

Posted on: Monday, August 1, 2005

Women on defense

- [What to look for in a class on self-defense](#)

By [Catherine E. Toth](#)
Advertiser Staff Writer

Melissa Mansfield stomped as hard as she could, trying to break the man's foot with her own. Then, as he lunged in to choke her, she swung her arms in a large circle and freed herself from his grip.

Now, if she needs to fight off a real-life attacker, she'll know what to do.

"If a situation like that happens and my adrenaline is pumping and it's life or death, I'm going to go down fighting," said Mansfield, 23, of Mililani, who took the class with her mother, Mary. "Now I have a better idea of what to do. I'm totally confident I can get out of it."

Mansfield was one of a dozen women who took the four-hour Women's Assault Prevention Course last Sunday at Daijingu Temple in Nu'uano.

They all came to learn simple, life-saving skills to protect themselves during an attack. They learned how to fall correctly, to protect their vital organs, to use their legs to fend off an attacker, to easily break feet and noses.

Each woman had her own personal attacker — a student from the Hawaii Jujitsu KoDenKai — to hit, push, grab and kick.

"Your brain will remember these moves in times of strife," course instructor and jujitsu professor Steve McLaughlin told the women. "They're that simple. They're that easy to do. Because they make sense."

The recent rash of purse-snatchings, muggings and assaults here has alarmed women into action. They're taking self-defense classes. They're parking in safer areas. They're more aware of their surroundings.

More importantly, they're passing on the reminder to others that this can happen to anyone.

"What happens is that people become complacent; they're saying, 'This won't happen to me,' " said Honolulu police



Brittney Shimabukuro, 13, of Salt Lake learns to defend herself against a choking maneuver, as attempted by mock attacker Danilo Madeja of Chinatown during a Women's Assault Prevention Course held at Daijingu Temple in Nu'uano.

Photos by REBECCA BREYER | The Honolulu Advertiser

- ADVERTISEMENT -

BOOST YOUR SAFETY ODDS

On the streets

- Dress appropriately. Avoid flashy colors and jewelry that might attract unwanted attention.
- Walk with someone when possible.
- Stay alert to what's around you.
- Go to a public place if you need to ask directions.
- Walk near people. Avoid isolated areas, parks and parking lots.
- Avoid shortcuts; they could be dangerous.
- Protect valuables.
- Carry only what you need.

Sgt. Kim Capplonch. "They think it's just a story. Unfortunately, it's happening."

WOMEN ARE TARGETED

Last month, a 50-year-old tourist was robbed and assaulted in Kailua, Kona. An 18-year-old woman reported that she was abducted, raped and assaulted after she got off a city bus in 'Aiea.

In June a 22-year-old woman was hurt during a botched purse-snatching in Makiki. Six pedestrians in the Makiki and Punchbowl areas were attacked by a man on a bicycle who hit his victims with a brick or rock and stole their money.

Women, who have been the target of purse-snatchings, need to be more aware of their environs and take steps to lessen their risk for attacks, Capplonch said.

There are the obvious precautions (see box).

Then there are the not-so-obvious ones, such as re-evaluating your purse.

"Don't carry a handbag," Capplonch said. "It's so easy for them to just grab it."

Police suggest women use bags with shoulder straps. Better yet, wear the bag with the straps diagonally across your chest. This makes the bag more difficult to swipe — and you less of a target.

An estimated 1 out of every 8 women of all ages in Hawai'i will be victims of assault, according to research done by McLaughlin. Women age 18 to 25 are at an even higher risk: 1 out of 4.

According to McLaughlin, however, more than 50 percent of attacks happen in the woman's home. Of those, 70 percent are committed by someone the woman knows or has met before. In Hawai'i, only about 2 percent of assaults on women occur in parking lots.

So learning how to escape attacks is just as important as learning how to avoid them.

For example, what do you do if an attacker is sitting on top of you, holding down your arms by your wrists? Or what if he's trying to strangle you?

McLaughlin teaches women how to get out of these situations, from choke holds to pin-downs. In his class, women learn how to throw their attackers off-balance, to break his clavicle bone and to effectively knee him in the groin.

- If you carry a purse, keep it close to your body.
- At bus stops, wait in well-lit areas near others.

In your car

- Keep doors locked and windows rolled up in traffic.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Keep valuables out of sight in the trunk.
- Have your keys in hand and ready when you approach your car.
- Before getting into your car, check the back seat.
- If you have car trouble, raise the hood, put on emergency flashers. Stay inside the vehicle with the windows up, and ask anyone that stops to call the police or nearest service station.
- Don't pick up strangers.

Source: Honolulu Police Department

CRIMESTOPPERS HOT LINE

955-8300 or *CRIME on your cellular phone
<http://www.crimestoppers-honolulu.org/>



Steve McLaughlin, course instructor and jujitsu professor, demonstrates simple self-defense techniques with student Melissa Mansfield of Mililani.

"I wouldn't say I'm a very careful person," said Mansfield, who does walk to her car with her keys ready. "I grew up here, so I never really had bad things happen to me. ... But after this class, I feel like I should be a little more aware of who's around me, to be more cautious."

ANYONE, ANYTIME

Cindy Macfarlane Flores never thought she would be a victim of a mugging. At least not at a mall parking lot on a Saturday afternoon — and being nearly seven months pregnant.

But it happened this June.

An obviously pregnant Flores walked out of Macy's at Windward Mall and headed toward her car, talking to her husband on her cell phone.

Suddenly, a car pulled up in front of her. Another man came from behind her, grabbed her handbag and pushed her down to the sidewalk. Within seconds, the thieves — and her handbag, wallet, credit cards and cash — were gone.

