

# 2021

*How does Taekwon-Do provide leadership for youth? What do you do specifically to develop leadership and what ideas do you have to further develop leadership in your club or the organisation?*



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## How does Taekwon-Do provide leadership for youth?

The national body currently has no official program to develop leadership. Contribution or attendance credits as well as beginner instructor courses are required for degree advancement. These do have an impact on leadership skills.

There are individual schools that do have their own in house programs that they have developed to help maintain and produce future club instructors and mentors.

The schools that do have these programs are some of our biggest clubs with one hundred plus members. The development of leaders under this model may have come out of necessity to keep such large numbers of students adequately supported.

Schools with smaller student rolls tend to only require one head instructor with possibly one or two member black belts helping out on a regular basis. The requirement to actively engage in future leadership management is not usually a priority.

### **The philosophy for Growing Leaders is based on the following cornerstones.**

- ***The belief that leadership experiences enhance the development of all young people – leadership experiences should not be limited to a select few.***
- ***An understanding that leadership begins with self – knowledge in order to lead others, one must first know how to lead oneself.***
- ***The belief that many leadership characteristics and traits can be developed – leaders are made, not born.***
- ***An understanding that leadership is an act of service.***

*Growing leaders of the future-Sport NZ*

The question of how does Taekwon-Do provide leadership for youth is broader than just what is officially available from the national body.

We have many types of leaders within our organisation that range from our board members and operational staff to regional directors, advisory members and instructors. There are those that organise and run events become coaches, team management, umpires and referees. Our leadership base is mostly dependant on volunteer contributions. Many of our leaders may not even be members.

Due to the large base of our leadership being volunteers we can best define our leaders as anyone who has a passion to see Taekwon-Do succeed, becomes involved and willing to do for this for the success of the art. Many of our volunteers are youth members and by involving themselves within the frame work managing tasks at club, regional and a national level they are gaining leadership qualities.

The current syllabus does if only indirectly teach leadership qualities through the tenants and student oath. With Instructors also looking out for those that wish to maybe organise events or help out other than at a club level. The tenants and student oath are only a leadership tool if they are taught as such and not just a theory question to be recited.

The effective leader's traits from Sport NZ "Growing leaders of the future", aligns with our core values, student oath and tenants nicely. The traits of common significance are all areas that current youth should be driven to excel at that we already provide.

Although not actively grouped together as a pure leadership teaching resource there is an underlying link to our *values, teachings and moral culture that do provide a pathway to youth leadership through self development.*

**Effective leaders have the following traits.**

- ***Authenticity: Be yourself. Be confident in who you are as a person.***
- ***Inclusiveness: look to include others, get their opinions and thoughts.***
- ***Self-awareness: Understand yourself and your impact on others***
- ***Driven: Be motivated to perform and improve.***
- ***Relational: Effective leaders get along with others and build respect.***
- ***Communicative: effective communication enables information to be passed to you as a leader.***
- ***Selfless: Great leaders put others before themselves.***
- ***Responsible: Be accountable for your actions.***
- ***Competitive: Be effort-focused and demand high standards.***
- ***Focused: Be attentive.***

*Growing leaders of the future-Sport NZ*

**What do you do to develop leadership?**

I personally do not have a leadership program for my club other than the expectation that seniors will continue to come through and be able to assist with teaching and mentoring. I have always looked after those that assist in class with either offering them a new uniform when it's required and the club pays for them to attend courses, seminars and grading.

This approach has worked for me with black belts staying on for many years and offering support and assistance at club level. Currently I have no black belts at club due to retirement and relocation. I have then been asking my senior red belts to step up on occasion to assist in class with appropriate incentives also.

If my club role increased to a number that could no longer support this I would then have to consider another means of leadership development. I have a wide ranging age group of students as a resource and do have a few youth members at red belt that I am actively developing to be able to be comfortable offering mentorship to other members.

My students I'm sure never joined up with the idea of becoming any type of leader or role model and just wanted to learn a martial art. Not many of them will actually be capable or are willing to become a leader but most of them if given the chance can become positive influences on others around them and this I encourage as much as possible.

***“A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent.” –Douglas MacArthur***

10 powerful Quotes on Leadership - Forbes.com

### **What Idea's do you have to further develop leadership in your club or the organisation?**

Currently I have tried a model to help foster leadership at a club level.

Having green stripes using their learned skills to help develop and inspire the yellow belts to then go on to be inspired by the blue stripes.

This does not mean they teach each other but more within the frame work of asking “Pick the best or most interesting things you learnt as a yellow belt and how can, you let the new students know about it”. This can generate a feeling of inclusion and acceptance especially at the beginning and slowly develop passion and the ability to convey to others the excitement and new knowledge linked to your syllabus.

