

The Nature and Extent of Bullying among Food-Allergic Youth

Brandy N. Rocheleau, J.D.
Ball State University

Gregory C. Rocheleau, Ph.D.
Ball State University

1. BACKGROUND

- Youth with food allergies report high rates of bullying victimization (Muraro et al., 2014; Rocheleau & Rocheleau, 2019a; Rocheleau & Rocheleau, 2019b; Shemesh et al., 2013)
- Prior research has highlighted some of the ways in which the victimization experience of youth with food allergies is both different and similar to the others who are victimized (Lieberman et al., 2010; Shemesh et al., 2013)
- Research has thus far been limited to small, regional- or clinic-based samples, and has yet to consider how the severity of the food allergy condition may affect the bullying experience

2. METHODS

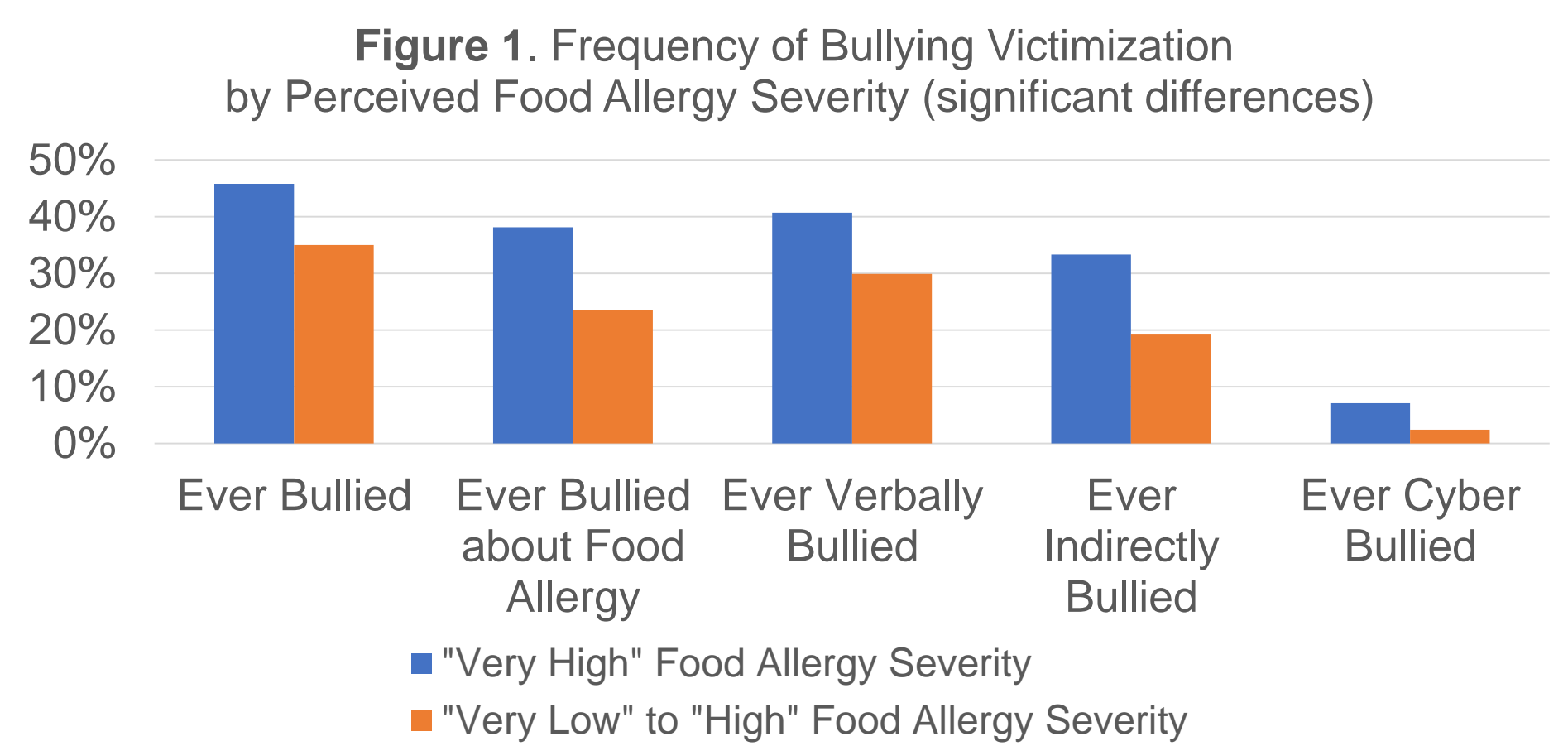
- Purpose:
 1. To describe the extent and nature of bullying among food-allergic youth
 2. To examine if perceived severity of food allergy affects the bullying experience
- Online survey in 8 different food allergy support groups
- Parent reports of children with food allergies
- Listwise deletion
- Full sample ($N = 708$); Ever bullied subsample ($n = 280$)
- Chi-squared tests for differences by perceived severity

