Researchers on their results and children's voices on the journey from bullied to acknowledged.

Always take action

Content

Preface

It is painful to listen to the stories of bullied children. But as adults, it is our obligation to do so. But furthermore, we need to take action.

Take action by taking children seriously.
Take action by providing inclusive environments.
Take action by increasing our knowledge.

In this anthology, we are publishing young people's testimonies along with research results on bullying. Children and young people are experts on their reality and their own lives. To truly involve children in matters that concern them is not only a right, but also a tool for creating sustainable change.

The development and dissemination of research-based knowledge about bullying is vital in the quest for a world where no child is subjected to bullying. The focus of the World Anti-Bullying Forum is that the best available knowledge about how bullying among children can be prevented is shared among practitioners, policymakers and researchers.

All the researchers contributing to this anthology have been keynote speakers at the World Anti-Bullying Forum. This anthology is one of the

ways that we take action, and trough it we want to give children a voice as well as make research-based knowledge accessible for everyone.

Bullying is one of our major public health problems today. Every stroke, slur or act of exclusion is a violation of children's fundamental rights. All adults must act in the best interests of the child and ensure that every young person has their rights met.

We must always take action.

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World Anti-Bullying Forum

The World Anti-Bullying Forum was founded by the Swedish NGO Friends in 2017 and is both a scientific conference and a hub for knowledge about bullying. Every two years, WABF gathers practitioners, policymakers and researchers from various research fields.

WABF objectives are:
- To stop bullying and other forms of violence between children in accordance with The Convention on the Rights of the Child and Agenda 2030.
- To promote that the best available knowledge about how bullying among children can be prevented is shared among researchers, policymakers and practitioners.
- To gather, coordinate and make the best available research-based knowledge easily accessible globally and digitally.

Friends

Friends is a Swedish NGO founded in 1997 that provides adults with research-based tools to prevent bullying among children and young people. Friends develops, implements and disseminates knowledge about bullying, degrading treatment and discrimination, nationally as well as internationally.

Friends are working within four areas that in combination contribute to the goal of not letting one single child be subjected to bullying: research, training, advise and advocacy.

Editors

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Introduction from the editors

Björn Johansson & Robert Thornberg (eds.)

Introduction

The international research on bullying is extensive. Among other things, it focuses on the causes and consequences of bullying, individual characteristics, relationships, group processes, school climate and school culture, the school's organizational structure, norms, and interventions to prevent and address the problem. Although the focus of the research and its explanatory models vary, bullying can on a general level be understood to have to do with exclusionary actions or processes that threaten students' psychological, social and physical integrity in different ways, and can have both short as well as long-term consequences for individual students, groups, school classes and the school. Extensive international research among other things shows that exposure to bullying during childhood increases the risk of mental health issues (e.g. depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts), both during childhood, adolescence and adulthood (Boden, van Stockum, Horwood & Fergusson, 2016; Evans-Lacko et al., 2017; Farrington, Lösel, & Theodorakis, 2012; Klomek, Sourander & Elonheimo, 2015; Lereya, Copeland, Costello & Wolke, 2015). In addition, being bullied is a risk factor for both increased school absenteeism and poorer school performance (Fry et al., 2018) including failing grades (Johansson, Flygare & Hellfeldt, 2017). Increased knowledge on bullying and efforts to reduce the prevalence of bullying are central to

schools' efforts on promoting a healthy school and to create a school climate that is positive for the development and learning of children and young people. Several perspectives are needed to contribute to a more complex picture of bullying. The anthology deals with bullying in all kinds of contexts and from a variety of perspectives. It is partly about young people's own stories and experiences of the problems, and partly on research that discusses the bullying problem in various contexts on the basis of diverse perspectives developed on the basis of different disciplines and in relation to different theoretical fields. One of the main points of the anthology is that the contributions should give the reader a broader knowledge of different aspects of the phenomenon and how it can manifest itself. Another is that the contributions are based on different perspectives, which allows a broader and deeper understanding of the problem. Although there are controversies between different perspectives in research, the idea is that the anthology's research contributions should be seen as complementary to each other rather than as their opposites. They all contribute to explanations and understandings of bullying in different contexts. The ambition is to include different perspectives rather than to exclude some for the benefit of others. It is by letting different perspectives meet that a dialogue can arise, and a synthesis can be created.

The term Bullying

As early as the end of the 19th century, "bullying" is mentioned in an American study on students who tease and bully others (Burk, 1897) and where bullying is described as "cases of tyranny among boys and girls from college hazing and school fagging down to the nursery. Cases where threats of exposure, injury, or imaginary dangers were the instruments of subjection and control" (p. 336). The modern research on bullying started in Sweden in the 1970s with Dan Olweus' (1973, 1978) early studies on bullying among schoolboys in Stockholm. These studies,

in turn, were preceded by a 1969 debate article in which a Swedish physician named Peter Paul Heinemann (1969) expressed concern for his son who had been subjected to group violence where a "mob", that is, a group of children, exposed him to various forms of abusive acts. The article was highlighted in one of Sweden's most influential newspapers, Dagens Nyheter, through an article series on bullying (Larsson, 2008; Nordgren, 2009). The term bullying has since become widely disseminated when it comes to discussions about various forms of negative acts that occur between young people in school. However, international research on bullying did not have a serious breakthrough until the 1990s and has since increased exponentially during the 21st century.

   The bullying process does not only include the those subjected to bullying (see the contributions of Salmivalli, Veenstra and Yoneyama in this anthology). According to Salmivalli (1999), there are six possible so-called participant roles that stand for different ways of being involved in bullying. These roles are formed in the social interactions and students will sometimes come to act on the basis of them as a result of the interaction between group processes and individual dispositions (see also Salmivalli et al., 1996). The six participant roles are: the victims (those who are repeatedly and systematically abused), the bullies (those who initiate and lead the bullying), the assistants of the bully (those who assist the bully and begin to bully when someone has started the bullying), the reinforcers of the bully (those who actively encourage the bullying by being spectators who laugh and cheer on those who bully), those on the outside (so-called "outsiders", who are the ones who remain passive witnesses, who stay outside and take no stand for any party) and the defenders of the victim (those who try to help and support the victim, who takes their party and who tries to stop others from bullying). How other students who become witnesses to bullying respond and act seems to play a role in bullying prevalence. Research has found that bullying is more prevalent in school classes

where students more often act as reinforcers and less frequently act as defenders, and vice versa (Kärnä et al., 2010; Nocentini, Menesini, & Salmivalli, 2013; Salmivalli, Voeten, & Poskiparta 2011; Thornberg & Wänström, 2018).

Bullying is generally defined as repeated physical, verbal and other forms of negative acts aimed at hurting or injuring a person who is in a disadvantage of power and therefore having difficulty defending him/her/themselves (Eriksson, Lindberg, Flygare & Daneback 2002; Hellström, Thornberg & Espelage, forthcoming). Thus, the concept of bullying contains a variety of acts, ranging from severe physical abuse and sexual harassment to various forms of social exclusion processes, verbal attacks and online abuse. These may be acts directed at an individual or a group of individuals for the purpose of hurting and at the same time strengthening their own group's unity and cohesion, but it may also include acts based on xenophobia or gender normative understandings. The extent at which bullying occurs in schools is difficult to estimate depending on the age group being studied and how the issue is investigated. Bullying also varies between individual schools.

Although bullying as a term has been widely circulated in policy documents and popular culture in the development of interventions and in children's own stories, there are some problems in pinpointing it or delimiting the negative acts that occur in school only in terms of bullying. Lumping different forms of violence, abuse, name-calling and social exclusion processes together can be problematic as it tends to hide the fact that different types of bullying can have different causes and be related to different levels in the school system. For example, it risks concealing systematic and structural forms of violence, harassment and discrimination, which can lead to minority groups or groups that do not follow the majority norms being more at risk of being subjected to bullying than others (see Payne & Smith's contribution in this anthology). The term bullying also contains a criterion that actions

must be repeated over time, even though occasional acts of violence, abuse and comments can have serious consequences. However, bullying is a concept that helps to capture the social processes at school where some students are systematically, over time and in various ways, subjected to negative actions by other students and where extensive efforts or support may be required to break these patterns.

The school as a system

Schools can be said to consist of two systems that are linked together to form a unit (see Yoneyama's contribution in this anthology). On the one hand, we deal with a system that consists of the organizational and institutional frameworks, which are ultimately regulated by school-initiated policies, regulations, policy documents etc. This system is maintained by actors associated with different positions or functions in the school organization, such as school management, teachers, special educators, school classes and students, but also of different administrative principles such as schedules, the grading scale, the division of students into grades and classes etc. (Eriksson, et al., 2002). One of the basic ideas of the administrative system is that its members should be treated equally and that any features they hold should be tolerated. For the students, the administrative system may be mainly applicable in the form of the division of students into school classes as well as through compulsory schooling. The school class is a unit that the individual student cannot choose freely. This also means that the student cannot choose which classmates should be included in the class or which ones to interact with, which in the long run can create friction and cause victimization. Schooling being compulsory obliges all students to attend the school without exception and also means that the student cannot withdraw without significant formal sanctions and social consequences. The discomfort or malaise (ill-health) and the feeling of shame that the individual student may experience as a

result of possible victimization (Lindberg & Johansson 2008) is probably not aided by compulsory schooling, as it forces the student to remain in the context.

Linked to the administrative system is also a set of informal social systems, where, for example, staff and/or students organize themselves into different informal groups. Some group members have stronger social ties to each other than others. What holds together such groups is that they produce certain social values that its members maintain, reproduce and defend in front of and in relation to others. The formation of informal social groups is one of the most elementary forms of social life. The members of these informal groups have a social responsibility for each other. For students, such informal groupings are often organized into a status hierarchy with the popular students at the top of the hierarchy (Johansson, Flygare & Hellfeldt 2018; Thornberg, 2020). When students engage in such processes, it can be described as relational work – a constantly ongoing work that involves organizing and regulating social life within the framework of the student group (Wrethander 2007). In some circumstances, students in their quest to establish dominance relationships in the informal groupings may resort to behaviors such as degrading treatment, bullying and, in the worst case, violence (Pellegrini et al., 2010).

All in all, students' efforts to acquire knowledge and live up to the formal requirements of the school (within the administrative system) and at the same time obtain a favorable social position (within the informal systems) can be draining. Those who fail in the latter regard and are ostracized often have low status in the informal social system, while at the same time the administrative system through compulsory schooling forces the student to remain within the context. The student's low appeal means that they are not seen as a sufficient social companion and that they are easily subjected to bullying. Who those students are, is to a large extent related to their social relations. The students' ongoing relationship work means that friendships are

unsettled, new friendships are formed, while old ones are broken. As the power balance in the informal groups may shift, so too can the positions of those in superior or subordinate positions change over time. The students being able to change social position may explain why those who are subjected to bullying at different times are only partly the same individuals (Hellfeldt, Gill & Johansson, 2018; Skolverket 2011). Students who have been bullied for a certain period of time may at a later date belong to those who are no longer subjected.

The school's mission and responsibility

In the Swedish context, the school's mission and responsibility regarding the students' rights to safety and equal treatment have been strengthened since the beginning of the 2000s through changes in the Education Act and the Discrimination Act. According to this legislation, there is zero tolerance for degrading treatment in schools. Educational organizers (huvudmän) shall promote equal rights and opportunities for all children, students in their organization, regardless of gender, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other beliefs, disability, sexual orientation or age. Furthermore, the education must be designed in such a way that all students are ensured a school environment characterized by security and study peace. This means that the school's activities are surrounded by clear regulations regarding various forms of integrity-threatening acts such as discrimination, harassment and degrading treatment. The school operations are required to actively combat all forms of victimization.

Although the legislation that surrounds the school does not explicitly speak in terms of a whole-school approach regarding the school's mission and responsibilities if students are subjected to discrimination, harassment and degrading treatment, it rests on such assumptions. Among other things, it is important that everyone in the school, regardless of role and position, together with students and their guardians, have a consensus, take a shared responsibility and

have an integrated view of the problem. Furthermore, the prevention, promotion, investigating and corrective work carried out must be well thought out, well anchored and adapted to the school's conditions (see Pearce, Cross, Shaw, Barnes, Monks, Coffin, Runions, Epstein & Erceg's contribution in this anthology).

Research also shows that interventions that contain methods that rest on a whole school approach are more effective in reducing the prevalence of degrading treatment, bullying, harassment and discrimination at school compared to interventions that only contain isolated ways or methods (Smith, Schneider, Smith & Ananiadou 2004; Ttofi, Farrington & Baldry 2008; Skolverket 2011).

Perspectives within bullying research

Research on bullying has increased substantially in recent decades. One reason is that the heterogeneity in definitions, theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches to studying bullying is high (Volk, Veenstra & Espelage, 2017). Another reason is that the perception of the causes of the phenomenon has changed - from a more individualistic perspective based in developmental psychology to including more group-oriented or organizational perspectives based in other disciplines such as social psychology, sociology or social anthropology (Thornberg, 2015). This has resulted in the phenomenon being regarded as a more complex and multifaceted phenomenon than before (Schott & Sondergaard, 2014; Migliaccio & Raskauskas, 2015). At the same time, controversies and conflicts between representatives of different perspectives have increased as a result of the dominant perspective being challenged. The situation is similar to the old Indian story of when six blind men meet an elephant for the first time, but where everyone comes in contact with different parts of it and therefore also perceives it differently (Thayer-Bacon, 2001). The representatives of the different perspectives have their theories about the phenomenon, they all find support for their theories and conflicts arise because no one wants to admit that the beliefs of

others can be correct, which could mean that they themselves only partially contribute to the "truth". In accordance with the Indian story, it becomes problematic to claim that one perspective is right and that all others are wrong. To reach a better and wider understanding of the phenomenon of bullying, those around the elephant need to engage in a dialogue with each other and take into account that different perspectives will describe the phenomenon in different ways depending on different metatheoretical (ontological, epistemological and methodological) assumptions. Given the diversity of positions and traditions found in social and educational science research, Thayer-Bacon (2001) argues that we need to realize the necessity of pluralism (a conversation between different perspectives in order to reach a more qualified understanding), accepting fallibility (that knowledge is always tentative; that we can never reach knowledge beyond all doubt because we humans [including researchers] are fallible, limited, and context-bound) and realize that knowledge is a culturally embedded social process of knowing that is in constant need of re-examination, correction and revision. It is only when the perspectives are united and in dialogue with one another that we can gain a better and more complete understanding of the phenomenon.

Sometimes bullying research is divided into two major (but not homogeneous) perspectives (Kousholt & Fisker, 2015; Schott & Søndergaard, 2014; Thornberg, 2015): The first order perspective (or the first paradigm) has its roots in developmental psychological research on aggression among boys. In this perspective, bullying is regarded and explained as something that happens between individuals. The research attempts to determine which individual factors (e.g. personality traits, empathy, self-esteem and social skills) increase and decrease the risk of engaging in bullying behavior or being subjected to bullying. This perspective examines and identifies typical characteristics of (a) students who bully others, (b) students who are bullied, and (c) students who bully others and are bullied themselves. In addition, it has a focus on examining how such characteristics deve-

lop and are linked to bullying over time for children and adolescents.

The second order perspective (or the second paradigm) views bullying as a social phenomenon and is understood or explained as a result of group processes and other social processes, social structures, social and cultural norms, discourses, hegemonies, etc. In other words, contextual factors are in the foreground. The focus can be on processes, norms and structures in peer groups, school classes and classrooms, schools, local communities and societal level. This perspective can be related to several disciplines and knowledge traditions including social psychology, sociology, social anthropology, social work, pedagogy and gender studies, but also to developmental psychology and educational psychology. Sometimes representatives of the second order perspectives criticize the first-order perspective by assuming that the latter reduces our understanding of bullying to individual-based factors as well as tending to pathologize students who bully others or who are bullied themselves. At the same time, it is important to remember that research focusing on individual-based factors does not claim that everyone who bullies shares a particular set of psychological traits and that everyone who is bullied shares another set of particular traits. What such research instead claims is that some psychological characteristics or traits are more common in students who bully others compared to students who do not bully others, or in students who are subjected to bullying compared to those who are not. Completely rejecting individual psychological explanations and referring only to social, cultural, discursive or soc-ietal explanations could also be criticized for reductionism as it tends to reduce explanations to these levels and marginalize the importance of the individual psychological ones.

Although the division of the first order and second order perspectives can be clarifying and help us see different explanatory levels and theoretical perspectives in bullying research, it risks creating a false dichotomy (either-or-thinking) where we must choose one and reject the other. Instead of positioning them against each other, we can see

them as complementary in that they, like the blind men in the Indian metaphor, are in and thus from different positions around the elephant (Thornberg, 2015). A curious, open-minded and sincere dialogue between the different perspectives is necessary and fundamental for a research community that seriously wants to learn more about the phenomena they are investigating and developing knowledge about.

> *If we are relational social beings who are fallible and limited by our own embeddedness and embodiment, at a micro level as well as a macro level, then none of us can claim privileged agency. None of us has a God´s eye view of Truth. Our only hope for overcoming our own individual limitations, as well as our social/political limitations (cultural and institutional) is by working together with others not like us who can help us recognize our own limitations /– – – / Given our fallibilism, then we must embrace the value of inclusion on epistemic grounds in order to have any hopes of continually improving our understandings. Inclusion of others perspectives in our debates and discussions allows us the means for correcting our standards, and improving the warrants for our assertions (Thayer-Bacon, 2000, pp. 11 and 12).*

The different perspectives need to be integrated into a more complex understanding of bullying. In this way, bullying can be understood as a social phenomenon that can arise, be maintained, changed or stopped through the complex interplay of individual and contextual factors. There are also many researchers who advocate and in various ways try to integrate individual and contextual perspectives or explanatory levels (see, for example, Espelage & Swearer, 2004, 2011; Hong & Espelage, 2012; Migliaccio & Raskauskas, 2015; Thornberg, 2015). With this in consideration, the anthology should be viewed as an attempt to have research based on different perspectives meet in order to contribute to a broader understanding of the problem.

The contributions of the anthology

Each chapter, with the researchers' contributions, is introduced with a presentation by experts from Friends. Woven in between chapters are stories from members of Friends' Children and Youth Group, who describe their experiences of bullying and being acknowledged.

In her chapter, Shoko Yoneyama focuses on the school as a social institution and how teachers' efforts to combat bullying are made more difficult by the fact that they themselves are part of the system that often, but usually unconsciously, contributes to the bullying that takes place in the school. She means that the widespread fixation on individual and family explanations points to factors that teachers generally cannot influence to any significant extent. Instead, students and their families are faulted while maintaining a belief that teachers cannot do anything about the bullying. Yoneyama thus emphasizes the importance of a "paradigm shift" to the second order perspective, which emphasizes the importance of context in understanding and explaining bullying. She takes Japan as an example and describes, among other things, how bullying in Japanese schools often occurs in classrooms, unlike studies in Western schools finding that bullying mainly occurs in the school yard and on breaks. Bullying in Japan takes place in peer groups where the roles often rotate. Against this background, Yoneyama describes how different aspects of the school as a social institution can help explain bullying: social control and conformity related to groups, school rules, negative use of discipline and vow of silence. The work against bullying can therefore not be isolated to individual students, but the whole school needs to be critically examined and changed.

Elizabethe Payne and Melissa J. Smith highlight the marginalization and subjection of LGBTQ-students to violence, aggression and bullying. They point out that an individualizing language and approach to talk about and dealing with violence and bullying obscure the view of the heteronormative power system that permeates

society and supports aggression and bullying directed at LGBTQ-students. They believe that beneath the surface of open violence against these students is a heteronormative school culture characterized by ideology, power and norms, especially regarding gender and sexuality, which privileges those who live by these norms and marginalizes and punishes students who do not. A value-based work that seeks to make students kind and nice is not enough because this cannot erase stigmatization of LGBTQ-students. The anti-bullying work needs to turn attention to how both the school's and the larger cultural value and norm systems contribute to bullying that takes place in school through normative ideals and boundaries for gender and sexuality, among other things.

In her chapter, Christina Salmivalli emphasizes that anti-bullying programs that have proven effective in scientific evaluations do not manage to fully eradicate all incidents of bullying in schools. What, then, is it that allows bullying cases to continue to occur despite various types of prevention and corrective measures? Salmivalli discusses this but also the effects of confrontational and non-confrontational approaches in meeting students who bully others and points out that the effect may vary between bullying cases. The role of the student in the anti-bullying work, and what she calls "the paradox of the safe context", are also discussed in this chapter.

René Veenstra approaches bullying as a group phenomenon, describes how it is related to social status and how it can be understood and analyzed by examining students' relationships to one another and belonging to different peer groups or constellations (so-called "social networks"). Veenstra discusses how different types of social norms among students and peer groups can be related to bullying. Like Salmivalli, he also draws attention to the paradox of the safe or healthy context, that is, the safer or healthier the school, the worse the situation tends to be for the few students who are not helped by an otherwise functioning anti-bullying program. Both Salmivalli and

Veenstra emphasize that bullying is a group phenomenon that needs to be understood but also handled in the social contexts in which they take place. Teachers need to see and work with group processes, norms and social networks. Together with the students, they need to promote a we-culture in school classes.

In their chapter, Michael Kyobe and Zizipho C. Ndyave present research that they and their colleagues have conducted in South Africa on cyber bullying via mobile phone (mobile bullying). Anonymity, collective behavior, power, frequency of use, the use of emojis and emoticons as well as gender and age are discussed and studied in relation to mobile bullying. In their research, they find how, among other things, the influence of anonymity varies between different online platforms and how unspoken power affects and is expressed in mobile bullying.

Natasha Pearce, Donna Cross, Therése Shaw, Amy Barnes, Helen Monks, Juli Coffin, Kevin Runions, Malanie Epstein and Erin Erceg describe the outcome of an extensive Australian research program under the name "Friendly Schools". This program began in 1999 by compiling international evidence-based research on anti-bullying work. Then followed a variety of studies in Australian schools. In their chapter, Pearce et al. discusses the intervention and implementation of what came to be called "Friendly Schools", which consisted of a whole school approach, methods of social and emotional learning, family activities and individual activities. The program focused on both traditional bullying and online bullying. Identification and adaptation to the local needs of the schools were also important. Key lessons learned from these "Friendly Schools" interventions, such as the importance of focusing on high-risk periods, identifying and managing obstacles to implementation, building staff capacity and preparedness, and involving students in the work, are outlined in the chapter.

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My story – Elin Abelsson

Friends´ Children and Youth Group

Sometimes I feel good, sometimes I do not. Most often, I am not feeling good. In a week I am turning 22 years old. The toughest time in school for me was 7th–9th grade, that was 8 years ago.

When I started 7th grade, I had two friends who both ended up in my class. I had attended the same school as one of them since pre-school and met the other one when we started taking foreign language classes in 6th grade. Everything was good the first six months. Then they began to exclude me. Sometimes I was included, sometimes not. Everything happened on their terms and I had no say. In 8th grade, the only time I was included was when one of them was sick. None of them wanted to be alone, so those times was good enough for them.

Even in front of the teachers they could say: "no we don't want to sit with her" or "she can't sit with us". And even then, nothing happened. No teacher ever said anything. Luckily, I had two people in another class, that I felt connected to. But since they were not in my class and our schedules rarely matched, I started skipping classes a lot. Not even

then anyone reacted. My mother did not know that I was not attending my classes, she was never told.

While this happened in school, some boys began to write to me. I knew exactly who was writing. They used Facebook, so everything is still saved. For several years they wrote sexually harassing messages to me. It was mainly two boys that were older than me, from my school. It could be innocent comments like "hello <3" or "good-looking". When they first started messaging me, I just got very happy since I was so alone at school – happy that someone actually cared about me and could like me. It was always someone who wrote that they had a crush on me. But they were really just mocking me. Sometimes they wrote rougher things like "Hello baby <3 how are you? miss writing with you! can't you come to our school so that I can get a real blowjob in the bathroom in our locker room? Please, begging you, want to see your hairy pussy too. Kisses! bye for now!!!<3". Then, when I realized they did not mean what they said I was very hurt and angry. I wrote very stupid things back to them. Then, finally, the time came when I no longer cared about it. I never reported it, something I regret today.

Finally, there was a teacher who noticed. Someone who had the guts to take action by asking how I was doing, a teacher who found out what was going on. That is something so simple to do. To just show that you see someone. Thanks to this teacher I got the opportunity to switch classes when I was starting 9th grade, to be in the same class as my friends.

What happened to me has left deep marks, for example I do not trust people. I do not trust that people can actually like me, it could just as well be a joke, like when those boys did that to me. It took me more than two years to fully trust that my boyfriend meant it when he said he loved me.

I have told my story many times, it is nothing I am hiding. When you talk openly about things, people comment. One of the comments that affected me the most was "She's ridiculous, there are so many people

who's been through much worse things". This is true. There are many who have been through much worse things. I have never claimed differently. But I want to tell my story to show that you do not have to have gone through the worst things for it to be considered bullying, the smaller things also count.

Everyone's story is important.

Chapter 1

The Politics of School Bullying:
Teachers Matter

Shoko Yoneyama

Shoko Yoneyama

PhD, Senior Lecturer, Asian Studies, University of Adelaide.

Shoko Yoneyama has worked extensively in the fields of sociology of education and Japanese Studies and is recognised internationally as the author of *The Japanese High School: Silence and Resistance* (Routledge 1999) which features a chapter on bullying (*'Ijime: The price of super-conformity'*). Focusing on issues such as bullying and school nonattendance, her research explores structural factors from a sociological perspective while attending to the perspectives of students themselves. Her publications include *'Problems with the Paradigm: The school as a factor in understanding bullying'*, British Journal of Sociology of Education (2003 with Asao Naito); and *'Theorizing school bullying: Insights from Japan'* in Swedish journal Confero (2015). She is also the author of *Animism in Contemporary Japan: Voices for the Anthropocene from Post-Fukushima Japan* (Routledge 2019).

Introduction from Friends' experts

Pernilla Björnsdotter Ackerman and Frida Warg

In this chapter, Shoko Yoneyama pinpoints what is usually referred to as school culture, partly by highlighting the social structure and the discourse (how something is understood, interpreted and talked about). In Yoneyama's description, the link between bullying among students and the institutional aspects of the schooling is made visible by the fact that the social structure affects many more than only those who fit the roles of bully and/or bullied. By this, she wants to shift the focus that is so often directed towards individuals and suggests that schools should not only be seen as reflections of societies, but rather as one of the supporting mechanisms of the power system of societies and thus also of bullying. The chapter provides several thought-provoking questions about schools and their representatives; What are the factors that gives fuel to bullying at our school? Could I unintentionally in my professional role and through my everyday practice be contributing to hierarchies and status schemes between students? How do I become conscious of that? Do I see others in my workplace doing so? If so, how can I point that out?

The hidden curriculum is a concept that has been around since the 70s. In Sweden, questions concerning the school's power system and sociology have been at the center of educational sociological research with Donald Broady leading the way. This is a question that Friends has tried to elevate on school agendas over the years, often in the context of the norm-critical questions. While norm criticism can arouse strong feelings and resistance, the so-called hidden curriculum is a more

accessible and useful concept that can be used to contemplate questions such as "What do my students learn from me beyond what I teach?" The problem with the hidden curriculum is not necessarily that it teaches inaccuracies, but that it is in fact hidden. In combination with the silence that tends to surround bullying, the effect is devastating, both for individuals and for school culture.

Yoneyama argues the importance of looking at the Japanese school context for a number of reasons. Typical for bullying in Japan is that the bullying mainly takes place in the classroom itself, unlike the schoolyard scenario or the set time between lessons, which are often said to be the most precarious environments and contexts in for example a Swedish context. This gives us insight into processes that are present in all schools, but which usually pass unnoticed. She also emphasizes that approximately half of all bullying takes place within a group of friends and that the roles in the group are not static: Subjecting and being subjected to bullying rotates between the people in the group of friends. Yoneyama believes that these changes of roles contradict the dominant explanation that is based on the individual. The individual perspective is not irrelevant but tends to lock us in an analytical corner where both the one doing the bullying and the one subjected to bullying are portrayed as children with specific characteristics, a lack of morals or a problematic family situation. Although these aspects are important, they cannot be used as the only explanation. When we notice various inclusionary and exclusionary mechanisms - and that the roles within that process interchange, it will be easier for us to abandon the stereotypical image of the "bully" and the "victim" as different individuals. Maybe we can even stop using concepts like bully and victim and focus on the structural and institutional factors?