I applied this at different training sessions recently to see how the students would respond to being able to adequately explain to previous grades what new or different techniques they now have in their current pattern and what the purpose and application of those movements was.

On another night I asked the more senior students if they thought their knowledge was good enough to be able to teach middle punch correctly to a new beginner and asked them to go over it with the white belts. Giving a brief overview of what I was expecting them to cover and include with their teaching gave them a positive focus on direction and content.

The outcome was encouraging with many different types of instruction dependant on the ages and grades being taken. It was definitely a worthwhile exercise and showed that being able to do the movement but then explain and teach the movement requires different focus and highlights the requirement to be knowledgeable in your abilities.

This is a direct leadership learning experience for students and can be developed within the safe and familiar environment of club.

***Supporting others success won't ever dampen yours.***

25 motivational quotes by women in business – musicandshine.com

Thinking of improvements to the organisations input to youth leadership I have looked to other sporting codes for guidance on what they do to promote youth leaders.

Netball NZ and Gymnastics NZ have dedicated youth leadership programs.

Netball NZ offers a program with three stages.

- Leadership learning – qualities of a leader, how to lead others and challenges of leadership.
- Pathway learning – specific chosen pathway development.
- Giving back – Support and mentoring to volunteer to develop learned skills.

#### Targets

- Young people between 12 and 24 years.
- Young people who are starting to exhibit leadership qualities.
- Young people who are starting to disengage with playing netball.

#### Objectives

- Inspire young people to engage in their own personal development and growth.
- Improve the well being of young people, develop confidence, resilience, and social skills and help them reach their potential.
- Use netball as a vehicle to engage young people in developing a deep understanding of leadership and how to be an effective leader.
- Grow the confidence and capability of young people as youth coaches, umpires and netball deliverers.
- Provide practical opportunities for young leaders to practice their leadership skills within a practical frame work for netball centres to grow their youth volunteers.
- Increase netball involvement by young people through playing, coaching, umpiring and other facets of the game.

#### Goals

- Growing young leaders through netball.

#### Description

- The program utilises netball as a vehicle to enhance the health and wellbeing and provide opportunities for youth to explore concepts of leadership and develop their capability and confidence as young leaders within their community. The young leaders are supported to practice their developing leadership skills through giving back in a coaching umpiring or netball delivery.

This program provides three awards to motivate young people in their leadership development.

<p><b>Bronze Award</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leadership Learning</li></ul>	<p><b>Silver Award</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practicing leadership within a pathway</li></ul>	<p><b>Gold Award</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experiencing Leadership Within a pathway</li></ul>
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***Individually we are one drop.  
Together we are an ocean.***

Gymnastics NZ also has a similar program called XTND which is offered in a six module course specific to youth coaching.

The XTND program is completed over two years to allow the students to practice what they have learned in the club environment and receive mentoring from club coaches. There are six modules in total, one online which must be completed before starting on the five practical modules.

- XTND Start it – (Online)
- XTND Bounce it
- XTND Balance it
- XTND Move it
- XTND Spin it
- XTND Throw it

XTND is the gymnastics NZ Coach and youth leadership program developed to support youth coaches in their club.

#### Benefits of XTND

- Develop leadership and coaching skills.
- Learn how to coach gymnastics sport.
- Learn how to coach children.
- Learn coaching strategies.
- Learn the fundamentals of movement.
- Learn a range of fun games to aid teaching.
- Develop your communication skills.
- Learn skills for time management.
- Learn skills for managing groups.
- Develop confidence and self management in different situations.

Netball has a head of Community Netball and Gymnastics a Youth and Foundation Developer. Both of these sports like us has a large percentage of their membership categorised as youth so having a dedicated team actively involved in the interests and development of youth, keeping them engaged and interested in the sport is something they both regard as important.

#### **Youth Leadership begins with practice**

***As children transition into and through adolescence, they need to practice skills that will teach them how to exercise positive influence over themselves and others. These skills do not come naturally to many children because they have not been in situations where leadership skills are easily developed. In fact, to become comfortable as a leader, it is helpful to learn and practice new skills in a safe, nurturing environment.***

Netball and Gymnastics current working examples could be examined and re-developed into a Taekwon-Do leadership resource. There are many similarities between the tangible outcomes with youth involvement and continued participation.

To develop a specifically targeted youth leadership objective we would need to adapt the working models and have a dedicated youth leadership advisory group. There are already sporting codes that have successful pathways and being able to reach out and consult with these codes on developing our own program would help to focus the process.

A dedicated youth leadership advisory could maintain all that we currently provide in this area. Youth tournaments, Mini Kids, Kubs, Junior camps and the child protection policies. All these areas would be the responsibility of the advisory to promote and maintain for the advancement of youth involvement and personal development with a direction to producing pathways to promote youth leadership.