3. RESULTS

3.1. Extent of Bullying among Food-Allergic Youth

Table 1. Prevalence of Bullying, by Perceived Severity

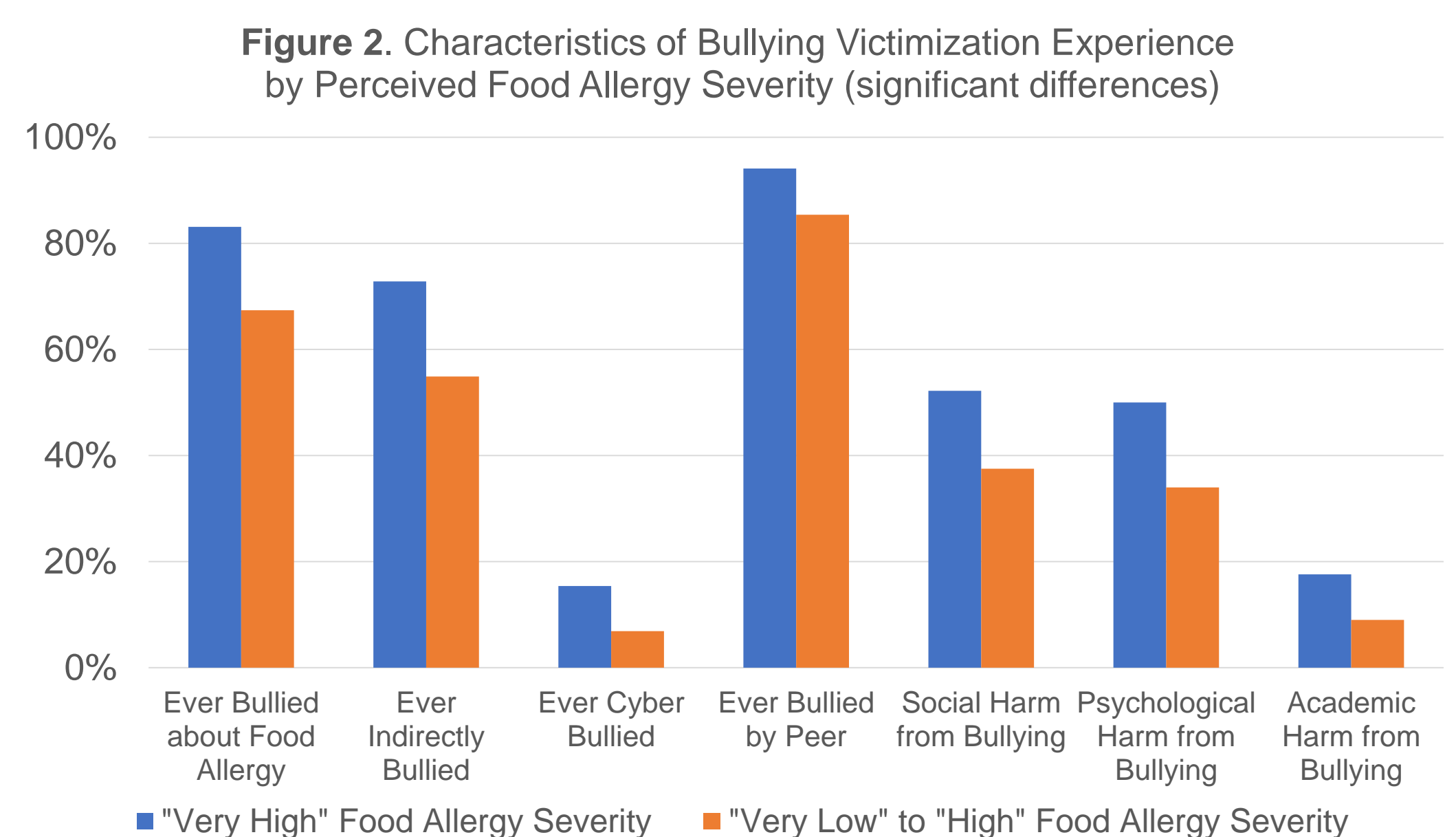
| Variable | Overall ($N = 708$) Frequency | "Very High" Food Allergy Severity ($n = 297$) Frequency | "Very Low" to "High" Food Allergy Severity ($n = 411$) Frequency |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Ever bullied | 39.5% | 45.8%** | 35.0%** |
| Bullied about food allergies | 29.7% | 38.1%*** | 23.6%*** |
| Ever physically bullied | 11.9% | 13.8% | 11.7% |
| Ever verbally bullied | 34.5% | 40.7%** | 29.9%** |
| Ever indirectly bullied | 25.1% | 33.3%*** | 19.2%*** |
| Ever cyber bullied | 4.4% | 7.1%** | 2.4%** |