Teachers, especially those who work with grades 2–5, frequently share their enormous frustration over the time they are forced to spend on conflict resolution in their classes. They talk about how they

must "extinguish fires", about preventive measures and children who feel violated and testify to one day being unmistakably included in the group and at other times not even being spoken to. It can be this way for months. In the teachers' testimonies, they are the ones that suffer the most since these problems occupies far too much of their time and that it is not in proportion to their teaching. How their students are affected by these conditions is rarely in the foreground. Since the process often involves children who are part of one or more peer-groups, and there is no simple image with clear roles of "bully" and "victim", it becomes more difficult for school staff to see this as a form of bullying. There is still a prevailing idea of bullying where the victims need to have their heads pressed into the toilet for it to be judged as urgent.

The chapter is important because it helps us see violations in situations and contexts that the adult world tends to just shrug at. Even those educators who devote much of their daily lives to sorting out the so-called conflicts between students tend to see it as the consequences of natural socialization processes, or an effect of "bored children who engineer drama". The focus is directed towards the individuals who expose each other to exclusion, banter or other degrading treatment instead of investigating and planning peer-promoting measures on an institutional level. How do you pedagogically plan the recess? To what extent is the internet considered as an arena in which the schools' core values are implemented? How can the school and its adult representatives understand the vulnerability that their students experience during these seemingly endless periods of exclusion and inclusion?

Yoneyama lists a couple of factors that are relevant for understanding the type of bullying she wants to put the spotlight on. One example is conformity, both official and unofficial, upheld by group members through different norms. It can feel like there is no other alternative then to be included in the group, which means the

requirements for adaptation to the group's norms can go very far. Leaving the group increases the risk of involuntary loneliness and is therefore considered even more dangerous than staying. Yoneyama's chapter subscribes to the voices that want to focus more on how normality is reproduced through bullying and the usage of exclusionary mechanisms. This can be combatted by promoting the forming of friendships outside the classes' subgroups. It can be done both through different types of group divisions as well as controlled activities during recess. But it is also fruitful to strengthen one's consciousness of norm and seriously examine the hidden curriculum. Since we all follow a series of invisible rules concerning how we are expected to be, look and think that affect our perception of what is normal and not, one strategy is to work with norm-criticism in schools. Both by examining oneself as an adult in school and by informing students about how we create and value norms we can take steps toward a more inclusive school.

The Politics of School Bullying:
Teachers Matter

Shoko Yoneyama

1. Introduction

A few months ago, in Australia, a distressed mother recounted the terrible impact of bullying on her family. She told me her daughter had been bullied in primary school, but the teacher 'did nothing' to help her. The young girl stopped going to school and still needs the ongoing support of a psychologist to manage her anxiety. Now, the woman's son, a middle school student, is being bullied and, in a repeat of history, the boy's teacher 'did very little' using the excuse that the bully was a 'model student'. The teacher's advice to the distressed family was 'to wait' (i.e. to persevere) until the following year when both boys, her son and the bully, would move on to different high schools. The bullied son stopped going to school and also started to see a psychologist. With two traumatized children staying at home, the woman and her husband felt hopeless. 'Teachers aren't interested in or seem resigned to bullying. They expected us just to put up with it. Why?' – the mother asked me.

Why indeed. We know there *are* teachers dedicated to helping victims and reducing bullying. Schools, at least in Australia have anti-bullying policies and intervention programs. Despite many measures taken to reduce bullying at various levels, and despite the large amount of research on bullying in the past thirty or so years, the woman's

experience suggests that there is still a considerable gap between the field of bullying studies and the reality of bullying at school. Is it possible that we, the researchers, have missed something fundamental in the field of bullying studies?

In this chapter, I will explore the *possibility* that in many schools, teachers cannot do much about bullying because they themselves are part of a system that often, albeit unintentionally, cultivates bullying due to the very nature of the school as a social institution. To put it simply, teachers' difficulties in noticing, recognizing and adequately dealing with bullying might be likened to fish which (presumably) have difficulties in recognizing the water in which they live. This is a terrible analogy for those truly caring teachers who are dedicated to reducing the bullying of students in their care. Even though each individual is important as an active agent, however, the social structure and discourse (how an issue is perceived, understood and talked about) are also important because their impact is more pervasive and less tangible.

Using the fish analogy again, my concern here is how to 'purify the water', to make the social ecology of a school more nurturing for *both* teachers and students. I say '*both*' because sometimes teachers also get bullied by other teachers and students. Some will argue that the aim of whole-school anti-bullying policies and practices is to change the school culture to make it friendlier. I agree, but I question if the critical and reflective examination has been deep enough. Has it not been the case that bullying is perceived essentially as an issue of problematic, dysfunctional students and their families? Alternatively, is not the school perceived essentially as a reflection of the community and society of which it is part, *without seriously exploring the possibility that the school itself may function as a key mechanism* for reproducing the normative order and power relationships, i.e. mechanisms that are fundamental to bullying (Yoneyama 1999 & 2003, Horton 2011, Bansel et al 2009, Dunkan 2013)?

This is *not* to say that issues arising from particular students and their family backgrounds have little to do with their involvement in bullying, either as a bully, the bullied, or bystander. Rather, too much attention has been paid to these aspects, which results in too little attention being paid to the role schools and teachers play in bullying. This imbalance is explained by the fact that mainstream school bullying literature has been largely 'in the field of developmental and educational psychology' where bullying traditionally has been explained essentially in terms of 'pathological or deficient individual and family factors' (Thornberg 2018:144). While it would be impossible to deny the presence of individual and family factors in many cases, this perspective is limited in that individual and family related factors are often the ones we have less control over as teachers, researchers, and policy makers. This understanding of bullying, by default, results in, firstly, blaming students and their families and, secondly, believing teachers are unable to do much about bullying. From the viewpoint of the victimised students, the implication of this research orientation is that the victim somehow gets the blame and has to endure the bully-ing, exactly as the mother of the two victimized children complained about above.

What we can control though, is what we do within schools as teachers, researchers, and policy makers. Which means, we should look more closely at the relationship between bullying and schooling. As Paul Horton remarks, 'school' constitutes half of the words in 'school bullying' so, why not pay more attention to the 'school' (Horton 2011:271). In other words, we should draw on **knowledge accumulated** in the field of sociology of education to better understand bullying. Bullying is all about *power and relationships* and school is the place where students learn first-hand about *power and relationships* through the '**hidden curriculum**' as well as through official pedagogy and the curriculum. Would it not be logical then to expect that there is a parallel in the way students use power to relate with each other and the way power is

used in the school. Would it not be the case that bullying is something students *learn* at school, i.e. their **undesirable over-adjustment to school as a power-dominant social space** (Yoneyama 1999 & 2003).

This chapter contributes to the strengthening voices in the field of bullying studies that the field requires a paradigm shift (Schott & Søndergaard 2014, Yoneyama 2015): a shift from **paradigm one**, that attributes bullying to the problematic characteristics of the students involved, to **paradigm two** which pays more attention to the context of bullying (Yoneyama 1999, 2003, 2015, Schott & Søndergaard 2014, Kousholt & Fisker 2015, Thornberg 2018). The recognition for a paradigm shift has become more pronounced in recent years, which can also be understood to be the effort to build **critical bullying studies** (Juva 2019). For instance, there has been a greater focus on the examination of the process whereby normality is reproduced through bullying by using mechanisms of exclusion (Søndergaard 2012, Thornberg 2018, Juva et al 2018). Further questions are: 1) whether school is a place that simply reflects the dominant normative order of the community, i.e. *it's just a place* where students happen to be; or 2) whether there are 'school factors' *that enhance and reproduce* the culture and normative order that cultivates bullying, and if so, how exactly do they work in the school.

With these questions, this chapter focuses on the nexus between bullying among students and the institutional aspects of school. It explores whether or how school factors contribute to increased bully-ing among students. The 'method' adopted in the chapter is to present the key points obtained from numerous empirical studies conducted in Japan on school bullying (mostly available in Japanese only) where the sociological perspective has been particularly strong (Yoneyama 2015), while at the same time incorporating knowledge from sociology of education, which curiously, has *not* been strong in the discourse on school bullying (Bansel et al 2009).

Although the discussion will be based on insights gained from Japan, it will be contextualized within a broader comparative perspective to

make it relevant to a global audience. The chapter will be especially relevant for interpreting key findings from the recent PISA results on bullying (OECD 2017) that highlighted the significance of student perceptions of **unfair teachers** as an explanatory factor.

2. The Second Paradigm of the Bullying Studies: Insights from Japan

Why Japan? The strong positivist orientation of bullying studies tends to minimise the social and cultural differences among societies, especially between 'western' and 'eastern (Asian)' cultures. Whether, or how, Japanese schools are different from schools in other societies essentially depends on the country, as well as the kind (e.g. conventional or alternative) and the level of the schools (e.g. primary or secondary).

With this caveat, the case of Japan is worthy of special attention for three reasons. First, Japan is what-we-call in-Japanese, *kadai senshin koku* (課題先進国), a frontrunner country in contemporary challenges. It means that Japan represents, *in concentrated form*, problems facing contemporary societies in general. In particular, it is most relevant when we consider the relationship between bullying and students' perceptions of **unfair teachers**, which has been singled out as the factor that is significant in explaining school bullying in PISA 2015 (OECD2017:5). The second reason for looking at Japanese bullying is that, the sociological perspective of bullying is well-developed in Japan and should be widely disseminated (Yoneyama 2015). The Japanese perspective suggests a slightly different focus for bullying research and ways to tackle this complex issue.

Third, the sociological accounts of bullying in Japan are relevant in Asia where similar education systems exist. PISA2018 found that students in Japan and Korea 'were some of the most dissatisfied with their lives …. and were about twice as likely as students in other OECD countries to report that they always feel scared or sad' (OECD2019:51). The report suggests that students in Japan and Korea are forerunners

of a global trend where 'students' sense of belonging at school weakened considerably between 2003 and 2015 and waned even further between 2015 and 2018' (OECD2019:51). Previously, PISA 2000 also found that East Asian countries (Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong China) constitute a distinct group, where students attend school more regularly, but their sense of belonging to school is low. They felt lonelier and more isolated at school than students in other parts of the world (OECD2004). These findings indicate that Japan is not only relevant for thinking about bullying in Asia but also that it is indeed a 'forerunner' in the concerning global trend of growling student alienation at school.

What are the challenges Japanese schools face in relation to bullying? First is the prevalence of bullying. The results of PISA2015, which is the most reliable and largest-scale comparative data available today shows that Japan is at the high end of the 56 countries in the survey (OECD2017). About one in 10 (9%) of the Japanese res-pondents indicated that they got hit or pushed around by other students frequently, at least a few times per month. About one in five (22%) indicated being frequently victimized. These are the third highest figures, following those of Hong Kong and Bulgaria.

Second, **Figure 1** shows the total number of suicides under the age of 18 by calendar dates, from 1972 to 2013. The total number is over 18,000 or about 440 young lives per year. As you can see, there are two peaks. The biggest is around the 1st of September, the other, in early April. The 1st of September is the day Term 2 begins after the summer holidays, and early April is the time the school year begins. Within a span of only 3 days at the beginning of Term 2, 317 young people have taken their own lives. The peak in September and not in April suggests that many of these suicides are related to bullying. At the beginning of the school year (in April) peer relations are not yet set. By the end of Term 1, however, peer relations are more or less fixed and students know they cannot escape from it. They dread returning to school after the summer vacation. Although not all suicides are caused or triggered by bullying, it has been reported that bullying

is most ferocious in September in Japanese schools (Otsu City 2016), suggesting that bullying is one of the major reasons for the suicide peak in September. These two statistics suggest that: 1) bullying is a serious issue in Japan, with drastic consequences; and 2) there is a close link between bullying and the education system.
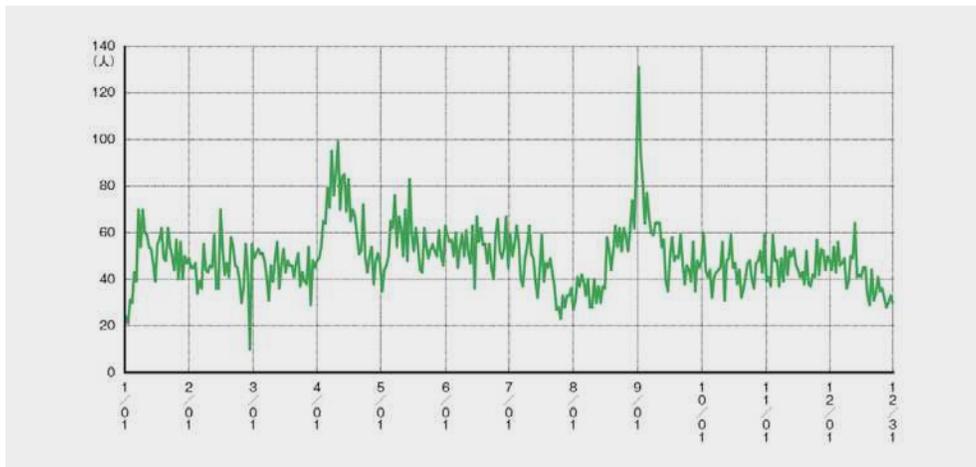
Figure 1
Total Number of Suicides (under the age of 18) by Day 1972–2013
Source: Ministry of Health, Labour & Welfare of Japan (2015:83)

What are the characteristics of bullying in Japan? Firstly, bullying happens most frequently within classrooms. In a survey conducted by the City of Otsu some 60 to 65% of the victimised students indicated that they were bullied in their classroom (Otsu City 2016:27). Although this is quite different from the West where the majority of bullying occurs in the school yard, it simply reflects the fact that students spend most of their time in classrooms in Japan rather than in the yard. The second characteristic of bullying in Japan is that about half of bullying occurs *within a closed friendship group among friends of the victim,* and this has repeatedly been confirmed by research (e.g. Kanetsuna et al 2006). The third key characteristic is that the bullying roles, who

is the bully and who is the victim, are often not fixed are often rotated within friendship groups as shown in **Figure 2**.
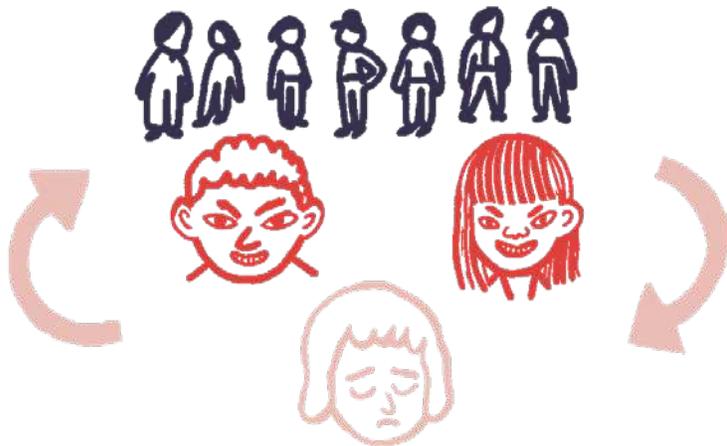
Figure 2
Role-change of Bullying

In primary and junior high schools, this role-swapping often occurs within less than 6 months, though the roles can become fixed for longer periods as students get older (Taki 2007). This reality of 'rotated roles' observed in Japan, contradicts the view that a bully is someone who has particularly-aggressive personality traits, moral issues, or family problems. The fact that roles are often rotated suggests that the students involved, whether as bully or victim, tend to be '*ordinary non-problematic*' *students*. This kind of bullying cannot be explained by 'Paradigm One' of school bullying (as critiqued by Schott & Søndergaard 2014) that seeks to explain victimization in terms of individual personality traits. To explain the rotation of bullying, we must look to structural and institutional factors, that is 'school factors' by using 'Paradigm Two'.

In order to reflect the mode of bullying widely observed in Japan, I developed a conceptual model that distinguishes between Type I &

Type II bullying (see **Figure 3**) (Yoneyama 2015). Type I is the style of bullying carried out by 'problem' students who bully others outside their friendship loop. The perpetrator is fixed, and the cause of the bullying may be unrelated to school. Solutions need to be sought within the individual. Type II bullying, on the other hand, mainly involves 'good' students who show few signs of problematic behaviour. They tend to engage in collective bullying, and there is considerable, 'swapping' of roles. Type II bullying occurs within a circle of friends. The prevalence of this type of bullying suggests that there are structural factors at work, and thus, the solution should be sought within institutional aspects of the school. Type I fits with Paradigm 1 of bullying research, and Type II, Paradigm 2. Type II bullying is especially relevant to think about cyber bullying.

	Type I	**Type II**
Bully	'Problem student'	'Ordinary/good' students
Mode of bullying (1)	Bullying by a single student	Collective/group bullying
Mode of bullying (2)	Mainly physical	Mainly relational and verbal, but can be physical
Status/role playes	Fixed	Rotated
Victim	Outside the friendship loop	Whitin the friendship loop
Casual factors	Individial factors	Environmental/school factors
Solution	Individual solution	Structural solution

Figure 3
Type I and Type II Bullying (Conceptual Model) Source: Yoneyama (2015):126

3. School Factors Relevant to Explain Bullying

What are the school factors relevant to explain bullying as suggested by the Japanese example? The first is that **groups are used as the basis of control and as vehicles for enforcing conformity**. This happens at both formal and informal levels. Formally, students are allocated into a **homeroom** for the whole school year, with a fixed *room* and fixed *group*. Teachers come to the homeroom for their lessons. Students spend almost the whole day (apart from PE, music, etc.) in this fixed physical and social space, in a closed group, unable to escape. Within each homeroom, students are often further divided into small groups (*han*), that become the basis of almost all activities: learning, discussion, eating, cleaning, etc. In secondary schools, the use of small groups may be less common, but each homeroom tends to consist of a microcosm of closed friendship groups which functions just like *han*. Leaving a friendship group is dangerous, as you will then be exposed to a greater risk of being ostracized and bullied by the whole class. This explains why bullying occurs within the small friendship groups, often in such a way that enhances conformity within the group.

The second factor is **school rules** which define what is 'normal', which in turn functions as a vehicle for exclusion. One striking example is the rule that 'students must not perm or dye their hair', i.e. student's hair should be black and straight. This rule became widely known to the public when a student in Osaka sued the local government in 2017 for repeatedly forcing her to dye her naturally brown hair, black. This was not an isolated case and it soon became clear that the purpose of the rule was not so much to prevent students from dyeing their hair, but rather, to enforce conformity. The basis of the conformity is the officially created 'norm' that students' hair must be black. Today, some 60% of public high schools in Tokyo demand a 'Natural Hair Colour' Certificate from students at admission (Doi & Minetoshi 2017). In enforcing such strict rules, the teachers are modelling *exclusion*, moving the school further away from an inclusive education style

that promotes diversity. It, in turn, feeds into bullying by students who *mirror or copy the teachers even in their resistance to school*. School rules, plus the words teachers use when they discipline students, are often appropriated by students as a mechanism of exclusion – which is bullying (Yoneyama 1999:166-170).

The third factor, related to the second, is the negative way power is used for discipline - a negative combination of **discipline and power**. One example reported widely in recent years involved the bully-suicide of a 17-year-old in 2016. A third-party-investigation panel concluded in 2019 that the suicide was caused by bullying by teachers, which was then copied by students (Mainichi Newspaper 2019). This judgement is significant in that it used the word 'bullying' for the first time to teachers in official discourse. The 2013 Bullying Prevention Law limits the use of 'bullying' to students only (Tokyo Newspaper 2019). Teacher's conduct, resembling bullying, is, instead, referred to as 'excessive guidance' which sometimes leads to 'guidance-death'(*shidoshi*). The existence of such a peculiar word indicates that 'guidance-related death' (or use of violence against students by teachers) is hardly an exception in Japan. Indeed, this 'guidance' includes 'corporal punishment' which is supposed to be banned. The Board of Education in Nagasaki in 2019

admitted that 'corporal punishment' (kicking and hitting) by a teacher *and* bullying by students were factors behind the attempted suicide of a 14-year-old (Asahi Newspaper 2019). The correlation between a negative 'disciplinary climate' and student bullying has been pointed out in various studies in Japan (e.g. Hata 2001) as well as in the PISA 2015 report (OECD2017:5).

The fourth factor is the **structure of silence** which involves not only students but also education authorities: teachers, principals and boards of education. After bullying was recognised as a social issue in Japan in the mid-1980s, news media have regularly shown scenes of authorities lining up to apologize to the public (Yoneyama 2008). They apologize for neglecting or inappropriately dealing with bullying, for denying the school's responsibility, or deliberately suppressing crucial information. In fact, silence often encapsulates bullying in many layers, including students, teachers and school authorities, and local education boards, leaving the bullied students in complete isolation, almost as if their very existence is 'invisible'.

Why has there been little improvement in breaking down this wall of silence? One reason is that those in the system can be blinded by a taken-for-granted reality. It has been pointed out by more caring teachers, for instance, that their authoritarian colleagues are less perceptive about bullying. Another reason is that teachers are simply too busy to deal with bullying. There is also a problem **with key performance indicators**. Teachers and school authorities are rewarded for not having problematic incidents in their homeroom, school or district, meaning there are structural incentives *to not notice bullying, and not* to report incidents.

The fourth factor, silence, however, must be distinguished from the other three school factors. Groups, school rules, and discipline are at the core of schools as social institutions, they are not necessarily 'bad' things. Age-based grouping of students provides basic structure to modern, conventional schools and the use of small-groups is valuable

for learning and teaching. Class and small-group activities often enhance the sense of belonging among students. Likewise, sensible rules and good discipline are essential.

These aspects of school as a social institution, however, can also cultivate bullying. Groups can function as a physical unit for social control to enforce nonsensical rules and discipline; school rules not only define normative order at school but also enhance conformity and exclude those who do not fit in. While maintaining a positive sense of discipline is essential for good learning, it can provide mechanisms to legitimate the abuse of power in the hierarchical social structure. Examples in Japan indicate: groups, school rules, and discipline can function as a hidden curriculum that nurtures bullying; bullying can be something student learn from this hidden curriculum, i.e. undesirable over-adjustment to school as a power-dominant social space (Yoneyama 1999:169).

In contrast, silence as the fourth factor explaining bullying in Japan is not an integral component of school as a social institution and its implications are negative. Silence indicates that teachers and school authorities are unable to counteract bullying. Breaking this wall of silence is essential in order to weaken the impact of the other three factors which are more fundamental to schools.

4. The Question of Silence

It is essential to understand how silence works in a class and here is one example, a rather old one, from 1986 Japan. As in other countries, bullying came to be recognised as a major social issue there in the mid-1980s, particularly after the suicide of a 13-year-old student who left a note saying the way he was victimized was like 'living in hell'. A few months before, his classmates held a 'mock funeral' and prepared a farewell card signed by most of his classmates as well as some teachers (Yoneyama 1999:157-158). After the suicide incident, a teacher who had signed the card preached the importance of tackling bullying. He

then noticed a student had brought something prohibited to school and confiscated it. The student got upset and out of frustration began hitting the boy in front of him.

> *The bully hit the victim 50 to 60 times in total, while saying, 'What the teacher says sounds real cool, but we'll see if he means it. If he cautions me, I'll stop bullying you....' The bully and the victim were sitting in the second and the third rows, i.e. fairly close to the teacher, and the victim repeatedly pleaded with the teacher 'Sensei [teacher], help me!'.... The teacher, however, pretended that he did not notice, and kept writing on the blackboard. ... One of the other students said, 'Sensei, ijime [bullying] started. Please stop it!', but the teacher did nothing. Another student said to the victim, 'You are deserted by the teacher, too'.... After enduring the assault for some 20 minutes the victim finally stood up and hit back in desperation at this predator, realising that no one, including the teacher, would intervene. A fight began between the two. It was then the teacher intervened. Instead of scolding the bully, however, he told the victim to stop it. Being outraged, the victim rushed out of the class, saying 'Teacher is too unfair. I'll kill [the bully] and kill myself. I'll go get a knife'. The teacher was alerted and chased after him all the way to the hardware shop in the neighbourhood, where they had an argument. The incident was disclosed because their argument was spotted by a policeman. The bully said later that 'My violence escalated as I got more and more angry with the teacher who ignored my bullying' (Yoneyama 1999:177–178).*

This episode illustrates that the teacher's action (confiscating a student's personal possession in front of the class) triggered the bullying, plus his inaction (not stopping the bullying) were key in getting the bullying going, maintaining its silence, and also escalating it. He also displayed appalling 'moral' standards by ignoring the bullying, immediately after preaching against it, even after repeated calls for help

by the victim, and also being pressured by other students to intervene. Moreover, when the victim fought back, he sided with the bully by scolding the victim. The silence was broken only when it was noticed by a third-party outside the school, the police officer.

If this example in Japan appears too extreme, compare it with the following, a fieldnote of a class in Finland in 2014 (Juva et al 2018) almost thirty years later. There is, clearly, a large disparity of not only time between the two events. Japan in the mid-1980s arguably had one of the most bully-prone education systems where authoritarian and un-democratic models of education prevailed, whereas Finland today, thirty years later, has strong anti-bullying awareness and a very 'democratic' school system. Yet, despite the strong contrasts, there are remarkable similarities between the two episodes.

Juva et al (2018) describes how teachers 'actively ignored' a male student ('Sasu'), who was considered to be 'not-normal' and was bullied by other students, by treating him as if he were invisible.

Throughout the class, small paper pellets are being thrown at Sasu. Some of them stick in his hair. Meri and Natalia who sit behind him say nothing, even though some of the paper pellets hit them too and they can clearly see that there are pellets in Sasu's hair. It is mainly Kadar, Heikki and Basil who are throwing the paper pellets; at some point, they threw them at each other too, but mainly at Sasu. The teacher – Tauno sees that they are doing something. (They are doing it so openly that it is impossible to ignore it, and Sasu's hair is full of paper pellets.) One of the students, Meri, is sitting behind Sasu, and the boys who are throwing the paper pellets are behind her. The teacher then makes a remark to Meri about her broad shoulders, and how he cannot see one of the boys behind her. The comment makes her uncomfortably stare at her desk. The students who are throwing the paper pellets notice that I'm looking at them and they start to stare at me, checking my reaction. Eventually, most of the students are looking at me. The situation passes quickly

as I glue my gaze in front of me. When the class is over and the other students leave the classroom, Nia, Satu, Aaya and Sasu stay behind. Nia, Satu and Aaya explain to the teacher how some of the students had been throwing paper pellets in Sasu's hair and name these students. (fieldworker: The teacher seems embarrassed, he keeps glancing at me. I decide to exit the situation, but from the door I hear the teacher promise to investigate the issue) (Juva et al 2018:7).

In the Finnish class also, the teacher 'actively ignored' the bullying and thus played a key role in keeping the bullying going and maintaining silence. Again, everybody in the class knew bullying was happening but the fact that the teacher 'actively ignored' it legitimated it. Juva describes how students sought a reference from her as another adult who could have changed the 'moral code' and power dynamics in the class. It was only after the direct approach of a small group of students after the class, *in the presence of the researcher who was apparently overhearing the conversation*, that the teacher acknowledged that there was an incident and said he would investigate.

In both examples, the teachers nurtured the bullying, even though it did not appear too difficult to caution the bully. Instead, in both cases the teacher 'set the moral standard' to tolerate bullying, *despite pressure from students to stop the bullying*, siding with the bully and thus compromising the positive discipline in the class. The teachers' inaction did not just maintain the silence about bullying, but legitimated it with longer-term moral, cultural and behavioural implications. The parallel depictions of neglectful teachers in two contrasting settings, Japan and Finland, some 30 years apart suggests that bullying is indeed a moral issue, not just for students but also for teachers. Furthermore, for the teachers, it was not just a moral issue, they displayed negligence and breached the code of conduct. And as shown in the Japanese example, a teachers' active

negligence is perceived by students *as being unfair*.

In this context, the result of PISA2015, which for the first time had a special focus on bullying, is especially relevant. The conclusion of the report is: "To combat bullying, improve the school climate". It says,

> *Schools with a low incidence of physical and relational violence tend to have more students who are aware of school rules, believe that these rules are fair, and have positive relations with their teachers.... [S]tudents who attend schools where perceptions of teachers' unfair behaviour are pervasive ... are 12 percentage more likely to be frequently bullied than students in schools where these perceptions are not as pervasive.... Teachers might help limit bullying by communicating clearly to students that they will not tolerate any form of disrespectful behaviour, and by acting as role models in the classroom (OECD 2017:5, emphasis added).*

The report does not say that educators should focus on, or deal with 'problem students' or 'problem families' to reduce bullying. Instead, it calls for change in the school climate so that students can respect teachers as role models in the classroom.

