



# PHYSICAL BULLYING

**THE**  
**RENER GRACIE GUIDE**  
**TO THE FACTS ON BULLYING**  
**AND WAYS TO**  
**PREVENT BULLYING**  
**USING THE**  
**GRACIE BULLYPROOF**  
**PROGRAM**

## WAS IT A SIGN FROM THE BUDO SPIRITS OR JUST A COINCIDENCE?

Thirty minutes before I interviewed Rener Gracie for this article, I spotted a story online in the March 11, 2011, edition of the British newspaper *The Telegraph*. It reported that President Barack Obama admitted to having been bullied as a child, mostly because of his big ears and unusual name. Obviously, he was able to resolve it on his own. For those kids — and parents — who need help dealing with the problem, the martial arts community is fortunate to have the Gracie Bullyproof program.

### WHO FOUNDED GRACIE BULLYPROOF?

I named it, and my brother Ryron and I formatted it for at-home learnability, but the Gracie family has been bullyproofing men, women and children for 85 years. We've always felt privileged to have been brought up the way we were, and we wanted to give parents the ability to empower their children the

Gracie way — from their homes.

### WHEN WAS BULLYPROOF UNVEILED?

Whenever we develop a new program, we use it in-house at the Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy for three to five years before we even think about exporting it online or on DVD. The same thing happened with Gracie Bul-



### GRACIE GAME 1 - SPIDER KID:

Unlike other self-defense programs that rely on punches and kicks, Bullyproof gives children the ability to defend against bullies without resorting to violence. Here, Roran Gracie (top) uses a solid hand base and low body position (1) to maintain the mount on an opponent who shifts from side to side (2-7) in an attempt to escape. Roran's goal is to stay on top until help arrives.

### DISCLAIMER

BLACK BELT COMMUNICATIONS, an Active Interest Media Publication, as publisher, does not endorse and makes no representation, warranty or guarantee concerning the safety or effectiveness of either the products and services advertised in this magazine or the martial arts or other techniques discussed or illustrated in this document. The publisher expressly disclaims any and all liability relating to the manufacture, sale or use of such products and services and the application of the techniques discussed or illustrated in this document. The purchase or use of some of the products, services or techniques advertised or discussed in this document may be illegal in some areas of the United States or other countries. Therefore, you should check federal, state, and local laws prior to your purchase or use of these products, services or techniques. The publisher makes no representation or warranty concerning the legality of the purchase or use of these products, services and techniques in the United States or elsewhere. Because of the nature of some of the products, services and techniques advertised or discussed in this document, you should consult a physician before using these products or services or applying these techniques. Specific self-defense responses illustrated in this document may not be justified in any particular situation in view of all of the circumstances or under applicable federal, state or local law. Neither Black Belt Communications nor the author makes any representation or warranty regarding the legality or appropriateness of any technique mentioned or depicted in this document. You may be injured if you apply or train in the techniques illustrated in this document and neither Black Belt Communications nor the author is responsible for any such injury that may result. It is essential that you consult a physician regarding whether or not to attempt any technique described in this document.

lyproof. We didn't release it on DVD until 2010.

### **WHAT INSPIRED YOU AND YOUR BROTHER TO DEVELOP IT?**

We had several incidents in which students were brought to our academy because they were being tormented by bullies. Some were borderline suicidal. We learned about their issues and spoke with their parents and realized we needed to reformat our youth *jiu-jitsu* program to target this problem. [We wanted] the program to include psychological and verbal [aspects] and rules of engagement, in addition to the physical techniques. Jiu-jitsu is the ultimate empowerment tool; the name means "gentle art" in Japanese, and that's exactly what it is. It gives people the ability to defend themselves against a physical threat without causing unnecessary harm to the assailant.

