

## Arm yourself with knowledge

By Nissa Yekich, Times Correspondent

Safety depends on having the correct knowledge and the necessary tools in hand; the community offers both to its residents.

I firmly believe that being prepared and determined have just as much to do with achieving success, as does talent or skill. It seems simple, but sometimes just resolving not to give up and making that a permanent mindset can give you the ability to consistently jump each hurdle set before you, regardless of its difficulty.

There have been many times in my life, where pure stubbornness paired with a sense of pride has refused to let me fail.

I know from personal experience that having bad luck or some bumps in the road can slow you down, but investing time and effort can keep you on track. Not everyone can catch all the breaks, but then again, the person that does not, develops more character, compassion, and knowledge, because of their struggles.

The same is true with confidence and being able to defend one's self. It is not always easy to stand up for yourself, especially, if you shy away from confrontation, but you have to know when it is the right time to do so and when it is, to do it with decisiveness and maturity.

Unfortunately, all of us are met with

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people who want to physically or emotionally hurt us along the way, and while not every painful experience can be avoided, many can be, if you know how to react in the moment.

With more children and women being kidnapped, assaulted,

molested, raped, and put in general danger each day, being aware of your surroundings and knowing what to do in certain situations can make all the difference, between having a close call and becoming a victim.

Lansing's Police Station offers self-defense classes for both children and women. If you are interested, you can contact Officer Protsman at (708) 895-7150.

They also offer free child fingerprint kits, which include a picture (which can be changed yearly) and sections to fill out personal, medical and DNA information, dental records, and fingerprints (ink pad included).

Kits like this have proven indispensable in situations where a child has become lost or kidnapped. Parents complete the kit and then, secure it in a safe location—hopefully, never having to use it.

In the case that it does have to be used, it is given to the police department where the incident occurred, rather than where the kit was given out, unless these two coincide.

To find out more information or to acquire a kit, contact Officer Barnes at (708) 895-7140.

If you live in another nearby

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suburb, I would suggest checking with your police station, as I am sure they offer comparable services.

Another great resource is the program "Just Yell Fire," a nationwide non-profit organization whose mission is "teaching girls to fight back against predators and sexual assault."

Their dvd can be downloaded via their website [www.justyellfire.com](http://www.justyellfire.com) for free. You can also request one be sent to your home by contacting the organization through their address: P.O Box 5647 Vancouver, WA 98668-5647 or by sending an e-mail to [maggie@justyellfire.com](mailto:maggie@justyellfire.com).

Also available is the option to have teachers, important community members, law enforcement, coaches, etc. train with the program so that they can spread the information to young teens and adults. You can contact them directly or check out their website for more information on how to do so, along with their rates.

Don't become another statistic; arm yourself with preparedness, the knowledge, and the confidence to defend yourself. ■