Bullying: Why Me?

Changing your behaviors and reactions will help eliminate being targeted by a bully. Those who bully feed on attention, fear and belongings.

"Kids who target others are constantly testing everyone around them. If you pass their test you are left alone, if you fail their test they continue to target you, and others start to target you. This is the swarm effect. First one kid picks on you, then two, then four, and pretty soon every bully in the school is picking on you. It is almost as if you have one of those Arby's hats glowing over your head saying, "Come pick on me". The good news is that once you learn to take away Fear, Attention, and Things, the Arby's hat goes away and the bullies go away with it. When you respond correctly they will leave you alone as fast as they swarmed you." (Bisenius 2011)

The following will help you understand ways you can change your behavior when confronted by teasing or bullying.

HEAD – *Wrong:* Holding your head down and tipped forward. When doing so you are projecting fear, and this will keep them coming back.
Right: **Tip your head slightly up giving the appearance you are calm and relaxed.**

EYES – *Wrong:* Looking down and around in a nervous manner.
***Right*: Focus on something in the distance, keeping your eyes higher than eye level and slightly to the left or right although, you don't want to appear to be nervously looking around the room. Looking directly at the bully will only feed their attention seeking behavior.**

MOUTH – *Wrong:* Chin and lips trembling. This signals that you are really afraid and the bully is in control, which is what they want.
Right: **Have your tongue pushed against the roof of your mouth or behind your front teeth. This will also help stop your mouth from trembling.**

BREATHING – *Wrong:* fast or quick breathing (shows fear)
Right: **Silently yawn to help slow breathing. (But don't look fake. That could make the situation worse.)**

SHOULDERS AND ARMS – *Right:* Keep your shoulders relaxed and down but not too far down or you will look tense. Keep your arms in a natural position – not too close to your body or moving stiffly.

LEGS & FEET – *Wrong*: Walking away fast shows fear**.** ***Right:*** **Scuff your feet as you walk at a slower than normal pace. (1/2 speed) This will make you appear confident.**
If you walk into a room where the individual who has been picking on you is, slowly walk past them, at more than arm's length, to the other side, scuffing your feet while "pretending" to look intently at something on the other side and then turn and leave.

Sources:

- Adapted from Jim Bisenius, "Bully Proofing Youth," http://bullyproofingyouth.com/.

ADDITIONAL LINKS
www.kidscape.org.uk
www.cyberbullying.org
http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind/problems/bullies.html#