### **WHEN PARENTS WOULD BRING THEIR KIDS TO YOU FOR HELP, WHAT DID THEY SAY THEY WANTED MOST?**

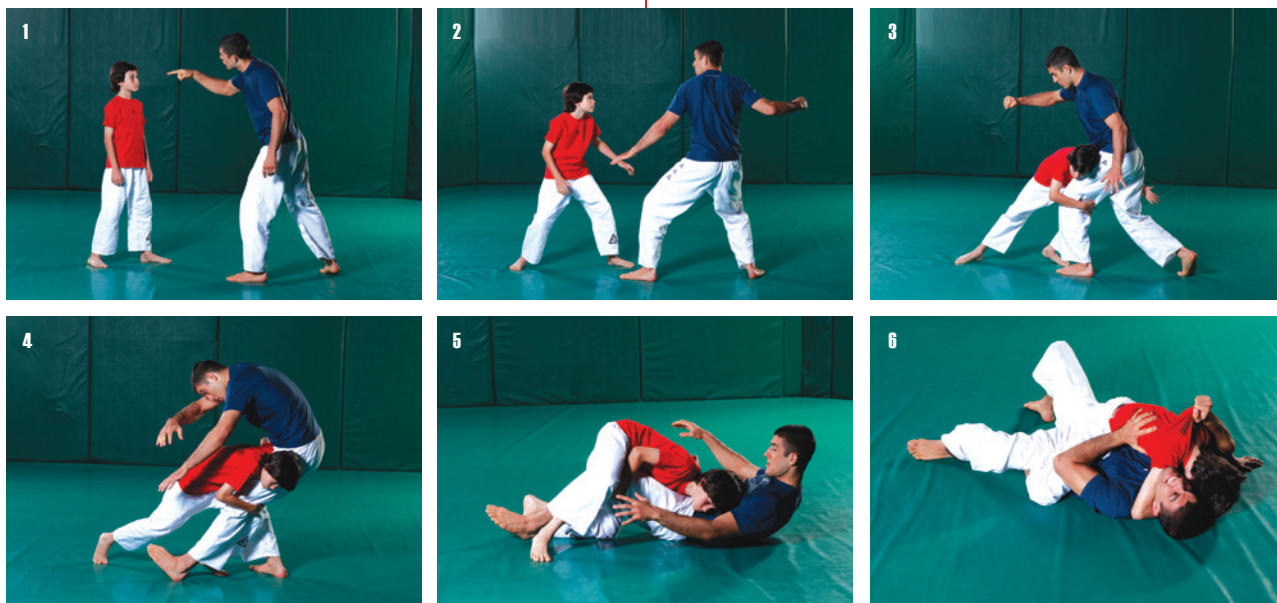
They wanted their kids to learn how to deal with bullies without becoming bullies. That's a fine line.

As soon as you start teaching a child punching and kicking as the primary resources for self-defense, when they get pushed to the edge, they respond with punches or kicks. That's fighting fire with fire. We prefer to fight fire with water.

### **IF A PUNCH OR KICK ISN'T THE BEST RESPONSE, WHAT IS?**

At the root of any child's inability to deal with a bully is the child's fear for his or her personal safety. When a child is being harassed day in and day out and is not responding to the tormentor, he or she may have no appetite, be depressed at home, not want to go to school — we've seen this many times. They're holding it in because they feel that if they respond — even verbally — it might trigger a violent reaction from the bully. If they knew their assertiveness wouldn't cause injury to them, they'd respond much more readily.

We give children techniques to use against most [types of] behavior and attacks on the playground. Once they realize they have the tools they need to physically stay safe, they can implement the verbal strategies we teach to prevent the violence from even starting.



## **GRACIE GAME 2 - TACKLE THE GIANT:**

The Bullyproof program teaches children to use verbal assertiveness to defend against bullies, but if the bully becomes physically aggressive, students can use simple yet effective self-defense techniques. In this game, Roran Gracie (left) fends off a sucker punch. As the bully attacks (1-2), Roran ducks under and grabs the aggressor's legs (3), then tackles him (4). Once on the ground (5), he maintains the dominant position until the bully agrees to cooperate (6).



