

STUDENT OF THE MONTH: ERIC PENA



Almost exactly seven years ago, this young man walked into PMA at 6 years old ready to start his martial arts journey. Over this time, we have watched him develop and grow into a hard-working, respectful young teen and we are so proud of him. Eric Pena is our student of the month this month!

Eric's mom, Syndi found PMA while she was waiting in the lobby watching him do gymnastics. She saw a Queens Parent magazine and saw an ad for Progressive Martial Arts. *"In fact, I recall dialing from that class on my cell to schedule the trial",* she says. *"After the trial, I felt you offered more of the skill and discipline we were looking for."* At that time, Eric came in as a 6 year old in our Lil Dragons Program.

Currently, he is a Red Belt in our Warrior Phase 3 Black Belt Club Program. *"I remember him coming in and seeing this little boy who wasn't quite sure of himself,"* Ms. Kathy says. *"Fast forward to today where I see a young man who is confident, disciplined and always willing to give 100%. It's such a joy to see!"* Mom agrees and says, *"The biggest reward over the years has been continuous improvement in focus and confidence. Focus hasn't always been easy and he was not particularly taken with team sports. PMA offered a great alternative to traditional sports teams. He's been proud of leveling up and I see him more social with initiating friendships and conversations."* She also enjoys discussing the Powerful Word of the month each month with Eric and how to incorporate in life.

For Eric, he says, *"Training has helped me to decrease stress, increase my strength, improve my exercises and has made me a more positive thinker."* His goals in training are to *"fully master the combinations in class and to achieve black belt."*

Outside of PMA, Eric is in the 8th grade. He recently just got accepted to Archbishop Molloy, which he will be attending in the fall. His other hobbies include coding, gaming and editing.

Stories like these are always inspiring and show the positive effects martial arts training can have in a child's growth and development. We are so grateful for the Pena family and their commitment to Eric's training. Even through the pandemic, where he trained remotely from Florida on consistent basis. We look forward to watching Eric on his continued Black Belt Journey!

MAY'S
POWERFUL WORD
OF THE MONTH:
RESILIENCE



POWERFUL WORDS

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

RESILIENCE

RESILIENCE MEANS:

“WHEN LIFE PUSHES ME DOWN, I BOUNCE BACK UP!”

RESILIENCE MEANS:

“THE ABILITY TO BOUNCE BACK FROM STRESS, CHALLENGE, TRAUMA, FAILURE OR ADVERSITY.”

DEVELOPING RESILIENCE IN YOUR CHILD - SETTING THEM UP FOR SUCCESS

Resilience is a skill and characteristic that one is not born with but rather must be developed over time and with experience. Underlying this characteristic and inherent in its development is the element of struggle. For without any struggle or obstacles, resilience cannot be learned.

As parents, it's difficult to watch your child struggle but we must understand that if we do not allow for it, our kids will never learn to succeed and surpass or overcome their limitations. Therefore, it's important for us to foster resilience in our children.

How do we do this? Here are five simple ways:

1. **Self Care.** Of course, as babies, our kids are helpless and require our help with activities of self care, like bathing, dressing, feeding, etc. But as they grow developmentally, it's important that we allow them to discover how to do these skills on their own. This requires patience and time on our parts as parents. Give up the need to do things for your child and foster their independence.
2. **Discovery.** Allow your kids some free play. Let them discover things in a non-organized manner. Not everything has to be structured and planned. With boredom comes a creative resilience to cope with all sorts of feelings and thoughts that come forward and kids need to experience this.
3. **Praise them for Hard Work.** While participation trophies are not recommended, praising your kids for their hard work is much more important than a trophy or certificate. Understanding that the value is in the hard work they put forth reinforces that the achievement isn't the ultimate success for rather the effort they put forth. And then when they fail, they understand that they can work harder to earn whatever it is they want.
4. **Teach them that mistakes and failure are only a stepping stone.** Mistakes are an important part of life and often people concentrate wholly on the mistake and failure rather than the lesson that can be learned from those obstacles. Teaching your children to get back up and try again is one of the most important lessons we can give our children.
5. **Make them finish what they start.** Quitting is a great way to NOT develop resilience and this habit can be learned early on. Teach your children that finishing what you start is an important lesson. So, even when things get hard and when kids aren't enjoying things as much as they had when they started it, it's still important for them to finish for the time period they signed up for. Just like school and work, when we don't feel like doing something, we still need to complete what we signed up for. Besides resilience, it also develops self-discipline and an understanding that life isn't always going to be fun and easy.