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Bullying in Schools

By

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Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Bachelor of Integrated Studies Degree

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Abstract

Bullying is defined as aggressive acts being inflicted by one or more individuals to another individual who appears weaker. In the United States alone one in four children falls victim to bullying. Several different types of bullying are discussed including verbal, reactive, relational, racial, sexual, and cyberbullying. Characteristics of bullies and victims are provided to help readers gain an understanding of who might be a bully or a victim. The detrimental effects that bullies and victims face are described. Bully prevention programs are extremely effective in preventing bullying and changing the effects that victims and bullies experience.

Keywords: school bullying, victims, bullies, prevention programs

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Bullying in Schools

Bullying is something that occurs among all ages. It does not discriminate against race, age, disabilities, or even gender. In the entire world people are at risk of being bullied every single day. Bullying can occur anywhere, but one of the most common places for it to occur is among youth at school. What is Bullying (2017) states in United States schools 28 percent of students reported being victims of bullying in grades six through twelve and 20 percent of students reported being victims of bullying in grades nine through twelve. Bullying is defined as “one or more aggressors intentionally causing pain, harass, or repeatedly subject a helpless classmate through aggressive face-to-face behaviors” (Garaigordobil & Machimbarrena, p. 335, 2017).

In 2013, Angel Green, a fourteen-year-old girl, from Indiana hung herself as a result of bullying. She hung herself from a tree that was in front of her bus stop so that the children bullying her could see what they had done to her. These bullies had repeatedly called her names such as; slut and whore and teased her because her father was jailed for hitting her. In her suicide note Angel Green wrote that bullying is what killed her (Goad, 2008). That same year Hailee Lamberth, a thirteen-year-old epileptic girl, from Las Vegas shot herself in the head because her peers would say horrible things to her. Her peers would say things such as; “Drink Bleach and Die”, “Why don’t you die?” and even go as far as leave a voicemail saying, “Where are you? I hope you died” (Goad, 2008). In her suicide note she mentioned the names of her bullies and wanted the school to know so that her bullies would know their words hurt. In 2014, Amber Cornwell, a sixteen-year-old student, from North Carolina hung herself as a result of bullying (Goad, 2008). Amber played tennis, sang in the school choir, and was an honor-roll student.

Unfortunately, other girls did not like her at all and they made sure to let Amber know. Bullying affects the victims, sometimes so severely that they end up taking their own life.

This topic is important to me because bullying affects so many people worldwide. Having young children in public schools makes this something that could eventually affect not only my children, but also myself. Children these days are extremely harsh. When my son was in kindergarten he had to have an appendectomy. When he returned to school all he wanted to wear was sweats or any stretchy pants because he did not want to bother his incision. When he finally started the first grade he had become accustomed to wearing sweats. One day he came home from school and informed me that he no longer wanted to wear sweat pants anymore. While he never admitted to children picking on him for wearing sweats, I believe that is what happened. It just did not make sense for him to randomly come home one day and decide that he would not be wearing sweats anymore. My son is now in the third grade and occasionally makes comments about looking like a hobo if he picks out his own clothes. Bullying problems begin in elementary school. In order, to be able to protect not only my children, but also everyone, bullying is an issue that needs to be addressed and solved. In order to prevent bullying from occurring well into adulthood, bullying must first be addressed in the youth. Bullying is a communication topic because it causes harm when certain individuals do not communicate effectively. Our body language, our facial emotions, how we include or exclude another all deal with us communicating with another person.

The purpose of this paper is to allow readers to have a better understanding on what bullying is and its many components. This paper contains information from journal articles and websites. Readers will have a better understanding about what bullying is, some of the different types of bullying, how it affects bullies and victims, roles of the bystander, factors that contribute

to being a victim or a bully, prevention programs, prevention strategies, and warning signs of victims and bullies. We want to be able to find a way to keep bullying from occurring. The issue of bullying begins at the home. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state individuals who themselves have previously bullied others in school have an increased risk of having a child that will later follow the same footsteps of their parents as far as bullying in schools is concerned. The aim of this paper is to answer the question how do the effects of school bullying and prevention strategies encourage the extinction of bullying?

Literature Review

The following is a literature review covering the topic of bullying in schools and several of its components. The varying definitions of bullying will be discussed along with the different types of bullying. It will also discuss the characteristics of both bullies and victims. Once the characteristics of both have been described, it will discuss the family background and how it plays a role in bullying. Readers will also gain a glance into what sorts of roles bystanders play in all of this. Following this it will delve into the effects that bullies face as a result of bullying and the effects their victims face. This paper will also discuss some of the prevention programs that are taking place in schools. Readers will also gain insight on different strategies that can be put in place to stop bullying from occurring. The last topic the literature review will discuss is warning signs that bullies and victims exhibit.

