

## A Parent's Testimonial

21 August 2008

### **TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: NAENAE BOXING ACADEMY**

I am delighted to be associated with the Naenae Boxing Academy.

Billy Graham and the Naenae Boxing Academy is the perfect vehicle for capturing the hearts and minds of local youth who have more to learn than what they already believe they know.

With his unique blend of wisdom, humour, life-skills and grassroots experience Billy is uniquely positioned within the Lower Hutt community to provide the right type of no nonsense help and support to those parents who seek it on behalf of their sons. The door to the gym does not discriminate and Billy welcomes any youth with a broad smile and open handshake for "a second chance at life".

My son is a product of Billy's mentoring. He is a successful example of a young adolescent from a single parent family. My son had low self esteem; was medicated for 4 years for ADHD, struggled with reading, writing and school, and unacceptable behaviour. Becoming a member of Billy's gym provided a secure foundation for him to overcome all of his difficulties successfully. The work of Billy Graham and the gym is an environment that is supportive; caring and loving. It has its own method that instils confidence and values in young men. As the journey progresses, my son has gained a strong appreciation for the skilful sport of boxing. He continues to grow and inherit the qualities of life that all parents, teachers, and mentors seek in a young man who is now going from strength to strength.

I remain indebted to the dignity Billy and Kerri Graham have returned to me as an individual and a mother who once thought her son was lost.

Thank you Billy and Kerri.

Trish

## Parent Testimonial II

August 2008

At the age of 16, my son fell into the trap that many young boys fall into such as drug use, being truant from school and generally getting into trouble. The only positive focus he had was boxing and the camaraderie generated by the Naenae Boxing Academy, and in particular Billy Graham.

Not only did Billy see my son's potential as a boxer, he also saw someone who was going down the wrong path and heading to a life of crime and hopelessness. Billy used his own time to guide my son away from drugs and also encouraged him to stay at school. Without Billy's help I know I would have struggled to keep my son away from drugs. In my opinion Billy went over and above what any normal boxing coach would have done. Billy surrounded him with boxers who have had similar experiences in their lives and this has seemed to have had a positive response.

Needless to say my son's boxing ability has progressed to the point whereby he has won a most scientific boxing award in a competition this year, a testament to the training provided by Billy, Graham, and Dean.

As aforementioned the camaraderie generated in the club is second to none. I have always felt welcome at the club and know most boxers on a first name basis, despite the number of boxers attending the club. The club offers not only boxing training of the highest calibre, it also teaches common courtesy, humility and respect. This is evident in the rules Billy has implemented in the club such as no swearing, no wearing hats in the gym and introducing yourself to one another, amongst other rules.

In finishing, I would like to say this club goes beyond what most boxing clubs offer and in my son's situation has turned his life around.

Wayne

## Parent Testimonial III

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing with regard to the great work under-taken by Billy Graham in the form of his Naenae Boxing Academy.

As a father and an uncle I have been privileged to be a part of the academy. In this regard I have witnessed the great change of my youngest son from a very shy, studious boy of 12 who did not like to participate in any form of sport and when socializing with his peers would always be content to take a back seat; who has now undertaken a transformation to be a confident young boy. His change has been witnessed by his teacher and the comment made "that it is wonderful to see him now have the confidence to achieve in all areas of schooling".

I am also proud to say the same for my nephew, who has always had sporting ability but was painfully shy. He has come out of his shell to the extent that now in the third year of college, he has been elected on to the Board of Trustees at Wainuiomata High School, and is going from strength to strength in his academic abilities.

Further, as I am presently doing a double degree in psychology and criminology at Victoria University, it is great to be part of the implementing of what is cutting-edge criminology theory into real life situation. There are three key areas in the development of good young men that are a credit to their communities. According to latest criminological theory it is pivotal for young men to have three core abilities. These are firstly a sense of identity, secondly a sense of belonging, and thirdly a sense of self worth. These are areas that Billy focuses on with the boys and it is great to see the results.

I can only speak for my family. I am happy to say that the results Billy obtains are fantastic. It is always a pleasure to be in the academy and every time we leave after a class I truly feel inspired. The boys feel the same and spend the rest of the week looking forward to attending again.

Yours

Murray