



## British Kung Fu Association

### Guidance on **SAFE PRACTICE** during kung-fu training sessions

Kung Fu training is an activity where safe practice is essential to help prevent injury. While 'At Risk' adults and children are particularly vulnerable, instructors have a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to ensure that **all participants** are kept safe from harm. These guidelines set out the main areas that instructors should consider...

#### **I. Warm Ups**

All activities should first include a thorough warm up, head to toe stretching and gradual cardiovascular activity. To help reduce injury, specific attention should be paid to those muscle groups that will be used during later activity.

#### **II. Kung Fu training involving locks and throws**

The risks include: falling on unsuitable surfaces: landing on the head: damage to the joints from locks.

Safe practice must include:

- (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 locks or throws which will injure their training partner.

### **III. Kung Fu training involving strikes, punches and kicks**

The risks are: 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. This type of injury can occur during traditional Kung Fu training as well as kickboxing training.

Safe practice must include:

- (a) Light contact only, especially to the head. (Light contact means the technique is targeted but controlled so that whilst the opponent is touched the technique is not followed through). The use of helmets, mitts or foot pads does not eliminate the risk of brain injury from full contact strikes. Therefore, only light contact should be used even when protective equipment is being worn. This is particularly important when participants are under 16 y.o.
- (b) An awareness that the joints of children are still developing and can be damaged by excessive stretching and exercises such as press-ups on the knuckles or hitting heavy bags. Therefore, avoid these exercises with participants under 16 y.o.
- (c) In sparring sessions and competition, participants should be matched for height, weight and gender.

### **IV. Kung Fu training involving weapons**

Safe practice must include:

- (a) No live blades (sharp or otherwise) in the training hall when children are present
- (b) Participants should receive a safety briefing in the use of training weapons
- (c) Good supervision at all times by Instructors

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