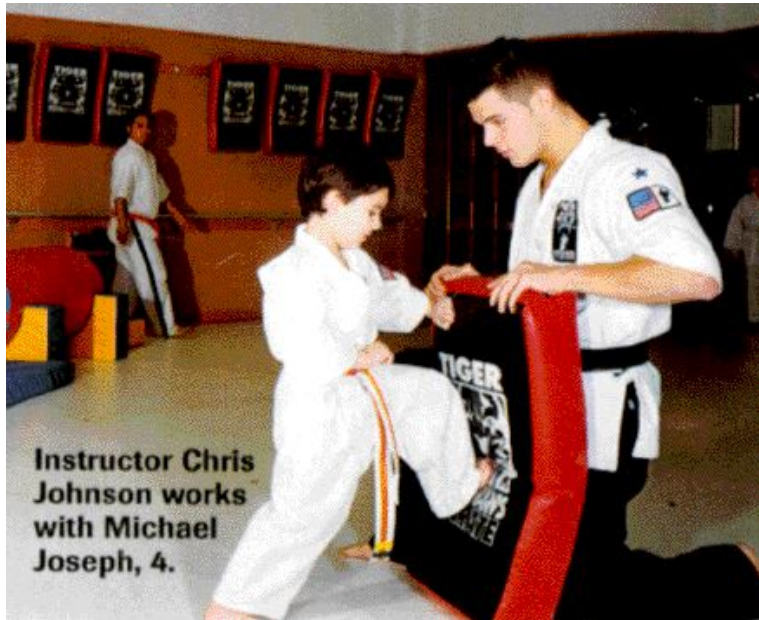


As featured in...

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**FamilyCircle**

# The Karate Kid

By Margaret Jaworski



Instructor Chris Johnson works with Michael Joseph, 4.

Karate Center. “After taking private classes for twelve weeks, his coordination, concentration and strength increased.” says Randy. For Michael Joseph, improvement on these fronts is especially meaningful. Michael has pervasive developmental disorder (PDD), a condition that falls on the autistic spectrum. Children with PDD differ widely in abilities and behaviors and may exhibit any number of daunting problems, including limited language

**e**very Friday afternoon, following a full day at the Variety Child Learning Center in Syosset, New York, where he attends school, four-year-old Michael Joseph Gorlano heads to nearby Great Neck to spend an hour yelling and kicking. His mother, Randy, 41, isn’t at all upset by her son’s after-school behavior.

Last July Randy signed Michael up for karate lessons with Paul Castro, program director of Tiger Schulmann’s

skills, distractibility and overreaction to sensory stimuli such as light and sound.

After private training, “Michael was focused enough to join class with ‘regular’ kids,” says assistant instructor Chris Johnson. Although karate is just one component in Michael’s education and treatment, “I’m grateful he’s out there having fun,” says Randy. For Michael Joseph, that’s a pretty good degree of success.