



SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS

SAFE PRACTICE POLICY FOR MIZU RYU JU JUTSU

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

Some examples are: Judo, Ju Jutsu and Aikido

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

Safe practice should include, but is not limited to:

- (a) Checking the matted area for suitability, particularly where the mats have been joined.
- (b) Checking that there are no hard surfaces or sharp/hard objects around the matted area.
- (c) Having an experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not taught to use or practice submission techniques, including locks, chokes and strangles on other children, due to the potential to cause injury.
- (d) Ensuring that during the learning of randori/sparring, inexperienced students are paired with those who already have experience as an extra aid to safe practice under the guidance of the instructor. In addition, no student randori/sparring to be conducted without strict observation of the instructor who maintains safe practices to reduce potential for injury.
- (e) During free randori/sparring practice of a grappling nature, where reasonably practicable, same sex/gender partners and similar grade and weight partners. Where not possible, permission sought from students and parents of children prior to practice, as well as stricter controls to mitigate potential for injury including but not limited to, single paired practice to facilitate heightened instructor observation and control.

3. Martial Arts involving strikes, punches and kicks

Some examples are: Karate, Ju Jutsu, Taekwondo, Thai Boxing and Kickboxing

- (a) 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.
- (b) Avoiding excessive stretching and exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles or hitting heavy bags; the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by these exercises.

Best Practice considerations in Ju Jutsu include, but are not limited to:

- *Controlled, light contact, no follow through, with no head contact for developing children or vulnerable adults. Safeguards to limit the risk of head injury include appropriate head guards and gloves, controlled contact as previously mentioned, and instructor observation.
- Immediate cessation of activity and first aid assessment if head injury occurs, including gaining further medical advice, GP or hospital treatment, depending on severity of contact/injury assessment.
- Additional safeguards during randori/sparring includes inexperienced students being paired with those who already have experience as an extra aid to safe practice under the guidance of the instructor. In addition, no student randori/sparring to be conducted without strict observation of the instructor who maintains safe practices to reduce potential for injury.
- During free randori/sparring practice of a striking nature, where reasonably practicable, same sex/gender partners and similar grade and weight partners. Where not possible, permission sought from students and parents of children prior to practice, as well as stricter controls to mitigate potential for injury including but not limited to, single paired practice to facilitate heightened instructor observation and control.

4. Martial Arts involving weapons

Some examples are Kendo, Kobudo, Iaido, Ju Jutsu and Freestyle Forms Karate

Safe practice should include but is not limited to:

- (a) No live blades when children are present
- (b) Safe protocols for the use of training weapons by children
- (c) Good supervision at all times by Instructors

Above all, safe practice means having a suitably qualified and experienced instructor who will ensure that children are not exposed to the above risks and who can make a training session enjoyable whilst maintaining the discipline essential to learning a Martial Art.