



In the U.S. ultimate fighting began in 1993 as a televised competition to find the best fighting style. It was a bloody, no-holds-barred brawl. By 1997 ultimate fighting was banned in 36 states.

## VOCABULARY

**Mixed Martial Arts:** (MMA or ultimate fighting) combines boxing, wrestling, judo, jiu-jitsu, and kickboxing into one form of fighting.

**UFC:** (Ultimate Fighting Championship) the main body overseeing MMA events.

**Tap out:** tapping the mat three times or verbally surrendering to avoid further pain or injury; giving up or crying “uncle.”

**Submission hold:** used to force an opponent to tap out. Usually a choke or a potential injury hold.

## Are You Looking For A Fight?

Boys today might not know the name of the world's heavyweight boxing champion but they know the names Georges St-Pierre, Anderson Silva and Brock Lesnar. They are mixed martial arts champions. (See the vocabulary box.)

In an ultimate fighting match two combatants are paired in competition inside a wire cage for three rounds of five minutes. Fighters adhere to a simple set of rules which allowed sports commissions to legalize ultimate fighting after 1997. The rules? No biting, eye-gouging, head-butting, bending of fingers and toes or hits to the groin, throat or spine. Otherwise almost anything goes. A match may end in three ways: when one combatant is knocked unconscious, when one combatant taps out in a guillotine choke hold, an arm bar or some other dangerous hold, or when the clock runs out – then the three judges decide a winner.

In 2005 ultimate fighting surged in popularity when the show *The Ultimate Fighter* first aired on television. Ultimate fighting surpassed professional boxing in year-long, pay-per-view revenue in 2006, drawing \$223 million. The summer of 2009 saw another surge by pitting the Canadian MMA star Georges St-Pierre against the college wrestling champion and professional wrestling star [Brock Lesnar](#) in *Ultimate Fight Championship #100*. It had 1.7 million pay-per-views.

Ultimate fighting's rapid growth in popularity is also reflected elsewhere.

- Street fighting: there has been a rise in the popularity of actual street fighting. YouTube has many no-holds-barred, bare-knuckle fighting videos with over one million views. “Friendly” but bloody street fighting is being done just for the adrenaline rush and to be able to upload the recording, hopefully both barbaric and popular, to YouTube.
- Video games: *UFC 2009 Undisputed* sold one million copies in May and was voted the best single-person video game of 2009 by Spike TV.
- Among women: their MMA league is called the Women's Ultimate Fighting Association.
- Among children: an ultimate fighting league for children ages 6-12 has been started in Missouri.



EIGHT-YEAR-OLD ULTIMATE FIGHTERS

## Boy, Oh Boy!

~Contributed by Jim deSpelder

I wouldn't want to go through puberty again – not at my age. I wouldn't want to go through it at any age! I certainly wouldn't want to go through it now.

Raising strong sons today is not easy. A good dad has to help them handle hyper hormones, pervasive pornography and an avalanche of music, films, video games and TV shows. He must train them in godliness, honesty, responsibility, personal purity, leadership, integrity and respect for others – especially women – and he must do it for a son who has more distractions than a moth at a strobe-lit-disco.

Helping dads to help their sons was the goal of the recent "Preparing for Adolescence Weekend" held Friday night to Saturday night, October 16-17, 2009, in Grass Lake, Michigan.

The weekend was designed for boys about to reach puberty. We had 17 pairs of fathers and sons present and aimed at three main goals:

1. Communicating the challenges of going through adolescence in our culture and the changes the boys were about to encounter

2. Encouraging and equipping the fathers and sons to work together to overcome the challenges in a godly manner
3. Providing the time for fathers and sons to develop their relationship and to begin working on the above goals.



***Doing this weekend with other fathers and sons was a huge help. The material was very effectively presented. That made it easier to have longer and more in-depth, one-to-one conversations. The group discussions were also very helpful because good points were made by everyone. It didn't all depend on me.***

***~ Craig Galer, the Work of Christ***

Our weekend started off with a short horror show – the boys got to see what their dads looked like when they were in junior high! The weekend ended with the fathers praying over their sons.

In just over 40 hours, we played pool volleyball, soccer, floor hockey, and football. We had a campfire, a

worship time and celebrated the Lord's Day Opening! In between these fun activities we squeezed in some engaging talks on challenging issues encountered during the adolescence years. Our sessions addressed:

- Handling Negative Peer Pressure
- Physical Changes in Adolescence
- The Canyon of Inferiority
- Relating to Girls
- Handling Emotions
- New Powers of Thinking
- Brothers Together

The talks were based on a set created by Dr. James Dobson entitled "Preparing for Adolescence." They were enhanced for the specific needs of the fathers and sons in Sword of the Spirit communities.

The weekend was designed by a development team of dads from Michigan, consisting of Dan Smith, Peter Giles, Matt Stoll, and Jim deSpelder with Kairos Junior High Program Director, Stan Mathay, serving as the team leader.

For information on putting on a weekend like this or on junior high boys adventure trips, contact Stan Mathay: [stanmathay@gmail.com](mailto:stanmathay@gmail.com)

## Intense?

Everything in youth culture is getting more intense or extreme. Movies are faster paced. *Avatar*, a movie released this week, is a case in point. Its 3D technology sucks you right into the film. Video games like *Grand Theft Auto* and *Call of Duty* move at a blinding pace. Youth novels like *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* are page turners. The X-Games bring new thrills to sports-on-boards, and everywhere you look the sexual boundaries are getting extended, whether on TV by *Gossip Girl* or in music by Lady Gaga.

To keep youth connected to it all there are cell phones, the internet, facebook, twitter and e-mail, plus the necessary energy drinks to keep youth going – like Red Bull and Rockstar. To get away from it all they can slip into the virtual worlds of *SecondLife* or *Habbo* or just "slow their roll" with Drank.

### Return to real life

The best reality show isn't a show. It's real people in the present moment. It's also one of the best antidotes to youth culture.