UNESCO's 2017 report, *School Violence and Bullying: Global Status Report*, convey the same message. It lists 'leadership' and 'school environment' as the most important 'responses' to school violence and bullying. Leadership includes 'developing and enforcing national laws and policies that protect children and adolescents from violence and bullying in schools' (p.32). 'School environment' states that: 1) 'school governing bodies and management structure have a duty of care' and 2) 'codes of conduct for teachers need to refer explicitly to violence and abuse and ensure that penalties are clearly stipulated and consistent with legal frameworks for child rights and protection' (p.37). School bullying is in fact an extremely political matter and, again, the case of Japan helps us to understand its political nature.

5. The Politics of School Bullying

Bullying Prevention Law was enacted in 2013 in Japan following the suicide of a 13-year-old boy in Otsu, Gifu Prefecture. Among numerous cases of bully-suicide in Japan, this case drew exceptional media attention because the school not only failed to take appropriate action despite having knowledge about the bullying, but it also deliberately suppressed critical information afterwards, which triggered a police raid of the school and the city board of education. The case prompted the law which stipulates that schools must report 'serious cases' of bullying to both the local municipality and the education ministry.

The scheduled revision of this law in 2019 made the politics of school bullying starkly clear. In preparation for the revision, a supra-partisan committee of lawmakers conducted hearings with parents who had lost a child to bully-suicide and drafted amendments aiming to strengthen the law. They drafted five recommendations including, teacher training, disciplinary action against teachers who breached their duties, and the establishment of a third-party investigatory team based on the principle of conflict of interest. The revision became controversial because the chair of the committee, a former minister of education, rejected all these amendments, saying 'they will increase the burden of teachers' and 'teachers will find it too daunting' (Tokyo Newspaper 13.04.2019). More than forty pairs of parents who had lost their child through bully-suicide submitted their statement to the former minister opposing his rejection of the proposal. At the end of 2019, deliberations on the revision have been halted for months.

How Japanese schools are different from schools in other societies is a moot point, but there is a global trend to improve the legal environment concerning bullying. In Western Australia, for example, two teachers were criminally charged in 2019 for failing to report bullying involving child sexual abuse, a first for educators in that state. State legislation, enacted in 2009, 'requires teachers, police, nurses and doctors to report all suspected cases of child sex abuse' (Clarke

2019). The case happened in 2017 and 'the number of mandatory reports from teachers to the Department of Communities spiked to 1323 in 2017-2018, up almost 60 per cent from 840 three years earlier' (Clarke 2019). This suggests that over half of the child sexual abuse of which teachers were aware of might not have been reported had the two teachers not been criminally charged.

The controversy over the revision of the Bullying Prevention Law in Japan and the case of teachers in Australia who were criminally charged for their negligence indicate that the issue of bullying has opened up and addressed issues concerning children's rights at school in way that has never been done previously. This is not an easy process. For persistent 'low-level' bullying such as cyber-bullying that is less visible to teachers, the issues of negligence and school liability are even more complex and politics will become even more relevant.

As discussed earlier, the second paradigm of bullying studies points out that for Type II bullying, where 'good students' take turns in being involved, the solution must be sought in the social ecology of the school, or in 'school factors' because groups, school rules, and discipline are used to enhance conformism rather than diversity, cultivate exclusiveness rather than inclusiveness, and thus cultivate bullying. This means that any attempts to reduce bullying at school, whether by anti-bullying policies, intervention programs, or pedagogy and curriculum, need to be planned and implemented while teachers, school authorities, and administrators shed a critical gaze on these aspects of the school. *Any attempts to reduce bullying should not happen in isolation, without first critically evaluating the conventional practices of the school*: the way the school is organised and run, the way students are taught, the way student-teacher relationships are defined, the way school rules operate, and the way discipline is maintained and applied. The presence of Type II bullying indicates that bullying is not just a problem of students and their families but is a 'whole-school' issue that demands an even broader 'whole-education' approach.

Schools have two contradictory sociological functions apart from education per se. One is to reproduce an existing power structure. The other is to initiate social change to make a better society. Bullying is a contemporary social issue that emerged from our heightened sensitivity against unfairness and injustice. After thirty years of collective efforts, the path ahead seems clearer than before. Although methods and emphases may differ, there is general agreement that anti-bullying endeavors should revolve around key words such as: duty of care, code of conduct, eradication of negligence, and conflict of interest at the operational levels, to make the education more inclusive, diversity-oriented and life-enriching. Research on bullying began some thirty years ago in Finland, Japan and the UK in reaction to the loss of young lives to bully-suicide. Far too many lives have already been lost or harmed and the issue still continues. How to change schools is the homework given to us by children and young people, so we can create a better future for them.

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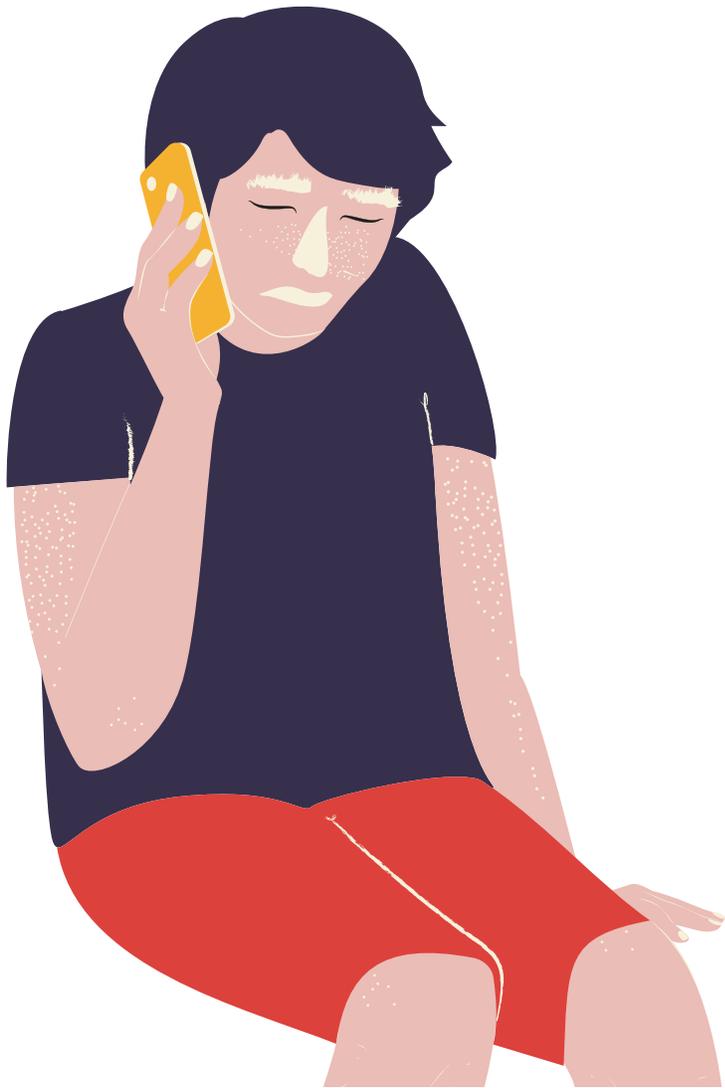
Chapter 2

Violence Against LGBTQ Students:
Punishing and Marginalizing Difference

Elizabethe Payne and Melissa J. Smith

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Introduction from Friends' experts

Linda Bonaventura and Frida Warg

The most used definition of the concept of bullying, formulated by psychologist and researcher Dan Olweus, states that bullying is recurring, intentionally harmful acts which keep happening over a period of time, and where there is a power imbalance between the parties. This definition has been debated, problematized and nuanced by both researchers and practitioners over the years. For instance, this definition excludes sporadic serious incidents, as well as long-term victimization that lacks clear intention. In other words, some of the criticism relates to factors that are excluded in the traditional bullying definition, which risks neglecting all students' right to a safe school.

In this chapter, Elizabethe Payne and Melissa J. Smith problematize the traditional understanding of bullying from a perspective especially linked to gender and sexuality. They merely argue that the dominant interpretation of bullying fails to recognize the heteronormative social power dynamics that support bullying of LGBTQ-students (an umbrella term for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer expressions and identities).

It is generally taken for granted in society that romantic relationships, sex, marriage and parenthood are reserved for men and women. In other words, heterosexuality is viewed as the norm for human sexuality - this is usually called heteronormativity. Being heteronormative is not the same thing as being homophobic (having a negative view of homosexuality and bisexuality or behaving abusively for example by joking about homosexuality and bisexuality in a degrading way)

but norms that we are not always aware of can still be excluding and offensive. Transphobia means thinking that it is wrong to be trans, but also to express that it is wrong or odd to look different from what a girl or boy "should" look like, or that there are only two genders (girls and boy) and that no one can feel like "neither one", "in between" or "both". Trans is a term that incorporates many different identities.

Friends experience is - as is also highlighted in this chapter - that when homophobia, heteronormativity and transphobia are expressed in various ways in school, teachers often proclaim that these phenomena are learned outside of the school context: at home, through social media, in the peer-group or via media. The possibility that the school culture itself could be part of reproducing and reinforcing the oppression is rarely admitted. The authors of the chapter emphasize that bullying interventions are often designed to correct dysfunctional behaviors that students are presumed to have gained outside of school, but that such methods will probably fail to account for how oppression and power dynamics shape social hierarchies and how differences in identity - such as gender identity and sexuality - are relevant to the students' positions in a social hierarchy as well as their experiences of bullying and other types of violence. This is a reason to problematize the bullying definition since different forms of victimization require different questions to be asked. In order for the issue of bullying not to become too narrow and thus to miss students experiencing violence and victimization linked to LGBTQ related issues, a structural lens is required.

The definition of bullying indicates that the aggressions that a student is exposed to follow some sort of system or pattern. Sometimes it serves a purpose to use the word bullying to make a point, for example about long-term victimization or pointing to a dose effect (how someone is affected by the amount of aggressions). The Swedish Education Act uses the term degrading treatment and does not mention bullying at all, partly because the school should act directly when a student

feels violated and not wait until something can be categorized as bullying. By looking at each individual act of degrading treatment, it is easier to focus the interventions on the actual causes. Through such an analysis, different structures can be made visible. It is common for different power structures to intersect with each other. It is usually called "intersectionality" and means that a person's vulnerability can sometimes not be explained by just one discriminatory system, but several act at the same time. The word intersectionality comes from the word "intersection" and symbolizes the intersection of different power schemes. This could, for example, mean that if a school wants to make efforts to promote gender equality, many aspects often need to be taken into account because, the group that identifies themselves as girls is not uniform. In the group of girls, factors such as age, class or race vary. This affects the experience of victimization and can even reinforce oppression and discrimination.

In this chapter, the concepts of school climate and school culture are given deeper meaning as a tool for discovering the difference between individual events defined by school climate, and a deeper understanding of power relations defined by school culture. Both peoples' behavior and individual events need to be understood in a context, and in the light of the structures they represent. For example, it is possible to act homophobic or sexist without having meant anything bad or having understood that what you did was homophobic or sexist. In Friends' contact with schools, school staff often raise questions concerning problems with foul language. The way we speak can be seen as the very surface of a norm that is considerably deeper. In the chapter, the authors highlight research in which teachers in interviews point out that teachers should generally be active by consistently intervening when observing homophobic language at school, as this allows students to learn that verbal expressions of oppression - even if unintentional - can cause a schoolmate with LGBTQ identity damage. Having supportive teachers who takes action is a factor that has proven to be an important prerequisite for a less hostile school

climate and increased self-esteem for LGBTQ-students. To effectively promote inclusion, all school staff need explicit directives from school management that intervention in bullying and harassment of LGBTQ-students is both expected and will be supported.

But merely reacting to foul language does not address the problem of diminished social capital for those who do not conform to normative expectations of gender and sexuality. Therefore, Payne and Smith ar-gue that interventions focusing on changing cultural norms are needed. One essential part of supporting schools in their work with norms and school culture is a genuine analysis of the surveys that students answer about school climate and bullying. Their free text responses often contain a nuanced picture of underlying problems behind school jargons or the most unsafe spaces. It shows how important it is to start from the student's own experiences, percep-tions and understanding of their life. Students must be the subjects and we must start with their own voices and thoughts in order for us to successfully understand the problem, its causes and solutions.

With an understanding of underlying power structures, a school will be able to approach what the chapter authors refer to as "the root of the problem", rather than focusing on finding the problem in isolated events and in individual students. To only focus on the problems can lead to students adopting that view of themselves and each other and comparing themselves to what is perceived as normal. The risk is that the students then devote themselves to paying attention to one another's deficiencies, rather than discovering different ways of being and acting. In an environment where there are few ways to be "correct" the need to find someone who is more "wrong" than yourself arises, which certainly leads to victimization of various kinds. Either we categorize some students as "different" and try to get others to tolerate them - which does not change the power system - or we look at what categorizes them as different, and work to change that attitude. Every student is an asset and needs to hear that - both about themselves and others.

Violence Against LGBTQ Students:
Punishing and Marginalizing Difference

Elizabethe Payne and Melissa J. Smith

In recent years, bullying as a social phenomenon has become part of public consciousness as a problem demanding immediate attention. Books on LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) bullying now proliferate, and anti-bullying laws have been enacted around the country. The US Department of Education has hosted bullying summits, further lending credence to particular ways of understanding the problem of in-schools bullying, including the experiences of LGBTQ students. These conversations typically focus on LGBTQ students as "victims"; the correlation between victimization and negative psychological, social, and educational outcomes; and the responsibility of schools to protect vulnerable students from aggressive, antisocial peers. These public dialogues around in-school harassment and the marginalization of LGBTQ youth reduce the complexities of peer-to-peer aggression to "anti-social behaviour where one student wields power over [a victim]," (Walton 2011, 131) and conceptualize "the problem of bullying in terms of individual or family pathology" of a singular aggressive student (Bansel et al. 2009, 59). This definition of "the problem" reproduces bullying discourses, which "are now so accepted … in schools that they have gained hegemonic status" (Ringrose and Renold 2010, 590). It has become practically impossible to understand in-school violence and school responses to it outside "the binary logic

of protection (for 'victims') and vilification (i.e. pathologising the aggressor)" (574). LGBTQ youth are perpetually painted as victims, bullies as "bad kids," and schools as negligent due to their ineffective methods of intervention.

This dominant narrative depends on inaccurate premises: It assumes schools to be neutral sites where students of all genders and sexualities have equal opportunities to succeed and that barriers to success only appear when individuals' injurious behavior or attitudes create a "negative" school climate where student safety and belonging are threatened. However, as Walton (2010) argues, "framing the notion of bullying in a generic manner by focusing on the individual behavior and relational power, rather than on the specific constructs of difference that underlie incidents of bullying, operates to perpetuate practices that are fostered within the grid of social regularities" (142). Simply, the dominant understanding of bullying fails to acknowledge heteronormative social systems of power that support acts of bullying targeted at LGBTQ and gender non-conforming students. Overt acts of violence against LGBTQ youth (or those who are perceived to be) are only the surface-level, explicit effects of heteronormative school cultures that celebrate idealized (hetero) genders and create social benefits for peer-to-peer policing of non-normative sexualities and gender expressions (Payne 2007). We must come to understand the problem of LGBTQ student bullying differently if we are to have different outcomes in our intervention efforts.

In this chapter, we will briefly review the limitations of the dominant bullying and school climate discourses and illustrate the ways typical bullying intervention efforts constrain educators' abilities to understand the range of aggressions targeting LGBTQ students and to enact change. Throughout the chapter, we will use data from QuERI research projects to illustrate how the dominant bullying discourse manifests in educators' approaches to the problem of aggressions targeting LGBTQ youth. We challenge the taken-for-granted conceptualization of

LGBTQ youths' school experiences of violence and argue for a broader worldview that encompasses cultural systems of power – particularly along lines of gender and sexuality – that persistently privilege specific groups of youth while marginalizing others. Shifting the definition of "the problem" in this way demands a different understanding of peer-to-peer aggression than that underlying the dominant bullying discourse. It requires recognition of how aggression functions in processes of social positioning and how patterns of youth aggression are reflective of cultural norms for sexuality and gender expression. Bullying is a tool for preservation of the status quo, the privileging of heterosexuality, and adherence to the gender binary. It "reflects, reproduces, and prepares young people to accept inequalities embedded in larger social structures" (Pascoe 2013, 95).

Methods

The data excerpts presented in this chapter are all drawn from QuERI research on our professional development model, the Reduction of Stigma in Schools© (RSIS). RSIS is a research-based professional development program providing educators with tools and knowledge for creating more affirming school environments for LGBTQ youth. The larger data set consisted of workshop evaluations, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires completed by past participants of RSIS workshops. Complete descriptions of the research methods are available in the program design and evaluation papers (Payne and Smith 2010, 2011). Though the educators in this study were interviewed to gain insight into their experiences participating in the RSIS program, all participants also devoted significant interview time to the "state of things" regarding LGBTQ student experiences and bullying in their respective school contexts.

Breaking Down the Bullying Discourse
The Construction of "Bullying"

Both the popular discourse and the dominant research on bullying reflect cultural myths about who bullies are, what they look like, and whom they target. Bansel et al. (2009) argue, "The predominant trend in bullying research, and current interventions arising from that research, tend to conceptualize the problem of bullying in terms of individual or family pathology" (59). Research on bullying often aims to identify factors that increase students' risk for engaging in bullying behaviors, and interventions designed in light of this research typically involve managing the aggressive behavior and changing the attitudes of students who are identified as bullies (see Dupper and Meyer-Adams 2002; Espelage and Swearer 2010; Orpinas and Horne 2010; Swearer et al. 2010). This body of work is predominantly shaped by a bully/victim binary in which "power is conceptualized mostly as the capacity of an individual student for abusing another who is perceived by the bully as being weaker or deficient in some way" (Walton 2005, 102). Olweus (2010) defines bullying as a specific type of aggressive behavior characterized by intent, repetition, and an imbalance of power between bully and victim. His definition is frequently used in bullying scholarship and often in survey instruments (see Frey et al. 2009; Smith and Brain 2000; Swearer et al. 2010; Waasdorp, Bradshaw, and Duong 2011). Other researchers have added to this baseline definition: Students who bully are also understood as individuals who exhibit antisocial behavior (Alsaker and Gutzwiller-Helfenfinger 2010), report low levels of empathy (Hymel et al. 2010), and/or have been affected by adults (e.g., family members) and other environmental factors (e.g., a violent home) that have inadvertently supported the development of aggressive behavior (Espelage and Swearer 2010; Green et al. 2011; Johnson et al. 2011; Nickerson, Mele, and Osborne-Oliver 2010). These conceptualizations of bullying assume an individual-to-individual relationship between

bully and victim and define power in terms of an individual bully's capacity to abuse and intimidate a victim.

This binary construction of bullying carries implications for possible interventions: bullies need rehabilitation, victims need protection, and schools define the problem as individual students who learn aggressive, antisocial behaviors from family, community, and cultural influences. Intervention efforts are designed to correct dysfunctional behaviors that are assumed to be learned outside school, but they are unlikely to account for how systems of oppression shape social hierarchies and how identity differences – such as gender and sexuality – are relevant to students' positions in the social hierarchy and their experiences of bullying and other forms of violence.

When QuERI research participants describe the LGBTQ targeting that happens in their schools, they reproduce the dominant bullying discourse by deflecting the root causes of individual students' in-school aggression to cultural forces outside the school. They argue that students learn aggressive behavior and biased attitudes from family and mainstream media, and these influences are so powerful that the school will never be able to stop their effects on social interactions inside school. The data excerpts below are from two different school professionals:

> *I think that, no matter what programs you have instilled, you are going to have kids in a school environment that come from homes that are, um, racist, um, that are prejudiced against types of differences. And I think it's the same way with all this other stuff about attitudes of tolerance and, you know, of anything, that it comes from somewhere out here in society and I think that our kids pick up on that real easily and depending on how your family is and how, you know, people are viewed in your family, you know, what's talked about and are people, you know, is there a joke that's been made in your family, and people laugh about some gay/lesbian joke or*

whatever, or racist joke or whatever it is. You know, I think kids pick up on that attitude and then they live it. And … I think our school has some problems with that.

Both participants claim that students learn bias from their families, which places schools in the difficult position of fighting cultural and familial values in the interest of greater tolerance between youth. Neither educator acknowledges the possibility that school culture could be reproducing and reinforcing those same biases. Interpreting LGBTQ bullying in this way limits the possibilities for successful intervention because all attention is focused on correcting bad behaviors that individual students learn elsewhere and bring into the school environment rather than critically examining what exactly the school is teaching students about difference and identity, who belongs and who does not.

LGBTQ-specific Bullying and Victimization

Research on LGBTQ youths' school experiences comes largely from educational psychology and positions this group of students as victims within the bully/victim binary. The central questions unifying this scholarship are: In what ways are LGBTQ students "at risk," and what are the environmental factors that have the potential to alleviate/reduce that risk? Building from this starting point, these studies seek to identify individual and environmental variables that (i) predict negative psychosocial consequences, and (ii) either mediate these negative effects or eliminate them altogether.

It has been long established that there is a correlation between victimization and higher incidence of health and sexual risk for LGBTQ-identified youth. Researchers have examined the relationships between homophobic victimization and LGBTQ students' mental health outcomes, sense of school belonging, likelihood to engage in disruptive behavior, academic outcomes, truancy, suicidality, and drug use (Birkett, Espelage, and Koening 2009; Murdock and Bolch 2005; Poteat

and Espelage 2007). More recently, this line of questioning has extended to compare the risk data for heterosexual and LGBTQ-identified youth who reported similar victimization experiences (Robinson and Espelage 2013; Robinson, Espelage, and Rivers 2013). Results indicate that LGBTQ-identified respondents experience higher rates of risk (Robinson and Espelage 2013) and higher levels of long-term emotional distress (Robinson, Espelage, and Rivers 2013) than their heterosexual peers who had similar victimization experiences. A significant implication of this line of research is that bullying and harassment do not fully account for risk discrepancies between heterosexual and LGBTQ-identified youth; there is a clear need within educational psychology research for a more complex understanding of how LGBTQ-identified youth experience stigma beyond peer victimization.

Much of the educational psychology research focused on LGBTQ youth has prioritized identifying environmental factors that have a positive impact on LGBTQ students' health and academic outcomes. Scholars have pursued questions about correlations between LGBTQ students' reports of suicidality, depression, or victimization and supportive factors such as perceived school safety or positive school climate, presence of a GSA (Gay–Straight Alliance) and supportive teachers, LGBTQ-inclusive school policies, and family support (Goodenow, Szalacha, and Westheimer 2006; Espelage et al. 2008). These supportive factors have also been connected to increased academic achievement (Kosciw et al. 2013). In particular, having supportive educators is "one of the stronger predictors of a less hostile school climate and of greater self-esteem for LGBT students" (Kosciw et al. 2013, 58).

Recently, educational psychology scholars have paid additional attention to teacher attitudes toward LGBTQ students (Dragowski, McCabe, and Rubinson 2016); their awareness of the amount and type of peer-to-peer aggression that occurs in school (Dragowski, McCabe, and Rubinson 2016; Espelage, Polanin, and Low 2014; Perez, Schanding, and Dao 2013); intention to intervene when they witness LGBTQ bullying (Dragowski, McCabe, and Rubinson 2016; Perez, Schanding, and

Dao 2013); and their perceptions of school-wide support for LGBTQ students (Rinehart and Espelage 2016). Collectively, this research positions teachers as a powerful factor within whole-school anti-bullying efforts. These scholars argue that in order for LGBTQ safety and inclusion efforts to be successful, the adults throughout a school building need to receive explicit messages from leaders that intervening in LGBTQ bullying and harassment is expected and supported.

Teachers who have participated in QuERI research projects provide additional insight to how educators interpret the quality of school environments and the work that needs to be done in their schools to better support LGBTQ students. Their comments predominantly focused on the observable behavior they felt conveyed "intolerant" attitudes. Teachers expressed concern that hearing homophobic language throughout the school put LGBTQ students at risk for emotional or psychological distress and increased their risk for absenteeism, social isolation, drug and alcohol use, and suicide. They believed teachers should play an active role in reducing this risk by consistently intervening when they observe homophobic language, because doing so teaches students that verbal expressions of bias – even when it is careless or unintentional – can cause significant harm to a LGBTQ peer. One teacher described how convincing the entire faculty to commit to this work had been a struggle in her school:

> I think, pretty much, people do kind of see it [homophobic language] as a normalized, you know, behavior. That, I don't know if anybody's ears go (makes a surprised sound). You know what I mean? Like profanity, they would. You know? Umm, and not [to] say that they like it or accept it or say that that's okay, but I just don't know if people would go out of their way to go over to somebody that they don't know [and correct them]. Now if they know the kid, they might say something to 'em, but, you know, would they turn around in the hall to a kid they don't know? I would (laughs). And, umm, you know, just say something. I just don't know if they [other teachers] would.

This teacher attributes her school's inconsistency in addressing homophobic language to lack of understanding about the injurious effects of homophobic language. Normalization of this language means that teachers perceive it to be neutral or "no big deal." This teacher believes the potential harm is significant enough to "go out of [her] way" to stop students from saying things like "that's so gay" or "no homo." She, and many other teachers in our research, sees interrupting anti-gay speech as an important risk reduction strategy for LGBTQ students and is deeply committed to gaining cooperation from fellow teachers in these intervention efforts. Though they acknowledged the impossibility of achieving this goal, many participants believed that eradication of such language would significantly improve the school climate if not completely solve the problem. DePalma and Jennett (2010) caution against this common understanding of "the problem" of LGBTQ student marginalization primarily in terms of homophobic and transphobic language. They argue that it "reflects a shallow understanding of the social processes underpinning these phenomena" (16).

The problem of LGBTQ students' negative school experiences has been shaped by a discourse of bullying that neglects research that examines "the situational and socio-cultural dimensions of power" along the lines of gender, and sexuality (Ringrose 2008, 510) as well as the dynamics of the social "hierarchies that young people must somehow manage" (512). Reducing "risk" through intervening in anti-LGBTQ targeting is indeed critical for the well-being of LGBTQ students,. It is that reduced social capital and marginalized position within the school that puts these students at risk for targeting and its consequences. To be positioned as a "victim" is to be additionally marked out as "deviant" within the normative contexts of school. In the following section, we will examine the limitations of the bullying discourse as they appear in three common LGBTQ bullying interventions.

Addressing Bullying and Harassment in Schools
Anti-Bullying Interventions

Given that anti-bullying initiatives are common responses to the problem of gender-based targeting, identifying the goals, processes, and assumptions of these programs provides insight to how school leaders, policy makers, and educators understand the problem of violence toward LGBTQ youth. Most anti-bullying programs contain four components: (i) assessment of how much bullying is happening, quantifying the problem; (ii) direct responses to active bullies and targets; (iii) whole-school education for educators, parents, and students; and (iv) a system of monitoring where all members of the community are expected to report possible bullying activity (Jacobson 2013). The bullies are imagined as students who are attracted to aggressive behaviors or lack the ability to empathize with others' feelings (Hymel et al. 2010) or fail to accept peers from diverse backgrounds (Bandyopadhyay, Cornell, and Konold 2009), thus solutions focus on changing how individual students interact with their peers and behave in the school environment.

Throughout the United States, schools are often attracted to "whole school" programs that promise to decrease bullying and improve school climate. There are countless anti-bullying models available, but the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) is arguably the most famous and widely used anti-bullying program in the United States and Europe. It is particularly significant because its designers hold an authoritative position in the academic conversation about what bullying is and successful strategies for decreasing bullying behaviors (Swearer et al. 2010). OBPP asks schools to implement new policies and procedures at the student, classroom, institutional, and community levels in order to establish consistent messaging and buy-in from all stakeholders for the mission of eliminating bullying. The intent is for all members of the community to raise their awareness of bullying, have a shared understanding of what bullying is, learn how to have

more positive interactions that reflect acceptance and empathy, and to make a collective effort to report and intervene (Olweus and Limber 2010). Evaluations of OBPP (many executed by Dan Olweus and his team) have measured its effectiveness according to students' self-reported experiences of bullying or being bullied. External evaluators have been more cautious than the Olweus team in their endorsement of the Olweus model. Smith, Schneider, Smith, and Ananiadou's (2004) review of studies evaluating OBPP concluded, "It is clear that the whole school approach has led to important reductions in bullying … but the results are simply too inconsistent to justify adoption of these particular procedures to the exclusion of others" (557). Swearer, Espelage, Vaillancourt, and Hymel (2010) question the validity of reliance on "self-reported data about bullying and victimization" (42) and call attention to the failure to account for factors such as race, disability, or sexual orientation in how they define the problem of bullying.