What is bullying?

Bullying is an issue that is not only in the United States, but an issue all around the world. In order to gain a better understanding about bullying in schools one must first know what bullying is. According to Garaigordobil and Machimbarrena (2016) bullying is when one or more aggressors cause pain, harass, and subject another individual to face-to-face behavior intentionally. While Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) suggest that bullying is a form of aggression that often leads to one or more children intending to cause harm to another child that would be perceived as being unable to defend himself or herself. Book, Volk, and Hosker (2012) on the other hand define bullying as two individuals having an imbalance of power where the stronger individual causes harm to the weaker individual repeatedly. Based off of these three articles it can be determined that everyone defines bullying differently.

What is known is that bullying happens when another individual does something that causes harm to another individual. This can either be physical harm or emotional harm. Bullying can also be indirect meaning it is more so in the form of name calling, spreading rumors, encouraging others not to play or talk to another individual, or even threatening another individual (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Or it can be direct bullying meaning using means of verbal or physical aggression (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). The Violence Prevention Works (2016) website states the three main reasons why bullies bully is because they receive some sort of reward whether it be material or psychological, when they cause injury and suffering to other individuals it causes them to feel a sort of satisfaction, and they have strong needs for power and negative dominance.

All around the world people are bullied. Bullying can happen absolutely anywhere. Bullying can also affect anyone. Levine and Tamburrino (2014) state that school, the workplace, family events, sports, and within the community are all places where bullying can occur. Children can be bullied by their parents and siblings, which can result in them exhibiting the same aggressive behaviors later on in life. Bullying that takes place on playgrounds, in the classroom, and on the way to and from public places is typically done when there is not even supervision. Bullies are not going to target another person if they are around adults. They would just risk getting in trouble. Bullies will ensure that they find a target in a targeted area where there is not adequate adult supervision.

Even adults can be bullied. Bullying is not just something children deal with, adults see bullying in the workplace. Colleagues, customers, and even supervisors can all bully adults in the workplace. Dryden-Edwards and Stoppler (2017) state that in the United States more than 40 percent of workers believe that they have been bullied at some point in the workplace.

Surprisingly, more than 90 percent of women believe that another woman has undermined them at some point during their careers (Dryden-Edwards & Stoppler, 2017).

Bullying affects children, adults, minorities, and even disabled individuals. Bullying also is not gender specific. Boys will bully other boys and girls, as girls will bully other boys and girls also.

Bullying in Schools: Schools are a place for learning, but instead they are becoming a place for violence among students. Flaspohler, Elfstorm, Vanderzee, and Sink (2009) state one of the most potentially serious school violence acts is bullying. Midgett and Doumas (2016) state that in the United States bullying is a major problem that youth face. In 2013, 5.3 million students in the United States alone reported being victims of bullying (Midgett & Doumas, 2016). Aluede, Adeleke, Omoike, and Afen-Akpaida (2008) stated approximately 2.1 million bullies and 2.7 million victims are in American schools. In a matter of five years the amount of bullying victims has nearly doubled. Bullying in schools is becoming a major problem that needs to be addressed in order to prevent physical and emotional injuries in victims. Levine and Tamburrino (2016) state that possession disputes-arguments over play materials are the number one reason young children have aggressive outbursts. Not only does the problem of school bullying comprise safety, it also affects students academically, physically, socially, and emotionally (Letendre, et al., 2016). Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state that according to The National School Safety Center the most enduring and underrated problem in United States schools is bullying. In school or areas close to school such as; playgrounds and hallways is where the majority of bullying incidents occur (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Bullying is an issue that occurs worldwide in a number of different schools such as; small schools, large

schools, single sex, co-educational schools, and traditional and progressive school. (Aluede, et al., 2008). Surprisingly, bullying is less likely to occur in older teens (Aluede, et al., 2008).

Types of Bullying

There are several different types of bullying. Verbal bullying, relational bullying, racial bullying, sexual bullying, reactive bullying and cyber bullying are just a few of the different types. Naidoo, Satorius, Vries, and Taylor (2016) reported that among United States adolescents 53.6 percent reported verbal bullying, 20.8 percent reported physical bullying, 51.4 percent reported social bullying, and 13.6 percent reported electronic bullying. Based on these findings Naidoo and colleagues (2016) found verbal bullying to be the most prevalent among adolescents.

