



## Talkin' about self defence

A key goal for Council's community programs is to provide a wide range of activities that promote health, well-being and incorporate fun and new skills as well. Our [Term 3 Women's & Girls Self Defence Program](#) run in collaboration with CWKD Kung FU Academy is just one such example. It's an opportunity for women to come together in a safe environment and challenge themselves. We recently caught up with Donco Jakovski who is one of the program facilitators to talk about this course.



### **How long has the program been running at Burwood Council?**

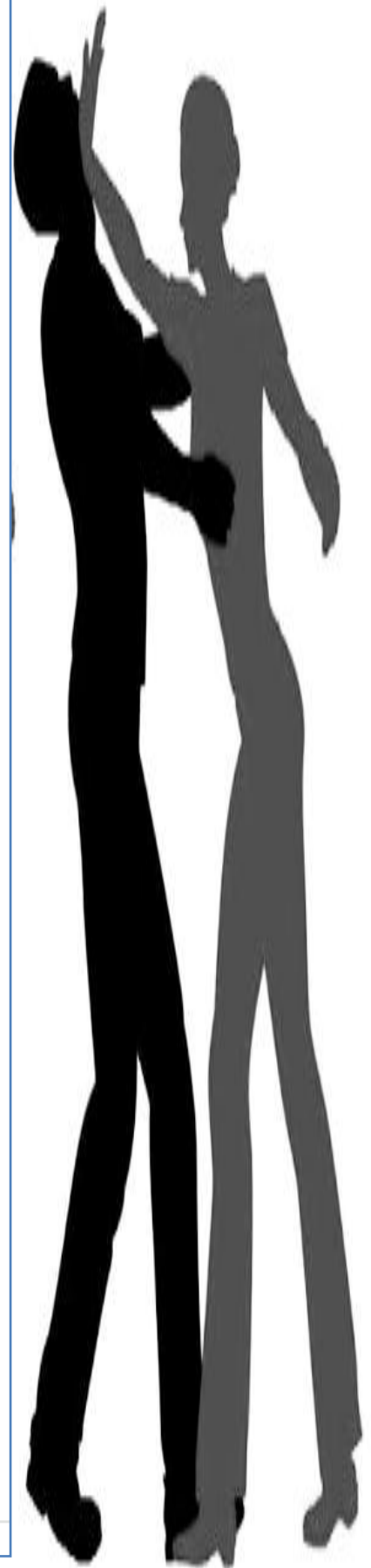
The program started with CWKD Kung Fu Academy participating in the White Ribbon events from 2019 with Burwood Council. The initial one-day course was well received by the community. After receiving numerous positive feedback and enquiries, Burwood Council decided to trial a 9-week Personal Safety course. This was very successful hence the program has been extended to what it is currently.

**Is there anything that inspired you to become a facilitator and to pass on these skills?**

We have been involved in Martial Arts for over 35 years. I could see that the community could benefit from an understanding of the Martial Arts. It can help developing confidence as well as reducing stress. Other benefits include increased motivation, mental wellbeing and good health. Seeing my students grow and develop gives me the motivation and inspiration to pass on the skills and philosophies I have learned through my training and self-development. We have seen students come in as children and become well educated adults and positive members of the community.

The biggest aspect that I have found in training in Martial Arts is that you belong to something bigger than you, you have a support group through your fellow students and instructors. In effect you inherit a family.

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### **What does a typical session look like?**

Each session commences with a quick warm up. We then work on techniques such as strikes and kicks. Students get to practice, analyse the scenario and be guided by the instructors. There's always time for questions which is encouraged before we do cool down.

### **What would you say to women to encourage them to take up the program?**

This program is not just a self defence course but also focuses on self development. It enables women to gain confidence in themselves and to be empowered knowing they can keep themselves safe in conflicting situations.

The 9-week course is based on real-life scenarios, and we encourage further practice and training after the course.