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Parents and Teens Bond in Personal Safety Course

St George, UT – August 10, 2015 – Most topics are difficult to cover with teens, and that includes talking about the possibility of sexual assault. Yet the community Personal Safety course is helping teens and parents confront these topics head on, and learn how to protect and prepare for these situations together.



Makayla and Tamra Carter, personal safety course students

Tamra Carter, a St. George resident, is taking the course with her teenage daughter Makayla. Both mother and daughter describe how the class has helped them reinforce their boundaries and create a fighting mentality, which is a personal commitment to protect oneself at all costs in the case of assault or rape. “I wanted to prepare myself for the future,” said teenager Makayla. “The course has helped me prepared emotionally and mentally, so if I ever got in a situation where I had to fight to protect myself, I know how.”

Tamra herself is a survivor of workplace rape and sexual assault. She took the class last year for healing, and is now taking it a second time to learn how to be a personal safety facilitator. “I want to help other women know that sexual assault can happen to anyone,” said Tamra. “I thought I was immune to it. Now I want to protect my children and other women from that.”

Taking the class as mother and daughter has its advantages. Makayla mentions how she’s more comfortable practicing self-defense with her mother there. And Tamra appreciates that her daughter is learning things she was never taught about relationships. “When we talked about signs of a potentially abusive partner, Makayla pointed out negative qualities she’s noticed in my previous dating relationships,” said Tamra.

Only about half the class-time is spent on self-defense moves in the gym. A classroom portion explores social, emotional, mental, and psychological patterns that encourage the prevalence of sexual assault in society, including why victims are often blamed for sexual assault, what abusers look for in targets, and how to identify an abuser at the beginning of a relationship. Overall, the personal safety course strives to empower its students.

Enrollment is now open for the fall Personal Safety Course, which meets every Wednesday night for 16 weeks starting August 26. The course costs \$124/person, but only \$104/person when enrolling with a family member. For more information about the personal safety course, please visit www.dovecenter.org/personal-safety, or call the DOVE Center at 435-628-1204.



Instructor Tim Eicher teaches how to escape back holds