If our intention is to also providing training for youth to become leaders of society and their communities we could offer out sourced courses by scholarships that directly provide these skills.

The YMCA has a youth development programme called "Rise up" Which teaches communication, goal setting, group participation and confidence. It is an interactive one day training workshop based around learning, theory and practical workings of teams and of team work.

There are many other suppliers that offer a similar experience for youth such as Outward Bound who also have an adapted course for those living with impairments and disabilities.

***I start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers. –Ralph Nader***

*150 Leadership Quotes to inspire the leader Within You – [blog.vantagecircle.com](http://blog.vantagecircle.com)*

There is one factor currently that is unknown in regard to how it will relate to our future youth leadership. We have had an extremely large influx of Kubs and Mini Kids students over recent years. Many of these students will hopefully filter into the normal class structures after graduating and moving forward.

There is no current statistical information as to how many of these students are progressing from junior classes and would be likely to then become our future leaders.

As our membership numbers have shifted dramatically towards a much younger demographic you could surmise that our future volunteer leaders would be of a younger average age group than they are now. This in itself will require some thought into how we manage the logistics as younger volunteers organising and running events or instructing are going to require assistance to achieve the social and legal requirements attached to such positions of authority.

Having an advisory group to actively manage these areas and collect data will help us understand their specific requirements and boost the retention of those moving between our different youth experiences and up to adult participation.

*"I'm keenly aware of the Principle of Priority, which states (a) you must know the difference between what is urgent and what is important, and (b) you must do what is important first. – Steven Pressfield, The War of Art.*

Goodreads.com

It is never a good idea to add additional advisory groups or introduce extra levels of management just for the sake of it but in this case it is warranted. We have our largest numbers of members left with no official support or thought on their continued development or direction.

If we build a successful youth program designed and administered directly at targeted age groups we would then be able to track successes and further develop programs to increase youth engagement and offer leadership opportunities that are age appropriate at each targeted level.

Building a framework that is totally inclusive and softly targets every youth member with leadership training and experiences for personal development would then see those that excel being able to be individually fostered with more advanced experiences that could help with producing or future in house leaders as they progress into the teenage and adult years of participation.

## **Conclusion**

There is now an excellent opportunity to develop and expand our youth member experience. One of the key indicators that we are missing the mark is the large number students that leave early on in their journey. Developing strategies expressly designed for their age groups and emotional development could help turn the numbers around so more stay and become invested and can see a future where Taekwon-Do is an important part of their routine into adulthood.

There are many examples of other sporting codes that implement a strategy directly focused on youth. These codes though not similar to our own still have the same common thread of having to maintain and support large numbers of youth members. They have all recognised the importance in applying specific recourses towards youth development in the areas of personal and social advancement.

Asking other successful youth based codes for assistance and direction in developing our own strategies would offer an excellent incite and offer us a head start.

Our member demographic has always been heavily student based and introducing a lower tier of Kubz and Mini Kids has pushed the average age lower. The continued development of our younger market is showing measurable progress though member growth it is however lost if we don't then expand on that success with our offerings to youth students joining main stream classes.

The questions asked have been an interesting journey as I had not given any thought as to the youth market and what it means and how it impacts our current or future membership. Examining information on youth and the importance of how it relates to our own sport has been an interesting exercise.

Looking at our current structure there is a void in offering a consistent experience across the full youth demographic.

## References

Kiwi Sport: Growing leaders of the future:

[https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fsportnz.org.nz%2Fmedia%2F2207%2Fgrowing-leaders-facilitators-guide.pdf&psig=AOvVaw0OHUQs7Kyq3128wkq3B7kj&ust=1629508544972000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=2ahUKewjYzo\\_Btr7yAhUyHHIKHT8GChQqr4kDeqUIARcpAQ](https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fsportnz.org.nz%2Fmedia%2F2207%2Fgrowing-leaders-facilitators-guide.pdf&psig=AOvVaw0OHUQs7Kyq3128wkq3B7kj&ust=1629508544972000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=2ahUKewjYzo_Btr7yAhUyHHIKHT8GChQqr4kDeqUIARcpAQ)

Netball Leaders Information: <https://www.sporty.co.nz/netballnorthern/Leadership-1/Information-On-Netball-Leaders>

XTND Youth Leadership Program: <https://www.gymnasticsnz.com/gymsports-member-resources/xtnd-youth-leadership-programme/>

YMCA Rise UP: <https://www.raiseup.co.nz/>

Outward Bound NZ: <https://www.outwardbound.co.nz/>

Netball NZ: <https://www.netballnz.co.nz/>

Gymnastics NZ: <https://www.gymnasticsnz.com/>