The success of school interventions is typically evaluated by measuring the frequency of reported bullying behaviors or student perceptions of safety. However, "reduction [of bullying] is a measurable outcome … [that] merely *contains, regulates, and manages* violence rather than *addresses* it" (Walton 2005, 112). When the absence of reported bullying functions as the indicator of a safe or inclusive school for LGBTQ students, we fail to account for both the social processes underpinning homophobic bullying and "the subtle ways in which schools are complicit in sustaining them" (DePalma and Jennett 2010, 16). Further, anti-bullying programs' focus on "statistics, characteristics, psychological profiles, and measurable events" (Walton 2010, 113) fails to question why the same groups of students are targeted decade after decade. Anti-bullying programs are more often pushing violent behavior underground than they are calling systemic privileging and marginalization into question. They do not get to the "root" of the problem.

Just Be Nice: Character Education
Embedded within anti-bullying programs are narratives about the

value of civility, kindness, and decency; *who* such programs think a bully is; and the kinds of school environments that allow bullying to take place. According to Rigby (2010), "Probably the most common way of responding to bullying in schools is to assert the importance of certain values or ideals that should govern interpersonal relationships between students" (547). Anti-bullying programs often address this issue by including "character education" components in their behavior management systems. *Character* is "the complex set of psychological characteristics that enable an individual to act as a moral agent" (Berkowitz and Bier 2004, 73), and character education aims to "help children learn the character attributes that enable them to become caring and responsible adults" (Leming 2000, 414). Students who do not act morally – who do not express care and responsibility – are considered to lack "sociomoral competency" (Berkowitz and Bier 2004, 73) and are in need of specific instruction in order to "develop a structured system of values, ethics and morals" (Leming 2000, 414). Bullying programs that include character education components are, therefore, attempting to compensate for the deficiencies in students' values and belief systems that are leading them to act aggressively or impose power over their peers. The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program includes activities intended "to help build empathy and perspective-taking skills" (Olweus and Limber 2010, 382). *The Steps to Respect program* asks students to take a pledge to resist bullying – asking them to make the morally "right" decision to keep one's promise (Frey et al. 2009). *Bully-Proofing Your School* aims to develop a "caring community," where social power is held by the "caring majority" (Porter et al. 2010). *The Bully Busters program* "is predicated on the assumption that aggression and bullying are behaviors borne of social skills deficits, lack of skills for taking others' perspective or a failure to empathically relate with others, and a moral or value system that denigrates others" (Horne et al. 2010, 508). Although these programs do not take identical approaches to bullying, they do share similar assumptions about the relationship between student aggression and individual

students' values, beliefs, and morals. In short, students who have "good" character will express respect, tolerance, and empathy toward their peers, not aggression. This focus on psychosocial deficiencies in individual students neglects both educational institutions' role in supporting bullying behaviors and the underlying value system that allows some students to be targeted based on difference.

Donna, a high school teacher, demonstrates this idea in her discussion of attempts to convince students to stop using homophobic language:

> I mean, I can sit and try to tell kids how it is, you know, and like, say, you know, "suicide rates higher" and all that kind of stuff, but I think the general kid is like, "Oh well. Too bad." You know what I mean? Like, they don't understand and they don't, they don't have that empathy and I think that probably, that empathy would be important to our kids.

Donna's definition of "the problem" and vision for solving it reflect messages within the bullying discourse that claim that students who engage in aggressive behavior do so because of individual negative attitudes or poor social skills learned from family and other cultural sources (Espelage and Swearer 2010). Her reasoning for encouraging kids to be more empathetic is suicide risk reduction. Further, her claim that an absence of empathy is to blame reflects a belief that problems of bias and violence in schools only have effects on the feelings and self-worth of individual victims who may be personally injured – either by being directly targeted or by hearing the language circulating in their environment. This interpretation fails to acknowledge the constant reproduction of heterosexuality and hegemonic gender norms occurring through the "normal" usage of biased speech. Homophobic speech used in reference to something students deem abnormal or unpleasant implicitly cites heteronormative discourse – which defines heterosexuality and stereotypical gender roles as normal and other

genders and sexualities as deviant (Ngo 2003). She believes that if kids are just "nicer" to one another, the problem will be solved. Niceness cannot erase the stigma – it merely asks students in the dominant majority not to be unkind to those they deem deviant.

Safety, Safe Spaces, and GSAs

When discussing bullying and anti-bullying efforts for LGBTQ students, educators often rely heavily on the language of "safety." LGBTQ students need to be "safe" in school and they need designated "safe spaces" in which to "be themselves" – where it is "safe" to be openly LGBTQ free from violence. In our experience, teachers' thinking about "safe spaces" is closely aligned with Stengel's (2010) argument that "educators take for granted the need to protect [marginalized] students ... from apparently threatening social circumstances" (524). Further, "safe space" is code for the argument that it is an educator's responsibility to "create positive conditions for learning and growth" (524) and – therefore – separate students from the possibility of harassment. So, while our research participants believe in the power and necessity of such spaces (as do the authors), most described visible "safe spaces" as signs of success for their schools without considering how the safety rhetoric paints LGBTQ students as victims in need of protection (Hackford-Peer 2010) and fails to "elevate the status of LGBT[Q] people from a protected class to a valued group in the school community" (Hirschfeld 2001, 611). As Youdell (2011) explains:

> [S]ubtle or implicit hierarchies and everyday injustices [in school] often have their origins in institutional and educator judgments about "who" students are. These judgments inform practice both explicitly and implicitly as they are taken up by educational institutions and educators to predict and explain what students can or cannot do, how they will or will not behave, the futures that are or are not open to them. This "who" is drawn on by educators as

they forge different relationships with differently positioned students and as they explain and constrain the relationships that these differently positioned students can and cannot make and sustain. These everyday judgments have massive implications for students' experiences of education, shaping and constraining how students understand themselves and the opportunities, relationships and futures they see as being open to them. (9)

The LGBTQ student "who" that is institutionally created and recreated through the pervasive safety rhetoric is synonymous with "victim" and vulnerable "at risk" student.

In our data, "safety" was most often represented as a designated time or space, marked by a scheduled meeting or a Safe Space sticker. Having safe spaces where students feel that they can have a temporary reprieve from harassment is important, and many students have spent significant portions of their high school days in the library or a supportive teacher's classroom seeking that reprieve (Payne 2007; Mahan et al. 2007). However, the establishment of these spaces, rather than being an answer to the problem, should only make the problem more apparent. The real problem is that students do not experience the entirety of their school as safe and therefore require these zones.

QuERI research participants have been nearly unanimous in their belief that LGBTQ students need a place to go where they can escape the possibility of hostility in the school environment. Donna explained her understanding of what posting a Safe Space sticker symbolizes:

I think … that it just means in my classroom, you're safe here, and nobody's going to pick on you, say something, and if somebody does say something that's, you know, derogatory, judgmental, or whatever, that I'm gonna say something about it. You know, I'm not gonna tolerate that. So you're safe in my room. … If they're having a, you know, if they see the sticker and they want to say something to

you [about their sexuality] then yeah, you're there to support them and help them in some way that you can.

Donna's description is representative of the teacher interpretations of "Safe Space" that occur throughout our data: educators who display these stickers are promising that homophobic language will not occur in their classrooms or offices, but if it does it will be addressed immediately. Further, the stickers are meant to show kids where they could safely tell a teacher about their LGBTQ identity or seek help if they are experiencing any kind of distress in relation to their gender or sexual identity. Research participants understood the need for Gay–Straight Alliances and similar student groups in much the same way, with the addition that they saw a need for LGBTQ students to have a formalized time and space to share experiences with their peers. However, some were concerned that such student groups gained a reputation as the "gay club" which could contribute to continued marginalization. The stigmatization of LGBTQ identities also limited student participation in the group:

> *But I think there are people who, I don't know, I'd like to be able to have kids have the experience that can come with the Acceptance Coalition meetings and not feel like that's where the gay kids go, and, so if you are with them [the gay kids], you are one of them [gay] and if you are one of them [gay], that's bad, you know? I wish there was a more open, um, environment.*

This club advisor is noting that some students assume that anyone who attends the Acceptance Coalition meeting is LGBTQ, "one of them," and that being "one of them" is "bad." Although the club has successfully provided a "safe space" for students to connect with peers and adults, the group itself is marginalized, stigmatized, and isolated in the school environment – and this stigma likely prevents many kids who

are seeking support from attending meetings. So, while the participating students may feel a greater sense of connection and belonging in their school and have a brief scheduled time designated free from harassment, the larger social hierarchy continues to marginalize queer kids in the school and the act of attending a meeting potentially produces more marginalization.

Despite the increasing numbers of character education and anti-bullying programs, schools are still experienced as hostile environments by LGBTQ students and families (Hirschfeld 2001). Addressing this problem by focusing on safety issues is comfortable for most staff, and even for most communities, as safety practices reflect the "moral self-image that most people have of themselves" (7). Like anti-bullying programs, the establishment of Safe Spaces is vital to the school success of LGBTQ students; however, it fails to address the heteronormative system that privileges heterosexuality and hegemonic gender. Research indicates that "gay," "fag," and "dyke" are considered by youth to be among the worst of possible pejoratives (Thurlow 2001) and that to be "called 'gay' by others was among the most psychologically disturbing forms of sexual harassment" to students (Mahan et al. 2007). Safe Space initiatives are attuned to the injurious effects of this language, but they do not expose or challenge the value system that positions "gay" as such a horrible way to be or that provides popularity and prestige to the harasser (Mahan et al. 2007). They fail to address how and why students are systematically excluded through "apparently mundane and everyday practices inside school" (Youdell 2006, 5). Anti-bullying programs, Safe Space stickers, Gay–Straight Alliances, and other such interventions fail to be disruptive, and LGBTQ and gender non-conforming students' position in the social hierarchy remains largely marginalized and unchanged and the systems of power that put them there remain intact (Payne and Smith 2012a).

Rethinking LGBTQ Bullying and Interventions
Bullying as Regulation of Gender Difference

The majority of bullying research has been "gender blind" (Ringrose and Renold 2010, 576) – failing to look at the sociocultural context of bullying and the ways many bullying behaviors are rooted in reinforcing the rules for "appropriate" gender behavior and sexuality. The scant bullying research that has attended to gender comes largely from the field of developmental psychology and has served to reinforce gendered stereotypes and "essentialised" norms of masculinity and femininity rather than exploring the policing of gender boundaries as a primary social function of bullying behavior (Ringrose and Renold 2010, 577). We propose (as have others) that bullying behaviors are not antisocial but rather highly social acts deeply entrenched in the perpetuation of cultural norms and values. Significantly, those norms require a fixed relationship between (hetero) gender, sex and sexuality, and the maintaining of "gender coherence" (Ringrose and Renold 2010) through this "constellation" (Youdell 2005).

Students' speech, behavior, and dress are regulated by cultural rules related to the "right" way to exist in the school environment, and youths' everyday gender policing practices often fail to draw adults' attention because these behaviors largely align with the institutional values of school. Young people's attitudes about difference are partially formed in a school-based social scene that rewards conformity. Children learn "'their place' in the U.S. political and social order through their public school experiences" (Lugg 2006, 49,) and school is a primary cultural site where young people learn the rules about who men and women are expected to be. Youth regularly regulate and discipline the boundaries between "normal" and "different" along the lines of sex, gender, and sexuality (and their intersections with race, class, ability), and this process is a mechanism for acquiring and increasing social status.

These patterns of aggression occur constantly throughout the school, producing and reproducing systems of value based on gender conformity, and they often occur within friendship groups (Ringrose 2008), making it all the more difficult to see and to intervene. Boys' misogynistic teasing and sexual harassment of girls, girls' verbal policing of one another's appearance and sexual reputations, and boys' homophobic teasing of one another are examples of verbal aggression that constantly circulate within peer groups and police the boundaries of acceptable gender, but fall outside dominant discourses of bullying (Duncan 2004; Payne 2007, 2010; Payne and Smith 2012a; Youdell 2005). In addition, some forms of aggression are considered "normal" based on cultural expectations for gendered behavior – for example, "for boys to be heroically and 'playfully' violent and for girls to be repressively and secretly 'mean'" (Ringrose and Renold 2010, 591). Youth operate within these acceptable dynamics of aggression to battle for position in social hierarchies without (much) adult scrutiny, reproducing gender norms including those for "relational aggression" (586) along the way. Students who are socially powerful are those who successfully perform normative gender and heterosexuality, and great importance is placed on youths' success in the "heterosexual marketplace" (Eckert 1994) through acquiring (heterosexual) dating opportunities and demonstrating attractiveness to the "opposite" sex. Those who most successfully conform to gender expectations are "celebrated" (Lugg 2006, 49) in their peer groups and in school culture.

Young people who are viewed as having inadequate gender characteristics or a gender identity not normatively associated with their biological sex are more violently and publicly "marked" (Payne 2007, 64) and denied access to social power and popularity. The further youth fall from idealized forms of masculinity and femininity, the more vulnerable they are to these patterns of heightened policing as well as more severe forms of violence. LGBTQ youth are often the most vulnerable in this system. Through "the continual, vocal branding of [the] Other" (Thurlow 2001, 26), students not only fight for power and establish their

own positions within the social hierarchy by marking others' positions as higher or lower than their own (Pascoe 2007), but they (re)establish who they cannot "be." Biased speech and other verbal aggressions and micro-aggressions (Solorzano, Ceja, and Yosso 2000) should be understood as "citational practices" – "drawing on and repeating past articulations and perceptions" (Ngo 2003, 116). Homophobic language does not need to be explained in the moment, which signifies that it is citing and reproducing cultural and historical understandings about this kind of speech, and these cultural norms are reproduced each time kids use this language to regulate one another. Hate speech acts – "faggot," "dyke," "homo," "slut" – "injure" individuals and the larger group of queer and non-conforming students by repeatedly placing them in "subordinate position[s]" in the social hierarchy and publicly reaffirming the associated gender transgressions as deviant (McInnes and Couch 2004). However, it is only the students who are overtly, publicly, repeatedly targeted who are framed within dominant bullying discourses as the victims of bullying.

Because these escalated verbal acts of aggression draw from the same cultural system of meaning and practice as everyday gender policing – a normalized part of social life – they are not viewed as abnormal by youth. It is, therefore, possible that those who "bully" do so because they are making an "extreme investment" in a cultural system that allows them to access power through the "normative regulation of others" (Bansel et al. 2009, 67). In other words, the violence termed "bullying" is the heightened and visible form of aggression that circulates every day in schools and in the larger culture – aggression that targets appearance, personal interests and hobbies, academic engagement, bodily comportment, physical size and shape, and sexual behavior in ways that continuously reassert the "right" way to be a gendered person and affirm the expected alignment of sex, gender, and sexuality.

Connelly (2012) notes that high school is "one of the most intensely and often violently anti-gay sites in our culture" (254). Each time a LGBTQ student is harassed, it communicates the message that "a central

element of the gay student's identity is deficient, shameful, and worthy of ridicule" (Wallace 2011, 748). "Student [and adult] discourses of 'normal' gender and sexuality make the school feel unsafe for [LGBTQ] students" (Ngo 2003, 118), so it is imperative that anti-bullying work focus on gaining a deeper understanding of the subtle ways that privileging of heteronormative gender in appearance and behaviors constantly influences how students negotiate their school environments. Targeting others for their failure to "do" gender "right" is a learned mechanism for improving or affirming one's own social status as well as reaffirming the "rightness" of the gender "rules," and schools are participants in both teaching youth to use these tools and in privileging some groups of (conforming) students over others. It is, therefore, important to examine the various ways in which schools institutionalize heterosexuality and silence and marginalize gender and sexual difference, thus supporting social positioning practices that privilege idealized heterosexual performance – from social rituals like prom, to elections of school queens and kings, to awards for "cutest couple," to the heterocentric curriculum, to school dress codes that affirm the gender binary. Heterosexuality and gender conformity are rewarded with a position at the top of the school's social hierarchy – visibly reaffirming the school ideal (Payne and Smith 2012a) – often through the awarding of crowns.

Attending to Climate and Culture

A high incidence of bullying is often assumed to be the cause of a negative school climate, not the iteration of the values and beliefs of the larger school culture. Climate research is "the most frequently studied school characteristic linked to bullying" (Gendron, Williams, and Guerra 2011, 151) and it intends to identify "the mediating variables between the structural features of the school and the outcomes for pupils and teachers" (Van Houtte 2005, 71). Climate assessment tools measure student and faculty perceptions of factors such as school attach-

ment, school involvement, clarity and fairness of school rules, parental involvement, safety, respect between students and staff, strength of leadership, student and staff morale, and clarity of educational mission (Gottfredson et al. 2005; Stewart 2003; Welsh 2000).

A major tension in the climate research is the uncomfortable relationship between climate and behavior. Connecting the two means identifying concrete, measurable elements that are indicative of the overall quality (whether positive or negative) of an organization's environment and linking these (often implicitly) to student and staff behavior. This research evaluates climate through school community members' collective perception of the quality of the environment. For example, Welsh (2000) utilized a climate assessment that asked for perceptions of school safety, clarity of rules, fairness of rules, respect for students, student influence on school affairs, and planning and action. Stewart's (2003) research on the relationship between "school-level characteristics" and misbehavior collected data addressing students' perceptions of school attachment, school involvement, belief in school rules, association with positive peers, and parental school involvement, and compared schools according to size, "school social problems," and "school cohesion" (576). Gottfredson et al. (2005) measured school climate using student perceptions of fairness and clarity of rules, and teachers' perceptions of "organizational focus," "morale," school-wide strategies for problem solving, and "administrative leadership" (423–424). Such measurements (e.g., "fairness," "morale") establish a normative standard for what the school environment should be, and they ask participants for their general perception of how the school measures against these standards while implicitly assuming that all respondents hold the same standard for concepts such as "fair" or "not fair" and thus are able to usefully report. The implication is that if there are deficiencies, the structural features of the school will need to be altered in some way to "fix" the climate. It is, therefore, unsurprising that anti-bullying and school climate

interventions often go hand in hand, as many school safety studies argue a causal relationship between decreases in violent behavior and a more positive school climate.

Some of this climate research has focused specifically on the experiences of LGBTQ students. For example, Toomey, McGuire, and Russell (2012) conducted research to assess "students' perceptions of the school climate as safe for gender nonconformity" and "how the visibility of safe school strategies … may be associated with greater perceptions of safety" (189). This study discussed a relationship between heteronormativity and school climate, but ultimately their conclusions were focused on correlating specific interventions – inclusive anti-harassment policies, GSAs, professional development – with students' feelings of safety rather than with indicators of strict heteronormative values. Kosciw, Palmer, Kull, and Greytak (2013) "examined simultaneously the effect of school climate on achievement and the role that school-based supports for LGBT students may have in offsetting this effect" (48). Like Toomey, McGuire, and Russell, they reported that the presence of in-school supports such as GSAs and supportive educators were indicators for a less hostile climate and fewer incidences of victimization. Research studies such as these are attractive to political and educational leaders because they support the assumption that climate is a measurable phenomenon and, therefore, it is possible to prove the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of specific interventions.

Notably, these studies and others (Birkett, Espelage, and Koenig 2009; Goodenow, Szalacha, and Westheimer 2006; Murdock and Bolch 2005) measure school climate with student reports of *feelings of safety and incidents of victimization*. In other words, climate is either positive or negative, depending on the presence or absence of reported violence. This body of research is attempting to identify specific structural elements that when addressed will help LGBTQ students feel safer, but these interventions are primarily focused on raising awareness of

LGBTQ bullying and providing spaces in the school where students do not feel the threat of victimization. These interventions are undoubtedly important, but they do not address *school culture*: the institutional value systems that privilege gender conformity and heterosexuality.

This link between climate and anti-bullying divorces climate from culture, continues the limited focus on visible signs of a deeper cultural problem, and eliminates the possibility to gain understanding of how students use social norms as tools to battle for position in the social hierarchy. Culture and climate are both prevalent concepts in discussions about institutional beliefs, values, and attitudes, and they are often conflated in educational discourse, collapsed under the umbrella of school climate (Anderson 1982; Hoy 1990; Van Houtte 2005; Welsh 2000). However, "researchers concentrating on culture maintain that *culture* may offer a more profound insight into an organization, because ultimately climate is nothing more than 'a surface manifestation of culture'" (Van Houtte 2005, 78 citing Schien 1990, 91). In other words, culture represents the system of values and beliefs that give an organization identity and shape how it (and the people in it) function, and climate is created through individuals' interactions within that organization based upon those values and beliefs (Hoy 1990; Maxwell and Thomas 1991; Van Houtte 2005). In terms of students' school experiences, one can conceptualize climate "as the way school culture affects a child's sense of safety and acceptance, and consequently is a critical determinant of their ability to focus on the task of learning" (Dessel 2010, 414), whereas culture encompasses the systems of knowledge and belief that are available within a given context for people to use in making meaning of their experiences of marginalization. The impetus to target students with harassment based upon their gender or sexual difference lies in the values and belief system of the school and larger culture. Marginalized students' interpretations of what this targeting "means" about them as people and members of that school community draws from the same value

system. Moving forward, "we must take into consideration how bullying is influenced by a patriarchal macrosystem" (Carrera, DePalma, and Lameiras 2011, 490) and how the behaviors associated with bullying, "as well as the everyday practices of oppression that are normalized and naturalized in institutional school settings, demonstrate a strong gendered component" (493). Research on school culture and heteronormativity should ask questions about institutional beliefs and values, school rituals that elevate the status of heterosexuality and gender conformity, and policies and practices that reinforce the gender binary. These are questions that will provide insight to how school culture is contributing to the ways students police one another's identities, expressions, and behaviors.

Rethinking Violence against LGBTQ Students

The literature reviewed here and the data excerpts from some of our own research represent the dominant narrative about US schools' responsibilities to LGBTQ students. The "problem" of LGBTQ students' negative school experiences has been shaped by a discourse where "overly individualized and psychologized analyses … distort larger issues of inequality" (Pascoe 2007, 17) and that neglects research examining youths' negotiations of the social hierarchies in their peer groups (Ringrose 2008). A "lack of theorizing the power of social difference" perpetuates the dominant discourse on bullying (Walton 2011) and its narrow focus on the bully/victim binary. "Anti-bullying" responses to this understanding of "the problem" include a need to protect individual victims and overlook "the role that schools play in the reproduction of social relations along axes of class, gender, race and … sexuality" (Youdell 2005, 250) that privilege some and marginalize others. LGBTQ sexuality and non-normative genders appear in the school environment only as sites of risk and vulnerability, calling for surveillance and intervention by adults, and LGBTQ youth are only acknowledged and supported as victims, or potential victims, in need of protection and

care (Fields 2013). When educators understand "the problem" in this way, the cultural, systemic privileging of heterosexuality and gender normativity is never called into question, the marginalization of LGBTQ youth is reproduced and re-entrenched in new ways, and schools avoid claiming responsibility for their complicity in the aggression targeting LGBTQ and gender non-conforming youth.

The bullying discourse is rarely questioned because it aligns with the cultural mythology of the K–12 school experience. This mythology has a socially unifying force – anyone who has been educated in US public schools can provide a recognizable narrative of "the bully," and while there is a collective desire for the bully to be eliminated, there is also an acceptance of the bully's presence as a rite of passage or a "normal" part of the K–12 schooling experience. The problem of pervasive and persistent targeting and harassment of LGBTQ students fits easily into this collective memory of schooling. However, this meaning making of LGBTQ harassment fails to address why LGBTQ students have historically been hyper-visible figures of "deviance" in the school environment (and thus the targets), and why for decades homophobic epithets like "fag" have served as such powerful tools for marking any student who falls outside social norms (Smith and Smith 1998). Bullying is not an individual "pathology" but "a form of gender socialization and a mechanism by which gender privilege is reproduced" (Pascoe 2013, 87). Traditional bullying discourses do not account for the social norms that dictate who students are "allowed" to be in the school environment, or who has access to power and prestige in the social environment of school (Payne 2007). What is needed is an understanding of bullying as more than "autonomous acts, free-floating from their histories and contexts that can be accounted for through the character of one faulty individual" (Bansel et al. 2009, 66). "Generic" anti-bullying policies – though "masquerading as providing protection for all" – do not address the "specific ways that particular children, and not others, are continual targets of peer violence" (Walton

2011, 137). Violence targeting LGBTQ students is embedded in and reproduces "normative power structures [which] discursively organize ideals of masculinity and femininity" (Ringrose 2008, 512). Thus, acts of LGBTQ harassment are "reiterations of the dominant order" (Bansel et al. 2009, 66) that normalize the marginalization of students who do not conform or meet the standards of hegemonic gender in some way. Bullying LGBTQ students is an act of social violence not only against an individual, but against gender and sexual difference. And in that way, bullying is a political act.

The educators we cite here from our research data are interpreting their LGBTQ students' experiences and their school climates through a lens that allows them to "see" overt acts of sexist and homophobic violence but not the ways in which "schools play a part in structuring adolescent selves … including relations of power, labor, emotion, and symbolism" (Pascoe 2007, 18). Although the participants recognize the presence of homophobia in their schools, they lack insight on how social stigma and marginalization work "in the most mundane moments everyday inside schools" (Youdell 2006, 13), or "how school processes act unwittingly to exclude particular students from the educational endeavour" (1). Furthermore, as Ringrose and Renold (2010) argue, "the dominant 'bully discourses' employed to make sense of and address [peer-to-peer] conflict offer few resources or practical tools for addressing and coping with everyday, normative aggression and violence in schools" (575). These "normative cruelties" are "exclusionary and injurious practices" (575) that are taken for granted as normal gendered behavior. Our research participants' perspectives on peer-to-peer aggression reflect this argument that social interactions such as girls' gossiping, boys' roughhousing, or "playful" exchanges of insults like "slut" and "fag" are rarely considered to be overtly aggressive behavior. Therefore, such low-level aggressions – which actively reproduce normative expectations for gender and sexuality – are rarely noticed, let alone monitored. Prevention and intervention methods as well as

professional development designed for teachers should highlight the relationships between "normative cruelties" (Ringrose and Renold 2010), sexual harassment, and the acts currently termed "bullying" and include a thorough education on the "constructed nature of gender, making gender boundaries more flexible, and valuing sexual diversity in the classroom" (Carrera, DePalma, and Lameiras 2011, 494).

We propose a new definition of bullying that aims to address the issues described above and that will provide a more useful framework for (i) understanding the social nature of the aggression that occurs between peers, and (ii) designing interventions that will address the cultural roots of peer-to-peer aggression. Further, we wanted to develop a definition that challenges the bullying discourse and draws attention to the daily violence that often fades into the landscape of "normal" adolescent behavior. We argue that it is imperative to keep this subtle aggression in the foreground because it reflects the cultural norms embedded in a given context – like a school or community – and is the mechanism through which youth regulate the boundaries between "normal" and "other." Finally, we take the position that a majority of peer-to-peer aggression in US public schools is some form of *gender policing* and we believe bullying must be redefined to account for relationships between peer targeting and structural inequalities:

> *Bullying is overt verbal, physical, or technology-based ("cyber," text messaging, etc.) aggression that is persistently focused on targeted person(s) over time. This behavior is visible aggression that has escalated from a larger system of low-level or covert normalized aggression that polices the boundaries between "normal" and "different" in a specific social context. Targeted person(s) are victimized because they are perceived to be outside the boundaries of "normal" as culturally defined within a peer group. This aggression is a tool for acquiring higher social status in a peer group because by targeting others as "different," the aggressor claims a higher*

position in the social hierarchy and reinforces the social "rules" of acceptability. Peer-to-peer aggression typically replicates structural inequality, and therefore patterns of targeting are likely to reflect systemic marginalization along lines of gender, sex, sexuality, race, (dis)ability, and class. Bullying frequently reinforces gender norms – ideas about "correct" and "normal" masculinity and femininity. Students who are viewed as having non-normative gender (and by extension, sexuality) are frequent targets. Not all aggressive behaviors between students can be termed "bullying" – some are the result of individual conflict or personality differences.

By redefining bullying in this way, we hope to disrupt the cultural mythology of bullying as a taken-for-granted, coming-of-age experience in US K–12 schools. This definition is meant to create emphasis on the cultural roots of "the problem" of peer-to-peer aggression, which will ultimately drive interventions that focus on shifting cultural norms.

