



HOW TO BULLY-PROOF YOUR CHILD

One of the most frequent questions I am asked after teaching a self-defense class is, "How can I reinforce the lesson of verbal defense at home?" Bullying comes in two forms; relational & physical. Relational behaviors are more common and include; teasing, name calling, picking on, laughing at, excluding, bossiness, manipulation, and gossip. Physical aggression involves pushing, hitting, stealing from, cutting in line, biting etc. Like any lesson, verbal defense can be reinforced through parent-child communication and role playing.

Children need to be taught that their "Secret weapon" is always confidence. Bullies don't pick on confident children. Studies have found that role-playing increases a child's confidence level and self esteem by **giving them options and appropriate responses**. They then are able to diffuse a situation should it arise.

Remind your child that the "key" to keeping their power, is NOT TO REACT. Don't show emotion, especially attitude and anger. Smile, look the bully in the eye and use one of these "Power Protector" techniques:

POWER PROTECTORS MAKE YOU THE WINNER!

- **W** **Walk away** from the bully! Say nothing. Keep walking and don't look back!
- **I** **Ignore the comment!** Ignore the bully as if he or she weren't there. Go on your way.
- **N** **No Attitude:** Agree with the bully! Tell the bully, "O.k. sure...." Don't say powerless words like, "Whatever, SO! or I don't care!" Attitude only attracts attitude
- **N** **Nice:** Change the subject and say something **nice** to the bully! Then keep walking.
- **E** **ESCAPE! Refuse to fight!** Just say **STOP!** Leave me alone! Attract attention with your voice! Keep them 2-arms length away.
- **R** **Report it!** If you see someone being bullied go tell the adult who needs help. That way you won't be labeled a snitch. If you are in a group, go and get the kid who is being bullied and walk him away. Don't get into it with the bullies. There is power in numbers!

After discussing several scenarios, it's time to reinforce the response your child should take. They must not hesitate and they must *practice* using their voices. Your child's voice is their **biggest weapon!** The louder the better, **noise attracts attention!**

Remind them that smaller people can back off larger people just with their voices. Practice and see! Remember the arms length rule- (**Keep bullies two arm lengths away and strangers or vehicles, 4 arm lengths away.**)

For information on what to do if your child is being bullied, go to:
http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_What_Do_About/

For class information and dates, go to: www.PlayItSafeDefense.com