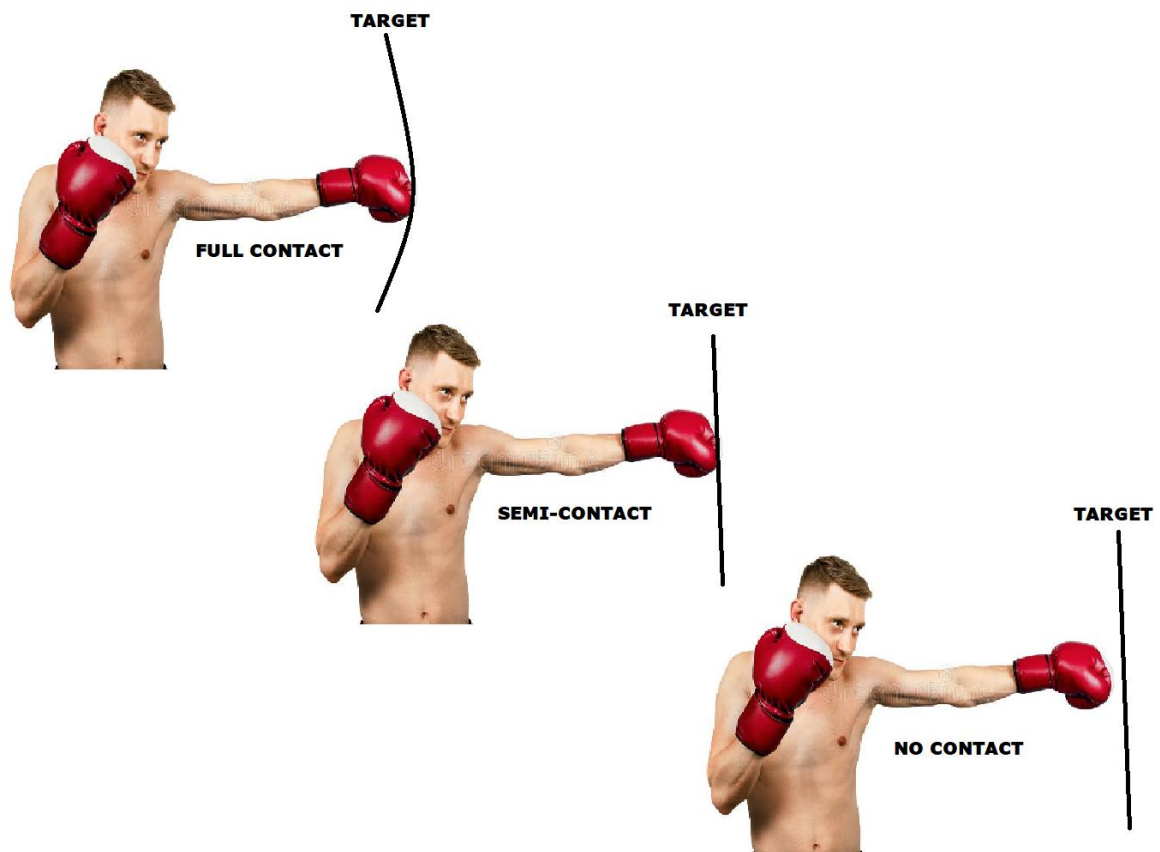
Gloves

Groin protector (males)

Shin guards

Boots

Students engage in semi-contact. (see image below)



Controlled contact to the head and face is permitted, but this is generally avoided with the lower grades and strictly monitored by the instructor and at least one first aid trained person is in attendance.

Both male and female combatants work together, but whenever possible they are separated.

Should any head contact occur that is deemed excessive, parents must be informed when collecting their child from the session regardless of any steps or treatment given. Emergency contact numbers are held for all students.

#### **4. Martial Arts involving weapons**

4 to 7 years – Kids

Weapons training doesn't exist for 4 to 7 years programs.

8 to 12 years – Juniors

Weapons training doesn't exist for 8 to 12 years programs.

Teens and adults - Seniors

Weapons training for the senior class is limited to high grade colour belts and black belts, some of these grades are children. Practice involves the use of plastic knives and bamboo sticks and is always supervised by a qualified instructor.