



KiVa antibullying program: The importance of implementation

Sanna Herkama
Senior Researcher, PhD
University of Turku, Finland
INVEST Flagship / KiVa antibullying program

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Outline of the presentation

- Why implementation matters?
- KiVa antibullying program
 - Background
 - Evidence of effectiveness
 - Theory of change
 - Content of the program
- Implementation of KiVa antibullying program:
Lessons learnt so far



Towards sustainable implementation

- Developing effective interventions is only the first step toward improving the health and well-being of populations (Durlak & DuPre, 2008)!
- *Implementation is the real challenge!*



Towards sustainable implementation

- Phases of program diffusion
 - Reach
 - » *How many will know about the program?*
 - Uptake
 - » *How many will adopt the program?*
 - Implementation
 - » *How many will use the program?*
 - Sustainability
 - » *How many will continue using the program?*



KiVa® antibullying program

- School-based program for bullying prevention and intervention
 - Basic education (grades 1–9)
 - The meaning of “KiVa”
- Developed at the University of Turku with funding from the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2006–2009)
 - Program co-leaders: Professor Christina Salmivalli and PhD, Special Researcher Elisa Poskiparta
- Well known in Finland
 - Reach has been 100%; uptake 90% at best, currently 45%
- Implemented in many other countries as well



How was such a broad uptake possible?

- Background: Legislation, normative regulation already before KiVa
- A lot of societal attention to bullying in Finland in the beginning of the 1990s
- Legislation:
 - 1999: each student has a right for a safe learning environment
 - 2003: each education provider (school, municipality) needs to have an action plan against bullying

(see for more, Sainio et al., 2019)



How was such a broad uptake possible?

- Support provided by the government
 - Materials and training free of charge for schools
- Two school massacres (2007, 2008), associated with victimization in people's minds
 - A lot of discussion about bullying and the need for its effective prevention
- KiVa was found feasible by school personnel and its reputation as an effective and user-friendly program spread fast



KiVa® is evidence-based

- Randomized controlled trial 2007–2009
 - 117 intervention and 117 control schools
 - Around 30 000 students (grades 1–9, 7–15 year old)
- First year of nationwide implementation (2009–2010)
 - 880 Finnish schools (cohort longitudinal design)
 - Around 150 000 students (grades 1–9)
- KiVa annual survey since 2009



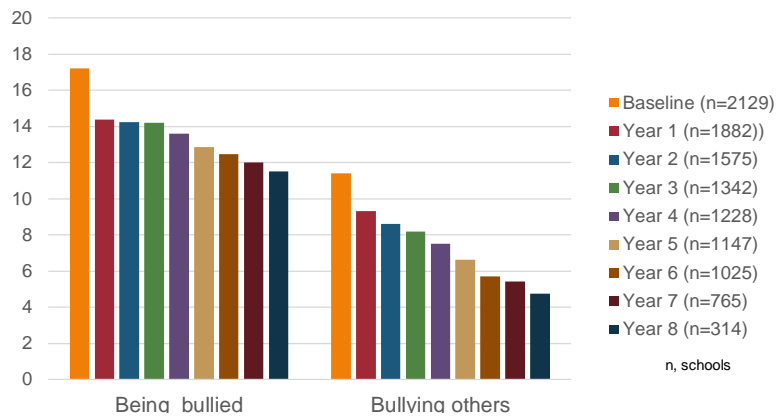
Effectiveness and implementation of KiVa® during the Finnish RCT

- Beneficial effects on bullying and victimization
 - Mediated by changes in students' antibullying attitudes and perceptions of peers' bystander behaviors and teacher attitudes toward bullying
 - Prominent in elementary schools, modest in middle schools
- Positive changes in many related variables
- More remarkable reductions in victimization in classrooms where teachers delivered KiVa lessons with more fidelity.

