

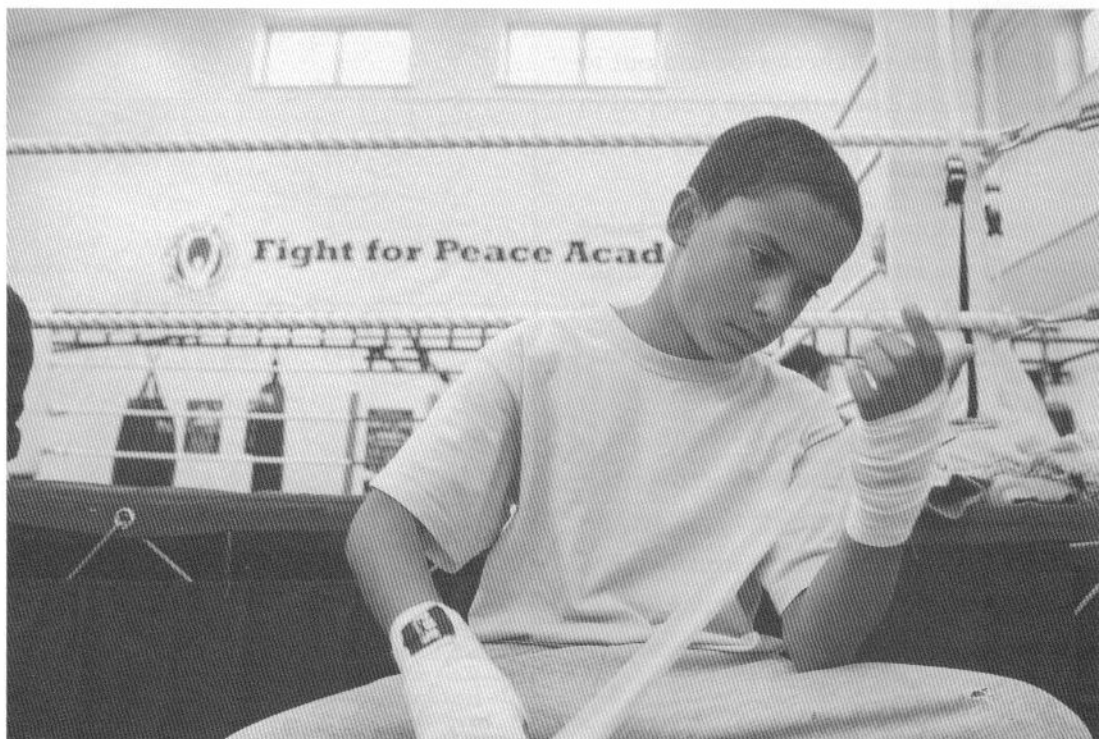


# 闘え！ ロンドンの子ども育成プログラム Stepping Into the Ring: London's Fight for Peace

ブラジルの貧民街で産声を上げた「Fight for Peace（平和のための闘い）」プログラム。

「ボクシングを通じて子どもの成長を促す」という理念のもと、イギリスの人類学者にして、大学のボクシング王者だった、ルーク・ダウドニーさんが始めた。その活動が今度は母国イギリスにも「逆輸入」された。ボクシングを通じて、子どもたちにはどんな変化が生まれるのだろうか？

by Keith W. Strandberg





6歳から16歳までの子どもたちがプログラムに参加している

### ボクシングを通じた教育

The sights, sounds and smells of the boxing gym in North Woolwich, England, just next to London City Airport, are like any in gyms around the world — boxers pounding heavy bags, the slap of leather on skin, the smell of sweat and liniment.

The difference here? The boxers, martial artists and workout fanatics are kids, anywhere from 6 years old to 16. This boxing gym is where the London version of Fight for Peace calls home.

The Fight for Peace program, funded by the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation, was started in the poorest areas of Brazil by anthropologist and former UK university boxing champion Luke Dowdney. It was incredibly successful, and Dowdney wanted to “port” the program over to his

hometown. The result is right here, in one of the toughest neighborhoods in what has become a very tough, and often violent, city.

“It’s important to understand that it’s not about violence, that there is a difference between violence and sports,” Dowdney emphasizes. “Boxing is an Olympic sport, and it has produced some of the biggest icons in the history of the world, like Muhammad Ali. Boxing gives you respect for rules, a lesson in life that if you don’t work hard or train hard, you cannot succeed. As a discipline to structure young minds, boxing is brilliant.”