"The hegemony and ultimate stranglehold of the bully and anti-bully discourses over educational research, policy and practice is in much need of a critical overhaul" (Ringrose and Renold 2010, 591). Moving forward, research on and a re-envisioning of in-school aggression must address the sociocultural dimensions of bullying and aggression (Ringrose 2008) and the "intense" social competition (Ringrose and Renold 2010) and gendered expectations central to what it means to be a gendered subject within school contexts. We are looking for ways to achieve sustainable change, and for any change to be sustainable, school interventions must take on the task of cultural change alongside violence intervention. The anti-bullying paradigm does not offer the tools to accomplish this goal because, "[b]y using vague terms such as bullying and name calling, [it] avoid[s] examining the underlying power dynamics that such behaviors build and reinforce, [which] effectively reinforce[s] the status quo" (Meyer 2008, 44). Additionally, the increased surveillance and reporting that often accompanies anti-bullying programs disproportionately impacts al-

ready marginalized youth including LGBTQ youth and students of color (Smith and Payne 2013).

What is needed are interventions that see schooling "as being shaped by the ongoing deployment of available discursive strategies" and believe "the school is also a material location" (Youdell 2006, 58). It is important to understand schools on a macro- and micro-sociological level, accounting for both the lived experience of the students and the cultural processes of elevating hegemonic gender performance and heterosexuality to a position of prestige in the school environment. Bullying is not antisocial behavior, but rather is both intensely social and functional behavior rooted in the school and larger cultural value systems. It serves a "social purpose by reinforcing hierarchies of power and privilege" and is "a reflection of broader social inequity and prejudice" (Walton 2011, 140). "It is a barometer of collective social, cultural, and political anxieties" and routinely "marginalize[s]" and "villifie[s] those who are seen as 'different'" (140). A primary area of difference marked and targeted is gender (and by extension, sexuality) and schools are still complicit "in the everyday cruelties of the enforcement of heterosexist/homophobic hegemony" (Smith and Smith 1998, 309).The power at play in acts of bullying needs to be reconceptualized in both research and policy, moving away from the limited notion of one more powerful individual acting against another who is weaker and toward an account of "the situational and sociocultural aspects of power and identity and their dimensions in terms of gender and sexuality" (Carrera, DePalma, and Lameiras 2011, 488). Ultimately, this lens provides a richer understanding of how students are stigmatized in school – and this understanding is imperative for designing interventions that have any hope of creating sustainable change.

About QuERI

Queering Education Research Institute© (QuERI) is an independent think tank, qualitative research and education center dedicated to bridging the gap between research and practice to improve the school expe-

riences of LGBTQ students and families. QuERI began in 2006 with the Reduction of Stigma in Schools (RSIS) program – a research-based professional development program for K–12 educators, and expanded in 2008 to become a research, training, and policy institute. QuERI was founded by Dr. Elizabethe Payne and housed in the Syracuse University School of Education from 2006 to 2014. QuERI is located at the LGBT Social Science and Public Policy Center, Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute, Hunter College, City University of New York, through 2018. For more information about the research and applied work of QuERI, see the website www.queeringeducation.org. QuERI can also be found on Huffington Post, Facebook, Twitter, and on Academia.edu.

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My story – Nadine Hultman

Friends´ Children and Youth Group

When I was bullied, it might have appeared to be like many other situations when someone is verbally bullied. The biggest difference with my bullying situation was that adults were constantly present. I have a physical impairment and during the period when the bullying was going on, I was in a class with children who had various kinds of functional impairments, which meant that we constantly had assistants around us. The problem I had was that the adults chose not to see. Sometimes they took action, but most often they thought it was easier to make it appear as if I had provoked a reaction from my bully. Then there was something concrete I could do. The assistants wanted these situations to look like fighting, even though each time it happened unprovoked.

At home, I was encouraged to tell someone about what happened in school since school staff are obliged to take action if a student is exposed to bullying. It ended up with me reporting each incident to

the school. In school, a form had to be filled in together with a mentor, so it resulted in me using a large portion of recesses to fill out paperwork. Those forms were piling up and at first, nothing happened. When I continued to give example after example, they began talking to me about tools that are used when someone is exposed to bullying. Finally, I believed something would happen. But it ended up with the same measures being taken again and again. They talked to my bully and said that it was not okay to behave this way. It was difficult for me to understand that they worked with some kind of bullying tool since the conversations with the person didn't make any difference.

The adults at school did not pay attention to me when I said there was no change and that the bullying was continuing. Since nothing happened, my mother contacted the school. Then the principal also got involved, but it did not make a difference – everything still moved as slowly as before. In the end, the school administration decided to arrange a meeting with the parents and the principal but considering how little had happened since I told them that I was being bullied, we came to the conclusion that it was easier to switch schools.

It was when switching to a new school that I first began to experience a real difference – to come to a school where the staff was willing to act upon the students' experiences of their situation. If someone were not doing well, I knew they would do something about it and not only make it look like they were doing something, when in reality, they only collected and added forms to a pile. In addition, nothing had to have happened in order for you to be aware of how the core value system worked and what you could do if you were exposed to bullying.

Chapter 3

Challenging bullying cases:
let's take the challenge

Christina Salmivalli

CHRISTINA SALMIVALLI

PhD, Professor of psychology at the University of Turku, Finland
Deputy head of the INVEST flagship research center

Christina Salmivalli has done school-based research on bullying and its prevention since the early 1990's. Salmivalli's team developed the KiVa antibullying program, which is widely used in Finland and beyond. Her work has been awarded both nationally and internationally. Salmivalli has published numerous widely cited research articles, book chapters, and books on the topics of children's peer relations and school bullying. She has been in charge of numerous large-scale projects and trained and supported thousands of teachers in their antibullying work. Salmivalli is the deputy head of the new INVEST flagship research center which aims at increasing wellbeing of Finnish society during childhood, youth and early adulthood and preventing psychosocial risks compromising such development through innovative interventions.

Introduction from Friends' experts

Frida Warg

Researchers from various disciplines have devoted much work to answer questions about the causes, consequences and expressions of bullying and, not least, about effective efforts to prevent and stop bullying. We know so much more about bullying today than we did just 10 years ago, not to mention 30 years ago. In this chapter we are introduced to Christina Salmivalli's analysis of a relatively unexplored area: the most difficult and challenging cases of bullying.

In most cases the bullying stops when school staff intervene, but for a few it gets worse and for some, bullying continues despite efforts by adults. How come? A relatively large part of the research on bullying deals with so-called risk and protective factors. Risk factors increase the risk of bullying occurring and are associated with a high prevalence of bullying, while protective factors "buffer" or protect against bullying and are associated with a low prevalence of bullying. For example, a positive school climate (protective factor) may serve as a buffer for friends' bad influence (risk factor) or for guardians who are lacking in the care of their children (risk factor). In general, it is therefore good to strengthen the protective factors and reduce the risk factors to increase the opportunities for a school to combat bullying. The same goes for anti-bullying programs: they often work well. The large meta-analyzes that have been carried out - which means that researchers compile and statistically weigh material from several research studies - have shown that the programs and their components are effective: bullying is reduced by 15-20 %. There are also several success factors

for combating bullying: for example, there is a relative consensus that a whole-school approach is fundamental to effective work against bullying. This means that the entire school should be involved: school management, teachers and other school staff as well as students and guardians.

So of course, we know a lot about bullying today. However, in this chapter, Salmivalli points out that evaluations and summaries of both preventative and remedial measures against bullying often focus on what works. Of course, it is extremely important to know what efforts are effective, both for those who work with children and young people to be able to use methods that have proven to work and for us all to learn more about the mechanisms of bullying. But despite all this knowledge that various fields of research have produced in recent decades, Salmivalli emphasizes that we need to understand exactly how school staff intervene in specific cases of bullying and when and why these efforts fail. This is an area that has hardly been explored at all, and Salmivalli argues that we must now learn from the challenges and not just the successes.

Prevention is usually divided into three different types:
- Universal prevention targets an entire population, such as the population at large or an entire school.
- Selective prevention is aimed at subgroups where the risk of the problem is greater than in other groups.
- Indicated prevention is aimed at high-risk individuals where the problem is already established.

In the field of bullying prevention, the general concepts used are universal or targeted prevention. Universal measures consist of prevention efforts involving all students, whether they have been directly involved in bullying or not. Targeted measures, on the other hand, focus on students who are directly involved in bullying, either

as one who is bullied or that bullies. Research has highlighted that the programs that are likely to be the most effective in preventing bullying are those that have a whole-school approach containing multiple components and that combine universal and targeted strategies.

But to be able to target specific individuals, school staff need to be aware of the bullying that is going on. However, most bullying incidents take place in environments where adults are not present, such as school yards or hallways, and many students do not report being bullied. Confident, warm and trusting relationships between teachers and students layss the foundation for successful bullying prevention. Warm relationships can increase students' tendency to act against bullying, and even their willingness to trust adults when they themselves or others are treated badly.

We can see an example of relationship-building efforts at one of the schools Friends collaborates with in Sweden. The principle tells us that they work extensively with relationship-building and that they, for example, make home visits before the students start school, with the aim that both students and guardians should feel that everyone is part of the same team. Creating these warm relationships with students is a process where general and everyday communication can be a tool to use. It is said that body language is a greater part of our communication than what we say in words. Therefore, it is important to consider what kind of body language, tone or looks are used between adults and students in school. In some cases, it is possible to compare the teaching profession with the role of an actor: you are always on stage and need to think about what you want to convey to your audience. If you want to show students that they are important and valuable - how should you get your message across? With such simple means as voice mode or eye contact, we can positively affect people around us. We can make another person feel seen and important, or useless and boring - just by turning our body, changing our facial expression or smiling. Being observed by a colleague with focus on communica-

tion is a good way to improve oneself. It is not a matter of looking for mistakes or being judged, but of making things that you may not be aware of visible. It is an opportunity to see yourself and your profession in a new light and to discuss for example what your interaction with the students looks like, if there are any recurrent patterns and what general view on children that you are communicating.

Whether students should have a role - and what kind of role - when it comes to bullying prevention is controversial. It has shown to be effective to strengthen the bystander's awareness, empathy and tendency to support peers subjected to bullying, rather than to reinforce and support the behavior of those who bully. However, other research shows that methods where students are involved in a school's bullying prevention can even be counterproductive. So, what is right? The truth is that student participation is important. But as Salmivalli points out in this chapter, there is a difference when, on one hand, students are assigned a heavy and formal responsibility to stop bullying, and on the other hand, to promote civil courage and implement rules for how bystanders can act when they witness bullying.

Something that is highlighted in this chapter is the importance of school staff clearly communicating and taking a stand against bullying as it turns out that students are then more likely to report if they have been subjected to bullying. Discussions about bullying can therefore not only be held on designated theme days, class teacher hours or on specific lessons. Schools that integrate the bulling prevention in general teaching, that have teachers who clearly take a stand against bullying and keep the issue high on the agenda, have better opportunities to counteract bullying. In addition: however important it is to always act in the moment when bullying and degrading treatment occur, it is made clear in this chapter that it is not enough to act on every single incident - school staff must intervene and act on the situation based on the whole picture. Bullying is a complex issue and needs to be tackled accordingly.

The essence is that if a school wants bullying prevention that is comprehensive and effective, several perspectives are needed: such as a combination of universal and targeted efforts, or a combination of committed students and adults who take a stand. And as a basis: warm and trusting relationships. That must be the starting point for both prevention and remedial work.

Challenging bullying cases: let's take the challenge

Christina Salmivalli

Although anti-bullying programs reduce the prevalence of students who bully others and of those who are bullied, the reductions are limited to 15-20% (Gaffney, Ttofi, & Farrington, 2019; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). Thus, even the most effective programs do not protect all victimized children, and they have limited impact on the behavior of some children who bully. So far, research on bullying prevention/intervention has focused on success, by evaluating and comparing the effects produced by different anti-bullying programs. Furthermore, analyses on the effective components of programs mainly concern universal, preventive measures (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). While this is important, it has overshadowed attempts to understand how exactly school personnel intervene in particular cases of bullying and when and why these interventions fail. Furthermore, studies examining the interventions from the perspective of the children who bully are lacking: it is not known how they perceive different actions taken by adults. The present chapter discusses some urgent questions in the field of bullying prevention and intervention: why are not we more efficient in reducing bullying; How might the characteristics of specific bullying cases moderate the effects of interventions; and how should we address these issues questions in future research and in educational practice.

Bullying by peers remains to be a pervasive problem among school-aged children around the world. The victims suffer from depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and they are often rejected by their peers and have few or no friends in their classroom (Salmivalli & Isaacs, 2005). The negative consequences are especially serious among youth who are victimized over long periods of time (Bowes et al., 2013) sometimes affecting their lives into adulthood in the forms of mental health problems, suicidal ideation and behavior, and marginalization from society (Lereya et al., 2015; Ttofi et al., 2011). Thus, bullying constitutes a serious threat to the healthy development of individuals, along with considerable costs for societies (e.g., Cohen and Piquero, 2009).

Interventions aiming to reduce bullying can be universal or targeted. Universal interventions consist of prevention efforts involving all children, regardless of whether they have been directly involved in bullying. Targeted interventions, on the other hand, address children involved as victims or perpetrators in particular bullying cases that come to the attention of school personnel. Many anti-bullying programs involve several universal elements (such as student lessons, awareness campaigns, and increased playground supervision), along with guidelines regarding targeted interventions. Most evaluation trials test the effects of programs as a whole, in an intention-to-treat-design, without separating their different components. While such studies are important, they may have overshadowed attempts to understand *how exactly school personnel intervene in particular cases of bullying and when and why that is not successful.*

We've learnt from success, now let's learn from challenges

To this date, research on bullying prevention and intervention has *focused on success* by evaluating and comparing the effects produced by different policies or programs (trying to find out "what works", or to identify the "most effective" program). Although meta-analyses show

that anti-bullying programs reduce the prevalence of students who bully others and of those who are bullied by their peers, the average reductions are limited to 15-20% (Gaffney et al., 2019; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). Even the most effective programs do not protect all children from victimization, and they have limited impact on the behavior of some children who bully. Clearly, universal prevention efforts do not prevent all bullying, and it is of outmost importance to find effective interventions to be used in such cases. Therefore, we should perhaps start zooming in on the *bullying cases that remain unresolved* and trying to understand when and why that happens.

It should be clarified that by *a bullying case* I refer to the student who is repeatedly bullied and the peer(s) bullying them, as well as the larger peer setting in which the whole situation is embedded. A bullying case could be described, for instance, as "Pete and Noel are bullying Mark on a daily basis, mainly by verbal abuse but sometimes also physical aggression. Overall, Mark is rejected and isolated by classmates." Unresolved cases are the ones where bullying continues despite of a targeted intervention, even if some of its characteristics (e.g., shifting from face-to-face perpetration to online bullying) may change.

I argue that it would be important to study the outcomes of targeted interventions in a systematic way – and start understanding *the challenge factors* that contribute to a bullying case remaining unresolved despite of a targeted intervention. We recently organized a one-year training for teachers and other school personnel on *challenging bullying cases*. In that context, we asked them to write a one-two -page description of a challenging bullying case they have been involved with. These descriptions revealed that the attributions made by school personnel regarding the reasons why some bullying cases are difficult to resolve are varied. The descriptions included references to the individual characteristics of the victimized children or those of the bullies, the quality of home-school collaboration, the form of bullying (e.g., online bullying was perceived difficult to tackle,

and so were very subtle forms of bullying), or the group dynamics involved (such as the whole school class being involved). Some cases may remain unresolved due to the intervention approach itself, or the attitudes or characteristics of adults who intervene. Studying targeted interventions and challenge factors could indeed shed light on several aspects of persistent bullying.

Too many victimized students do not tell adults

In order for adults to intervene, they need to find out about bullying. Unfortunately, however, some cases never come to daylight. Most bullying incidents take place in settings where adults are not present, such as schoolyard or hallways during recess time, and many students who are targeted do not report it. The prevalence of telling *someone* about victimization has been found to be 50-70% at best –in our recent Finnish study, it was 55% (Blomqvist et al., 2020). Victimized students tend to disclose to their friends rather than adults, and parents rather than teachers. Telling a teacher about being bullied is rare (only 3–18% of victimized students), and telling some other adult at school is even rarer (3–9%) (Smith & Shu, 2000). Indeed, in Haataja and colleagues' (2016) study, only one in four chronically victimized students came to the attention of school personnel.

We recently identified, besides grade (younger children being more likely to tell) and gender (girls being more likely to tell) some factors increasing the likelihood of telling an adult about being victimized (Blomqvist et al., 2020). First, students who had been victimized for a longer time were more likely to tell an adult about it. Second, students who perceived classmates as supportive, and those who perceived their teachers as having strong anti-bullying attitudes were more likely to report bullying that was happening to them. Therefore, in addition to having appropriate channels for reporting bullying to adults, an effective way to promote telling is school personnel's clearly communicated stand against bullying.

Intervening in specific incidents (even if repeatedly) is not enough

Research shows that many victimized students are not satisfied with the outcomes of teacher interventions. Some studies asked students who had been bullied, whether any teacher intervention took place and whether it was helpful. Smith and Shu (2000) reported that among 2308 youth in the UK, bullying stopped or decreased in 56% of the cases after teacher intervention. However, the situation did not change for 28% and bullying actually increased for 16%. Similarly, a Dutch study involving 2766 children (Fekkes et al., 2005) indicated that teacher intervention was helpful in 49% of the cases, but the situation did not change for 34% and it got worse for 17%. Thus, in both studies about half of the victimized students said they were *not helped* by the interventions. However, in these studies it was not clarified *what the teachers actually had done* to stop the bullying.

In the context of the randomized controlled trial (2007-09) of the KiVa® antibullying program in Finland, separate follow-up meetings were organized with the victimized child and with the ones who had been bullying them, after each targeted intervention. In the former meeting, the student who had been victimized was asked whether the intervention had been successful. As many as 97.6% of the victimized students whose case had been tackled by adults at school reported that bullying had either stopped (78.2%) or decreased (19.5%). Only 2.1% said it remained the same, while 0.3% said it got worse (Garandeau et al., 2014). It should be noted that this study was different from the Smith and Shu, as well as Fekkes and colleagues' study in several respects. First, the targeted interventions were evaluated in the context of a universal program during a randomized controlled trial – targeted interventions may be more effective when universal interventions are being implemented in the same time. Second, the adults belonging to schools' KiVa teams (who were in charge for intervening) were provid-

ed clear guidelines to tackle the cases of bullying with evidence-based methods. Finally, the outcome (whether or not bullying had stopped) was reported about two weeks after the intervention, so it only concerned short-term effects.

After the above-mentioned randomized controlled trial, the KiVa antibullying program was widely implemented in Finnish schools since 2009. Our (unpublished) data collected during the ten years of wide implementation shows somewhat lower success of targeted interventions. According to the students who said the schools' adults had intervened when they were victimized, the negative treatment had stopped or decreased for 72% (averaged across the years), remained the same for 20%, and got worse for 8%. We also asked students who had been targeted by an adult intervention because they had bullied another student, whether this led to a change in their behavior. From among these students, 80% said the intervention made them stop or decrease their bullying behavior.

Although there is no empirical research on this, anecdotal evidence suggests that teachers and other school personnel often think about bullying interventions as *intervening in specific, single incidents of bullying* that they witness or hear about. Indeed, many studies on intervening provide teachers with a hypothetical vignette describing a bullying incident, followed by questions on how they would, or how they have, intervened when facing such an incident. However, being bullied is more than an incident – or even a series of incidents. The adults should intervene in the bullied student's situation as a whole – in other words, they should intervene in the bullying case, not just in separate bullying incidents. This means that it is insufficient to tell (again and again) students who are doing the bullying to "stop immediately" each time they are engaging in mean acts towards a specific peer. Instead, adults should arrange a series of meetings with the students involved, with serious discussions about the fact that *one student is repeatedly negatively treated and that must stop*.

What kind of intervention approach works best?

Two main methods of intervening in bullying cases have been referred to as confronting and non-confronting approaches (Garandeau et al., 2014). In the confronting approach, the key element is condemning of the bullying behavior and holding the bullies openly responsible for the harm caused. This is recommended in the pioneering anti-bullying program of Dan Olweus. According to Olweus (2013), there should be some form of sanction for the bullies, and school personnel must make it clear to them that the sanction is a consequence of their bullying behavior. The sanction needs not to be actual punishment; it might simply consist of having a serious talk with the bully/ies or informing their parents about the bullying. In contrast, the key element of the non-confronting approach is arousing bullies' empathy for their victims. The bullies are not blamed and it is not even necessary to mention that they have caused the harm. The goal is to establish a shared understanding that the situation is painful for the victimized peer and something must be done to change it. The focus is on solving the situation, allowing to avoid angry and defensive reactions from bullies; they should be less tempted to deny responsibility for bullying when they are not even blamed for it.

Whether the cases of bullying should be handled in a way that condemns the bullying, as in the confronting approach, or in a manner that harnesses the bullies' empathy, as in the non-confronting approach, is a controversial issue: the debate over which one should be recommended is ongoing. To this date, only one study compared directly the effectiveness of the two approaches (Garandeau et al., 2014). Neither of them was overall more effective – however, the findings suggested that their relative effectiveness might vary across the bullying cases. For instance, the confronting approach worked slightly better than the non-confronting approach in middle school, and the non-confronting approach was more efficient in cases where victimization had continued for a longer period of time.

Johander and colleagues (submitted) examined the implementation and effectiveness of the confronting and non-confronting approaches in 1,211 KiVa schools for six years (the 2009-10 academic year through the 2015–16 academic year), based on annual surveys filled in by students and by school personnel. The findings indicated, again, that overall there was no difference in the average effectiveness of confronting and non-confronting approaches. Most schools had chosen to use the former, but both KiVa team members and students who had been bullied were equally satisfied with the outcomes of targeted interventions in schools utilizing either one of the two approaches. Across the six-year study period, there was a trend toward more schools using their own adaptations (approaches not outlined in the KiVa materials). Interestingly, KiVa team members as well as students in schools using their own adaptations were somewhat less satisfied with the outcomes of the targeted interventions that those in schools using program-recommended methods. Finally, KiVa team members and students in schools that could not specify their intervention approach ("did not know which approach they used") were the least satisfied with the outcomes. Overall, the findings suggest that the approach itself may not matter that much, as long as there are evidence-based methods at place.

In practice, school personnel intervening in bullying situations are likely to use different combinations of elements from confronting and non-confronting approaches. They may also add elements to the discussions that were not originally meant to be part of it, such as blaming or shaming the bullying child. Yet, virtually nothing is known about the (non-)effectiveness of these different elements and their combinations, or about the bullies' cognitive and emotional responses to the way they are approached in the intervention discussions. Social psychology provides an important perspective to why interventions sometimes fail to produce behavior change. *Psychological reactance* is an instantaneous, unpleasant motivational arousal individuals

may have when someone is attempting to influence their thinking or behavior – it arises from the experience, whether conscious or not, that one's freedom is threatened (Brehm & Brehm, 1981). Reactance is typically measured by items such as: "[The message] tried to pressure me" or "[The message] tried to make a decision for me" (Steindl et a., 2015). Psychological reactance can be expected to play a part in resistance towards condemning interventions where students are told that their behavior must change. However, reactance might also occur in response to empathy-raising attempts, as they involve persuasion to think and feel in a certain way. There is evidence that increased pressure to aid a person in need can reduce, rather than increase, the individual's willingness to help the person – in the same time, other research suggests that reactance is lower when empathy is induced (Shen, 2010). When persuasion seems improper or unjustified (as when the student does not think (s)he has engaged in bullying, or "it was just a joke"), reactance is likely to be high, leading to little or no intention to change one's behavior. Also framing of the intervention message is likely to matter. For instance, when condemning the bullying behavior, it is possible to blame the student as a person or, in contrast, tell them that although they have done the wrong thing the adult is sure they can change their behavior and make the school days nicer for the peer. Expression of disapproval of the behavior sets clear limits regarding what is acceptable and what is not, and enhances the possibility for change whereas blaming the student may have an adverse effect.

(How) should peers be utilized in interventions?

Whether or not peers should have a role – and what kind of a role – in bullying prevention and intervention is controversial. On one hand, research has demonstrated that peer witnesses' responses are crucial in inhibiting or fueling bullying (Salmivalli et al., 2011). Further, some of the most effective bullying prevention programs, such as the KiVa antibullying program developed in Finland, rely on enhancing

bystanders' awareness, empathy and self-efficacy to support victimised peers, instead of reinforcing the bullies' behaviour (Kärnä et al., 2011). On the other hand, according to the meta-analysis by Ttofi and Farrington (2011) "work with peers" in an intervention could be even counterproductive; anti-bullying programs including this element were, on average, less effective than programs not involving "work with peers". In the coding of Ttofi and Farrington, however, work with peers was defined as "formal engagement of peers in tackling bullying'" (including the utilization of formally assigned peer mediators, or peer supporters), rather than awareness-raising about the role of all peers and formulation of rules for bystander responses when witnessing bullying. On a theoretical as well as empirical basis, the latter type of approach is highly recommended (Salmivalli, 2010). Formal peer helpers intervening in bullying has, based on current evidence, little effect on ongoing bullying. It should be noted, however, that assigning peers as educators (involving them in awareness-raising) has been found effective in reducing bullying among adolescents (NoTrap! intervention, see Palladino, Nocentini, & Menesini, 2015). To summarize, although adults should always take the responsibility of intervening in bullying, it can be helpful to empower all students so that they make their private anti-bullying attitudes visible and support the vulnerable peers who are at risk for victimization or are already experiencing it.

Healthy context paradox: What does it mean and why does it matter?

A common goal of educators and researchers is to find ways to reduce the prevalence of bullying problems. Alarming evidence suggest, however, that victimized students are especially maladjusted when they are in contexts (e.g., classrooms or schools) where the overall level of victimization is low, or decreasing over time. In other words, young people who are the only, or among the very few victimized in their environment, feel worse than youth who are victimized in

contexts where many others share their plight. This phenomenon has recently been referred to as the *healthy context paradox* (Garandeau & Salmivalli, 2019).

How could it be that victimized youth feel worse in healthier contexts? Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) offers one explanation: when being bullied in classrooms or schools with many victims, students are able to compare themselves with others in a similar position, which might help them restore self-esteem. If, in contrast, victimized peers are rare in the context, the ones experiencing victimization might be more likely to blame themselves for the situation and make negative self-evaluations (Schacter & Juvonen, 2015). Another mechanism is an interpersonal one. Victimized youth often affiliate with other victims, partly because they have no other choice (Sentse et al., 2013). It might be more difficult for victimized students to befriend with others in classrooms with low levels of victimization – friendlessness, in turn, exacerbates internalizing problems. Finally, *person-group dissimilarity* model postulates that the peer group's attitudes towards its members depend on what is normative in the group (Wright et al., 1986). Accordingly, victims are often viewed as social misfits in classrooms or schools with low levels of victimization, and thus more likely to be rejected by the mainstream peer group (Sentse et al., 2007).

It is likely that not only a healthy context contributes to the increasing maladjustment of remaining or new victims, but also highly maladjusted *children are at a high risk of remaining or becoming victimized even in relatively healthy contexts.* In other words, some types of maladjustment may be challenge factors contributing to persistent victimization. Recent study by Kaufman and colleagues (Kaufman, Kretschmer, Huitsing, & Veenstra, 2018) pointed to this direction. They examined the different victimization trajectories of children in schools implementing the KiVa antibullying program in the Netherlands over the period of two years. The findings showed that although the program helped most victimized children escape the victim role, about one fifth of children

identified as victimized at baseline (3.6 % of all children in their sample) were on the trajectory of persistent victimization: they continued to be bullied despite the program being implemented in their schools. In comparison to the children on the decreasing victimization trajectory, the persistently victimized were high on peer rejection, anxiety, and depression already high at baseline, before program implementation started. Further insight into the processes that make victimization continue among these vulnerable children needed. To begin with, we should find out whether they were identified as victimized by the school personnel in the first place, and whether any targeted interventions took place to stop the bullying they experienced.

From the practical viewpoint, the healthy context paradox means that we should not be satisfied merely by trend data showing there are decreases in the overall level of victimization. A low-victimization context may be especially traumatizing for the few individuals who remain victimized. This is another reason to believe that prevention work is not enough; more attention needs to be devoted to targeted interventions and especially challenging cases that are not easily resolved.

Conclusions

We already know quite a bit about preventing bullying. The good news is that we can achieve significant reductions in the prevalence of the problem by implementing evidence-based anti-bullying programs. The bad news, however, is that there are children who remain or become victimized even in contexts that are relatively healthy, or "bullying-free" – and there is evidence that these children tend to be the most maladjusted. We need a better understanding of why some kids are not easily helped by standard interventions – and the role of the individuals who bully, the peer group, the families, and the actions taken (or not taken) in schools in such persistent bullying cases. We also need studies that take a closer look at targeted interventions aiming to change the behavior of children who bully, and examine how

children with different individual characteristics respond to different types of interventions. This might produce further insight into why some youth are more resistant to intervention attempts than others are. Celebrating successes is a good thing, but we could also learn a lot from failures. It is time to take the challenge and investigate the most challenging cases of bullying.

