

Author's Latest Teaches Kids Confidence & Focus

By Kara Sibilis



It's the "Most Wonderful Time of the Year" — or so the classic Staples commercial tells us! Back-to-School season is in full swing, and while some kids (and parents) are elated, others... not so much. The beginning of the school year may bring excitement and nervousness simultaneously, and it can be tricky for parents and teachers to help children both manage their feelings and focus on their schoolwork. Enter children's book author and Westfield resident, Rosanne L. Kurstedt, Ph.D. As an educator with over 20 years of experience, Kurstedt understands the challenges that the start of the school year can bring. Her latest picture book, *Karate Kid* (Running Press Kids, 2019), teaches children mindfulness, focus and inner strength, all explained through the skill of karate.

Karate Kid allows readers to explore

the traditional practice of Shotokan karate, a martial art that not only teaches physical methods, but is rooted in character development as well. Kurstedt explains, "(The book) highlights some of the core elements of karate — respect, focus and confidence." Kurstedt herself is well versed in the martial art of tae kwon do, for which she holds a brown belt. She has since taken a break from her tae kwon do practice, however during her research for *Karate Kid*, Kurstedt worked with a sensei in the Shotokan style of karate to make sure she nailed every detail. The book's prose blends delightfully with the fun illustrations of a goat "kid" performing specific moves, including the proper terminology for each position or stance, as well as breathing techniques. Kurstedt feels this book is important because, "It introduces kids to karate in an engaging

and accessible way." One of the most surprising things Kurstedt discovered when writing *Karate Kid* was that she really misses practicing tae kwon do. Some of her hobbies have included skiing and photography, but... Kurstedt may add tae kwon do back to the list in the near future!

Throughout everything she does, Kurstedt's love of reading, writing, teaching and connection to "story" shines through. As the Associate Director of READ East Harlem/Hunter College, Adjunct Professor at the Hunter College School of Education, founder of the nonprofit The Author Experience, Assistant Regional Advisor of the New Jersey Chapter for the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) and children's book author, Kurstedt realizes her passion for literacy and education every day. "I've always



Rosanne L. Kurstedt

been a writer," she notes. "I've kept journals all of my life — even my college entrance essays were excerpts from my journals." In addition to *Karate Kid*, Kurstedt has authored and co-authored numerous professional development books; and during a time living in Hong Kong, she also helped establish the Hong Kong Academy International School, and was their Director of Curriculum. After Kurstedt returned to New Jersey, another project she developed was The Author Experience — a nonprofit organization dedicated to building "a lasting culture of literacy".

The Author Experience engages entire school communities to help children cultivate their own, unique stories because, "Everyone has a story to tell," states Kurstedt.



Karate Kid was released on September 3, 2019 and is available at your neighborhood library, or can be purchased locally at any major retailer where books are sold, including Barnes & Noble and Target. You can also buy it on Amazon, Hudson Booksellers, IndieBound and many other online book merchants. Plus, you can check* the following local bookstores as well:

Books-A-Million
301 Mount Hope Ave., #1041, Rockaway
(973) 366-2019
booksamillion.com

Indigo – The Mall at Short Hills
1200 Morris Tpke., Short Hills
(973) 315-9696
shopshorthills.com/stores/indigo

***If you cannot find *Karate Kid* at your local library or bookstore, you can ask for a copy to be ordered for you.**



HOW TO CONTACT:

For inquiries on booking media appearances, school visits, professional development, interviews or book signings, please contact the author at: rlkurstedt.com/contact.

For more information on The Author Experience, please visit: theauthorexperience.org.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Join Kurstedt for events at the following locations:

1. September 21st, 11am –
Word Bookstore,
123 Newark Ave., Jersey City, NJ
07302; wordbookstores.com,
(201) 763-6611.

2. September 28th, 11am –
Short Stories Bookshop and
Community Hub,
23 Main Street, Madison, NJ 07940;
shortstoriesnj.com,
(973) 845-6086.

3. October 12th, 9am –
Bucks County Book Festival,
(multiple locations) Doylestown,
PA; go to bucksbookfest.org for
more information.

4. October 19th, 11am –
Boogie Down Books @ Mottley
Kitchen, 402 E. 140th Street,
(Mott Haven) South Bronx, NY
10454; boogiedownbooks.com
or mottleykitchen.com,
(929) 308-2099.

