

GRACIE **BULLYPROOF**®

Rules of Engagement

Even upon learning the self-defense techniques featured in the Gracie Bullyproof program, there is a very good chance that your child will not take a stand against bullies. Fear of punishment, from school administrators and from parents, is so strong, that most children will do nothing in response to verbal or physical harassment from a persistent bully. By teaching your child the Rules of Engagement, you will give them a step-by-step plan to follow any time they are targeted by a bully, and, more importantly, you will give them the assurance that you will support them in the event that they are compelled to stand up for themselves.

The Three T-Steps

Bullying is such a widespread problem in the United States, that most schools have implemented a zero-tolerance bullying policy. Although this policy has reduced physical abuse, it has done little to remedy the ever-increasing problem of verbal harassment. Verbal harassment can be difficult to detect, but studies suggest that it can cause even greater long-term damage than physical aggression. If a persistent bully harasses your child verbally, the Three T-Steps will enable them to take control of the situation and end the torment.

1. **Talk:** If a bully harasses you, confidently ask them to leave you alone.
2. **Tell:** If the bully doesn't leave you alone, notify your teachers and ask your parents for help.
3. **Tackle:** If the bully persists even after the grownups have intervened, you must take matters into your own hands. First, you will tackle the bully mentally, using Verbal Jiu-Jitsu, and if they become physically aggressive towards you, then you tackle them physically with Gracie Jiu-Jitsu.

The Rules of Engagement

Once your child understands how to use the Three T-steps to deal with persistent verbal bullies, it is essential that they learn the five basic rules regarding the use of the techniques.

Rule 1: Avoid the fight at all costs.

Rule 2: If physically attacked, defend yourself.

Rule 3: If verbally attacked, follow the Three T-steps.

Rule 4: Never punch or kick the bully, establish control and negotiate.

Rule 5: When applying submissions, use minimal force and negotiate.

Critical Conversations

Just as much as they fear school punishment, your child fears the punishment they will receive from you, their parents. Only if your child knows that they will not get in trouble at home for defending themselves will they embrace and implement the Rules of Engagement as their own. The best way to show your child that you support the Rules of Engagement is to have casual conversations with them on the topic. The goal is not to give your child permission to fight, but to make it clear that if they are getting bullied, they have your permission to follow the appropriate steps and take a stand against the bully. Also, when discussing the Rules of Engagement, make it a point to remind your child that their goal, if they ever get into a fight, should be to control the bully and gain cooperation without causing any unnecessary harm.

If you have any questions or comments about the Rules of Engagement, feel free to contact me.