


# New Year's Resolutions

Making Them Stick

by Kimberly Horg



**N**ew Year's resolutions are a great way to put bad habits to rest and transition to a possibly healthier, more enriching lifestyle. However, whether it is the desire to live better through diet and exercise, read

more, see more of the world or acquire new skills, resolutions can also be hard to maintain after Jan. 31. But one of the keys to making them stick is finding activities that easily fit with your family's interests and lifestyle.

### Exercise, Exercise, Exercise

Whether it is an indoor bounce house, ice skating, canoeing, kayaking, laser tag, miniature golf, bowling, dance classes or karate classes, the family can be off the couch and, most importantly, having fun together.

Kovar's Karate Center, a family business owned by brothers, Tim and Dave Kovar, puts its focus on family first.

"We are teaching positive family values and successful life skills," says Tim.

The Kovars train at their center along with their children and their oldest student, 83-year-old Len Kovar, who also happens to be their father. Tim says the three generations live by the slogan, "a family that kicks together, sticks together."

The classes vary depending on skill level and age, with the youngest students starting at three years old.

The school not only teaches the physical skill of self-defense, it increases the level of confidence and teaches discipline and respect.

Instructors also advise children on family values and good manners, as well what to do if approached by a predator.

"Most parents can't do a spinning hook-kick so we have the unique ability to capture the attention of children," says Tim.

He says the majority of adults who train at Kovars are the parents of children who are also taking classes. The adult and children classes are taught separately but run back-to-back so parents and children can watch each other in class.

The adult class is one hour long and children classes are 45 minutes long. It is recommended that students attend twice a week, but it is up to the student.

According to Tim, martial arts teach students long-term planning and goal achievement. Every month students have the chance to earn a new strip or belt and it takes up to five years to earn the highest-level training: a black belt.

### Creative Minds

If some people in the family are interested in learning more about art, check out area museums and exhibits. And if there is a budding artist in the family, a variety of art classes are offered to all ages.

"I have had a lot of children and their parents take my classes," says Kerry Van Dyke, instructor of Kerry's Art in East Sacramento.

The students in her classes range in age from seven years old to adult. The children's classes are held in the afternoon and the adult classes are held in the evening, but during the summer a lot of parents and children take her weeklong oil painting class together.

She says art is a vital part of life. It teaches people to appreciate nature and can also be very relaxing.

"Anyone can draw, they just have to learn the process. The way I teach teaches people to see," says Van

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Dyke. "People notice things they haven't seen before."

The classes are two hours long for adults and are one hour for children during the school year and two

## Resources

### Kovar's Karate Center:

Opened in 1978  
14 locations in Sacramento area  
916-481-4830

### Kerry's Art

Art classes taught out of home in East Sacramento since 1986  
[www.kerryvandyke.com](http://www.kerryvandyke.com)  
916-455-8994

### Funtastic Play Centers Inc.

El Dorado Hills indoor gymnasium with grand opening in September 2005  
[www.funtasticplaycenters.com](http://www.funtasticplaycenters.com)  
916-933-1077

### Dream Dinners

To-go entrees prepared by family then brought home to freeze for future meals; grand opening in Sacramento in November 2005  
[www.dreamdinners.com](http://www.dreamdinners.com)  
916-290-9333

hours during the summer.

### Playtime for All

If classes are too much of a commitment and the younger family members need to release some excess energy while mom or dad take a break, Funtastic Play Centers Inc. might be the new place to frequent.

Owners Jim and Suzanne Kerr recently opened the center in El Dorado Hills and already almost a thousand children have explored through the tunnels, cabins and balance beams.

Being the parents of two small children themselves, the Kerrs thought this was the type of facility the area needed. They were correct.

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# Resolutions

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"It has taken off!" says Jim. "We are getting more and more families coming here."

The floor is covered with mats and the entire indoor play area is cushioned for safety.

The equipment is unique – some of it is shipped from England – and is of the highest standard.

"The whole premise of this place is to be able to watch your children play in a safe and supervised environment while you have a snack and talk to the other parents," he says.

There are trained staff members who play games with the kids, and children have the opportunity to play on their own.

It is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Private parties can be booked in advance during 4:30 to 6 p.m. on weekdays and on weekends.

## Quick and Healthy Meals

New Year's resolutions for many

families are to get healthy inside and out. So what would you say to 12 different homemade nutritious entrees prepared outside the home and then frozen for future use? If that sounds good to you, check out Dream Dinners, a national franchise that recently opened in Sacramento.

Owners Erin and Anders Bjork heard about the franchise from a friend and from that moment on, their lives changed.

"Dinner in our family was often disorganized, so we fell in love with the concept from the beginning," Erin says. "It is a lot more reasonable than eating out and you can look up each dish's nutritional value online. It is also a really fun and social atmosphere."

It takes two hours once a month to make 12 entrees. People can choose 12 (or for smaller families, six) out of the 14 different choices offered each month. There are a couple vegetarian dishes and different chicken, beef and fish recipes to pick from. Different stations at Dream Dinners locations are

equipped with the recipes and ingredients, and instructors are always available to help with any questions.

"There are no dishes, no clean-up and people don't have to go out and buy a particular spice for a dish that they will probably only use once," Erin says.

The entrees – ranging from Salisbury steaks to Swedish meatballs, deep dish chicken pizza and calzones – are frozen raw so when it is cooked, it is fresh and tasty.

It costs \$200 for 12 entrees, which comes out to be less than \$3 a serving.

Two sessions are offered on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Children over 12 are welcomed and private parties can be booked in advance. Two other Dream Dinner franchises by different owners recently opened in Natomas and Folsom.

"This program is a great New Year's resolution because instead of spending time cooking every night, you can spend more time with your family," says Erin.

## LEARNING PROBLEMS

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THE LISTENING CLINIC

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For information: (916) 448-1500  
thelisteningclinic.com

Costa Mesa (714) 979-1160  
Santa Rosa (707) 575-1468  
Walnut Creek (925) 952-4724

Para información en Español call 916-448-1500

## Children's Creative Art Center

Outstanding Arts & Music Programs for All Ages

Phone: (916) 791-6407  
[www.childrenscreativeartcenter.org](http://www.childrenscreativeartcenter.org)  
6210 Douglas Blvd - Granite Bay, CA 95746

## YOUR DINNER SOLUTIONS

Your Solution to "Whats for Dinner?"

- Meal Planning Made EASY!!
- Social Time for Moms (Private Parties available)

\$10 off 9 entree session EXPIRES 1/31/09

(916) 630-8797  
2625 Sierra Meadows Dr St 600  
(880) West Rocklin Rd. corner of Granite Dr and Sierra Meadows  
Wright Watchers Friendly  
Go to website: [www.yourdinnerolutions.com](http://www.yourdinnerolutions.com)  
for schedule, menu and reservations