Ben Tillet, 15, has been in the program from the start. “The personal development program helps us avoid bad situations,” he says. “When I get into a situation, now I

can avoid it. If I have a problem, I can come in here and talk about it. I get respect here.”

The original Fight for Peace program was started by Dowdney to do development work in the Complexo da Maré, a complex of *favelas* (shantytowns) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. “I boxed as an amateur in the ’80s and ’90s and was very involved in the sport,” he explains. “I knew the potential of boxing in terms of accessing young people who are not very interested in social programs, school, job training, etc. I realized that a lot of boxing clubs are ‘projects’ by their nature. Often, clubs will attract kids that are having trouble at home, and the club gives them discipline and structure.”

Fight for Peace has developed a model to meet the problem of child and youth participation in crime, gangs and gun violence within poor communities. This strategy is called Five Pillars, which breaks down as follows: 1) boxing and other martial arts training and competition; 2) formal and extracurricular education programs and personal development sessions; 3) access to formal employment through job skills training and help in finding paid

internships; 4) support services for young people and their families; and 5) building youth leaders via participation in a youth council and leadership training.

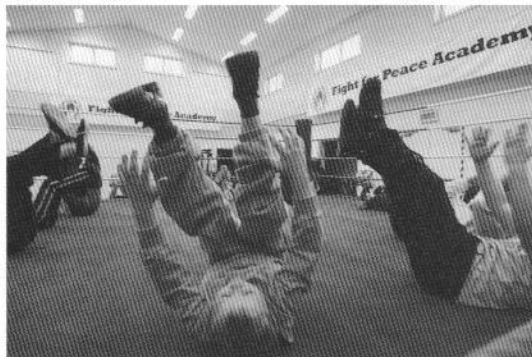
“I work on the youth council, and if the little kids have ideas and are scared to share them, they will come up to me,” says Rima Nsubuga, 14, who participates in the fitness and boxing programs. “Bringing ideas to the staff — that’s one of our big responsibilities. It’s making us better and giving the neighborhood a good name. It’s a safe place to be and hang out with friends.”

#### 人生を生き抜く力をはぐくむ

The Fight for Peace program works on many levels. First, it offers the kids in the area structure and the ability to gain life skills through the personal development programs. Second, it offers alternatives to drug dealing and violence. Third, kids involved with any of the programs increase their self confidence because they are acquiring skills that require hard work, dedication, determination and discipline. Lastly, the Fight for Peace program gives these kids someplace to go.

Though the program is not specifically to train boxers and martial artists, several national fighters have come out of the program in Brazil. There are also some fighters in Woolwich who already show the ability, desire and determination to succeed in amateur boxing.

The workout in the Fight for Peace program is very rigorous. It is, in fact, tougher than many programs for which adults pay a high price to attend. During the fitness part, the kids ride exercise bikes, run on



子どもだからといって手加減なし。大人が受けてもハードなトレーニングだという



ルーク・ダウドニーさん(中央)から取材の一環でトレーニングを受けた筆者(右)

treadmills, perform exercises, stretch, lift weights and more. It's impressive how dedicated the kids are to the training, following directions and staying focused.

After the fitness program is finished, the boxers take over the gym. Thirty minutes of warm-up are followed by serious boxing training. The first drills focus on blocking and evading, then the boxers work combinations of punches in pairs.

After these drills come nine two-minute rounds with one-minute rest in between — three with Dowdney holding the targets, three with a heavy bag, and three shadow-boxing. Dowdney is determined to get as much out of the boxers, a mix of boys and girls, as possible. He holds the targets and yells out which types of punches the boxers are to use. Any boxer who doesn't hit hard enough hears about it from Dowdney — or sometimes gets a whack in the head.

The young people are very focused and dedicated to the work. The atmosphere is extremely welcoming and open, even though Dowdney is a tough taskmaster.

He is forever barking out orders to hit harder, react faster, move quicker, push harder. It is a nice combination — it's obvious that Fight for Peace is a serious boxing program, but at the same time, it has a friendly atmosphere.

The smiles and sweat of the kids in the program are proof of how well Fight for Peace is working in this tough East London neighborhood. 🥊



レッスンは、ロンドン・シティ空港にほど近い、ノース・ウールウィッチで行なわれている。  
詳細は<http://www.fightforpeace.net/>

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Strandberg is an American freelance writer and award-winning writer/producer of feature films who lives in Switzerland. He is also a motorcyclist and a martial artist, runs and plays football and tennis. He is currently working on teleplay for a television show in Europe. He speaks fluent Chinese, is learning French, and has three sons and two daughters.