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## **Elizabeth Smart Visiting Kansas City for Expansion of Her Self-Defense Program**

**Kansas City, MO, May 19, 2021:** The Elizabeth Smart Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to the education and prevention of sexual violence, announces the expansion of its Smart Defense program to Kansas City, MO. The Foundation is celebrating the expansion of the program with a free Grand Opening in Kansas City, MO on May 22, 2021. Elizabeth Smart will speak and take pictures with guests, and the Smart Defense program director, Miyo Strong, will give a demonstration of the program. The public can register for free at [elizabethsmartfoundation.org/grand-opening](https://elizabethsmartfoundation.org/grand-opening).

Elizabeth Smart, the founder of the foundation, is the subject of one of the most-followed abduction cases of our time ([Elizabeth's bio](#)). Smart decided to create Smart Defense after she was sexually assaulted on an airplane in the summer of 2019 ([link](#)). Of the program, Smart said, "This is a tool that hopefully you can take, and you train and you practice it every day so that should you ever find yourself in that situation — which I hope no one ever does — then it is an option for you," ([link](#)). Smart Defense was developed by self-defense experts to give women and girls the skills they need to protect themselves against assault ([link](#)). Smart Defense classes in Kansas City will be taught at Kansas City BJJ by trainers certified by the Elizabeth Smart Foundation.

One out of every six American women has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime—Smart Defense aims to lower that statistic through prevention and education (<https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence>). Studies have shown that around half of attackers will stop if their victim simply shows that she is willing to fight back.

Smart Defense is currently headquartered in Salt Lake City and is available in various cities throughout the United States. Its expansion to Kansas City BJJ is the first time the program will be available in Missouri.

### **About the Elizabeth Smart Foundation**

The ESF was founded in 2011 by kidnapping survivor Elizabeth Smart. Smart was abducted in 2002, after which she endured 9 grueling months of daily sexual assault and abuse by her captors. The mission of the Elizabeth Smart Foundation is to bring hope and end the victimization and exploitation of sexual assault through prevention, recovery, and advocacy. For more information, go to <https://www.elizabethsmartfoundation.org>.

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