

Developed and introduced by Grandmaster Kwang Jo Choi, a 9th Degree Black Belt, Choi Kwang Do (CKD) is celebrating its 18th Year Anniversary with a Seminar at Life University in Atlanta, GA. Grandmaster Choi oversees a network of more than 400 schools worldwide from his headquarters in Atlanta. Choi Kwang Do's training methods and concepts are unique in the fitness and martial arts industry. It's a noncontact, nonfighting, noncompetitive art that stresses mental, physical, emotional and social development. The system also promotes nonviolent resolutions to conflict, practical solutions to cardiovascular improvement, and enjoyable methods of exercise.



Recent research in the fields of biomechanics and neurophysiology explains how Choi Kwang Do's movement can directly benefit a child's nervous system: The brain is made up of two hemispheres connected by a bundle of nerve fibers (the corpus callosum) in the middle. The left hemisphere controls the right side of the body, and the right hemisphere controls the left side. The corpus callosum allows the hemispheres to communicate as a complete unit. When they are communicating well, we have calm, integrated thought and an optimal learning state called whole-brain thinking. When one hemisphere is processing information more predominantly than the other, it's vexing to the brain and our thinking is negatively impacted. How we move also dramatically affects the brain. Exercise can either stimulate or strain the psyche.

Contralateral (or bilateral) movement is natural movement using opposite body sides. When we walk, we swing the opposite hand to our foot. This spontaneous movement stimulates our brain. Ipsilateral (or homolateral) movement is simultaneously using a hand and foot

on the same side of the body. This movement is prevalent in many sports activities such as fencing, bike riding and tennis. Ipsilateral movement is also found in many martial arts systems. Some scientists have found that continual and prolonged ipsilateral movement can overstress the brain and even temporarily shut down communication between the hemispheres by "switching off" the corpus callosum. This limits integrated thought and lowers energy level. Extended use of these awkward movements can also hinder learning, because it can overstress, or even permanently damage, the hippocampus. Sometimes slightly elevated stress is good for our memory, but ongoing and/or excessive stress is detrimental to learning. Choi Kwang Do teaches predominantly contralateral movements—using the hand and foot on opposite sides of the body. We normally use contralateral movements when we crawl and walk, too, and this natural movement stimulates our brain. (The early process of crawling is essential for creating neural links between the left and right hemispheres.) Kinesiologists claim that integrated movements can dramatically improve learning capability in people of any age. CKD movements stimulate the brain naturally, without stress.

Choi Kwang Do movements can also develop the nerve fibers of the corpus callosum by providing each side of the brain with specific functions. This could help children develop a more balanced, integrated way of thinking and process information less stressfully, quicker and more efficiently.

Choi Kwang Do training also empowers children. Our students learn to support each other wholeheartedly with positive reinforcement, which creates a pleasurable environment to learn in. Our students receive no criticism or punishment. Rather than pointing out the wrong way, we show them a better way by redirecting or correcting the movements and techniques. We also downplay competition. Young children can't distinguish between winning/losing in a competition and winning/losing in real life. When children lose in a contest, they often feel like they have lost in life as well. Since the child is still forming his or her sense of self,



this belief is negative reinforcement and detrimental to their growth. Even in school, children compete against each other for high grades and praise, and much of the curriculum involves abstract analytical skills and facts. At Choi Kwang Do, we understand that learning comes not only from the intellect, but also from interactions with other people and knowing that you really can achieve your goals! Children at Choi Kwang Do learn to encourage others to grow, to support each other, to be patient, to share, to behave with decorum and to compassionately relate with, rather than compete against, each other. In our protective, affirming environment, children can relax, make friends, learn, enjoy their training, and develop pride with humility. They learn to keep a clear, strong mind; they learn about commitment and persistence; they learn that achievement takes time; CKD will also improve a child's Emotional Quotient (EQ) by teaching inner strength, leadership skills, good manners, self-respect, and esteem for others. Young students learn to motivate themselves, overcome adversity, break free of limitations, and cultivate winning from within rather than competing against others! People with a high EQ have been proven to be more successful, because success is developed with more EQ than IQ. According to the A. C. Nielsen Company, the average American watches 3 hours and 46 minutes of TV each day (that's more than 52 days of nonstop watching per year). Teenage suicide rates are climbing, the number of children living with single parents is rising rapidly, and white-collar crimes are on the increase. Character development, based on values appropriate for today—humility, honesty, gentleness, perseverance, dependability and self-responsibility—could be the solution to these social problems. We strive to meet this need by putting character development at the heart of self-development.

Choi Kwang Do is also a holistic health system. Sports training has little to do with health—the goal is winning. Competitions overstress the body with high-intensity workouts that overtax the immune system and cause injuries. Statistics show more than 10,000,000 sports injuries are treated each year in the United States. At Choi Kwang Do, children may train at any age and enjoy the benefits of fitness and longevity! We encourage all our students to exercise regularly and to live a wholesome lifestyle.