



# Parents Guide to Judo

## Enhancing Confidence and Independence for Blind and Visually Impaired

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### Summary

The purpose of this paper is to describe how the sport of Judo is an especially strong method of building personal, physical, and emotional capability for blind or visually impaired persons. This paper outlines the benefits of Judo; how it is taught; and a brief history of its origins. It also includes a summary of a recent Judo success for a blind and visually impaired person.

### Introduction

Parents only want the best for their children. Children who are blind or visually impaired bring added concerns to parents as the children grow up, enter school, socialize, and build their network of peers. Parents want their children to have every possible opportunity to thrive, including the chance to reap the physical and mental benefits of sports.

Each day we witness media glorification of various sports figures from a variety of sports disciplines. This especially holds true during the Olympics, which many consider to be the ultimate measure of athletic achievement. But, what about the Paralympics? Two weeks after the close of the Olympics, most sponsors, media, and spectators head home. Yet, this short two-week period is the opening of the second largest sporting event in the world: the Paralympic Games

There are only nineteen competitive sports in the Summer Paralympic Games as compared with thirty-nine events in the Summer Olympic Games. One such sport is called Judo. The US Paralympic Judo Team is comprised solely of blind and visually impaired athletes (Judokas) that have embraced Judo like no other sport. Of course, not all who practice the sport of Judo compete in the Para-