Verbal and Reactive Bullying: Jacobsen and Bauman (2007) state that verbal bullying is any form of bullying that involves verbal threats, teasing, and name-calling. Verbal bullying is often times hard to detect and intervene because it happens rapidly (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Joy (2017) states when someone is using words in a negative way, they are engaging in verbal bullying. One of the major differences between verbal bullying and physical bullying is that verbal bullying is hard to stop; it is very difficult to pinpoint the exact moment when verbal bullying is going to occur (Joy, 2017). With verbal bullying nobody will ever see physical marks, what they do not know is that the victim of verbal bullying is dealing with deep long-term mental scars (Joy, 2017). Verbal bullying has been known to cause depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and even has resulted in some individuals committing suicide (Joy, 2017).

Smokowski and Kopasz (2005), define reactive bullying as pertaining to bullies who are impulsive. These bullies will typically start a fight with the intended target and then claim self-defense when it's all said and done. Reactive bullying is typically the hardest type of bullying to identify. National Voices for Equality, Education, and Enlightenment (NVEEE) (2016) states

that reactive bullies will make themselves appear as the victims most of the time. These types of bullies will constantly taunt their peers until one of them snaps and exerts physical or verbal aggression (NVEEE, 2016). NVEEE (2016) also states that the victims of reactive bullies are typically bullies themselves.

Relational Bullying: Jacobsen and Bauman (2007) define relational bullying as individuals participating in social isolation behaviors that include spreading rumors, leaving others out of certain activities, and gossiping. Girls are normally the ones to engage in this form of bullying especially in grades five through eight (Gordon, 2017a). The reasons girls will engage in relational bullying is because they want to be able to build their own social status while bringing down the social status of their target. Relational bullying is a type of bullying that most times goes completely unnoticed by adults and parents. The children that engage in this form of bullying are able to manipulate, control, and bully others all without adults ever even knowing it happened (Gordon, 2017a). Gordon (2017a) states that this type of bullying is known as emotional bullying or even the “mean girl” phenomenon. Relational bullying involves excluding people from groups, spreading rumors, breaking confidences, sharing secrets, and recruiting others to dislike a target (Gordon, 2017a). Although, relation bullying is often times hard to identify, some signs to watch out for would be: students talking badly about others, backstabbing another student, making fun of someone for how they dress or how they look, excluding and ostracizing others, leaving hurtful or mean messages where others could see it, cyber bullying, intimidating others, using means of peer pressure to get others to engage in bullying, establishing rules for members of the social group, forming cliques, and spreading rumors or engaging in gossip (Gordon, 2017a).

Boredom is alleviated and excitement is created, peer pressure, stemming from low self-esteem, elimination of the competition, and is a learned behavior are all reasons why children engage in relational bullying (Gordon, 2017a). One thing girls, especially teenage girls, like to do is sharing not only negative information about someone else, but also sharing juicy stories. Younger girls thrive on spreading rumors, sharing secrets, and creating drama (Gordon, 2017a). The reason some girls participate in relational bullying is because of peer pressure. These girls want to be able to feel accepted and be able to fit in with their peers and they feel the only way to accomplish this goal would be to starting spreading rumors (Gordon, 2017a). Another reason girls might engage in relational bullying is that they are trying to hide the fact that they have low self-esteem (Gordon, 2017a). If a girl feels uncomfortable with something about herself she is going to do anything in her power to make herself feel better. If attacking somebody for how they dress or look is going to take the attention from their own insecurities then that is exactly what is going to happen (Gordon, 2017a). Jealousy can also be a reason why girls engage in this form of bullying. If they feel somebody looks better than them, is more popular, or even smarter these bullies will do anything to make them appear less desirable to their peers (Gordon, 2017a). Finally, relational bullying is a learned behavior. If children see grown women gossiping or talking poorly about their peers, these children are going to feel as though these actions are acceptable (Gordon, 2017a).

Racial Bullying: Whitted and Dupper (2005) define racial bullying as involving the use of graffiti, mocking another's culture, making racial slurs, and even making offensive gestures. Nittle (2017) states bullies will target anyone that they envy or who stands out. In schools that are predominantly white and have only a few people of color, these students of color are going to stick out and become easy targets for the bullies (Nittle, 2017). NoBullying.com (2015) states

that in the United States among all ethnicity groups, Asians are the ones most targeted by racial bullying. In many cases racial bullying has been known to start in young children because they are now aware that what they are doing is wrong and because racial bullies learn the behavior at home (NoBullying.com, 2015). In order for racial bullying to no longer be a prominent problem everybody has to be involved. Parents, teachers, school administrators, and even the bullies have to be able to cooperate in order to rectify the situation and prevent it from happening further (NoBullying.com, 2015). For children who fall the victims of bullying, parents and adults will need to ensure that the child knows their own ethnicity is nothing to be ashamed about (NoBullying.com, 2017).