(for review, see Herkama, Saarento, & Salmivalli, 2017; Salmivalli et al., 2013)



Proportion of students who have been bullied / who are bullying others repeatedly, Finnish KiVa schools 2009–2017



Theory of change and KiVa®

- *By changing bystander responses to bullying, we can reduce students' motivation to bully their peers and buffer against the harmful effects of victimization!*



The role of bystanders in bullying

Participant roles in bullying (Salmivalli et al., 1996)

Assistants of the bully 7%



Outsiders 24%

8%



12%

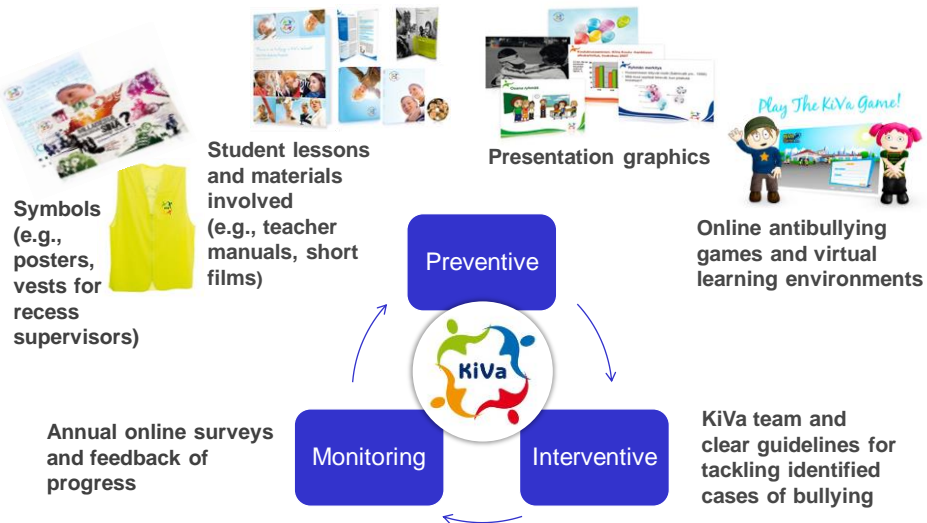
Defenders of the victim 17%



Reinforcers of the bully 20%



KiVa® antibullying program: Components



What about implementation?



Degree of implementation across years (Finnish KiVa schools)

- During 2009–2017
 - About 80% of students in KiVa schools knew that KiVa is being implemented in their school
 - About 70% of KiVa lessons were delivered
 - About 7 bullying cases/year were handled by KiVa teams



Implementation and outcome: Finland

- The (teacher-reported) implementation of student lessons in a classroom is associated with the magnitude of change in (student-reported) victimization in that classroom (Haataja et al., 2014).
 - Preparation of lessons
 - The proportion of tasks delivered
 - > Larger reduction in victimization
- Principal support is crucial for implementation (Ahtola et al., 2013; Haataja et al., 2015)



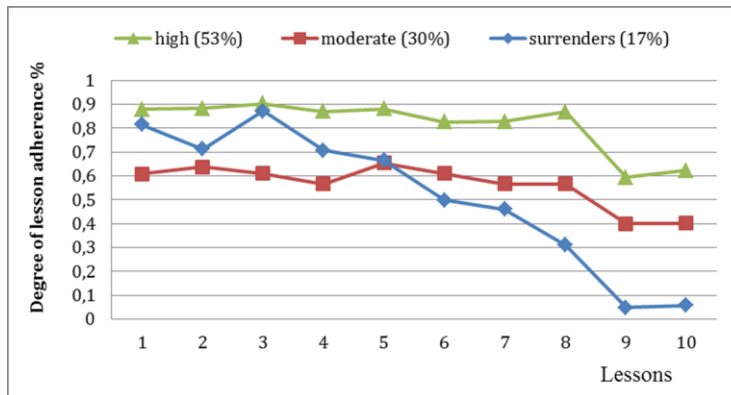
Implementation and outcome: Delaware, US

- The reductions in victimization and bullying are dependent on the dosage.
 - Time spend delivering KiVa lessons
 - Lesson activities completed
 - Total number of lessons delivered
- > *Basically, KiVa worked better in classrooms receiving more of it!*

(Swift et al., 2017)



Implementation of KiVa lessons during one school year



(Haataja et al., 2015)



