

Cyberbullying: Perspectives on Current Research and Best Practices

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Our Plan for Today...

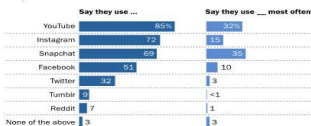


- The Context: ICT Use Among Youth
- The Nature and Prevalence of Cyberbullying
- Overlap between Traditional Bullying and Cyberbullying?
- Risk and Protective Factors for Involvement in Cyberbullying
- Outcomes of Being Cyberbullied
- Prevention and Intervention
- Current Laws Related to Cyberbullying
- Resources

Teens and Technology Use

YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat are the most popular online platforms among teens

% of U.S. teens who...



Note: Figures in first column add to more than 100% because multiple responses were allowed. Question about most-used site was asked only of respondents who use multiple sites; results have been recalculated to include those who use only one site. Respondents who did not give an answer are not shown.
 Source: Survey conducted March 7-April 10, 2015.
 "Teens, Social Media & Technology 2015"
 PEW RESEARCH CENTER

2017 Youth Focus Group Results

Youth Ages 12-18
 Metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia, USA

The Focus:

Conversations highlighted the positives and negatives related to the use of social media to build, connect, and maintain friendships through making plans, sharing experiences, and easily staying in touch.

"What do you like best about social media?"

- "You can hang out without having to be in person."
- "You can share compliments and be supportive"
- "You can share photos and experiences."
- "You can build friendships by exchanging social media accounts after meeting in person."
- "You can reach someone if you don't have her phone number."
- "It's creative and fun!"

"What is the worst thing about social media?"

- "People say mean things."
- "Hating on other people."
- "Ugly lists."
- "Exposed or hate pages on Instagram."
- "Throwing shade," or "indirecting" on Snapchat.
- "Group gossip chats targeting a person."
- "Sharing screen shots to cause drama."
- "People feel pressure to be funny so they post cruel videos or use Finsta accounts to make fun of others."

Under Pressure

- “It’s so time consuming; it takes away from family time.”
- “Everything happens so fast and it’s hard not to react.”
- “You feel pressured to respond, whether through comments and messages or keeping a ‘streak’ going on Snapchat.”



According to youth in the focus groups

- Online bullying and “drama” primarily occurs in reaction to issues happening in ongoing relationships and between peer groups.

What is Cyberbullying?

- **Bullying** is (a) aggressive behavior that (b) occurs in a relationship characterized by an imbalance of power, and (c) typically is repeated over time.
- **Cyberbullying** is “an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victims who cannot easily defend him or herself” (Smith et al., 2008).

How To Understand Power and Repetition Online?

- Power imbalance?
 - technical know-how
 - access to large audience
- Repetition?
 - numbers who are reached
 - length of times a message or image remains in cyberspace



Unique aspects

- Anonymity?
- Potential for vast viewing audience
- 24 hour connectedness

Online communications are highly contextual

- Can make it challenging to determine if a message is humorous, conflict, harassment, or cyberbullying.

Digital Self-harm

- One study found 6% of middle and high school youth reported that they had anonymously posted something online about themselves that was mean.
- Males more likely to report doing so as a joke or for attention.
- Females reported doing so because they are depressed and hurting psychologically.
- More common among non-heterosexual youth.
- More likely to have previously engaged in self-harm behaviors offline.

-Patchin & Hinduja, 2016

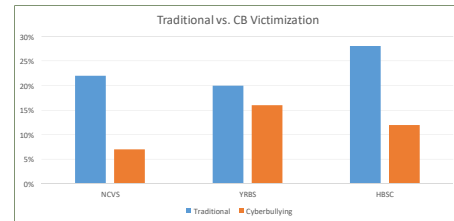
Prevalence of Cyberbullying

- There is a “bewildering array of prevalence estimates of cyberbullying” (Olweus & Limber, 2017).
- Prevalence over the last year:
 - 1% to 61% have been cyberbullied
 - 3% to 39% have cyberbullied others (Brochado et al. 2016)
- What’s going on?
 - Different recall periods (Lifetime? Last year? Last couple of months?)
 - Different threshold for qualifying as CB (once? Several times or more?)
 - Different (or no) definitions
 - Different samples...