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My story – Jennifer Ottestig

Friends´ Children and Youth Group

I was basically bullied throughout all the 10 years in elementary and middle school. It was a small school, with only 200 students, from Kindergarten through 9th grade. This meant that if a person had friends at school, it was a safe and comfortable place, but if someone felt alone it became very obvious, which was what happened to me.

My experience was to be constantly ostracized by my classmates. They often told me mean things, gave me looks, and talked badly about me. Somehow it was like it was okay to pick on me. And even though the teachers saw practically everything, they didn't do anything. Instead, I was told over and over again to avoid my classmates and to not pay attention to them, which was difficult as we were only 20 students in the class, including myself and my sister.

In other words, I was blamed for them being mean to me, and it felt like teachers and others at school twisted the truth so that it would look

like I was the problem. So that it would be more comfortable for them. Those involved in the situation were the school, the ones bullying me, and also my parents. My parents were a tremendously strong support to me, and they did everything within their power to try to improve the situation. Without their support, I wouldn't have made it through.

In 4th–6th grade it also escalated to physical bullying, when a girl in my class began hitting me, pulling my hair, and kicking me. It often happened in the locker room, but also at recess. My parents were going to meetings together with staff from the school and the girl's parents, but were told that we had to feel sorry for the girl since she had a lot of issues herself, but couldn't tell the reason for them. The situation with physical bullying improved with time, but all the other things continued throughout all my years in school.

The situation changed when I came to high school, something I had looked forward to for a long time. There, I met teachers that took me seriously and treated me fairly. They also encouraged my studies which made it fun to attend classes. I ended up in a class with people who had similar interests to me.

Chapter 4

The Need for a 'We-Culture': The Importance of the Larger Network and Social Norms for Tackling Bullying

René Veenstra

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René Veenstra's work focuses on the theoretical and empirical elaboration of a social network approach to bullying and victimization and pro- and antisocial behavior. He has coordinated the implementation and evaluation of the KiVa anti-bullying program in the Netherlands. His articles have appeared in top-level journals, including *Child Development, Development and Psychopathology, Journal of Educational Psychology, Prevention Science, and Social Networks*. He was Associate Editor of the Journal of Research on Adolescence for the period 2010-2016. He is an elected member of the Royal Holland Society of Sciences and Humanities. He is a regular speaker at science communication events, including talks about bullying at the Children's University.

Introduction from Friends' experts

Frida Warg

Most of us went to school at some point in our life, and therefore have firsthand experience of the intricate web of relationships that a classroom consists of. If you are a teacher, you know that relationships between student's are always ongoing processes that effects just about everything in school. Bullying impacts the students' relationships with friends and adults at school. It is common that bullied students feel ashamed, which makes it difficult to establish and maintain social relationships. Victimized students have fewer friends, are lonelier and trust their teachers less.

In this chapter Rene Veenstra argues that a 'we-culture' is needed to tackle bullying and that teachers should look at a classroom as a group rather than a set of individuals. His conclusions are based on social network research which is used to examine bullying as a group process and includes asking students questions about bullying (Who do you bully?), victimization (By whom are you bullied?), and defending (By whom are you defended?) as well as other relationships, such as friendships (Who are your best friends?) and rejection (Who do you dislike?).

One of the school's missions is to create conditions for good and healthy relationships between students, which is why mapping student's social relationships in school is important since children's and adolescent's social interaction with others is largely carried out in school. Since a school is a dynamic environment in constant change, it is important to create a picture of the situation at your school using

various mapping methods such as observations, interviews or surveys. The next step is to find out why the current situation is the way it is and to conduct an analysis by identifying the underlying causes. Knowledge on who is connected to whom and in what way can be a good start for teachers to determine where and how to intervene.

Social norms are highlighted in this chapter as something that needs consideration when it comes to bullying. Social norms shape and maintain behavior in the sense that if you are conforming to a norm you will be rewarded with for example approval, social inclusion and status – whereas if you deviate from a norm you risk punishment such as rejection, victimization and ostracism. It is important to remember that students are not the only ones responsible for the norms that exists in a classroom - teachers are also a part of constructing and reinforcing social norms. Adults must look themselves in the mirror and ask: In what way am I creating or co-creating the social norms in my classroom? If you only are chit-chatting with the hockey players about their hobbies, you are a part of constructing ice hockey as something that gives status and attention. If you are only mentioning couples that consists of a woman and a man, you are reinforcing the heterosexual norm in your classroom. If you do not react against bullying, degrading treatment or other forms of aggression, you are sending clear signals that it is allowed to bully someone. When a student does or says something that is in breach of the school's values – begin by establishing that very fact.

Even if societal factors – like gender inequality or racism - may be difficult to change overnight, it is still possible to design preventive measures based on them. One example is having discussions about norms that limits people and to criticize them together with the students with the intention of helping them understand (and hopefully take a more liberal attitude to) narrow societal norms. In addition, a norm-critical approach in general can help create a classroom culture where deviation from norms is easier and does not lead to punish-

ment and exclusion but on the contrary promotes inclusion, openness and tolerance.

When speaking to students almost everybody rejects bullying, but that is not always shown in their behavior. This can be explained by so-called "pluralistic ignorance" which is basically a will to adapt to social norms which makes an individual in public go along with a norm that they privately reject, but incorrectly assume that most others accept.

"The power of norms lies in its ability to contribute to the fundamental need to belong by steering a strong tendency to conform."

This quote from Veenstra's chapter is describing the problem with norms – but is at the same time something to lean on because it means that there also is power in the positive and wanted social norms, the norms based on everybody's equal value and the basis for a positive atmosphere.

A relatively large part of the research on bullying deals with so-called risk and protective factors. Risk factors increase the risk of bullying and correlate with a high prevalence of bullying. Protective factors provide a buffer against bullying and correlate with a low prevalence of bullying. For instance, a positive school climate (protective factor) can act as a buffer for the bad influence of friends (risk factor) or for guardians who lack the preconditions to care for their children (risk factor). Having prosocial friends is such a protective factor, and in this chapter Veenstra highlights that the ideal classroom is a classroom in which popularity is positively linked to prosociality. Prosocial behavior can be explained as actions that benefit other people, such as helping, sharing and/or being nice and friendly.

The million-dollar question is how to create such a prosocial pop-ularity norm. A good start is to build warm and trusting relationships between teachers and students by for example learning all students' names, getting to know them and taking an interest in their person.

Warm relationships make students more inclined to act against bullying and increases their willingness to confide in an adult when they or others are being treated badly. Each student should have at least one adult at school that they trust. There are only benefits to be gained when you invest in building relationships with the students. As well, warm teacher-student relations are a solid foundation to establish a "we-culture".

Everybody – students, teachers and other school staff – must feel that this is our school, not just a school. That must include both the actual school building and the people in it and be based on the notion that we have a common responsibility for each other and that we all have the power and the ability to create a good atmosphere. Promoting prosocial behavior can be hard work, not least since aggressive popularity norms often take precedence over prosocial popularity norms, which is pointed out in this chapter. Aggression may not only gain more attention due to fear but may also create admiration and be easier to imitate.

A very interesting and important part of the research presented in this chapter is "the healthy context paradox".

> *"After schools had worked for two years with an anti-bullying program, these remaining victims were worse off and had higher levels of depressive symptoms and lower levels of self-esteem than before. Paradoxically, the following applies: the safer the school, the worse the position of the remaining victims."*

Even if teachers manage to instill a prosocial popularity norm, they must be aware that some students may have a hard time in a well-functioning and friendly classroom. This paradox is yet another reason to use the previously mentioned mapping methods, and as a teacher it might be even harder to see the problems in a friendly and prosocial classroom. Remember that the students are the experts of their

own reality, and therefore it should be them that identify, define, and suggest solutions to the school's problems. To increase awareness and create effective school strategies and policies, the students need to be involved from start, and it needs to be their experiences that formulates the school's challenges. Taking the students seriously is the base for creating a true "we-culture".

The Need for a 'We-Culture': The Importance of the Larger Network and Social Norms for Tackling Bullying

René Veenstra

We live in an era of individualization. For that reason, it is not a surprise that self-help books often become bestsellers. Individualization has several advantages, including an increase in social mobility and emancipation. A clear drawback, however, is the undeniable shift in society from solidarity to individuality, thus from collective to individual responsibility. The result is that many Western societies can be characterized as social-Darwinist states, where those who do not succeed have only themselves to blame. Another disadvantage of individualization is that people find it more and more difficult to take the behavior of others into account. For that reason, we can label our era as a 'me-culture.' However, a 'we-culture' is needed to tackle bullying. Victims need help from others to overcome the power imbalance with bullies, and teachers should look at a classroom as a group rather than a set of individuals.

In the school context, children and adolescents are always in the proximity of others. Peers play an important role in that context, and in this chapter I discuss insights into peer interactions, relationships, and groups related to bullying. Relationships between victims and bullies do not occur in isolation, but exist in larger networks and in interplay with other relationships (Veenstra & Huitsing, 2020). What do we know

about the larger networks in which bullying occurs? How important are social norms? Who sets the norm in a classroom? Are the feelings of victims about themselves context-dependent? I will show that no man is an island and that it is important to think about how we can propagate a 'we-culture.'

Bullying and Social Networks

Researchers are collecting increasingly rich data on relationships in childhood and adolescence through network questions. This includes network data on bullying (Who do you bully?), victimization (By whom are you bullied?), and defending (By whom are you defended?) as well as other relationships, such as friendships (Who are your best friends?) and rejection (Who do you dislike?).

One of the first network studies on bullying and victimization (Veenstra et al., 2007) examined who bullies whom, from the perspective of both the bully and the victim. The results showed that bullies had an advantage over their victims by being more dominantly aggressive. Bullies specifically picked on targets who were rejected in the classroom, which might be part of the bully's strategy not to lose social approval.

The findings from the victim's perspective were highly complementary and revealed a power imbalance in favor of bullies over victims. A related study investigated the extent to which bullies and victims differ in how important status goals (e.g., that others respect and admire you) are to them and the extent to which they are perceived as popular (Sijtsema, Veenstra, Lindenberg, & Salmivalli, 2009). It was shown that bullies found status important and were often perceived as popular. In contrast, victims found status less important, were only reactively aggressive, and were low in perceived popularity. That study also showed that being popular is not the same as being liked, because bullies were just as rejected by their classmates as victims. Furthermore, bullies in secondary education found status goals more important than did bullies in elementary education, possibly indicating that striving for status increases in early adolescence.

Network studies can also examine who defends whom. It was found that boys and girls predominantly defended same-sex peers (Sainio, Veenstra, Huitsing, & Salmivalli, 2011). Defenders were especially liked by the victims they defended, and were perceived as popular not only among victims but also among other classmates. Despite victims' high need of defending, they were somewhat less likely to seek each other's support than bullies did (Huitsing & Veenstra, 2012). Victims might fear that siding with other weak and powerless victims is damaging for one's social position. It was also shown that bullies created an *ingroup* of bullies and an *outgroup* of victims (Huitsing & Veenstra, 2012). The embeddedness in a group of bullies might protect them from retaliation by victims.

The ways bullying and popularity may go together has also been examined (Van der Ploeg, Steglich, & Veenstra, 2020). It was found that bullying often leads to an increase in popularity among classmates, and that high-status individuals tend to bully. Further, it was demonstrated that, unlike low-status bullies, high-status bullies did not continue to bully the same victims but searched for new victims across the school year. Furthermore, children in the higher grades of elementary school considered bullies popular, whereas younger children sanctioned bullying through a withdrawal of status attributions.

Some other social network studies have examined whom bullies select as their friends and to what extent children and adolescents influence each other in their bullying behavior (Huitsing, Snijders, Van Duijn, & Veenstra, 2014; Rambaran, Dijkstra, & Veenstra, 2020; Sentse et al., 2014). These studies found that bullies select other bullies as friends. In addition, children and adolescents adopt their friends' bullying behavior and collectively target victims. Furthermore, victims in secondary education (but not in elementary education) select each other as friends – perhaps to seek protection against bullies – but those adolescents that befriend victims, unfortunately, run the risk of becoming victimized by the bully (Lodder et al., 2016; Sentse et al., 2013; Sijtsema et al., 2013).

In sum, social network research is the way to examine bullying as a group process. It requires data on relationships between children and adolescents through network questions. Network studies allow us to examine who bullies whom, who defends whom, or who perceives whom as popular. It also allows us to examine how this evolves over time, which can provide insights for interventions. Whether network processes play a role in the development of bullying, victimization, and defending has implications for the design of interventions (Veenstra & Huitsing, 2020).

Bullying and Social Norms

How important are social norms? Social norms emerge from consensus about what is typical or appropriate in a given context. In addition, they shape, constrain, maintain, and redirect behavior at the individual level. As norms entail expectations about behaviors that align with the context, they have an important socializing function by prescribing what is typical or appropriate (Veenstra, Dijkstra, & Kreager, 2018). Conforming to a norm (behaving according to socially acceptable standards) results in positive external benefits and rewards, for instance, approval, social inclusion, status, honor, and respect, but also internal rewards, particularly when norms are internalized, such as feeling good about oneself. By contrast, deviation from the norm entails the risk of facing negative social consequences, such as rejection, victimization, ridicule, harassment, and ostracism as well as negative internal sanctions, such as feeling guilty or bad about oneself (Veenstra et al., 2018).

A key distinction can be made between prescriptive and descriptive norms. Prescriptive norms reflect what people approve ('what ought to be done') and reflect perceived moral rules of the group (also known as 'injunctive norms'). Descriptive norms cover what children or adolescents actually do ('what is done') and represent the kind of behavior that is most prevalent in a given context. Prescriptive and descriptive norms are typically defined by examining the mean level of attitudes

or behaviors, respectively, reflecting what is considered appropriate or typical in a context.

The focus on how descriptive norms strengthen or mitigate the effects of individual behavior on acceptance and rejection has been prominent. These studies typically build on the person-group dissimilarity model (Wright, Giammarino, & Parad, 1986). The main point of this model is that what is considered as "dissimilar" varies across groups because of different group norms. The very same behavior pattern can be socially approved and result in social acceptance in one group but can be socially disapproved and result in social rejection, social exclusion, and victimization in another group.

The first test of this model focused on a group of children with emotional difficulties at a summer school camp, and combined peer nominations with adult assessments of the children's behavior. Specifically, the researchers were interested in to what extent the relations of aggression (e.g., Who hits and pushes other kids around?), prosocial behavior (e.g., Who helps other people?), and withdrawal (e.g., Who plays by himself most of the time) with peer acceptance (seen as a good friend by others) depended on the average level of aggression in the particular context. Prosocial children were more accepted in low-aggressive than in high-aggressive groups (Wright et al., 1986). Related studies showed that aggressive children were more rejected in low-aggressive classrooms and more accepted in high-aggressive classrooms (Stormshak et al. 1999) and that bullies were more accepted and victims more rejected in high-bullying classrooms (Sentse et al. 2007). Thus, prosocial (or defending) behavior increases the chances of peer acceptance and reduces the chances of peer rejection in classrooms with a low-aggressive norm, whereas this holds for aggressive (or bullying) behavior in classrooms with an aggression norm. As such, the power of norms lies in its ability to contribute to the fundamental need to belong by steering a strong tendency to conform.

Popularity Norms

Who are the norm-setters? It is likely that the behavior of popular peers is more important for imitation than the average behavior of peers (Henry et al., 2000). The behavior of popular children and adolescents is very noticeable and might be used as a guideline to increase one's own chances of becoming popular (Laninga-Wijnen, 2020). It was shown that particularly bullying by popular adolescents rather than the bullying behavior of all peers mitigated the negative effect of bullying on acceptance and rejection, showing that popular adolescents set the norm in the class (Dijkstra, Lindenberg, & Veenstra, 2008). Other research showed that popularity was related to defending, particularly when the popularity norm for bullying was negative in classrooms (Peets et al., 2015). This suggests that popular students not only set the norm, but also vary their behavior depending on the context and the rewards given by peers. Figure 1 depicts why social norms may play a role in explaining the classroom level of bullying and defending. At the classroom level, the link between bullying and popularity is associated with less defending of victims. The underlying mechanism might be that the popularity norm leads to conformity to the pro-bullying norm (e.g., out of fear of becoming victims themselves). The increase in conformity creates positive external benefits, such as social approval and social inclusion. These positive external benefits result in social outcomes that are characterized by less defending.
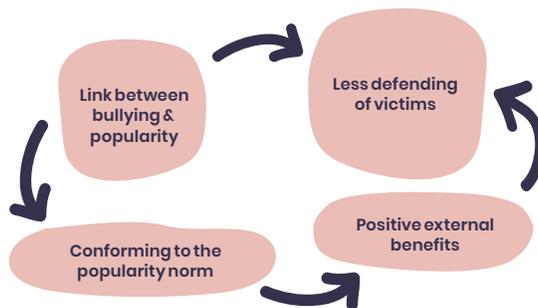

Figure 1.

Why the popularity norm plays a role explaining the classroom level of defending

In line with this, it was found that when adolescents perceived pro-bullying norms, bullying behaviors were more likely to be used as a friendship selection criterion and bullies were more likely to select each other as friends (Shin, 2020). In addition, as adolescents perceived pro-bullying norms, friendship influence on bullying and victimization was magnified. Anticipating positive consequences of bullying, bullies seem to engage in bullying even more frequently and also targeted the victims' friends. Accordingly, the experiences of victims were more severe (Shin, 2020).

Norm conformity can be an efficient guide of individual behavior in case of uncertainty and ambiguity. However, norm conformity can also be caused by pluralistic ignorance, where individuals privately reject a norm, but incorrectly assume that most others accept it, and therefore go along with it in public (Miller & McFarland, 1991). Figure 2 depicts that the underlying mechanism for the link between popularity norms for bullying and less defending can also be explained by pluralistic ignorance. It is likely that, privately, most children and adolescents reject bullying, but that they wrongly assume that most accept the norm and, because they have a need for social approval, adhere to this incorrect conviction. In sum, they suppress their dissent and copy the behavior of popular classmates, creating a self-reinforcing mistaken belief.
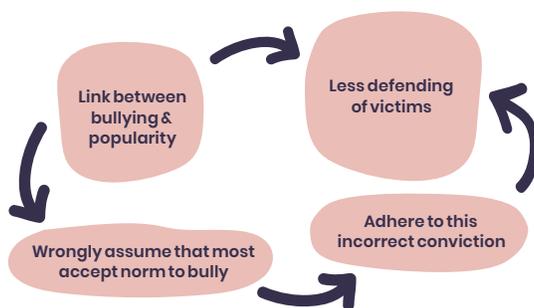

Figure 2.
Pluralistic ignorance as an alternative explanation for the link between the popularity norm and the classroom level of defending

The ideal classroom is likely to be a classroom in which popularity is positively linked to prosociality, which might result in more prosocial behavior and less aggression (or bullying). How easy is it to instill such a prosocial popularity norm? A recent study shows that in many classrooms the aggressive popularity norm prevails, because it is the only norm, in the case of aggressive classrooms, or because it wins from the prosocial popularity norm, in the case of classrooms with multiple norms (Laninga-Wijnen et al., 2019). What does it mean when a classroom contains multiple norms?

Perhaps there are sex-specific class norms. One study found that rejected children were more likely to become victims of bullying in classrooms where girls advocated pro-bullying norms (Isaacs, Voeten, & Salmivalli, 2013). Another study also found that especially girls set the tone in a classroom. Girls played a central role in shaping their classmates' normative beliefs about aggression and influenced the aggressive behavior of boys as well as girls (Busching & Krahé, 2015).

Alternatively, the occurrence of multiple norms might result from some children and adolescents combining prosocial and antisocial behavior (Hawley, 2003). Such bi-strategic students have the highest need for recognition and the highest level of influence. They employ both prosocial strategies (getting along with the group through influencing others, who feel a need to do something in return) and antisocial strategies (getting ahead of the group through bullying others to do what they want). They are often viewed as popular. Because only a few classmates set the tone, it is possible that the same students set the norm for prosocial and antisocial behavior (Laninga-Wijnen et al., 2020a). If so, the label multiple norms is a misnomer and should be replaced by bi-strategic norm.

Only when the aggressive popularity norm is absent does the prosocial popularity norm influence friendship processes, including the formation of new friendships and the continuation of existing friendships based on prosocial behavior (Laninga-Wijnen et al., 2020b).

In such classrooms, adolescents conform to the prosocial norm. This conformity creates positive external benefits, which result in social outcomes that are characterized by more prosocial and less aggressive behavior. This demonstrates that prosocial popularity norms *can* buffer against aggressive processes and encourage prosocial friendship processes – but *only* if aggressive popularity norms are absent. Educational interventions aimed at promoting prosocial behavior can foster a context in which aggressive and victimized students are less rejected (Palacios et al., 2019).

The finding that aggressive popularity norms overrule prosocial popularity norms is in line with prior work on the relative impacts of aggression and prosocial behavior. Aggression is usually considered to be more visible and impactful than prosocial behavior, particularly in adolescence (Laninga-Wijnen, 2020b). Aggression may not only gain more attention due to heightened fear, but may also create admiration and may be easier to imitate. Therefore, the aggressive side of popular peers receives more attention than their prosocial side. As a result, adolescents may use popular peers' aggressive norms rather than their prosocial norms to guide their social and behavioral decisions.

The Healthy Context Paradox
Even if teachers manage to instill a prosocial popularity norm, they have to be aware that some students may nevertheless have a hard time in this well-functioning, friendly classroom. The group of students that still feels victimized or rejected in such a context might be small, but can easily consist of about one student per class (Kaufman, Kretschmer, Huitsing, & Veenstra, 2018). Some students may have more difficulty creating or sustaining positive relationships with peers. They may be in such a disadvantageous position that peers do not want to be associated with them, because siding with victims might decrease a child's own status (Juvonen & Galván, 2008) or evoke retaliation by bullies (Huitsing et al., 2014). Therefore, students with a very low social

standing may have additional challenges to overcome and an anti-bullying program may be counterproductive for them (Kaufman et al., 2018). After schools had worked for two years with an anti-bullying program, these remaining victims were worse off and had higher levels of depressive symptoms and lower levels of self-esteem than before (Huitsing et al., 2019). Paradoxically, the following applies: the safer the school, the worse the position of the remaining victims. How is that possible?

The remaining victims might feel extra sad because they compare their own situation with that of the students who are no longer victimized. For victims through bullying, the reference group of relevant others consists of co-victims. When co-victims are no longer bullied and are, therefore, in a better situation, an upward comparison takes place. The remaining victims, therefore, assess their own situation as extra negative. Moreover, they will attribute the cause of the bullying to themselves ("It must be me") instead of to the bullies ("It could be them") when the victimization has stopped for others but not for them. The less classmates are bullied, the more victims blame themselves for bullying (Schacter & Juvonen, 2015), and these internal attributions are linked to higher levels of internalizing problems (Huitsing et al., 2019).

Conclusion and Discussion

Research has shown that bullying is a group phenomenon and happens in a context, and that it is, therefore, unprofitable to focus on the individual level to troubleshoot. Research on social networks and social norms provides insight into how bullying works. Nowadays, school-wide anti-bullying interventions aim to change social norms such that bullies are less supported by bystanders and that their behavior is less rewarded among peers (Huitsing et al., 2020; Kärnä et al., 2011). These interventions may lead to a prosocial popularity norm. Such a norm might be the ideal for most students. However, teachers have to realize that even in an ideal classroom a few students might

be victimized or rejected. For that reason, extra attention is needed for students who are dissimilar to the group, including students who are not helped by an anti-bullying intervention.

Social network information can also be used to formulate advice for teachers (Kaufman, Huitsing, Bloemberg, & Veenstra, 2020). Advice on who is connected to whom (in terms of friendships, defending, bullying or rejection) will provide teachers with suggestions on where and how to intervene. Information on how often students are nominated for bullying, victimization, or defending potentially fosters the understanding of group processes in bullying. It can also help in detecting students with a marginalized network position and identifying students who might function as role models because they are considered highly popular or prosocial leaders (Andrews, 2020). Furthermore, it is important that teachers realize that bullies are often popular and that, if that is the case, other students are less willing to defend victims, because of norm conformity or pluralistic ignorance.

The role of the teacher is important in combating bullying (Veenstra, Lindenberg, Huitsing, Sainio, & Salmivalli, 2014), but they have to be helped by the children and adolescents themselves. It is difficult for teachers to detect bullying, because they are often absent from the hot spots (e.g., online, in the corridors, or on the schoolyard). So, students have to solve bullying incidents as a group or inform the teacher. Teachers should take it seriously when students tell about bullying and they should instill a 'we-culture' in the classroom, because victims need help from others to overcome the power imbalance with bullies. Students should also realize that it is hard for victims to find support, particularly in a context where there are no co-victims. Thus, all students can play a role in tackling bullying. As Albert Einstein said: "The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it."

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My story – Annie Hansson

Friends´ Children and Youth Group

In 5th grade, I experienced something I never want to go through again. I was in a new class. In the beginning, it felt so good. I thought that all the new people would be my friends for the rest of our lives. But it did not turn out the way I had thought. This was when the exclusion and prejudice started. It was never about me being completely alone. I did have my "diamond friends", my close friends who always supported me and never left me.

But every day I got to hear about rumors that had been spread about me behind my back. In the beginning, it did not get to me. I think I have always been strong. Something inside me is telling me this is important. But then the comments about me became part of my everyday life. It was about my looks. It started with talk about how annoying, weird, and worthless I was. Never would anyone want to hang out with me. People saw me as a mix of shy and "bitchy", someone who was not down to earth. But after a while, when everyone in class got more acquainted with one another, it turned into jealousy. They realized that what they thought was not accurate. And instead, they began to complain about other things. That it is disgusting to be so kind. Which is not true at all, it is only good to care about others!

Time passed and it felt like even though I had my friends, the negativities took over. I lived in some kind of bubble. It was me and another girl in class who also is extremely nice, the two of us, every day got to hear something about how we were just wrong. And even though we never knew who had said what, it always struck us. Somewhere inside, it got stuck. Whether I wanted it or not. Some days I thought that I needed to be more unpleasant to be more appreciated. Which is really crazy, that I even had those thoughts! I talked to my teachers a few times, but it felt like they answered but did not listen. And somewhere I knew, that even if I tell the teachers probably nothing will be different. Instead, I took matters into my own hands.

One day, I stood up in front of the class and told everything. I explained, I cried, I did my best, and most important of all I told how disappointed I was. Today I do not regret that I, as a 12-year-old, stood there and cried.

But maybe I regret that I did not let the school take action, it is their responsibility to show when things have gone too far. I think it was a wake-up call for the teachers, seeing me standing there. After my talk in front of the class, everyone was beginning to think about it and the atmosphere in class became the best.

As a teacher at a school, I think many can see who is feeling great and who is feeling not so well. However, I think they react in the wrong way. The school has always worked in the way that yelling at the kids and put them in their place, is the best way. But a child who is bullying someone is always feeling bad. Therefore, that child doesn't need even more bad things.

Instead, one can sit down and talk about the matter in a calm and sensible way. Talk through other ways to act or other things to say. Also, let the student talk to a counselor or someone similar to really be able

to talk. One should definitely make the student say sorry, but I think it is important to first get the child to understand that it was wrong, then the apology becomes so much more believable and the student will think more about these things in the future.

I also believe it is important to give the students time. One can see that if looking at investigations that are being done at my school. Do they think that an ordinary little person can change their behavior in a week? I think everybody understands that it will not work. What I had wished for that when I was in that tough situation: that the teachers did not only listen, but also took action. That there would have been teachers who were not there only for the salary, but also because they care about how children are doing.

Chapter 5

Analysis of Mobile Bully-Victim behaviour of students using both Facebook and Twitter: The case of South African Students

Michael Kyobe and Zizipho C. Ndyave

Michael Kyobe

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Michael Kyobe holds a PhD from the University of Free State (SA) and an MBA from the University of Durham, UK. He is a rated researcher by the South African National Research foundation and his research interests include Mobile bullying and cyber-security. He is the Principal Investigator for a grant project on mobile bullying in schools in South Africa, funded by the South African National Research Foundation. He coordinates an initiative that will promote cooperation between the International Bullying Prevention Association and researchers engaged in bullying prevention and intervention in Africa.

