

children's PRESSLINE

Kids worry about impact of beauty products

By SAMANTHA CRUZ
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Willa Pittman, 11, is concerned about how cosmetics are manufactured.

"I found out about beauty products being tested on animals from 'Legally Blonde 2,'" said Willa. "I was kind of interested in it, so I asked my mom if she had beauty products that were tested on animals, and she said that she did."

"Beauty products are dangerous and should not be test-

ed on animals," added Willa.

Experimenting with their effects on living creatures is just one concern youth have with everyday cosmetics. Many also discuss how these products affect not only animals, but also their own environment and well-being.

Genesis Espinal, 11, says beauty products affect her family's health. "My grandmother has asthma," said Genesis. "When I go to her house, I can't wear perfume because it triggers her asth-

ma."

Sean Gray, senior analyst for the Environmental Working Group, explains, "When you spray anything in the air, you run a risk of being able to inhale it."

But the dangers aren't just from breathing them in.

"Another thing that we'd be concerned about is a lot of beauty products having what we call 'volatile organic compounds' in them," says Karl Berger, from New York's Department of Environmental

Conservation.

Although these cancer-causing agents in products should be a big concern, youth don't always know about them. Instead, they sometimes have unfounded anxieties.

Phoebe VanDusen, 11, says, "Half of those products are tested on animals and half of them are just made out of animal's pee, which is kind of disgusting." Though animal products in cosmetics may seem undesirable, animal urine is

not a common additive.

Whatever their concerns, though, youth say it still may not be enough to change their beauty-buying habits.

"I realized that it is bad that [products are] tested on animals, but people still like [them]," said Willa. "And I still like [them]. So I can't really help it."

Additional reporting by SkyAnn Avilez, Stephany Cruz, Amarilee Rodriguez, Luz Soto, Thalia Vazquez and Marimar Vega.

Teaching more than martial arts in Brooklyn

By LINDA ARMSTRONG
Special to the AmNews

Parents and children can take advantage of an undiscovered jewel in Brooklyn. As you pass by on Herkimer Street, you can't help but look in the windows and watch the young people, in their white gis, so focused

ing in age from 4 years old to adults. A typical class consists of basic blocks, punches and fundamental stances. All students are also taught the primary principle, "Attitude determines approach and approach determines success or failure. We believe that a positive attitude is every-

qualified to be the chief instructor. He began taking karate at the tender age of 6 and was a black belt by the age of 11. He has been teaching the Japanese Shotokan style of karate for 30 years. This fifth-degree black belt is a former member of the U.S.A. Olympic karate team

level of belt according to their skill level. "Once they reach a particular level of skill, I assess them and promote them to the next level. The entire process to get to make black belt in this school should take three-and-a-half years." Getting to a black belt is purely based on skill at

director, Leonard Dyer, who, by the way, is also a former student of Sensei Speedy.

Parents, get your children—and yourself—involved. Classes are held Monday-Thursday. Classes for 4-6-year-olds—Tiny Tigers—are held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:45 to



Sensei Darnell (left) and Sensei Speedy (far right) pose with members of the Tiny Tigers children's class.



Adult class members strike a stance with the senseis.

(Linda Armstrong photos)



Sensei Speedy demonstrates a side thrust kick for students at Get Right Dojo with Sensei Darnell.

exercising and learning karate moves. It's a place with a positive environment that offers young people a chance to learn martial arts, self-discipline and self-confidence. That place, located right on the corner at 1350 Herkimer Street between Rockaway Avenue and Eastern Parkway in the Ocean Hill/Brownsville area, is Get Right Dojo.

The school first opened in early February 2009 and currently has 14 students rang-

ing in this Shotokan school," said Sensei Speedy Wilson, who is the chief instructor.

Taking karate is something that only has a positive effect on children, according to Sensei Speedy. "It develops and increases their concentration and focus; instills self-discipline and also produces a strong sense of self-confidence in conjunction with maintaining physical fitness."

Sensei Speedy is quite

and competed with them from 1982 to 1986.

While there are different styles of karate, Sensei Speedy chose to focus on Japanese Shotokan for a few reasons. "It is a traditional, historically based karate system, and its fundamental approaches are dynamic and strong, and it has truly endured the test of time. It is also very effective in sports karate, competition and in self-defense," he said.

Students move to the next

Get Right Dojo.

Students also have the option of competing in karate competitions through AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) organizations.

Sensei Speedy is joined on the floor by Sensei Darnell Ford, his assistant instructor, a second-degree black belt and his former student. Sensei Speedy, in fact, grew up with Ford and at the age of 14 was teaching karate to a then 10-year-old Ford.

The school is owned by its

5:45 p.m. Junior-level classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. Adult classes are on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7 to 8 p.m. and advanced classes are on Mondays and Wednesdays from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. In the advanced class, students learn self-defense techniques and kata (forms of defending against imaginary opponents).

To get more information about registering, call Get Right Dojo at (347) 406-9731.