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Dreams for Kids aims to empower children

The Karate Can-Do! Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering children of all abilities to reach their fullest potential through karate, recently welcomed the Dreams for Kids organization for the second annual afternoon of martial arts training at North Shore Dojo in Glenview.

Founded in 1989, Dreams for Kids is a non-profit organization committed to providing children leadership programs and life-changing activities that inspire them to pursue their dreams. The organization helps children throughout the North Shore.

As the children punched, kicked, climbed ropes and maneuvered their way through lessons and obstacles, they also learned other lessons.

"Karate is a discipline which focuses on concentration and strength, which improves physical, cognitive and emotional health," said sensei Jeff Kohn, who has been a coach for 27 years and is the founder and executive director of the Karate Can-Do! Foundation. "I've watched in awe at the courage and inner strength of my special needs kids. I've learned that there is no limit to the human spirit."

The Karate Can-Do! Foundation emerged from Kohn's North Shore Dojo.

Kohn's passion and approach to teaching makes the benefits of karate accessible to children with special needs, no matter their physical or intellectual challenges.

Dreams For Kids aims to help break down social barriers and end the isolation of children in need. Through various initiatives from global awareness workshops to adaptive sporting events, Dreams for Kids unites children of every ability, race, religion and socioeconomic background and works to inspire them to realize their full potential and serve as active members of their communities and citizens of the world.

One program Dreams For Kids offers is Extreme Recess, which gives children with physical and developmental challenges the opportunity to participate in sports.

Dreams For Kids founder and President



A child learns karate with a mentor.

Tom Tuohy said he knows first-hand what it is like to grow up from the sidelines of life.

"My mother was a single parent left to raise four children alone," he said. "Through challenging circumstances and with my mother's example, along with encouragement from those who cared, I reached my dream of becoming an attorney."

Tuohy founded Dreams For Kids in 1989 in a small room inside a Chicago homeless shelter.

"Watching the kids break wooden boards and master techniques, you can see a sense of achievement that is truly felt by the person who earned it," Tuohy said. "It was so gratifying to witness. We came here today because it's a chance for all the kids to realize that everything in your life is possible and there is nothing that you can't do."

For more information about the Karate Can-Do! Foundation, call 847-729-0001. For information about Dreams For Kids, call 312-729-5404 or go to www.dreamsforkids.org.

—This story was submitted by Audrey Saffrin of Audrey Saffrin Public Relations.



The Karate Can Do! Foundation welcomed the Kids Can Dream organization for an evening of martial arts.

Photos submitted by Audrey Saffrin Public Relations



A mentor teaches a student karate movements.