



## Shannon Cascio

### Sochin Martial Arts, Kid~Space and Kindle Academy

462 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd. Port St. Lucie, Fl. 34953

772-340-2140

[www.kidspacerocks.com](http://www.kidspacerocks.com)



For years, Port St. Lucie resident, Shannon Cascio, was a busy homeschooling mom of two boys. In the spring of 2006, Shannon's sons began taking martial arts classes. After seeing how excited they were, she decided to try it. "I sat there for several weeks, thinking I wanted to try it too, but I wasn't sure if I'd be able to keep up."

Eventually her desire over rode her fear and Shannon signed up for a

class. "I remember my first class," Shannon said. "It was the most difficult. I wasn't exactly sure what to expect; however, the instructor was kind and patient. By the end of the first class, I was sure that Karate was the thing for me. In fact, if you have never taken martial arts, it's difficult to explain the true feeling of self-confidence that can be experienced. I hear it over and over again, from both women and men in our program. However, women are quick to point out that they feel empowered because of their new level of physical fitness and that the knowledge they are able to defend themselves."

After a year of karate classes, Shannon was a different woman. She lost 40 pounds and her knee, which had been a problem for years and required surgery, was growing stronger. In addition to the physical benefits Shannon experienced, she said that the challenging and rewarding experience of success in martial arts gave her the confidence to pursue an ambition that she had had for some time. "I had the idea in my head; however, I just never imagined being able to make the leap from idea to reality."

Shannon wanted to continue to homeschool her boys, yet she always had the fire in her to own her own business. Children have always been a huge part of Shannon's life, and her "idea" was a business plan based upon a need that she saw in the community. Shannon always had a strong interest in combining her love of kids and sports. She wanted to provide school-age kids with a place to go afterschool that was safe and engaging. "My goal was to design a program that would offer school-aged kids the opportunities to experience a variety of activities, all within the same program. I also needed to create a business plan where I could continue to homeschool my boys and provide for them as a single mom."

In addition to a degree in child development, Shannon had spent 7 years as a board member with Mako Soccer in Port St. Lucie. She even went as far as implementing a successful homeschool division for the league. So, when it came time to start developing and implementing her business plan, she made no compromises.

Shannon went full speed ahead with her plan. With the support of her two sons, in 2007 she opened up two businesses side by side. Sochin Martial Arts and Kid~Space. In addition to martial arts classes and the afterschool program, Kid~Space evolved and now offers summer camp sessions, Kids' night out events and birthday parties. Both businesses were an instant success.

"I wanted Kid~Space to be a place where kids would be feel comfortable and safe. I think the atmosphere is what sets Kid~Space apart from the crowd." Kid~Space is certainly comfortable—a quick look around shows bookcases, computer stations, a craft room, basketball hoop, five couches and plenty of open floor space. The furnishings provide a welcoming and cozy environment, which feels more like a giant house than an afterschool facility.

In March of 2010, Sochin and Kid~Space outgrew the original location and moved into a roomy 6,000 sq. foot facility in Coco Vista Plaza in Port St. Lucie. This strategic move was to also accommodate Kindle Academy, a private school that Shannon recently opened. "We continuously add new programs and activities to keep things fresh. As our kids get older, it's important to keep their focus on the positive forces in their lives."

Shannon added a few more pearls of wisdom.

"Developing children need stability and to build bonds with their caretakers. This is why I staff adults at Kid~Space. I am thrilled to say that we have a very low employee turnover rate and an experienced staff that genuinely enjoys working with children."

When asked what advice Shannon would give to other moms or mompreneurs, her response was clear and concise.

"When I think about what I was able to accomplish, I think of women who have great ideas and let fear paralyze them. Not every idea will work, that's a given, but nothing is accomplished if you never begin. I urge any mom out there who has a dream to just go for it! Don't let yourself or others get in the way of your own



Shannon Cascio and her two sons.

success. My goal was to find a great space, fill the space with great activities and a superior staff and see what happened. So far it's a winning combination!"

To learn more about Shannon Cascio, Sochin Martial Arts, Kid~Space or Kindle Academy, please stop by 462 SW Port St. Lucie Blvd. Port St. Lucie, Fl. 34953 or call 772-340-2140 or visit [www.kidspacerocks.com](http://www.kidspacerocks.com).

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