## WHAT FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO THE MAKING OF A PLAYGROUND BULLY?

Bullies are created, not born. They're products of their environment. The kids who call other kids "stupid" or "fat" or "ugly" do it because they experienced the same harassment. Bullies are unusually confident — contrary to popular belief. They're so confident they feel they have the right to impose their will on other people and call them names — the way they learned from their relatives or peers.

We don't teach kids to fight so they can put bullies in their place or beat them up. If a kid tackles a bully and twists him in a knot just because of some verbal harassment he was experiencing, it's going beyond the call of duty because he wasn't attacked physically. We teach kids how to defend themselves so they no longer fear for their personal safety. Often, their confidence and assertiveness will show bullies that they're not an easy target.

## HOW DO YOU HELP KIDS NOT BE AN EASY TARGET?

We give them the resources to respond to the bul-

ly in a verbal way that draws a line. The first rule of engagement is, Avoid the fight at all costs. Next is, If physically attacked, defend yourself.

No. 3 is, If verbally attacked, follow the three "T" steps: If someone verbally harasses you, *talk to him*. Express your dissatisfaction: "Stop calling me stupid. I don't like how that makes me feel. Please leave me alone." You state the action that's bothering you, you state how it makes you feel and you state the desired outcome.

The second "T" is *tell a teacher*. If the bully persists after you talk to him, that means he has no consideration for your feelings. A grown-up should be notified — a teacher, parent or principal.

## IF THAT DOESN'T SOLVE THE PROBLEM, WHAT'S THE KID SUPPOSED TO DO?

That's where the third "T" comes in: *Tackle him with your words*. You have to stand up for yourself: "You've called me stupid and fat. If you want to hurt me or fight me, I'm not scared. If you don't, leave me alone. Stop wasting my time."

Think of the confidence a child who says that must



## GRACIE GAME 3 - SHARK BITE:

Bullyproof includes proven methods for stopping the most common schoolyard attacks. Here, Renon Gracie (bottom) momentarily protects himself from a mounted bully (1). He escapes from the vulnerable position before his opponent can punch by hugging the bully's torso (2-3). Renon then traps one arm and one leg (4) and bridges his hips up to off-balance the man (5). Once he establishes the dominant position (6), he can maintain control using the skills he learned in the Spider Kid game (7).

have. It's huge. In the past, bullying has happened to us, but it never persisted because our family is very effective at drawing lines. If someone says or does something we're not happy with, we quickly say, "Here's the deal: I might not be the best basketball player on the court, but neither are you, and if you're going to keep making fun of me, do something about it or leave me alone." We became good at making it so the bully must do something physically or leave us alone.

### **WHAT IF IT BECOMES PHYSICAL AT THAT POINT?**

When a child has learned the Bullyproof physical techniques, if the fight does take place, he can just hold the bully close. It's based on control. Whether you're on top or bottom — guard, mount, side mount, clinch — you create a distance at which strikes are not possible. You establish control until help arrives while avoiding his strikes. Or you can achieve the dominant position and negotiate from there: "Are you going to leave me alone from now on?"

Think of the benefits: You haven't punched him in his face. If you go to the principal's office afterward, you can say, "I didn't initiate it. He attacked me. During the fight, I wasn't trying to hurt him at all. I was trying to control him. I just wanted him to stop bugging me." From the court-defensibility angle, it's completely different from a situation in which the bully winds up with a black eye and a broken nose.

### **WHAT PHYSICAL TECHNIQUES DID YOU OMIT FROM THE PROGRAM TO ENSURE BULLYPROOF STUDENTS WON'T BE VIEWED AS AGGRESSORS?**

We don't teach any strikes or kicks — there's no real need because there are so many considerations [regarding school policies] and the law. And at school, it's rarely a life-or-death fight like you might encounter on the street.

We don't teach chokeholds because they can be misused. If they're applied for too long, they can kill. There are some joint locks, but they're taught with the rules of engagement for submissions, which state, "Use the minimal force and negotiate." That means you can't apply pressure until you talk to the bully. For example, the child catches an arm lock and says, "Do you prom-

ise to leave me alone?" If the bully cooperates, the child loosens up. If not, he applies minimal force. When the bully feels some pain, he'll normally concede.