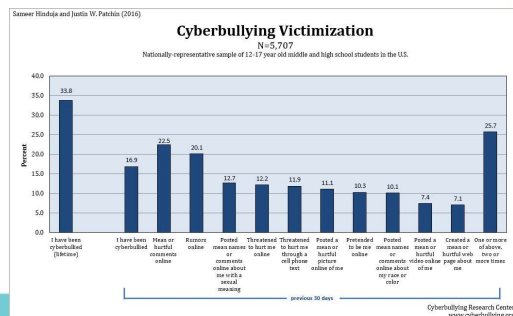
Cyberbullying Prevalence – CDC YRBS, 2017

- 14.9% of U.S. students in grades 9-12 had been cyberbullied (19% bullied) during the past 12 months
- **Cyberbullying < bullying:** “The prevalence of having been electronically bullied decreased from 2011 (16.2%) to 2013 (14.8%) and rose again in 2015 (15.5%) and then decreased to 14.9% in 2017.

Prevalence of Traditional versus CB in Nationally Representative Studies



Forms of Cyberbullying Experienced: 2016



Has Cyberbullying Increased?

- Probably not in recent years...
- NCVS: Increased between 2007 & 2011 but then declined.
- YRBS: Declined between 2011 and 2013, but then no change.
- HBSC: Declined between 2006 and 2010.
- Olweus:
 - No changes in Norway (2006-2010) or US (2007-2010).

How Much Overlap Between Traditional Bullying and Cyberbullying?

Minimal?

How Much Overlap Between Traditional Bullying and Cyberbullying?

Moderate?

How Much Overlap Between Traditional Bullying and Cyberbullying?

Minimal? Substantial?

Moderate?

How Much Overlap Between Traditional Bullying and Cyberbullying?

Minimal? Substantial?

Moderate? Complete?

Risk and Protective Factors for Being Cyberbullied

- Individual Factors
 - Technology use
 - Gender
 - Sexuality
 - Disability
 - Weight status
 - Self-esteem
 - Social intelligence
 - Self-control
 - Aggressive thoughts, antisocial personality

Risk and Protective Factors for Being Cyberbullied

- Peer Factors
 - Feel support from peers
- Family Factors
 - Warmth, support
 - Parental rules and monitoring of online activities
 - Collaborative parental strategies (e.g., co-use)
 - Single vs. two parent households
 - Family conflict
 - Abusive relationships
- School Factors
 - Feeling safe at school, satisfaction with school, positive school climate

Risk and Protective Factors for Cyberbullying Others

• Individual Factors

- Technology use, online disinhibition
- Gender
- Low empathy
- Psychopathy, narcissism, Machiavellianism, sadism
- Levels of self-control, thrill seeking, impulsivity
- Moral disengagement
- Conduct problems



Risk and Protective Factors for Cyberbullying Others

• Peer Factors

- Negative peer influence, association with deviant online peers
- Peer rejection
- Cyberbullying appears to be normative

• Family Factors

- Trust, cohesion, secure attachment
- Parental monitoring

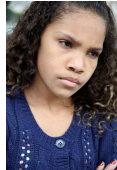
• School Factors

- Perceptions of safety, school climate
- Low teacher support
- Lack of clear rules
- Commitment to school



Effects of Cyberbullying

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Suicidal ideation
- Lower self-esteem
- Poor academic performance



- But are these above and beyond effects of traditional bullying?
- Most research suggests that CB predicts negative outcomes after controlling for TB, although the variance is small (1%-4%).

Cyberbullying Prevention

- Some universal bullying prevention programs have research outcomes that indicate a reduction in cyberbullying as well as in-person bullying, *despite* their minimal or lack of components designed to specifically target cyberbullying.

Examples: Kiva in Finland; VISC Social Competence Program, Second Step Violence Prevention Program in the U.S.

- And at least one cyberbullying prevention program has research outcomes that indicate a reduction in traditional bullying.

Example: Media Heroes, Germany (Long Version)



Cyberbullying Prevention Program Outcomes

- Suggests effective programs may impact both types of bullying, since risk factors/dynamics are similar
- Some successful cyberbullying prevention programs were implemented at schools that were already implementing bullying prevention programs (ConRed Program - Spain)



Mixed Results

- Most stand alone cyberbullying prevention programs have shown little impact (Della Cioppa, O'Neil, Craig, 2015).
- A content analysis of Internet Safety Education Programs (ISE) by Jones, Mitchell, Kimberly and Walsh (2014) found that many did not use effective prevention strategies such as "skill-based objectives, adequate dosage, and practice opportunities" and relied too heavily on simplistic messaging.
- The authors called into question treating ISE as a stand-alone issue.



