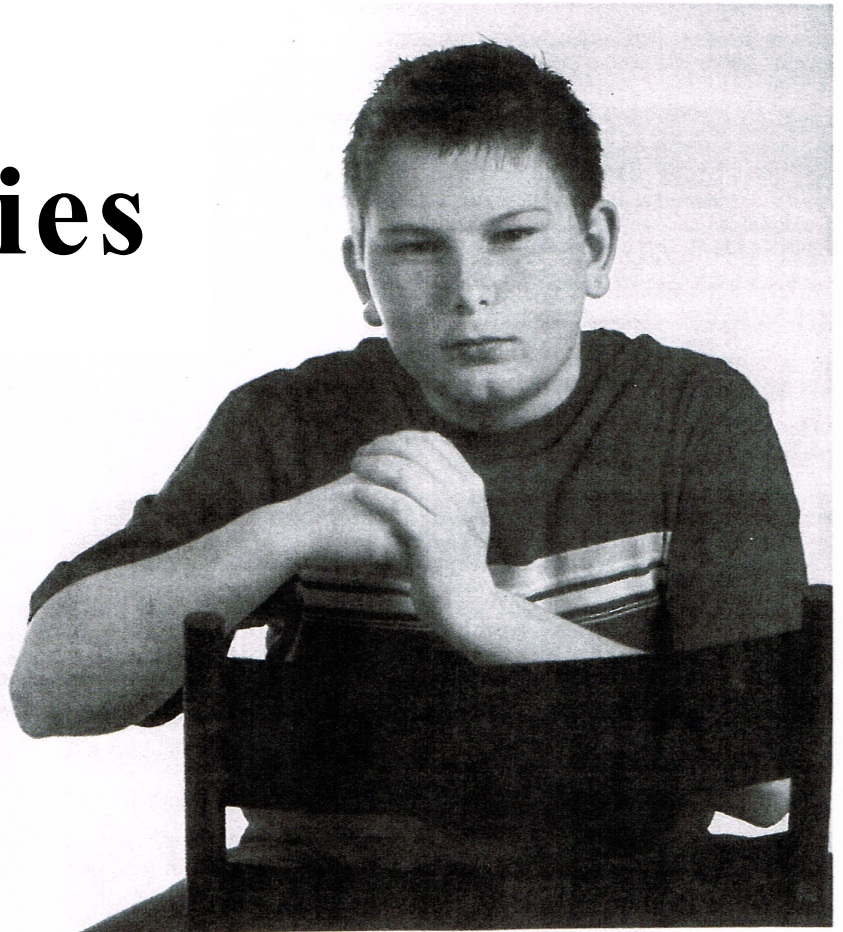


The Deal With Bullies



Quotes to Ponder

Courage is a special kind of knowledge: the knowledge of how to fear what ought to be feared & how not to fear what ought not to be feared.

David Ben-Gurion

Courage, her mother had once told her, was not simply the fact that you weren't scared of anything ... it was being scared & doing whatever it was anyway. Courage was dealing with your fears & not letting them rule you.- Missy Good

Courage is doing what you're afraid to do. There can be no courage unless you're scared. Eddie Rickenbacker

Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear. Ambrose Redmoon

Accept fate, and move on. Don't yield to the seductive pull of self-pity. Acting like a victim threatens your future. -Unknown

The Prevalence of Bullying

- » Children at every age are vulnerable to the risk of bullies. Experts tell us at least one in two children will be bullied at school, on the walk home, at a park, or during another outing.
- » In a recent survey of middle and high school students, more than **75%** surveyed said they had been bullied. More than 160,000 American students miss class every school day due to fear of physical harm.
- » Kids who bully others do so for many reasons. Bullying can escalate into other dangerous behaviors. Parents are encouraged to have direct and open discussions with kids about the dangers of bullying and how to deal with it.

How Should Parents Educate Children About Bullying?