### **DOES THE CURRICULUM INCLUDE ESCAPES?**

Of course. When I say it focuses on control, I'm talking about the final objective. Every fight begins with an attack from the bully: a head lock, a bear hug, a sucker punch, a kick, etc. All attacks are neutralized and escaped from, then you achieve the dominant control position, from which you wait for help or negotiate.

### **WHAT METHODS DO YOU USE TO TEACH A KID HOW TO RESPOND IN SUCH A RESTRAINED MANNER?**

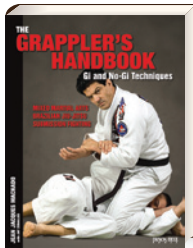
Every child begins with the Gracie Games. They're 10 games that don't include submissions — it's purely control, from taking someone down to maintaining the mount to escaping from the bottom to controlling the back mount. They're designed to be fun and engaging and educational without having the kid realize he's learning self-defense. Once he's done with that, he's ready for the Gracie Junior Combatives program, techniques simplified and modified for use on the playground. It's a gradual introduction to self-defense.

### **WHAT PERCENT OF YOUR BULLYPROOF STUDENTS EVENTUALLY MOVE INTO YOUR REGULAR JIU-JITSU CLASSES?**

One hundred percent. When they're around 14 or 15 years old, they all go straight into the adult program. And they prosper.

### **ARE OVERWEIGHT KIDS MORE LIKELY TO BE BULLIED THAN AVERAGE-WEIGHT KIDS? IF SO, DOES BULLYPROOF HELP THOSE KIDS GET IN SHAPE?**

Bullies will target anyone who's different. When you're overweight, they'll target you. Gracie Bullyproof has kids do 15 to 20 minutes of physical activity a day with a parent. While they're playing Gracie Games and sweating profusely and having a blast, they're becoming physically fit. The main reason people who don't work out don't work out is they haven't found something that stimulates their mind and body. [Kids who do Bullyproof] are engaged in the activity, and before they know it, they start shedding pounds. ✖



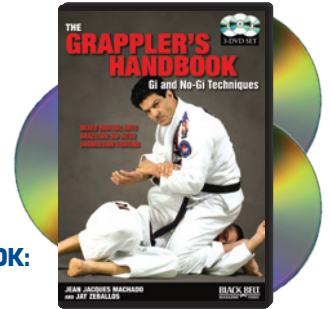
**THE GRAPPLER'S HANDBOOK:  
Gi and No-Gi Techniques**

by Jean Jacques Machado with Jay Zeballos

World-renowned teacher Jean Jacques Machado highlights the secrets behind *gi* and no-*gi* techniques for martial artists of all levels to successfully transition between styles.

184 pgs. (ISBN: 978-0-89750-183-5)

**Book Code 509—Retail \$26.95**

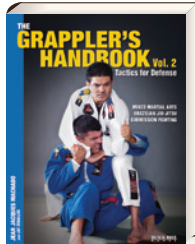


**THE GRAPPLER'S HANDBOOK:  
GI AND NO-GI TECHNIQUES**

by Jean Jacques Machado and Jay Zeballos

Filmed at the Jean Jacques Machado Academy in Los Angeles, this deluxe 3-DVD set offers multi-angle coverage (front, three-quarters and overhead) of each grappling, submission and MMA technique (60+ total) with step-by-step instructions, contextual explanations for application, and an optional subtitle track with page-specific references to *The Grappler's Handbook: Gi and No-Gi Techniques* book for an even deeper understanding of Machado's winning approach to chokes, takedowns, guard, strikes passing and more!

**DVD Code 9869 • Retail \$69.95 • DVD Approx. 184 min.**



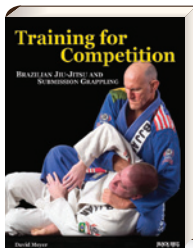
**THE GRAPPLER'S HANDBOOK VOL. 2:  
Tactics for Defense**

by Jean Jacques Machado and Jay Zeballos

Learn the best submission escapes from the world's greatest grappling instructor. Discover how to escape from virtually any position or submission with Jean Jacques Machado.