The overlap between bullying and cyberbullying – focus group results

- There is almost always an in-person aspect to online bullying and conflict.
- While it occasionally leads to physical or verbal altercations, more often it results in gossip or exclusion.
- An observation: Some of the middle school students had difficulty discussing cyberbullying as separate entities because of the overlapping aspects of both.
- Another observation: There is a fluid aspect when discussing online and offline bullying with middle school youth.

Revisiting the “Overlap” Concept

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine conclude that *“cyberbullying should be considered within the context of bullying rather than as a separate entity.”*

— *Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy, and Practice*

Mistaken Approaches to Preventing Cyberbullying/Bullying

- School/community assemblies — only a short-term approach
- Fear-based messaging
- Presuming bullying and cyberbullying are separate and exclusive concepts



Prevention Programs Focusing on Both Methods of Bullying

- CyberProgram 2.0 – Spain
- No Trap Program – Italy

Both programs demonstrated significant decreases over time for both bullying and cyberbullying victimization and perpetration.

Researchers noted that the most promising approach appears to be one that focuses on both in-person and online bullying.

OBPP fits this approach.


The OBPP and Cyberbullying

- School-wide prevention program with interventions at 4 levels
 - School-wide, Classroom, Individual, Community
- Demonstrated effectiveness:
 - reducing bullying perpetration and victimization, improving students' perceptions of adult responsiveness
- Cyberbullying focus:
 - Training of staff
 - Survey of students, including cyberbullying experiences
 - CB curriculum for use during class meeting (including peer leaders for MS/HS, focus on positive uses of technology)

Recommended Strategies to Prevent and Address Cyberbullying

- A multi-tiered approach
- Staff training on prevention and intervention
- Policies that address both bullying and cyberbullying
- Parental involvement through active mediation
- Efforts to improve family functioning (trust and support)

Students agree that youth have a role to play in preventing and responding to cyberbullying.



Listening and giving in-person support are the core "helping" concepts

- "It's more mature to talk things out."
- "Tell them to block them; don't confront them (online)."
- "Support the person, listen and talk with them."
- "You can help a friend face-to-face easier than inside social media, which may just fan the flame."
- "Even screen shots and messages can be used against you. So it's better to support the person in person."
- "Everything is so contextual that it's hard to report – so it's best to just talk in person."

Note that their responses imply that they usually know the people involved in online bullying.

Need for SEL Skills

- Self-Awareness** (e.g., identifying and recognizing own emotions, recognizing strengths)
- Social Awareness** (e.g., empathy, perspective taking, respect for others)
- Responsible Decision Making** (e.g., evaluation and reflection, personal responsibility)
- Self-Management** (e.g., impulse control, emotional regulation, stress management)
- Relationship Skills** (e.g., working cooperatively, listening skills, negotiating conflict, help seeking and providing)

CASEL – Social and Emotional Learning Core Competencies

Promising Strategies

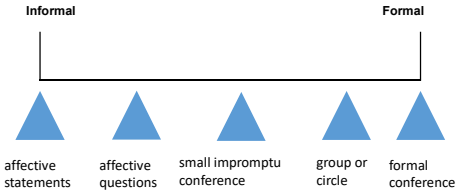
- Social norms
- Bystander intervention
- Restorative (or family) conferencing

Restorative Practices — A Promising Approach

"Restorative Practices are a framework for building community and for responding to challenging behavior through authentic dialogue, coming to understanding, and making things right."

— *International Institute for Restorative Practices, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania*

Restorative Practices Continuum



Informal | **Formal**

- affective statements
- affective questions
- small impromptu conference
- group or circle
- formal conference

International Institute for Restorative Practices
www.iirp.edu

We need more research . . .

- Two-thirds of the victims who participate in family conferencing report a greater sense of security and feelings of closure after conferencing. (Joudo-Larson, 2014) They also report less fear and anger and more sympathy for offenders.
- While family conferencing has provided positive outcomes for victims in other forms of crime, we need further research to determine if the positive outcomes will transfer to family conferences that involve cyberbullying situations. (Langoes and Sarre, 2015)

Case examples that involved technology

- 5th grade girl (age 11) cyberbullying peer on Instagram
- 13 year old boys, one hit the other over cell phone picture
- High school girl (16) set up threatening hate site targeting peer online
- No recidivism reported in the case examples. Victims, offenders, and supporters satisfied with the outcomes.