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Zizipho C. Ndyave holds a Master degree from the University of Cape Town, a Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) in Information Systems from University of Fort Hare and a BCom degree in Information Systems. Her research focuses on the behaviours of mobile bully-victims on social media. She serves as a Research Assistant on the Mobile bullying project.

Introduction from Friends' experts

Henrik Karlsson

Messages about youth and internet are often about problems. The internet is, of course, an arena where there are both up and downsides, in the same way as society in general. Most young people are aware of risks and have well-developed strategies for dealing with various situations online. An excessive focus on the risks can mean that the responsibility is placed on the one being exposed to violations instead of the perpetrator.

There are few adults who can convey knowledge about life on the internet, including risks and safety, that young people do not already know about. Adults can however contribute to the youths' protection by continuously share their experience of how to build social relationships and to be the one the young person turn to when something unpleasant happens or when the strategies are not enough. By showing a genuine interest, listen and take the youths' online reality seriously trust can be built between the youth and the adult.

When we approach the subject of the online life of youth it is important to consider that most youth do not have a negative view of their own online behaviour. For most, the overall view of the internet is positive. Despite that, we cannot turn a blind eye to the bad situations that children and youth have experienced. Many have normalised or accepted a certain degree violations and negative behaviours.

This chapter by researchers Michael Kyobe and Zizipho C. Ndyave focuses on bullying via mobile phone and on people who both bully others and are bullied themselves (bully/victim). It can be difficult to

identify these individuals as they alternate between different positions and behaviors. Relationship-building is dynamic and ongoing, and it is important not to get caught up in the roles that children and young people take in a bullying situation. However, we see that the consequences for those who both bully others and are bullied themselves are serious, with clear links to both suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts (Zych and Farrington 2017).

The chapter mainly analyzes the overlap between Twitter and Facebook, which are the two most common social media platforms for young people in South Africa. The text argues that we need to understand how concrete behaviors on the different social platforms differ. The increased understanding is necessary to design ways to deal with the various challenges that exist around cyberbullying. There are important insights to learn from in this chapter, for example about how different factors such as anonymity, collective behavior and informal power on the different social platforms can affect different forms of behavior by bully/victims.

The results of the study give us a couple of concrete suggestions on how we could break down the concrete behaviors. This can be used in all activities with children and young people and especially in school. All adults who have children and young people in their vicinity need to learn more about social life and relationship building on social platforms and what it means for children and young people. By understanding, listening and taking young people's online life seriously, both for the good and the bad, every adult can make a difference by being the one to turn to when the need for support arise.

Analysis of Mobile Bully-Victim behaviour of students using both Facebook and Twitter: The case of South African Students

Michael Kyobe and Zizipho C. Ndyave

I. Introduction

With the increase of digital social networks and electronic tools, online antisocial behaviours have become prevalent world-wide and specifically in schools (Wilson, Gosling & Graham, 2012; Fitzgerald, 2012; Ophir, Astern & Schwarz, 2019; Kyobe, Oosterwyk & Kabiawu, 2016). Cyberbullying studies tend to examine antisocial behaviour on one social network platform and the findings are then generalised over other platforms and applications. However, different platforms and technologies may have distinctive effect on bullying (Kyobe, Oosterwyk & Kabiawu, 2016; Pyżalski, 2011; Wolak et al., 2007). This makes generalisation of findings and development of interventions based on such generalisation problematic. Bullies often operate on multi-social networks and may use similar or different functions. Therefore understanding the connection between bullying behaviour and the overlap between social media platforms is important if we are to find appropriate solutions to cyberbullying challenges.

This chapter analyses the connection between mobile bully-victim behaviour and the overlap between Twitter and Facebook in South Af-

rica high schools. Mobile bullying is a form of cyberbullying committed using mobile technology and bully-victims are those that change between the role of being a bully and a victim. We focus specifically on Bully-victims because they are difficult to identify, face high risks and have been associated with suicidal tendencies (Rodkin, 2012; Ball, et al., 2008). Understanding their interaction and characteristics would contribute a lot to finding appropriate interventions for the challenges they present. This chapter reviews literature on cyberbullying and how it may be committed on Facebook and Twitter. It also examines how factors like anonymity, collective behaviour, implicit power, use of emoji, age and gender influence mobile bully-victim behaviour on Twitter and Facebook.

A conceptual model was developed to guide the study and hypotheses were made to test this model. We conclude with a discussion of the findings from a survey of high school adolescents using both Facebook and Twitter.

II. Literature review
A: Mobile bullying

Kyobe, Oosterwyk and Kabiawu (2016) describe mobile bullying as that form of cyberbullying conducted using a mobile phone through communication channels such as text messages, emails, Instant messaging and chat rooms. Mobile bullying shares some similar characteristics to traditional bullying. Key aspects of mobile bullying are: it is indirect and may be anonymous; it involves use of technology (mobile phone); the perpetrator may/may not witness victims' reaction; power can be demonstrated on mobile phone application features; may be caused by aggression or social integration; and the affected audience is much broader compared to the audience in traditional bullying. The present study focuses on one type of mobile bullying i.e., mobile bully-victims. A bully-victims is a person who changes between the role of being a bully and a victim. As indicated above,

they are difficult to identify and have been associated with suicidal tendencies (Rodkin, 2012; Ball, et al., 2008). In a country like South Africa, with a high level of crime among the youth, it is imperative to examine this category of bullies in order to find appropriate interventions.

B: Cyber-bullying on Facebook and Twitter

While Facebook, Twitter and Instagram have been identified as the worst platforms facilitating bullying (Ball et al., 2008; Suzanne, 2015; Fearn, 2017), the present study will not include Instagram since it is not widely used by students in South Africa compare with other social media. Facebook has been identified as one of the platforms where young people are most bullied when compared with other social media platforms. One of the reasons could be that one can post photographs and videos and links with no character limits (Suzanne, 2015). However, some other writers consider Twitter to be the worst (Suzanne, 2015; Fearn, 2017). Suzanne (2015) argues that Twitter can be hugely compromised by large groups sending torrents of abuse virally which can overwhelm the victim. The public aspect is also a concern since Twitter is used as news feed for many. Hate speech and bullying have also been identified as major problems for Twitter (Amnesty, 2018). Tian (2016) observed earlier that cyber aggression on Twitter is extensive and often extremely offensive, and could have serious consequences for the victims. Garcia, Mavrodiev, Casati and Schweitzer (2017) report that the more negative a Twitter cyberbullying message exhibits, the more often it will be retweeted.

Previous studies have identified various factors influencing cyber-bullying on social media (Kyobe et al., 2016). In particular, we would like to understand how factors most commonly identified in cyberbullying research (Sterner & Felmlee, 2017) and whose effect is sometimes debatable (Ndyave & Kyobe, 2017; Balakrishnan, Khan, Fernandez & Arabnia, 2019), interact on the two social media platforms to influence mobile bully-victim behaviour. These factors are: anonymity, collective

behaviour, implicit power, frequency of use, and use of emoji and social media features. In addition, due to inconsistent findings about the effect of age and gender on cyberbullying, we would like to know if these personal characteristics moderate the relationship between the predictors and mobile bully-victim behaviour (MBVB).

C: Anonymity

Anonymous cyberbullies have been identified as the most of all bullies. Anonymity is found to alter adolescent coping strategies and increase their distress. Facebook enforces a real-name policy when creating accounts. While this increases user accountability and content quality, it may also violate the privacy of users by letting services tie user interests to their names (Wilson, Gosling & Graham, 2012; Rodkin, 2012). Twitter, on the other hand, doesn't require users to provide their real names. Instead they can create unique pseudonyms which enhances anonymity. One can still create anonymous accounts in addition to the one with real names such that other users may not see the connection between the two accounts (Sterner & Felmlee, 2017). Balakrishnan et al. (2019) caution however, that the private Twitter account could still reveal who you are if one associates the metadata with available information. We hypothesise that:

H1: Anonymity enhances victimisation of bully-victims more on Facebook than on Twitter.

D: Collective behaviour

Collective behaviour are activities by a group of individuals acting with or being influenced by others. This may be relatively spontaneous or planned. A group can be created on Facebook and rules set for how the group members should interact. Some encourage meaningful conversations but others not. Some argue that Facebook groups have been acting as gathering places for racist and offensive activities. O'driscoll (2018). Teens can create hate groups on Facebook to bully

others as was the case for Kenneth Weishuhn (Amnesty International, 2018). In some cases, the group privacy settings are found wanting and friend may share their friend's post while unknowingly exposing them to bullies. Tian (2016) found that information shared by users on Twitter can be predictive of the location of individuals outside Twitter. He argues that individuals are not in full control of their online privacy and that sharing personal data with a social networking site is a decision that is collectively mediated by the decisions of others. Sterner and Felmlee (2017) identify the dangers of collective behaviours through retweets. They argue that pages such as @relatable, @girlposts, @tweetlikeagirl, which normally share posting that gain large numbers of retweets, create a dangerous mindset for young people transitioning from teen to adult. Balakrishnan et al. (2019) also argue that features such as retweet button increase the magnitude of dangers of collective behaviour. We predict that:

H2. Collective behaviour of bully-victims enhances victimisation more on Twitter than on Facebook

E: Power
On Facebook, implicit power is mostly obtained by adolescents with high social status and other attractive skills (Kwan & Skoric, 2013; Wilson et al., 2012). Bullying behaviour can manifest when these adolescents with many resources become arrogant and choose not to share with other Facebook friends (Kwan & Skoric, 2013). Marginalised adolescents may also use power to become relevant to their peers (Wilson et al., 2012). They tend to expose their peers' secrets for recognition or trend as people that have relevant information against their peers (Ophir, Astern & Schwarz, 2019).

Gartia et al. (2017) examined popularity, reputation, and social influence on Twitter using large-scale digital traces from 2009 and 2016. They integrated their measurements of popularity, reputation, and social influence to evaluate what keeps users active, what makes

them more popular, and what determines their influence. They found a range of values in which the risk of a user becoming inactive grows with popularity and reputation. They conclude that social influence on Twitter is mainly related to popularity rather than reputation. We predict that:

H3. The influence of Implicit power on bully-victim behaviour will mainly result from social status (Control) on Facebook and (popularity) on Twitter.

F: Usage Frequency

While researchers have not yet established which mobile social network contributes to mobile bullying the most, it is alleged that young people are twice as likely to suffer cyber bullying on Facebook than on Twitter (Kwan & Skoric, 2013; Ndyave & Kyobe, 2017). Excessive usage of Facebook was found to be positively associated to bullying (Kwan & Skoric, 2013). However, Twitter has also been accused of not addressing harassment on its site for a long time (Garcia et al., 2017). Harn (2017) argues that Twitter is the worst of the social media platforms, just because of the quickened and masked flow of abuse that takes place on the media. Statistically, it has been reported that 92% of all activity and engagement with tweets happens within the first hour of the post being made which makes the impact of abuse almost instant to the victim (Kapko, 2016). We predict that:

H4: Excessive use of Facebook and Twitter will be positively associated to mobile bully-victim behaviour.

G: Use of Emojis and Emoticons

Hinduja (2018) reports that use of specific emoji communicate certain sentiments that may be viewed as hostile, menacing, or foreboding. He lists several hateful contents embedded in emojis targeting African-American women. While sending messages with emoji is quick and fun, emojis have secret meanings, are open to many different interpretations and have inspired lawsuits and criminal charges (Lee, 2019). There is also concern that the emoticons on Facebook fail to force

users to think through a written comment thereby increasing chances of posting negative feelings towards others (Guarnieri, 2015). We therefore predict that:

H5. The effect of using Emojis and Emoticons on bully-victim behaviour will be stronger on Facebook than on Twitter.

H: Gender and Age

Sociological studies reveal gender differences in the way people react to their social environment. The Life-course theory recognizes the impact of historical changes and diversity in life journeys (Hutchison, 2011). It is claimed that crime patterns vary across the course of an individual's life. Women are however believed to be affected more than men in their life journeys due to stigmatization and are socialized and controlled differently by institutions such as family and schools (Aoyama, Saxon & Fearon, 2011; Sampson & Groves, 1989).

It appears that cyberbullying is more prevalent among girls than boys. It is claimed that Internet provides girls with covert ways of expressing their emotions (Edmondson & Zeman, 2009). Fearn (2017) also reports that in a study that analysed 228,000 tweets sent to 778 women politicians and journalists in the UK and USA in 2017, 1.1 million abusive tweets were sent to the women across the year and that the main target was women of colour than white women.

Research findings on age and involvement in cyberbullying have been inconsistent across existing studies. Some researchers found that cyberbullying increases with age (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010) while others found no age influence on cyberbullying (Smith et al., 2008). Hajimia (2014) found age mediating gender differences. Garcia et al., (2018) and Pellegrini and Long (2002) also confirm that prevalence rates and predictors of bullying can vary as a function of age. We predict that:

H6: Age and Gender moderate mobile bullying behaviour.

The conceptual model below represents the interaction of some of the common factors considered to influence bully-victim behaviour

on Facebook and Twitter. It will be used to guide the empirical research and testing of the Hypotheses. We also determine if personal characteristics like gender and age moderate or mediate the effect of these factors on mobile bully-victim behaviour.
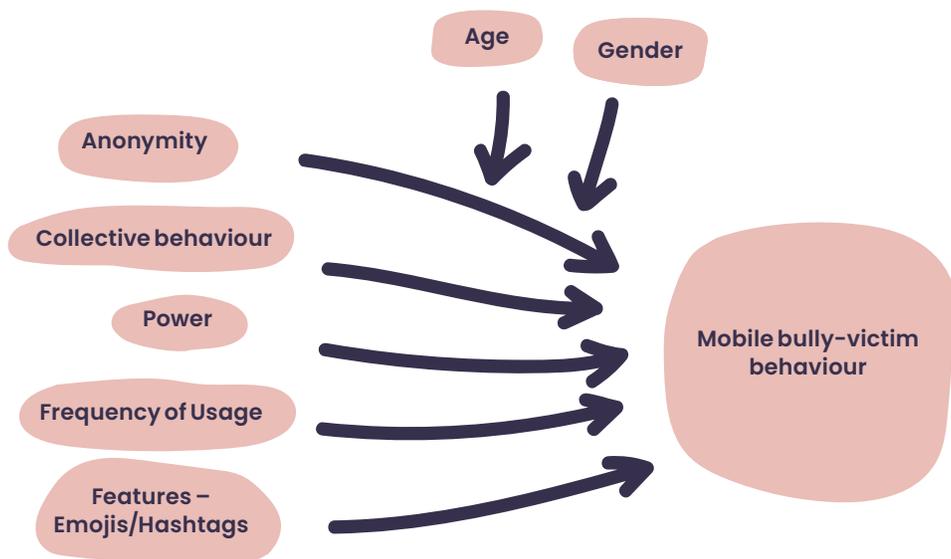
Figure 1:

Factors influencing Mobile bully-victim behaviour

Conceptual Model and Propositions
III. Method

Data was collected using a questionnaire. The targeted population were learners from various high schools ranging from grade 10 to grade 12 who have one or more active Facebook and Twitter accounts. Also, the learners were from different cultural backgrounds. We targeted learners from public schools in two provinces, i.e., the Western Cape and Gauteng. Previous research shows that there are more school violence cases occurring in these communities (Kyobe et al., 2016; Oyewusi & Orolade, 2014).

Data collection

Data was collected from the Western Cape and Gauteng public high schools. The probability sampling technique (Hajimia, 2014) was used and the bully-victims were identified by those who indicated that they were both bullies and victims. 457 learners responded to the questionnaire of which 319 were mobile bully-victims and 66 of these respondents had accounts on, or were members of both Facebook and Twitter.

Construct validity tests were done to test whether variables for the same construct are drawn from the same pool and that the construct and concepts being studied have been correctly identified (Hajimia, 2014). To check for reliability and validity of the instrument, a Cronbach alpha test was conducted and all the constructs were above the threshold of Alpha = 0.70, Hair et al. (2006). For instance (Anonymity 0.85; Collective behaviour 0.84; Power 0.63; Frequency of usage 0.84; Features, Emojis, 0.90; Mobile bully-victim, 0.89. Spearman rank order correlation test was also run to see the correlation between the variables that measured each construct. The correlation coefficients were all significant at 0.34 and above. This confirmed the associated between the variables and where possible the variables were averaged to obtain a representative score for the construct.

IV. Findings and analysis
Mobile bully-victim and Anonymity

Mobile bully-victims were identified by those who scored three and above on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Three questions measured anonymity on Facebook and Twitter. Female bully-victims tend to be more anonymous on Facebook than male bully-victims and use someone else's account on Facebook more than they use a different name. We examined if anonymity influenced victimisation on both Facebook and Twitter for the same user. Table 1 suggests anonymity will enhance victimisation of bully-victims more

when they are on Facebook than on Twitter. Hypothesis 1 is therefore supported. The T-test results revealed significant differences between the means of *anonymous users* (Group 2) and *non-anonymous users* (Group 1) on Facebook and for some behaviours on Twitter. Anonymous mobile bully-victims on Facebook are victimised more than the non-anonymous. This is surprising as one would have expected the opposite. However, it is possible today to determine the real identity of the anonymous by searching the personal information on the user's timeline using search engines. This can then be verified by adding the personal details to the friends list. If the anonymous accepts the invitation, his/her identify can be known. Table 1 shows that victimisation on Twitter does not differ by anonymity for the first two behaviours (i.e., Receive bad messages/comments repeatedly; People use social media to start/spread rumour that damage my reputation).

Mobile bully-victim and Collective Behaviour

The results in the Table 2 indicate that collective behaviour enhances victimisation more on Facebook than on Twitter. T-test results of those engaged in collective activities and those not, indicates significant differences in mean scores. The mean scores are however higher on Facebook than on Twitter. Hypothesis 2 (H2) is therefore not supported. Collective behaviour appears to enhance victimisation more on Facebook than on Twitter.

On Facebook, students mainly victimise others by "commenting on a public social media page when people are made fun of" (Mean = 4.70, Standard deviation (SD) = 0.84). This was rated highly, followed by "If i see someone being made fun of on social media post, i also make fun of them" (Mean = 4.48, SD = 0.96) and lastly, "When a post about someone i know is being shared, i share it too" (Mean = 3.98, SD= 0.89). However, when the bully-victims move to Twitter, it appears "sharing of the sent post" becomes the most common form of victimisation, followed by "If i see someone being made fun of on a post, i also make fun of them" (Mean = 3.85, SD = 1.05), and "i always feel like i should com-

ment on a public page where people are made fun of" (Mean = 3.60, SD = 0.73). When we analyse the features/buttons used, those engaged in collective activities on Facebook use Tag a friend button (Mean = 4.24, SD = 0.76), Video call (Mean = 4.00, SD = 1.22), Embedded post (Mean = 3.52, SD = 0.98) and Retweet (Mean = 3.17, SD = 1.32). They however have to use more features/functions to sustain their collective behaviours while on Twitter, e.g. Embedded Post (Mean = 4.65, SD = 0.91), Shared button (Mean = 3.77, SD = 1.12), Comment button (Mean = 3.77, SD = 1.31), Tag friend button (Mean = 3.85, SD = 0.88), Message (Mean = 3.74, SD = 0.75) and Retweet (Mean = 4.36, SD = 0.96).

We can therefore conclude that a person engaged in collective activities would continue to behave the same way as they move from one Facebook to Twitter. The only difference is that this person would employ more features or functions on Twitter than on Facebook.

Mobile bully-victim and Power

We also determined the influence of implicit power on mobile bully-victim behaviour. Power was measured by the extent to which bully-victim control others; the extent to which they can deal with bullies themselves; and popularity. The regression analysis revealed the following significant relationships: On Facebook: "I control who I want to be on my social media pages" (-0.23, p=0.01), "I always report to the owner of social media when I see someone being bullied" (0.35, p=0.02), "I know how to deal with someone who makes fun of me on social media" (0.90, p=0.00), "Popularity – I have people that follow me because I share good information on social media" (0.71, p=0.00). On Twitter "I always report to the owner of social media when I see someone bullied" (0.25, p=0.00), "Popularity –I have many friends on social media" (0.55, p=0.00). These findings confirm that implicit power gained via control or popularity on Facebook and Twitter will influence bully-victim behaviour. This is consistent with earlier findings by (Rodkin, 2012) The influence of control on Facebook is however negative (-0.23), indicating that as students control who they want to be on their social

media pages, the less likely they become mobile bully-victims. Implicit power obtained via control by "knowing how to deal with someone who makes fun of me on Facebook" had the highest influence of all variables that measured control (0.90, p=0.00), while "I have people that follow me because I share good information on social media" had the highest influence of all the variables that measured popularity on Twitter (0.55, p=0.00). We can therefore conclude that the influence of implicit power on bully-victim behaviour will mainly be as a result of social status (through control) on Facebook and by (popularity) on Twitter. Hypothesis 3 (H3) is supported.

Mobile Bully-victim and Usage of applications
Two variables were used to measure Facebook usage on a 5-point Likert scale of (1 = strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Bully-victims that scored 3 and above were considered to use Facebook more than others. We found that mobile bully-victims sometimes used Facebook to attack people they do not like more than they share status updates of people they do not like in order to make fun of them. A Spearman correlation analysis confirms existence of a significant relationship between mobile bully-victim and platform usage at 0.58. T-test results revealed a significant difference in means between frequent users and Non-frequent Facebook users on both Facebook (t=8.460 p=0.000) and Twitter (t=6.440, p=0.000). Hypothesis 4 (H4) is supported. Frequent users of social media are more likely to be mobile bully-victims regardless of the platform they use.

Use of Emojis & Features
In hypothesis 5 (H5), we predicted that usage of emojis and emoticons enhance (positively) bully-victim behaviour more on Facebook than on Twitter. 14 variables were used to measure usage of the emojis and certain features on the two platforms.
The Haha emoji is usually used to express positive feelings like grati-

tude and excitement. Mobile bully-victims who use the *Haha*, on Facebook, are 16 years old on average and males who spend on average 5 hours daily on Social media. They gratify victimisation of others "I like threatening others on social media" (Mean 3.48, SD = 0.67), "receive bad messages/ comments repeatedly' (Mean = 4.44, SD = 0.96), "have been deliberately removed from a social media group" (Mean = 4.33, SD = 1.06), and "People have used social media to start or spread rumours to damage other people's reputation" (Mean = 4.39, SD = 1.07). However, they also at times "share status updates of people they do not like to make fun of on social media" (Mean = 4.12, SD = 1.46), and "can start or spread rumours to damage someone else's reputation" (mean = 4.06, SD = 1,52). They use features like Tag friend button and Video Call. This suggests therefore that while the Haha emoji can be used by bully-victims to express positive feelings or intent, it can also be used to mock others (e.g., after making fun of them).

The Haha emoji on Twitter is also used mainly by 16-year-old Male, who draw satisfaction from victimising others ("I like threatening others on SM" (mean = 3.79, SD = 1.00), just like on Facebook. On Twitter, they use embedded post (mean = 4.46, SD = 1.17), retweet (mean = 4.08), shared button (Mean 3.67), comment Button (mean = 3.67) and messages (mean = 3.78). Like on Facebook, they have been deliberately removed from a social media group, have received bad messages/ comments repeatedly, but have also used social media to start or spread rumours to damage someone else's reputation and have deliberately removed someone from a social media group.

Users of the Haha emoji on both platforms are victimised but they also bully others. Therefore, there seems to be no change in behaviour of these users across the two platforms. However, the responses are more affirmative for Facebook than Twitter activities. Since the frequency of use is the same (about 5 hours of usage daily), one can say the activities on Facebook are more intense than on twitter.
The Love/Like emoji, usually represented as thumbs up emoji, is a sym-

bol of approval, liking something and general contentment. It can however be used sarcastically to mean something isn't good. In the present study, we found that the Love emoji is mostly used on a post or image that is shocking to others on Facebook. One interesting finding is that the Like emoji is mostly used by the bystanders on Facebook and Twitter. Unlike in traditional bullying where the bystanders just watch their peer being victimised, mobile bystanders would react with a like emoji, to indicate compassionate depending on the context of the post.

The Anger emoji is also used widely to express strong disapproval or dislike for something. It may convey varying degrees of anger and may represent someone acting tough or being mean. In the present study, the Anger emoji was used just like the Like emoji. The Angry and Love emoji's are used by bully-victims as expression/responses to their victimisation and perpetration. These are somehow surprising findings but could be explained by the fact that bully-victims swing between the behaviours or characteristics of a bully and victim. The Ha-ha, Wow and Sad emojis are less used to bully others while the Love and Anger emojis are more used to share and express compassion following victimisation. According to Harn (2017), emojis are often used to enhance the sentiment of a message, express empathy and to convey expressions. This makes sense as the relationship is positively correlated. These are somehow surprising findings but could be explained by the fact that bully-victims swing between the behaviours or characteristics of a bully and victim.

We conducted a regression analysis to determine the influence of use of emoji on mobile bully-victim behaviour (MBVB). In general, we did not find significant influence on MBVB of using the Like, Ha-ha, Wow, and Sad emojis on Facebook. However, there is significant influence on MBVB when bully-victims use the Like, Haha and Sad emojis on Twitter. The Sad emoji has the highest positive influence on MBVB of on Twitter. We also found that the Love and Anger emojis are used more by bully-victims on Facebook.

Influence of Gender and Age

Finally, we also tested if mobile bully-victim behaviour differs by gender or age. The Analysis of variances test returned non-significant differences in the Means. Three categories of gender were compared: Male, Female and those who preferred not to mention their gender. The Age categories were from 12 – 17 years. These results suggest mobile bully-victim behaviour does not differ by gender or age. We however found that age and gender moderate the influence of other predictors on mobile bully-victim behaviour (MBVB). First, we determined the influence of all the predictors identified in the conceptual model, on MBVB. The R^2 = 0,99340962. When age and gender were excluded, adjusted R^2 = ,95519379. While the R^2 decreases, it should be noted that this decrease is small (0.0025), which suggest a weak influence.

V. Conclusion

This study analysed the behaviour of mobile bully-victims using both Facebook and Twitter. It allowed understanding of some specificities about their behaviour and how factors like collective behaviour, anonymity, implicit power and use of emojis influence their operations across the two social platforms. We find that in some cases behaviours are sustained while in others there are changes in the predominance of the influencing factors.

We conclude that anonymity has more influence on the bully-victim ability to victimise others when they are on Facebook than on Twitter. It is therefore critical that social network providers, particularly Facebook, tighten the loopholes in their privacy control measures. We are also yet to see the effectiveness of Facebook's "Off-Facebook Activity" intended to give users information about third-party websites and apps sharing their visit history with Facebook.

Collective behaviour does not change much when bully-victims operate across the two platforms but its impact on victimisation is

stronger when they are on Facebook than on Twitter. We found that bully-victims would employ more features or functions on Twitter than on Facebook to sustain collective victimisation. Facebook should also strengthen controls over group activities.

We also tried to understand what contributes to the influence of implicit power on bully-victims behaviour. Our findings show that while on Facebook, the influence of implicit power on victimisation arise mainly from social control, e.g. "knowing how to deal with someone who makes fun of me on Facebook". This changes however to popularity, when the bully-victims move to Twitter. It is not clear to us why this is so but can predict that full understanding of the influence of implicit power on bully-victim behaviour of students overlapping between Facebook and Twitter will require careful consideration of the interactions between social control and popularity motivations.

We found that the Like, Ha-ha, and Sad emojis have significant influence on mobile bully-victim behaviour when the bully-victim operates on Twitter but not on Facebook. We also found that mobile bully-victims often use both the Love and Anger emojis in response to victimisation on Facebook. This confirms the fact that bully-victims swing between the behaviours or characteristics of a bully and victim. Another interesting finding is that the Like emoji is mainly used by bystanders on both Facebook and Twitter. Unlike in traditional bullying where the bystanders just watch their peer victimized, mobile bystanders react with a like emoji, to express compassionate feelings. Emojis therefore enable victims to express their feelings and enable the invisible bystanders to speak up against mistreatment of their peers.

There have been inconsistencies in literature regarding the nature and causes of bully-victims. The emoji findings can enable researchers understand the emotions of online young bully-victims to find appropriate interventions. Further studies into emoji expressions and across age, gender, and different cultural environment will reveal lot of things we do not know about mobile bully-victims. Our study also

found that mobile bully-victim behaviour (MBVB) of students overlapping between Twitter and Facebook does not differ by gender or age, but the study confirms that age and gender moderate the influence of other predictors on MBVB although this influence is somehow weak.

