

## Judo to beat the exclusion of children with special needs

**LOCATION:** Bormujos (Seville)

**DURATION:** 1'45"

**SUMMARY:** On his tatami children with and without special needs exercise together with no distinction. Gabriel Vera is a Sevillian judo teacher with 25 years of experience in the teaching of this martial art to young people with disabilities. One of his former students, Abel Vázquez, has represented Spain in three Paralympic Games. In his gym in Bormujos, Adrián, a nine year old boy is making progress. He has hearing loss and is affected by attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder. "We were searching for a martial art due to their philosophy: balance, self-control..." assures Jesús, Adrián's father. And that is what they have found in this sport and the lessons of Gabriel. Adrián is improving and learns how to communicate with his partners.

### VTR:

On this tatami mat, children with and without special needs are learning judo. Always under the supervision of Gabriel Vera, a judoka with 25 years of experience in teaching boys and girls with functional diversity. Children that just need to learn in a different way.

**GABRIEL VERA 'LITO'**  
Judo teacher

*"It improves their physical skills, just like in any other child. It also improves their quality of life, because it helps them to get their bearings better. It increases self-confidence."*

A special teacher for special people. Like Adrián, who is 9. He is affected by attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and he's also deaf. He can hear thanks to a cochlear implant.

**JOSÉ LUIS CÁNEVAS**  
Adrián's father

*"We were searching for a martial art due to their philosophy, which is finding balance, control, self-control. He needs much self-control, a lot."*

And they found Gabriel and chose judo. Adrián is progressing, although sometimes he makes mistakes, just like everyone else. However, he learns to respect rules and improves the communication skills with his partners.

**JOSÉ LUIS CÁNEVAS**  
Adrián's father

*"He is much better. Losing here... That was impossible. He made a scene every time he lost. But not anymore. He is beginning to admit that he can lose too."*

Gabriel also trains deaf-blind judokas, and with visual disabilities. He is the mentor of Abel Vázquez, who has represented Spain in three Paralympic Games. Maybe, they will also be champions in the future, but there's something more important than that...

**GABRIEL VERA 'LITO'**  
Judo teacher

*"They are able to show affection for me, for my work, because they don't see me as a coach, but as a friend, let's say. And well, I cry a lot."*

And the judo class is over for today.

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