Questions for student offender

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since the incident?
- Who do you think has been affected by your actions?
- How have they been affected?

Questions for the student who was harmed

- What was your reaction to the incident?
- How do you feel about what happened?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- How did your family and friends react to the incident?

Agreement Phase

1. What would you like from today's conference
2. Resolution Agreement:
 - Restitution and/or counseling
 - Safety issues
 - Retaliation issues
 - Follow-up meetings if needed

Conferencing May Be an Effective Intervention

- When aggressor(s) takes responsibility for his/her actions (this is not a mediation)
- All parties are willing to meet voluntarily
- Focus is on repairing the harm
- Facilitator has training and follows the script
- Is part of a broader restorative practices and bullying prevention/SEL approach

Feedback From a Recently Trained Administrator

“Overall, it went well, but being completely neutral was hard because I’m the type that always uses an opportunity to give advice to our students. The next one I’m going to have (a teacher who was trained) facilitate, as long as its not with her own students. The counselor and other administrator who participated **loved it as well.**”

Feedback From Principal of a Middle School

“I’m not sure who is in charge of the "restorative justice" model (at the county level), but our assistant principal has been a rock star with it! We have had such positive results with it so far. He did one with a teacher and student. He just did another one with 2 students and their parents.”

From an Assistant Principal

“During the Restorative Conference training I was immediately intrigued by the concept but I wasn’t sure if it would actually work. After facilitating a few conferences, the students, parents, and teachers have voiced their appreciation that the issue was being resolved as opposed to simply issuing punitive consequences.”

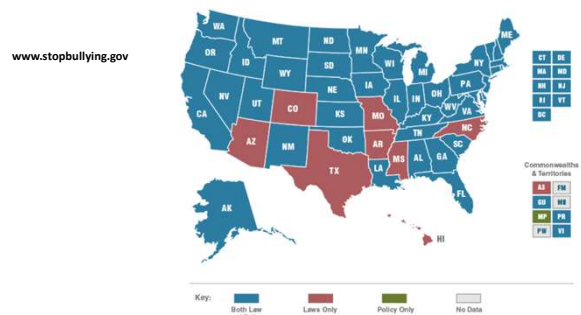
And From a Parent . . .

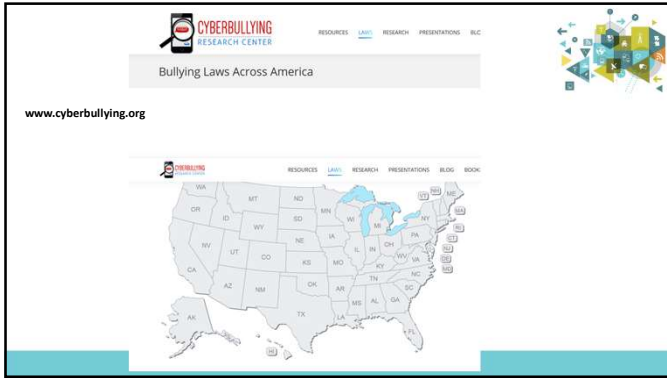
Dear (Principal), I am so satisfied!!!! The restorative conference was very much so needed! I sense in my spirit a domino effect will spring forth from this!!!! I see other schools getting involved. This will be EPIC!!! Yes!!!! The orchestration was outstanding!

State Laws and Policies on Cyberbullying

- All states have laws that require schools to have policies on bullying; most include cyberbullying.
- State laws vary significantly!
- To view your state laws/sample policies, visit:
 - www.stopbullying.gov
 - www.cyberbullying.org

State Anti-Bullying Laws & Policies





Resources/Helpful Links

- Common Sense Media – commonsensemedia.org
- Connect Safely – connectsafely.org
- International Bullying Prevention Association --www.ibpaworld.org
- Family Online Safety Institute – fosi.org
- Olweus Bullying Prevention Program
 - olweus.sites.clemson.edu/
 - Violencepreventionworks.org

“Damaged children need people, not increasingly severe punishment.”
 — Paul Dix, behavioral management specialist, teacher network blog, *The Guardian*

“Punishment is not the answer. Punishment is easy. It’s lazy. Redemption is hard. Redemption makes you work.”
 — Derek Landy, *The Dying of the Light*

“Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment.”
 — Mahatma Gandhi

Thank you for all you do!

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