This study has some limitations. It only focused on Facebook and Twitter, was conducted in a few schools and was cross-sectional. Precautions therefore need to be taken when interpreting the findings. More interesting findings about bully-victims overlapping between social networks may be obtained in a longitudinal study employing both qualitative and quantitative methods. In addition, while frequent users of social media were found to be mobile bully-victims regardless of the platform they use, further analysis of usage based on the number of active accounts may reveal different results.

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TABLES

Table 1: The influence of Anonymity

Facebook Users

Variable	Group 1 Mean	Group 2 Mean	t-value	df	p	Valid N	Valid N	Std.Dev.	Std.Dev.	F-ratio	p
	T-tests; Group 1: Not Anonymous; Group 2: Anonymous										
I have received bad messages/ comments on Facebook repeatedly	4,00	4,81	-3,97	51	0,00	6	47	0,63	0,45	1,98	0,02
People have used Social Media to start or spread rumours to damage my reputation	3,50	4,83	-5,83	51	0,00	6	47	1,22	0,38	10,39	0,00
I have been deliberately removed from a Social Media Group	3,63	4,84	-4,47	51	0,00	8	45	1,69	0,37	21,13	0,00

Twitter Users

Variable	Group 1 Mean	Group 2 Mean	t-value	df	p	Valid N	Valid N	Std.Dev.	Std.Dev.	F-ratio	p
I have received bad messages/ comments repeatedly	4,00	4,20	-0,48	13	0,64	5	10	0,71	0,79	1,24	0,89
People have used Social Media to start or spread rumours to damage my reputation	3,60	3,24	1,06	49	0,29	5	46	1,67	0,57	8,77	0,07
I have been deliberately removed from a Social Media Group	3,40	4,02	-2,30	49	0,03	5	46	1,67	0,33	25,31	0,00

Table 2: Collective Behaviour

Collective behaviour and victimisation on Facebook

Variable	Mean (Involved)	Mean (not involved)	t-value	df	p	Valid N	Valid N	Std Dev.	Std Dev	F-ratio	p
	T-tests; Grouping: Involvement nd non-Involvement in collective behaviour										
I have received bad messages/ comments on Facebook repeatedly	4,72	3,50	2,78	50	0,01	50	2	0,61	0,71	1,36	0,50
People have used Social Media to start or spread rumours to damage my reputation	4,72	2,50	4,39	50	0,00	50	2	0,70	0,71	1,02	0,64
I have been deliberately removed from a Social Media Group	4,74	1,00	7,89	50	0,00	50	2	0,66	0,00	0,00	1,00

Collective behaviour and victimisation on Twitter

Variable	Mean (Involved)	Mean (not involved)	t-value	df	p	Valid N	Valid N	Std.Dev.	Std Dev	F-ratio	p
	T-tests; Grouping: Involvement nd non-Involvement in collective behaviour										
I have received bad messages/ comments on Facebook repeatedly	4,27	3,50	1,54	11	0,15	11	2	0,65	0,71	1,20	0,60
People have used Social Media to start or spread rumours to damage my reputation	3,28	1,50	3,99	47	0,00	47	2	0,62	0,71	1,32	0,51
I have been deliberately removed from a Social Media Group	4,02	1,00	10,86	47	0,00	47	2	0,39	0,00	0,00	1,00

Chapter 6

Strengthening student social and emotional wellbeing and preventing bullying behaviours: Insights from 20 years of Friendly Schools research in Australian schools

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Dr Pearce is part of a team of researchers, led by Professor Donna Cross, that over the last 20 years has responded to Australian schools and teachers requests for understanding of bullying behaviours and how best to intervene. This research, collectively known as Friendly Schools, has informed the development of an evidence-based whole-school intervention that effectively supports schools to improve student social and emotional wellbeing and reduce bullying behaviours. Current research focus includes helping those students who engage in bullying and innovative ways to prevent cyber bullying with application technology and ensuring safer online behaviour among young children. Effective interventions only make a difference for students if they are implemented well so current research explores the interplay between intervention fidelity, adaptation to local school contexts and the system-level supports needed to ensure quality implementation and sustainability in schools.

Introduction from Friends' experts

Patrick Konde and Frida Warg

Friendly Schools is an Australian research project that started in 1999. Since then, Professor Donna Cross and her colleagues have worked to provide evidence-based knowledge and methods to support decision makers, school staff and other practitioners in Australia. In this chapter, the research group summarizes its results from the last 20 years into seven important lessons, and presents a number of studies from the extensive research project that has touched 35,000 teachers, parents and school leaders in over 350 Australian schools. The purpose of their work has been to develop and test strategies to improve student social and emotional well-being and reduce bullying.

Like most other researchers and program makers, Friendly Schools is based on the social-ecological theory that bullying occurs in complex interactions between children and the contexts in which they live. Based on this, Friendly School's methods include risk and protection factors at individual, family, peer, classroom, school, online and community levels, and the interaction between these. Accordingly, Friendly Schools addresses bullying through multi-level strategies. These include strengthening the school's policies and routines, developing relationship-strengthening skills, promoting student influence and ensuring that actual data (such as survey results) underlies the school's decisions and that the school's strategies are relevant to its context.

Implementation is a complicated process, and its own field of research, but can briefly be explained as the process of introducing new

methods (or knowledge) into practice and ensuring that the methods are used permanently and as intended. The chapter authors believe that a multi-level approach is necessary to deal with the complexity of bullying, but such an approach may, however, place higher demands on implementation. For the past 20 years, researchers in the field of bullying have agreed on the idea that effective bullying prevention requires a holistic approach based on an whole school approach. This means that long-term and sustained change in bullying behavior can only be achieved if all parties in the school are included in the work and steer in the same direction. Although there are now many evidence-based methods and programs against bullying available that are based on a whole school approach, the chapter authors emphasize that school staff experience a variety of obstacles when implementing such work methods. Therefore, some adaptation needs to be found to effectively meet the specific needs of the school.

According to Friendly Schools researchers, the time of school staff (or lack thereof) is a crucial contextual factor for the effectiveness of the implementation, as is a school's staff turnover, both among teachers and in school management. This is something we also see in the Swedish context, not least in research projects Hej Kommunen that is conducted by Friends. Hej Kommunen started in 2017 and is a research project where Friends assists with interventions at all municipal schools in two municipalities. The project is based on the question: What works, for whom, and in what context? The project uses an extended version of a whole school approach in what is called a whole community approach. This is partly to find effective interventions aimed at the specific challenges of schools, and partly to be able to read out at the aggregate level the challenges facing the entire municipality. In addition to this, the project works to create an effective collaboration between all parties in the entire Local guiding chain from the individual student, to the teacher, to the school management and on to the principal and the municipal policy. In this way, a red thread can be seen on all levels.

Preliminary results show that bullying is reducing in virtually all schools in both municipalities, but it has also been made clear how important it is to adapt the interventions to the opportunities and resources available to schools and tailor the efforts according to the schools' reality and everyday life. In other words, effective work against bullying needs to be based on what it actually looks like, and not on a desire or idea what it should ideally look like.

The chapter on Friendly Schools provides a clarifying entry into important factors to prevent bullying and provides a deeper understanding of the school's function and position in society. It shows the importance of consensus from all parties present in the lives of children in order to promote effective work on behavior change and ultimately the health and well-being of all students.

Strengthening student social and emotional wellbeing and preventing bullying behaviours: Insights from 20 years of Friendly Schools research in Australian schools

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Introduction

Strong evidence supports our current understandings of student bullying behaviours and ways schools can prevent and respond effectively to bullying behaviour. In the late 1990's, however, little was understood about the most effective ways to reduce bullying in Australian schools. In response to schools' need for evidence-informed action, a pipeline of research called *Friendly Schools* was initiated in 1999 which for the past twenty years, has provided robust whole-school evidence-based knowledge and skills to support policy makers, school staff and other practitioners working in schools and families across Australia.

This *Friendly Schools'* research helped to better understand overt and covert bullying behaviours, including cyberbullying, and informed

the development and testing of strategies to enhance students' social and emotional wellbeing and reduce bullying behaviours. Involving over 35,000 Australian students, their teachers, parents and school leaders in more than 350 schools, this research journey has provided policy and practice insights for educators in schools and education systems. This chapter highlights key learnings from this 20 years of *Friendly Schools* research that strengthened the capacity of Australian primary and secondary school educators to improve students' social and emotional wellbeing and reduce bullying behaviours.

The need to target students' social and emotional wellbeing and bullying behaviours

Social and emotional wellbeing includes three dimensions: 1) emotional wellbeing (including happiness and confidence, the opposite of depression); 2) psychological wellbeing (including autonomy, problem solving, resilience and engagement); and 3) social wellbeing (good relationships with others, the opposite of conduct disorder, interpersonal violence and bullying) (Pathways, 2016). Social and emotional wellbeing in childhood and adolescence predicts educational and academic, health and social outcomes, and even long-term economic circumstances (Ansari & Gershoff, 2015; Caprara, 2000). Moreover, adolescent social and emotional wellbeing can impact long-term outcomes in adulthood, including adult wages and reduced drug use and crime, more than achievement test scores (Heckman & Rubinstein, 2001).

Bullying is a significant risk factor affecting young people's social and emotional wellbeing and mental health (Cross et al., 2009) and is experienced by one in four young people in Australia (Cross et al., 2009). Further, the emergence of bullying perpetration using digital technologies has heightened the frequency, ease and severity of antisocial peer interactions, with approximately 20% of Australian young people reporting they experienced cyberbullying each year (Spears et al., 2014). This rate is higher than most other countries (Modecki et al., 2014).

Bullying has serious and long-term negative health and wellbeing effects including increased anxiety and depression (Shaw et al., 2010), suicide ideation and behaviour (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; van Geel, Vedder, & Tanilon, 2014), physical illness (Due et al., 2005) and reduced self-esteem (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010). It also negatively affects educational outcomes such as school attendance (Goodsell et al., 2017). Compared to other OECD countries, Australian young people are markedly less likely to feel connected to school and more likely to be concerned about bullying experiences (OECD, 2017), particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, 2018). Australian schools have also increasingly recognised the critical need to support children's social and emotional development and reduce bullying behaviour, to increase their overall wellbeing, educational and academic outcomes.

The Friendly Schools research journey

Friendly Schools (FS) is the most empirically researched school-based program in Australia from early childhood to middle adolescence (Barnes et al., 2019). It has been developed and tested in 18 research studies (11 randomised control trials) providing opportunities to empirically investigate students' experiences of bullying, cyberbullying, and social and emotional wellbeing especially in the context of Australian family, school and community factors (Cross et al., 2003; Cross et al., 2011; Cross et al., 2012; Cross et al., 2015; Cross et al., 2018; Cross et al., 2019). This includes 'The Australian Covert Bullying Prevalence Study' involving data collected from over 20,000 students around Australia, to better understand forms of bullying not easily observed by adults (Cross et al., 2009) (See Figure 1 for an overview of the *Friendly Schools* research journey).

Formative research in 1999 summarised evidence-based findings from international bullying-related research into best practice principles validated by leading international bullying prevention researchers (Cross et al., 2003; Cross et al., 2004). Later in 2011 these

# Friendly Schools Research Journey
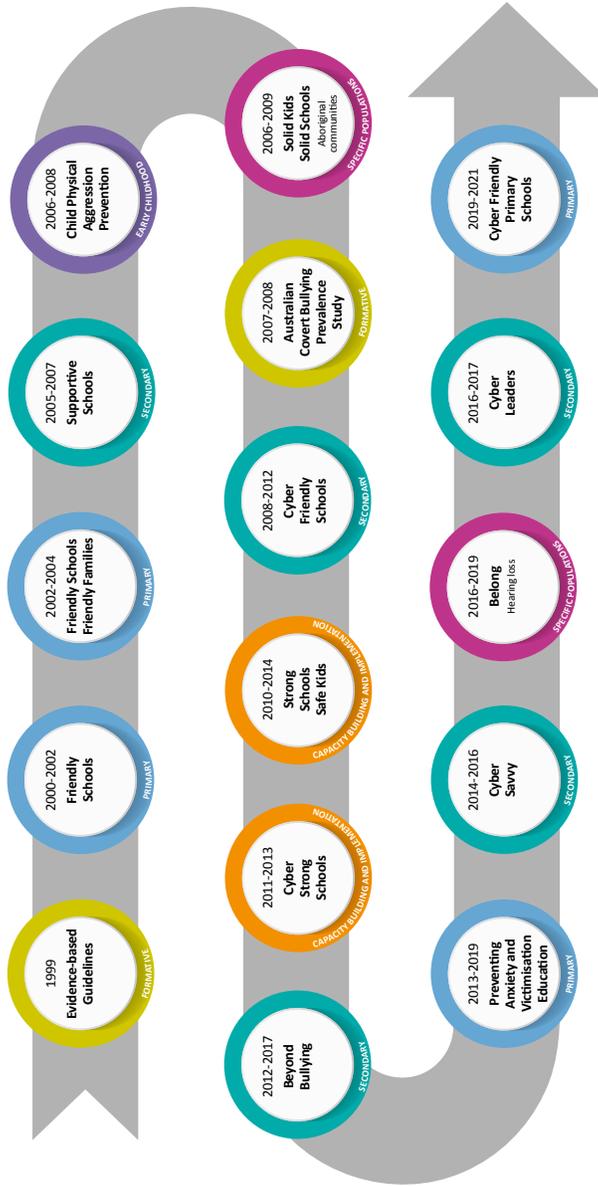
Figure 1:
Overview of the Friendly Schools research journey

principles were updated to address cyberbullying (Pearce et al., 2011). The 1999 principles were used to develop and test a series of primary school-based interventions and later the updated 2011 principles informed secondary interventions (Cross et al., 2012; Cross et al., 2011; Cross et al., 2019). Following these mainstream studies the FS research expanded to respond to identified needs, including cyberbullying (Cross et al., 2015); critical intervention windows such as transition to secondary school (Cross et al., 2018), and targeted supports for groups of students more likely to be victimised such as First Nation students and those with other cultural and non-dominant cultural positioning (Coffin, Larson, & Cross, 2010). Longitudinal research found FS reduced student bullying and cyberbullying behaviours and reduced risk and increased protective factors such as help-seeking, sense of safety, and connectedness to their peers, teachers and school (Lester et al., 2017; Cross, Lester, & Barnes, 2015; Waters & Cross, 2010).

The Friendly Schools Intervention and Implementation

Friendly Schools is a strengths-based, whole-school intervention. Integrated multi-level strategies address bullying by: strengthening schools' policy and procedures; developing student, staff and parent competencies to build positive relationships; providing opportunities for student participation and 'voice'; supporting social and physical environments; and encouraging parent, family and community engagement. The FS intervention also builds school leadership capacity to implement FS successfully over time through a quality improvement process and tools that ensure data informs school decision making and strategies are context relevant.

Friendly Schools Intervention

As outlined in previous research (Barnes et al., 2019), *Friendly Schools comprises*:

- *Whole school strategies* designed to evaluate and improve school

policies and practices. Schools select strategies that fit their context from six components: 1) leadership and capacity; 2) policy and procedures; 3) social environment; 4) physical environment; 5) building competencies though student curriculum, staff professional learning and parent communication; and 6) partnerships with families, services and communities.

- Developmentally *appropriate teaching and learning activities and training for school staff*, to enhance students' social and emotional learning (SEL), develop common understandings, and practice strategies to prevent and reduce bullying.
- *Family activities* to improve their awareness and self-efficacy to support their children's SEL including parent-teacher meetings, information sessions and booklets, newsletter items, and home activities.
- *Individual activities* for targeted support of victimised students and those who bully others, to modify behaviour and facilitate links with local health professionals.

Friendly Schools Implementation

A five-step process guides school implementation teams to prepare, assess, plan, build capacity for and implement critical evidence-based policies and practices. To meet schools' individual needs, online implementation tools enable school teams to examine their existing strategies for bullying prevention, identify areas for improvement, and address these gaps. Tools include student and staff surveys; school practice assessment; readiness check; and planning and review tools. These tools are designed to enhance implementation by a) aligning the school's vision with FS outcomes, b) matching strategies to identified school community needs, and c) building staff readiness to support practice change.

School teams select strategies from the 'Evidence for Practice' resource and toolkits that provide detailed 'how to' actions for strategies such as policy development and assessment of their physical environ-

ment. Grade-level classroom teaching and learning resources from the early years (4 year olds) to Grade 9 (14 year- olds) are organised around the five areas of social and emotional learning: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and social decision-making (Domitrovich et al., 2017). Communication and educational resources for families reinforce classroom learning and skill development. Accredited trainers provide professional development and guidance for school teams and teachers to support their implementation of the FS process, strategies and curriculum.

Key learnings for school leaders and teachers

As the FS research progressed, seven key insights (discussed below relative to each FS study) emerged to strengthen the capacity of school leaders and teachers to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of students and to reduce bullying behaviours.

1. Adopt a multi-level whole-school approach

Growing evidence suggests multi-level whole-school interventions are the most effective, non-stigmatising means to prevent and manage bullying behaviour (Farrington et al, 2017; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011). Numerous theoretical approaches have informed FS including the socioecological (Cross et al., 2015) and family systems (Cross & Barnes, 2014) theories that acknowledge health risks are not direct outcomes of individual behaviours, but emerge from complex interactions between young people and the contexts in which they live (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Espelage, 2014). Hence, the FS bullying and cyberbullying intervention targets risk and protective factors at the individual, family, peer, classroom, school, online and community levels, and the interactions between these levels (Monks at al, 2018; Cross et al., 2015; Cox et al., 2016)

The first FS study targeted student and teacher learning via a SEL curriculum and teacher training focused on building pro-social skills, non-violent conflict resolution skills, problem-solving skills and empathy, and skills to respond to bullying, and why it is unacceptable. This

study also targeted the school and family levels through policy and consistent positive practices and capacity building with families to discuss bullying with their children. A three-year randomised control trial followed nearly 2000 students from grades 4 to 6, and their teachers and families in 29 primary schools. The intervention resulted in decreased observations of bullying and increased reporting of bullying compared to the control group (Cross et al., 2011; Cross et al., 2003). The reductions in bullying were greater than the average effects for interventions of this type (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011), with results maintained three years later (Cross et al., 2011). However, schools requested further strategies to engage families and build staff capacity to implement the multi-level strategies.

The second FS study followed three cohorts of students from each of Grades 2, 4 and 6 (nearly 4000 students) for three years, from 20 randomly selected primary schools. This study provided more school and staff capacity building and a greater focus on active family involvement and compared three conditions (high, moderate and low dose of the intervention). A significant reduction in bullying perpetration and victimisation was found among students who received the high dose over time compared to the low dose intervention. This study provided support for multi-level whole-school interventions and implementation support for staff (Cross et al., 2012; Lester et al., 2017; Cross et al., 2016). These findings were consistent with international research indicating multi-dimensional interventions targeting all levels and members of the school community are needed to effectively reduce bullying (Rigby & Slee, 2008; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011; Vreeman & Carroll, 2007; da Silva et al., 2018; Flygare, Gill, & Johansson, 2013)

2. Target higher risk times for bullying and social development
Bullying behaviour prevalence peaks in Australian schools in middle primary (Grade 5, 10-11 years), a time of rapid social development, and then again in early adolescence after transition to secondary school (Lester et al., 2012). This second peak is related to changing peer and

friendship groups, new school environments and greater stress. *The FS transition to secondary school* study involved a three-year randomised cluster comparison trial with 3000 students from 21 secondary schools. It addressed the high prevalence of bullying using a whole-school approach and educational resources for students who recently transitioned to secondary school and their parents. The intervention reduced young people's experiences of bullying victimisation and perpetration, and enhanced their feelings of safety, staff and peer support (Cross et al., 2018).

The study was extended subsequently using an age-cohort design, to include Grades 7 to 9. This effectiveness study, *Beyond Bullying*, found implementation of the FS curriculum was associated with decreases in bullying perpetration and victimisation (Cross et al., 2019). These findings of FS effectiveness in secondary schools are particularly important in light of research indicating bullying interventions tend to lose efficacy by early adolescence (Yeager et al., 2015). Schools are often faced with limited capacity so targeted investment of time and resources at peak times of social development and adjustment is important to achieve the most cost-effective and impactful approach to supporting students and reducing bullying.

Prevalence of cyberbullying behaviours however, present a diffe-rent trajectory related closely to student access to devices. The Cyber Friendly Schools research (CFS), conducted in secondary schools found significantly greater declines within the first year of its implementation in the odds of involvement in cyber victimization and cyber per-petration (Cross et al., 2016). However, the increasing prevalence of cyberbullying among younger children means future research and action by schools will need to prepare primary students to use devices in ways that protect them from harm, particularly as they use these advanced technologies at younger ages, more frequently and with less supervision.

3. Identify and target barriers to implementation

While FS research found a multi-strategic approach is effective and necessary to address the complexities of bullying behaviour, implementing this approach can be challenging for schools. Quality implementation is critical to achieve positive outcomes for students (Domitrovich et al., 2008; Cross & Barnes, 2014). Across the FS studies, school staff reported numerous barriers and contextual factors to achieving successful implementation including: school fear of ownership of bullying behaviours; staff burnout from continuous new interventions; staff and leadership turnover; reactive approach due to limited time and capacity; lack of staff 'buy-in' to change practice; lack of accessible tools and training; insufficient school data to support decision making; and competing frameworks to achieve similar wellbeing, behaviour and learning outcomes (Pearce et al., 2014).

Early FS studies were implemented with low fidelity due to a range of factors and, whilst contributing to our understanding, created the unresolved question of how well the intervention could work if fully implemented as intended. In the FS Junior Primary study, *Child Aggression Prevention (CAP) Project*, which aimed to promote supportive school environments and social relationships among young children (Runions, 2014), teachers reported problems finding sufficient time for implementation (Hall et al., 2009). Additionally, whilst CFS intervention teachers and student cyber leaders received training, resources, and implementation support, teachers still reported a lack of confidence to teach cyber-related content (Cross, Lester, et al., 2015; Cross et al., 2016). A follow-up study to CFS targeted these implementation barriers and developed and tested online resources to build staff capacity to teach positive cyber behaviours and online safety. These strategies were found to be particularly helpful for teachers working in rural and remote areas and unable to access face-to-face professional learning.

4. Build staff capacity and readiness first

FS research found schools that receive greater support for capacity building demonstrated higher whole-school implementation capacity, higher program implementation levels and higher levels of parent engagement, compared to schools receiving no capacity support (Pearce, 2010). Hence, a five-year multi-site school case study (7 schools), *Strong Schools Safe Kids (SSSK)*, was developed to understand how schools' capacity to implement evidence-based practices could be strengthened to increase their sustainability and positive student outcomes. Systematic implementation processes and tools were co-developed with school leadership teams and refined during the SSSK study. A 'getting ready' phase was critical to fast-track policy and planning for whole-school implementation and evaluation (Cross, et al, 2010). It described how to establish a team to facilitate and manage the process of assessment, planning and implementation of evidence-based strategies, and provide strategies to build staff capacity to use evidence-based actions to respond to bullying behaviours. The following factors were associated with schools' successful implementation efforts:

- Provision of a clear link between school vision and culture
- A school leadership team responsible for embedding implementation into existing student-support staffing structures
- Provision of time within staff workloads to attend regular team meetings
- Flexibility to select appropriate staff and allocate roles and time to various responsibilities
- A committed leader with dedicated time for planning and supporting staff
- A principal actively engaged and supportive, and models distributed leadership
- Regular staff professional learning to foster common understandings

- Use of a systematic decision-making process utilising local school data
- Sharing school data with all staff to encourage ownership and motivation

5. Allow sufficient time to achieve social change

Recommendations to improve the effectiveness of bullying prevention interventions largely centre on implementation issues, with evidence suggesting duration and intensity are key factors (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011; Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). A stage-based implementation process, as used in FS, allows schools to select different strategies at different times and address different capacity needs when required. In complex systems such as schools, the solution will often change the problem over time, and adaption to this changing context is key to improving the quality of implementation and outcomes for students.

FS research provided learnings about the timing of the evaluation of bullying and cyberbullying interventions which may suggest the reported small to moderate effect sizes of these whole-school interventions may be in part due to evaluations conducted too early or with insufficient follow-up. If curriculum implementation was the only active component of school-based bullying prevention, its impact would be clear within the first year of implementation. However, FS research found whole-school interventions take much longer to achieve full potential, taking between 3-5 years to fully implement strategies across multiple school community levels. FS study schools report this timeframe is necessary to systematically and sustainably prepare leadership structures and staff capacity that can be built on over time without taking critical resources from other supports and strategies within the school.

6. Engage students in co-designing strategies to address cyberbullying and cyber safety

Cyber Friendly Schools (CFS) was one of the world's first randomised control trials to reduce the prevalence of student cyberbullying. Students in this study were integral to the development of best practices in addressing cyberbullying behaviours, via mechanisms that enabled them to identify their challenges and solutions (Cross et al., 2016). Student leaders were also recruited, trained and supported to work with school staff to implement the CFS intervention, engage with students and parents as peer and cyber supporters (Cross, Lester, et al., 2015). This process is crucial for cyberbullying, where students are often more knowledgeable about online behaviour and environments than parents and teachers (Spears & Zeederberg, 2013).

7. Provide contextually relevant support for higher risk students

To address bullying among higher risk young people, a FS research study, *Solid Kids, Solid Schools*, targeted the SEL needs of Australian Aboriginal students and their communities. The study was co-designed by Aboriginal Elders, young people and community members and local Aboriginal (Yamaji) people co-developed and pilot-tested specific cultural resources including a website to reduce harms from bullying (Coffin et al., 2010). The project found Australian Aboriginal students experienced bullying in different ways to non-Aboriginal children and described bullying differently referring to physical bullying as 'smashing', 'ripping' and 'double banking', and verbal bullying as 'carrying yarns', 'chipping', 'jarring', and calling someone 'winyarn' [weak]. These insights were used to tailor cultural awareness of and support for the development of knowledge and skills to address bullying specific to Aboriginal young people. This also led to a three-year social marketing research project utilising community feedback for bullying prevention messaging and information in an Aboriginal context. It attempted to improve teacher understandings of Aboriginal

children's behaviour and its management and promoted a culturally secure whole-school approach to addressing bullying (Paki, Coffin, Cross, & Erceg, 2011).

Providing contextually relevant support for high risk students also requires understanding the problem from their perspective, and the FS study called *Beyond Bullying* (BB) found this applies to both the perpetrators and targets of bullying. BB trialled the use of motivational interviewing with entrenched bullying behaviours to support students to identify and act upon their own motivations for engaging in bullying (Cross et al., 2018). This study identified important barriers to implementation of this approach, as well as implementation enablers (Pennell et al., 2018) that will support future trials of innovative responses to bullying behaviours.

Conclusion

While the high prevalence rates of bullying and decades of research demonstrate an urgent need to act on what we best understand, the challenges facing school leaders and teachers implementing evidence-based practices to address bullying are quite evident. These challenges include implementation and evaluation in the 'messy' real world of schools and classrooms and where increasingly 'quick fixes' are demanded. FS research found that to effectively implement a whole-school approach to bullying prevention and the development of students' social and emotional wellbeing, it is necessary to build positive relationships between school community members and embed these actions into strategic planning for student wellbeing. This approach led to a more collaborative, coordinated, whole-school approach using developmentally appropriate and evidence-based strategies that ensure school action is effective, sustainable and system-wide. These insights can help guide schools to reduce harm from bullying and foster the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people in their care.

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The World Anti-Bullying Forum was founded by the Swedish NGO Friends in 2017 and is both a scientific conference and a hub for knowledge about bullying. Every two years, WABF gathers practitioners, policymakers and researchers from various research fields.

WABF objectives are:
- To stop bullying and other forms of violence between children in accordance with The Convention on the Rights of the Child and Agenda 2030.
- That the best available knowledge about how bullying among children can be prevented is shared among researchers, policymakers and practitioners.
- To gather, coordinate and make the best available research-based knowledge easily accessible globally and digitally.

www.worldantibullyingforum.com

Bullying does not occur in a vacuum. It is not a coincidence when bullying emerges in a group. Knowledge of both the causes of bullying and how it can be prevented has increased radically in recent decades. We know more about bullying today than we have ever done before. This knowledge is vital to children's and young people's development and learning.

This anthology looks at bullying from different perspectives. Research results are interspersed with testimonies from young people on what changed their situation. The researchers' contributions come from different theoretical fields, which enables a broader and deeper understanding of the problem. The anthology's research contributions should be seen as complementary to each other rather than as opposites. They all contribute with explanations and understandings of bullying in different contexts.

It is a necessity that the knowledge that exists about bullying is disseminated to those who work with and for children and young people. This anthology can hopefully contribute to an in-depth discussion and inspiring reading.

World
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