Talk to your children directly about the kinds of bullying behaviors-verbal harassment,

threats for money or other valuables, ethnic or racial slurs, following or stalking at school or anywhere else, being bullied online, being singled or shut out of groups, pushing or hitting. It is important for parents to recognize their child may not understand what bullying really means and when they should ask for help. As with any personal safety training for children, each child should know how to contact their parents or guardians at all times, how to identify and get to a safe place or zone in any situation and how to call and provide information to 911. (During a 911 call, you must give the dispatcher your full name, address or location where you are, why you need help, and you must leave the phone connected.)

Talk to children about the kinds of dangers that exist. Don't be shy and beat around the bush. Teach children, above all, to trust their internal alarm. If this internal alarm rings, get to a safe zone and find a trusted adult immediately. Teach your children that awareness and distance are their two most important self-defense skills. Practice the skill of identifying safe zones in any environment. Make a game with rewards. Teach children never to be afraid to talk to you about anything. Remember, chil-

dren

act much quicker than they react. Spotlight bully scenarios and potential solutions in advance.

- » Have a family protection plan. Once a week, for a few weeks, bring the family together to discuss what is going on in the world: and spotlight a specific scenario of concern. Talk about it and suggest potential outcomes and a simple protection response. Keep the atmosphere relaxed and reinforce your love for the family is why we plan in advance. Use this time to discuss bullies.
- » Teach your children to walk with purpose and communicate with confidence. Develop a habit for yourself and your family to raise "situation awareness" when passing through doorways and exits. Teach your children to scan left to right as they enter an area; this is how we process information fastest and with the most retention.
- » Teach your children a "safety stance" and how to present a "personal fence" (hands up in a 'stop' position). Parents, teachers, or other helpful adults can readily see there is a problem. Help your child develop an assertive stay away command to be used with any aggressor such as "Leave me alone!"

12 Ways To Walk Away From a Bully With Confidence

- » Be a friend
- » Refuse to fight
- » Ignore and walk
- » Use humor
- » Stand up to the bully
- » Use authority
- » Walk away
- » Personal fence
- » Use reason
- » Use creative imagination
- » Assertive stay away
- » Don't be there

Discuss with your children that it is not always easy to talk to adults about serious or scary things such as bullies. If you have a couple of childhood bully stories to share with your child, they may relate much better with you about bullies. Rule# 1 in bully defense is, 'Always tell an adult.'

If it feels safe, stand up to the person who is bullying you. If a bully thinks you will take an assertive response to their bullying they will usually stop or move on to someone else. This does not mean to bully back or fight back unless you must. Keep your response simple. "Johnny, leave me alone." If possible, talk in a calm voice. If you are not comfortable confronting a bully, walk away. Just be sure to tell an adult.

If you are bullied online, don't reply. If possible, block any more communications from this person. Tell an adult and show them the bully's communication.

Learn the "Safety Stance." Learn how to present a hands up "Stay Away" command

such as "Leave me alone" or "Stay away." Or in a dangerous situation learn how to 'go crazy' or say, "Help me. This person is trying to hurt me."

Remember, we act much faster than we react. Work with children to develop simple, black and white responses to dangerous situations, whether a fire or explosion near them, a bully at school or any scenario where your child feels uncomfortable around any teen or adult. Our children will likely not face these scenarios when we are with them. They will react as they have been trained to react.



John Travolta, Lil' Iguana and Grand Master Bobby LaMattina during the World Martial Arts Children's Safety Convention held at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Key Biscayne, Florida

Grandmaster LaMattina has developed a unique way to resolve conflict peacefully by educating children about Bullying and adding in the disciplines of Martial Arts. He believes that children don't want to be lectured they need to have some fun by moving their bodies and when their tired educate them about success, attitude, respect, and how to resolve conflict peacefully by using their mind, words, and how not to be a bully.

Bobby LaMattina also known as "Tokyo Joe" who acquired his nickname from his high school football coach at East Boston High. He has over 43 years of experience in the Martial Arts character development and safety. For more information on Tokyo Joe's Studios E-mail Grandmaster LaMattina at tokyojoesstudio@myfairpoint.net or go to www.tokyojoes.net