Sexual Bullying: Whitted and Dupper (2005) define sexual bullying as any form of behavior involving a sexual nature such as: making jokes, passing around pictures, starting rumors, and passing unwanted notes. Gordon (2017b) states that sexual bullying is becoming more common in tweens and teens and not only can it occur online, but also in person. Sexual bullying can also be very hard to identify by adults because it does not necessarily leave any visible marks (Gordon, 2017b). Parents have to be willing to talk to their children regularly about sexual bullying and healthy sexual development (Gordon, 2017b). Sexual bullying includes actions such as; making jokes that are sexual about someone, making sexual gestures to someone, making comments relating to a person's sexual preference and activity, calling someone names that are derogatory and explicit, touching and grabbing someone in a way that is sexual, using texts or the internet to spread sexual rumors about another person, posting comments or pictures that are sexual on social media sites, sexting, pressuring someone to sext, and engaging in slut-shaming or public shaming in a sexual nature (Gordon, 2017b).

Some reasons why children engage in sexual bullying is to feel powerful, appear sexually mature, generate excitement, reduce insecurity, remove the competition, and mimic others (Gordon, 2017b). When children feel weak or powerless they will often times engage in sexual bullying (Gordon, 2017b). These children want to be able to gain some sort of control over their own lives therefore they target individuals who are weaker than them. In some cases children who sexually bully do it because they have either been sexually bullied or harassed or they do it because they are biased towards a particular gender or lifestyle (Gordon, 2017b). Children want to be able to feel accepted and be perceived as mature from their peers. Gordon (2017b) states that in order for boys to be able to gain acceptance from their peers and appear sexually mature they often times will sexually bully girls. When girls engage in sexual bullying they are doing so to other girls to diminish the girl's social status (Gordon, 2017b). There are some individuals who engage in sexual bullying simply for the excitement they gain. They enjoy the reactions they receive when they share juicy stories, rumors, and negative details about someone else (Gordon, 2017b). Some individuals engage in this form of bullying because they have insecurities of their own and they want to be able to diminish another's reputation because they are jealous of this person (Gordon, 2017b). Lastly, some individuals engage in sexual bullying because they see others doing it whether it is adults they know or people on the big screen (Gordon, 2017b).

Cyber bullying: Bonanno and Hymel (2013) define cyber bullying as bullying that uses electronic devices to harm the intended victim verses using physical means. Antoniadou, Kokkinos, and Markos (2016) define cyber bullying as “an aggressive, intentional act that is carried out by a group or an individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly over time, against a victim who cannot easily defend him/herself” (p. 27). Based off of this definition alone the only major difference between traditional bullying and cyber bullying is the use of electronic

devices to carry out the bullying. On the other hand Beran, Mishna, McInroy, and Shariff (2015) identify key differences between cyber bully and traditional bullying as cyberbullies feeling less empathy towards their targets because they are unable to physically witness the way that the target reacts. Cyber bullying also has the potential to reach more targets than traditional bullying ever would (Beran, et al., 2015). As technology continues to emerge, cyber bullying is becoming more of a concern. Twyman, Saylor, Taylor, and Comeaux (2010) state that even children who are involved in traditional forms of bullying are becoming more involved in using cyberbullying. The reasoning behind this is that cyberbullying can occur at any time and they are able to do so anonymously, meaning their victims will not know who is inflicting the harm.

Causes of Bullies

Now that the definition of bullying has been explored and a few different types of bullying, one must ask what causes someone to bully others. Naidoo and colleagues (2016) state that children who bully are more likely to come from a high socioeconomic environment. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state bullies typically share some of the same characteristics even if they are not engaging in the same types of aggression. Bullies are more likely to be destructive, dominant, hot-tempered, impulsive, overly aggressive, and have a short fuse when it comes to frustration (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Bullies want the victims to be submissive to their power. Individuals that engage in cyberbullying are more likely to be intense users of the Internet (Twyman, et al., 2010). Research has found that individuals who have been bullied in the past are more likely to engage in cyberbullying themselves. Beran, et al., (2015) states that children who are previously bullied are provided with the justifications to consider becoming a perpetrator later on. Victims will begin to wonder why being bullied is okay, but it is not okay to

bully someone else. Engaging in cyberbullying would be a way for the victim to get back at the perpetrator without him or her even knowing who it was.