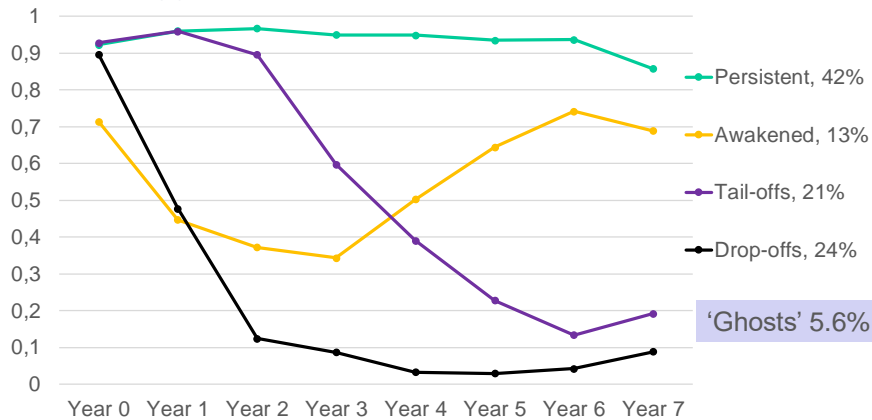
What explains teachers' adherence to student lessons during one year?

- 'Starting high' was associated with
 - Stronger beliefs on program effectiveness
- 'Starting high and keeping it high' was associated with
 - Stronger beliefs on program effectiveness, principal support, and more time devoted to lesson preparation

(Haataja et al., 2015)



Implementation of KiVa across years: Four types of schools



(Sainio et al., 2018)



Some predictors of sustainable implementation

- Number of students
 - Larger schools were more likely to sustain
- Good coordination; informing the whole community
- Initial level of implementation
 - Those doing more during the first three years were more likely to sustain
- Initial level of bullying problems low

(Sainio et al., 2018)

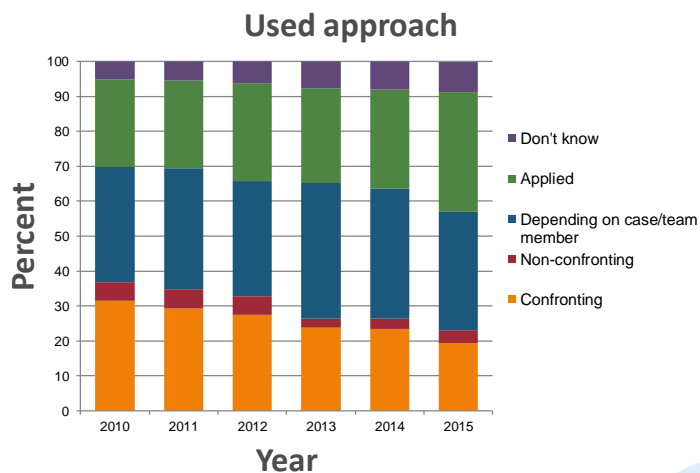


Three examples of implementation challenges

- Schools do hardly anything besides saying they are "KiVa schools".
- Schools start with enthusiasm, but implementation declines over time.
- Schools do many things, but they are different from what KiVa recommends.



Indicated actions taken by KiVa teams: changes during 2010–2015



Indicated actions taken by KiVa teams: changes during 2010–2015

- Over time, schools start making more adaptations
- ...even if the KiVa teams themselves find the two recommended approaches (confronting, non-confronting) most effective!



Sustainable implementation

- Sustainable implementation of antibullying practices: individual, **school**, and societal level factors
 - Commitment
 - People who believe in the program, speak for it, take action, and are concerned about children's well-being
 - Principal support for antibullying work
 - Coordination at the school level

(Herkama et al., 2019)



Implementation is critical!

- *Neither evidence of program efficacy nor the schools' original uptake of a program ensures that the teachers will implement the program as intended (if at all) and continue doing so over longer periods of time.*



Supporting the implementation process

- Detailed manuals
- Pre-implementation training
- Face-to-face and online training courses
- Newsletters
- KiVa days
- Webinars
- Consultation in difficult cases



Future visions and challenges

- Research continues!
 - KiVa works - under which conditions?
 - Where? When? How? With whom? What to do with the remaining victims?
 - Quantity and quality of implementation? Predictors? Outcomes?
- International "KiVa community"
 - International partners, certified KiVa trainers, schools
- Finding new ways to support the schools in sustainable implementation
- Development of the materials



Thank you!

Sanna Herkama
sanna.herkama@utu.fi
Twitter: @SannaHerkama

KiVa antibullying program
www.kivaprogram.net

INVEST research group
www.invest.utu.fi



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