128 pgs. (ISBN: 978-0-89750-201-6)

**Book Code 523—Retail \$26.95**



**TRAINING FOR COMPETITION: Brazilian  
Jiu-Jitsu and Submission Grappling**

by David Meyer

Champion and coach David Meyer shares his knowledge of competition-winning strategies with added insights from grappling authorities like Bas Rutten, Cesar Gracie, Gene LeBell and Wally Jay.

191 pgs. (ISBN: 978-0-89750-167-5)

**Book Code 495—Retail \$24.95**



**CESAR GRACIE:  
Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Instructional DVD**

This high-quality series features Brazilian *jiu-jitsu* black-belt Cesar Gracie's most effective techniques. Ranging from basic to advanced levels, this three-DVD set covers technical instruction with and without a *gi*. This series also features UFC fighter Gil Castillo and Abu Dhabi Combat Club champion David Terrell.

**3-DVD Set—Code 9249—Retail \$59.99**



**BRAZILIAN JUJUTSU  
VOLUME 1: Gi Techniques**

by Pedro Carvalho

In *Brazilian Jujutsu – Volume 1: Gi Techniques*, author Pedro Carvalho provides a strong technical foundation for the traditional jujutsu competitor by demonstrating techniques and submissions that utilize the *gi* (uniform).

78 pgs. (ISBN: 978-0-89750-150-7)

**Book Code 480—Retail \$13.95**



**RENZO GRACIE AND CRAIG  
KUKUK: Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu**

This is the original Renzo Gracie / Craig Kukuk series that changed Brazilian *jiu-jitsu* forever. This three-DVD set deals with sport *jiu-jitsu* and no-holds-barred fighting. Gracie and Kukuk take you through each technique with clear, concise explanations for easy learning.

**3-DVD Set—Code 9229—Retail \$59.99**



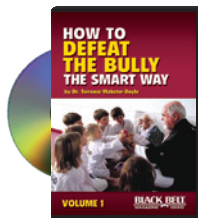
**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO  
BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU**

by the Editors of Black Belt

Spanning three decades of material from the *Black Belt* archives, the guide follows the evolution of this undefeatable sport from its genesis and as a family discipline to its first limelight appearance in the UFC and beyond!

191 pgs. (ISBN: 978-0-89750-171-2)

**Book Code 498—Retail \$16.95**

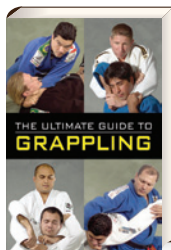


**HOW TO DEFEAT THE BULLY THE  
SMART WAY VOLUME 1**

by Dr. Terrence Webster-Doyle

This DVD offers many examples of common situations such as bullying in the schoolyard, confrontations over your possessions and many other everyday bullying occurrences using young students to role-play each scenario and response. (Approx. 60 min.)

**DVD Code 7579—Retail \$29.95**



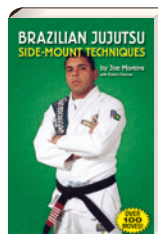
**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO  
GRAPPLING**

by the Editors of Black Belt

Ground fighting is the cornerstone of combat, and *The Ultimate Guide to Grappling* pays homage to the art with three decades' worth of instructional essays and interviews collected from the archives of *Black Belt*.

232 pgs. (ISBN: 978-0-89750-160-6)

**Book Code 489—Retail \$16.95**



**BRAZILIAN JUJUTSU:  
Side-Mount Techniques**

by Joe Moreira with Daniel Darrow

Describing more than 100 moves through photographic sequences and detailed captions, Brazilian *jujutsu* fighter Joe Moreira uses his "sequential teaching" style to delineate the network of options available to combatants dealing with side-mount situations. 149 pgs. (ISBN: 978-0-89750-145-3)

**Book Code 475—Retail \$13.95**