"It happened so fast," said Flores, a 34-year-old teacher from Kane'ohe. "This was broad daylight. And I'm pregnant. Who would've thought?"

Flores realizes now how many mistakes she made that Saturday afternoon, starting with her bamboo-handled handbag, which was dangling off her elbow. Now she uses a small bag with shoulder straps. And she minimizes what she keeps in it.

"Now I don't have my whole life in my purse like I did before," said Flores, who had to close her checking accounts and cancel her credit cards. "I'm still dealing with all that."

She also realizes talking on her cell while walking to her car may have made her less aware of her surroundings. While talking on the phone may ease the worry of walking alone, you may not be as attentive to what's going on around you. Had Flores been paying attention, she might have noticed the man who mugged her waiting outside the store.

Reach Catherine E. Toth at cloth@honoluluadvertiser.com.



Keone Mullen, right, of 'Ewa Beach shows Sherri Campbell of Makiki how to protect herself during an attack.

RELATED NEWS FROM THE WEB

Latest headlines by topic:

- [Auto Accidents](#)

Powered by [Topix.net](#)

[Back](#)

© COPYRIGHT 2006 The Honolulu Advertiser, a division of [Gannett Co.](#) Inc.

All materials contained on this site are protected by United States copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, published or broadcast without the prior written permission of The Honolulu Advertiser. You may not alter or remove any trademark, copyright or other notice from copies of the content.

ISLAND LIFE

[About Men/Women](#)

[Taste/Recipes](#)

[Faith calendar](#)

[Travel](#)

[Comics](#)

[Tube Notes](#)

[TGIF calendar](#)

[E-Postcards](#)

ARCHIVE

[Today's headlines](#)

[Back issues](#)

FEATURED NEWS

[Nation/World news](#)

[Movie showtimes](#)

[Special projects](#)

[Obituaries](#)

[Weather](#)

[Beach conditions](#)

[Columnists](#)

[Photo galleries](#)

Posted on: Monday, August 1, 2005

What to look for in a class on self-defense

By [Catherine E. Toth](#)

Advertiser Staff Writer

In light of recent attacks and

assaults, it wouldn't hurt for women to look into a self-defense class. But do your research first. Some courses can be more costly than effective.

"This common sense (in assault prevention) is available if you find a course that can tell you what is going on, what has happened to women in the past, what the trends are and what do to about it," said Steve McLaughlin, professor of DanZan Ryu JuJitsu who has been teaching self-defense and assault prevention for women since 1992. "Most women want to do something, they just don't know how."

Here are some of his suggestions:

[Video](#)

[Blogs](#) 

CUSTOMER SERVICE

[Help page](#)

[Contact us](#)

[Subscriber services](#)

[Reader services](#)

[Advertising services](#)

[About us](#)

[Site map](#)

[Corrections](#)

[Today's front page](#)

RESOURCES

[Discussion board](#)

[Traffic hotspots](#)

[HTYellowpages.com](#)

[Hawaiian dictionary](#)

[E-mail news alerts](#)

[RSS news feeds](#)

[Wireless news](#)

[Newspaper in](#)

[Education](#)

[Blood Bank of Hawaii](#)

HONOLULU TRAFFIC
SPONSORED BY 

[▲ Top](#)

- Find out the instructor's training background.
- Check the track record of both the instructor and the course.
- The class should not be part of an exercise program.
- Make sure the class is not just a come-on to join a school.
- You should feel comfortable with the class and the instructor.
- Get recommendations from other women who have taken the course and/or instructor.



MINI SITE MAP

LOCAL NEWS : [Education](#) | [Obituaries](#) | [Weather](#) | [Traffic hotspots](#) | [Military news](#) | [Discussion boards](#) | [Live chat](#) | [Columnists](#)

SPORTS : [Surf report](#) | [UH sports](#) | [High school sports](#) | [Recreation](#) | [Sports calendar](#) | [On the Air](#) | [Golf report](#) | [National sports](#)

ISLAND LIFE : [About Men/Women](#) | [Taste/Recipes](#) | [Faith calendar](#) | [Comics](#) | [TGIF calendar](#) | [Tube Notes](#)

ENTERTAINMENT : [TGIF weekend calendar](#) | [4-week guide](#) | [Movie showtimes](#) | [Dining](#) | [Visitors](#) | [National arts & leisure](#)

BUSINESS : [Hawai'i stocks](#) | [Hawai'i mutual funds](#) | [Hawai'i mortgage rates](#) | [Island bank rates](#) | [Stock quotes](#) | [Moneywire](#) | [Coming events](#) | [Trade Winds](#) | [Local resources](#)

OPINION : [Letters to the Editor](#) | [Dick Adair's cartoons](#) | [Submit a letter](#) | [Submit a commentary](#)

TRAVEL : [Travel almanac](#) | [Currency rates](#) | [Destinations](#) | [Sunday travel ads](#)

BLOGS : [The Daily Dish](#) | [Akamai Politics](#) | [The Warrior Beat](#) | [Volcanic Ash](#) | [Prep Talk](#) | [The Hot Seat](#)

HELP PAGE : [Contact us](#) | [Back issues](#) | [Newspaper subscriptions](#) | [How to advertise](#) | [Frequently asked questions](#) | [About us](#) | [Site map](#) | [Terms of service](#) | [Corrections](#)

CLASSIFIEDS : [Classified ads](#) | [Shopping](#) | [Coupons](#) | [Place an ad](#)

PARTNERS : [Jobs: Careerbuilder.com](#) | [Cars: Cars.com](#) | [Apartments: Apartments.com](#) | [Shop: ShopLocal](#)

© COPYRIGHT The Honolulu Advertiser, a division of [Gannett Co.](#) Inc.
Use of this site indicates your agreement to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy](#) (updated 6/7/2005)

