

Entrepreneur

SNAPSHOT >

ENTREPRENEUR:
Dawn Barnes, 40s,

founder of Dawn Barnes Karate Kids Inc. in Santa Monica, California **DESCRIPTION:** children's karate school that focuses on inspiring self-esteem in every child

STARTUP COSTS: \$15,000 in 1995 **PROJECTED 2005 SALES:** \$2.5 million for the four studios

PUPIL TO TEACHER: In 1984, Dawn Barnes enrolled herself and her two young sons in a karate class with no idea of the adventures that awaited. By signing up, this former ballerina and stuntwoman started down the path to becoming a third-degree black belt, successful entrepreneur and well-

DVDs used by teachers worldwide, she spreads her teachings by speaking at national conventions, and she has written a new children's book series—soon to be turned into a feature film—titled *The Black Belt Club*. Says Barnes, "If one seed of self-esteem can be planted in one child, that child is going to grow up and make a difference for other people." —SARA WILSON

FOR KICKS

KARATE IS MORE THAN FUN FOR THIS TEACHER—IT'S A WAY TO BUILD CONFIDENCE IN KIDS.

known leader in the martial arts industry. Fascinated by the physical/spiritual balance of martial arts, Barnes trained diligently and, about 10 years later, opened the doors to her own school. **MIND, BODY, SPIRIT:** Described by some as the "Four Seasons of karate," Barnes' four schools are lavishly equipped with leather seating, wall murals, Olympic judo mats and colorful equipment. But the schools' true beauty can be found in the life skills emphasized during each class. Focusing on respect, patience, kindness and honesty, all 1,200 students, ages 4 to 14, finish each class with a single thought: "Every day, do something to make your mind strong, your body strong, your spirit strong." **NO FEAR:** Barnes's next step is to take the phrase she coined—"positive dialogue response," meaning motivating children with praise rather than fear—worldwide. She has written instructors manuals and produced