3.2. Nature of Bullying among Ever Bullied Food-Allergic Youth

Table 2. Characteristics of Bullying Experience, by Perceived Severity

| Variable | Overall ($N = 280$) Frequency | "Very High" Food Allergy Severity ($n = 136$) Frequency | "Very Low" to "High" Food Allergy Severity ($n = 144$) Frequency |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Bullied about food allergies | 75.0% | 83.1%** | 67.4%** |
| Ever physically bullied | 30.0% | 30.1% | 29.9% |
| Ever verbally bullied | 86.8% | 89.0% | 84.7% |
| Ever indirectly bullied | 63.6% | 72.8%** | 54.9%** |
| Ever cyber bullied | 11.1% | 15.4%* | 6.9%* |
| Ever bullied by peer | 89.6% | 94.1%* | 85.4%* |
| Ever bullied by peer's parent | 19.3% | 22.8% | 16.0% |
| Ever bullied by school staff | 22.1% | 24.3% | 20.1% |
| Ever bullied in neighborhood | 16.4% | 17.6% | 15.3% |
| Ever bullied in school | 84.6% | 86.0% | 83.3% |
| Physical harm from bullying | 15.4% | 15.4% | 15.3% |
| Emotional harm from bullying | 77.1% | 80.9% | 73.6% |
| Social harm from bullying | 44.6% | 52.2%* | 37.5%* |
| Psychological harm from bullying | 41.8% | 50.0%** | 34.0%** |
| Academic harm from bullying | 13.2% | 17.6%* | 9.0%* |
| Missed school from bullying | 18.2% | 21.3% | 15.3% |



4. CONCLUSIONS

- Food-allergic youth are bullied at relatively high rates compared to the general population, and many are bullied about having food allergies
- Verbal and indirect bullying are the most common types of victimization, and the victimization is most commonly perpetrated by peers and at school
- The most common harms from being victimized are emotional, social, and psychological harms
- Bullying appears to be more frequent and to have greater consequences for youth with more severe food allergy conditions

5. REFERENCES

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