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Living With Children

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Q: We homeschooled our to even consider that our son This past fall, per his wish- not be suspended. Our son is es, we sent him to a pub- very upset and we are conlic school for the seventh sidering legal action. We've grade. Last week, he was followed your advice for a attacked by the class bully. long time and are hoping you This other child pushed our have some for us concerning son to the ground, called him this situation. vile names, and threatened was like he was unwilling and again, and again.

son through the sixth grade. was the victim and should

A: You obviously didn't him with further bullying. get the memo. In the new The principal has decided and glorious millennium, that both boys were equally here are no bullies. Every alat fault and suspended our tercation, despite facts to the son, along with the bully, for contrary, involves two equalthree days. Everyone knows ly responsible kids. And so, this other boy is a bully and as happened to your son, has been since he started public schools punish both school. When we pointed victims and bullies, and bulthis out to the principal, it lies live to be bullies again,

According to this com- kid in my class and usually pletely irrational (and yes, irrational and insane are synonyms) policy, Germany didn't invade Poland to start World War II. As every public-school principal knows, Poland was equally culpable. A Pole made faces at a German from across the border or something. In any event, Poland learned its lesson. All sarcasm aside, you

have learned, first-hand, that public school anti-bullying programs (and to be fair, the following comments apply to many if not most private schools as well) are a farce. A counselor talks to a class about healthy ways of resolving conflict and expressing anger as if bullies are only expressing anger inappropriately and any "conflict" is a two-way street.

the smallest of the boys. I was also a nerd and a geek rolled into one - a neek, or something along those lines. It was like wearing a bright red bullseye on my back and sure enough, the neighborhood bully picked up on the signal. For several years, George (his real name) chased me home from school nearly every day. If he caught me, which was nearly always, he delighted in sitting on my chest and tickling me. Yes, tickling me. Forget waterboarding. I guarantee tickling works much more effectively and may even be legal to use on terrorists. My school could do nothing because the incidents always took place off school grounds. It would have been useless, furthermore, to talk to George's parents. They I was always the youngest believed that George – who

was sent to juvenile prison victim have a meaningless at age sixteen - was never talk with the counselor and in the wrong about any- get suspended. Neutrality thing. Trust me on this: I was must be maintained, at whatnot equally responsible for ever cost to the victim. George's relentless attacks. This travesty of justice will I wasn't traumatized for life, continue until the parents of but I guarantee you, some a victim file a high-profile victims are.

George's parents, nearly ev- do so. Make a lot of noise. ery bully has parents who Cause a scandal. There are refuse to acknowledge that plenty of lawyers out there their kid is a sociopath. That, who will take such as case I suspect, is what drives pub- on a fee-contingent basis. lic school "student conflict" Just like employers, schools policy. School administra- should be held accountable tors absolutely know that if for creating unsafe environthey pin blame on the bully, ments. If you and your lawhis parents will rise to his yer so desire, I will gladly defense and the school may testify. end up with a lawsuit on their hands. As one public need to be stopped, and school principal told me, public schools will not stop "My primary job, John, is them. to keep the lawyers at bay." And so, when the bully does Rosemond: johnrosemond.

lawsuit against a school As was the case with system. I encourage you to

The Georges of this world

Family psychologist John his thing, both he and his com, parentguru.com.

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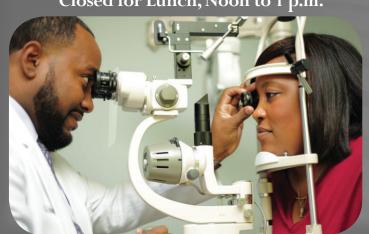


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