Hebert, Cenat, Blais, Lavoie, and Guerrier (2016) noted “mental health problem such as suicidal ideations, psychological distress, and low self-esteem were all significantly associated with both cyberbullying and bullying” (p. 626). On the other hand Book and colleagues (2011) states that average adolescents are worse off than bullies are when it comes to mental health. While both boys and girls are likely to engage in bullying, research has shown that boys are more likely than girls to engage in bullying. Aluede and colleagues (2008) mention bullies are more likely to be males, athletic, popular, having excellent social skills, are able to manipulate others with ease, and have the ability to attract followers. The amount of parental involvement a child has, has also been linked to bullying. Klein, Cornell, and Konold (2012) states substance abuse and depression have been linked to peer aggression and bullying. Some forms of drugs act as a depressant, which can explain the depression these individuals are experiencing. Aluede and colleagues (2008) state that bullying is often a cry for help and that roughly 30 to 40 percent of bullies have some form of depression. Interestingly, some research has shown that parents who were bullies in school were more likely to have a child that was a bully (Craig & Pepler, 2007).

Theory of mind has also been linked to bullying. Theory of mind (ToM) is referred to as the everyday understanding and predictions of other people’s behaviors based on their mental state (Shakoor et al., 2011). Theory of mind allows individuals the ability to be able to understand that others have beliefs, intentions, and desires just as he or she does. Poor emotion recognition, poor communication, and poor executive function in children is associated with having poor Theory of mind (Shakoor, et al., 2011)). Shakoor and colleagues (2011) found that children who have a poor theory of mind develop a higher risk of becoming a bully when they

battle with socioeconomic status, child maltreatment, and bullying. Not only does theory of mind result in bullying, but also the life that the individual experiences at home. Both theory of mind and home life contribute to an individual becoming a bully. Interestingly, some studies have found that individuals with poor Theory of mind have a hard time making correct attributions for behaviors of others are sometimes more likely to engage in bullying activities. Shakoor and colleagues (2011) state emotional and behavioral problems in children are associated with poor Theory of mind and bullying involvement. Shakoor and colleagues (2011) conducted a study on same-sex twins born between 1994 and 1995. Home-visit assessments were conducted at age five, seven, ten, and twelve. The results showed that by age twelve for both bullies and victims poor Theory of mind was independently associated (Shakoor, et al., 2011). In other words, poor Theory of Mind by age twelve was not found to be associated with child-specific or family factors. The main findings show a strong developmental marker for victim of bully-victim status in children having a poor Theory of Mind (Shakoor, et al., 2011). Shakoor and colleagues (2011) suggest that in order to reduce the vulnerability of becoming a bully in later years, in early childhood the developmental delays associated with Theory of mind need to be targeted.

Students with disabilities

Rose and Gage (2017) found that over the course of three years students with disabilities such as; Autism spectrum disorder, emotional disturbance, other health impairment, and speech-language disorders compared to students with no disabilities had greater rates of victimization and engaged in higher rate of perpetration. Rose and Gage (2017) do mention that individuals with learning disabilities are 1.3 times more likely to be victims of bullying and individuals with autism spectrum disorder, emotional and behavioral disorders, and intellectual disabilities are also more likely to fall victims of bullying compared to peers with no disabilities. Rose and Gage

(2017) conducted a longitudinal study involving 6,531 students in grades three to twelve. Of the students selected 43 percent were Latino, 36 percent were White, and 16 percent were African-American. Gender distribution of the sample was 50 percent female and 50 percent male. 66 percent of students in the sample received free or reduced lunch, 10 percent were English language learners, and 16 percent were part of special education classes (Rose & Gage, 2017). The study focused on two main factors; bully victimization and bully perpetration. In relation to bully victimization having feelings hurt by other students, getting hit or threatened by other students, and having mean rumors or lies being spread about victim to others were all factors looked at (Rose & Gage, 2017). In relation to bully perpetration pushing or hitting peers as a result of anger, spreading lies or rumors about peers, and hitting, pushing, and spreading rumors on or at the bus stop were all factors looked at (Rose & Gage, 2017). Results found that students who were male, Hispanic, received free or reduced lunch, and classified as English language learners were more likely to have disabilities (Rose & Gage, 2017). This study found that students with disabilities reported being hit or threatened more than their peers, but they were also more likely to spread mean lies and rumors about their peers. As a result, the study concluded that students with disabilities were more likely to be victims of bullying, but also more likely to be perpetrators of bullying (Rose & Gage, 2017). The most victimization was reported in students with Autism Spectrum Disorder followed by emotional disturbance (Rose & Gage, 2017). Students with emotional disturbance and other health issues such as; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder were reported to have higher bullying perpetration rates as compared to students with disabilities (Rose & Gage, 2017).

Rose and Gage (2017) mentioned in relation to students with disabilities 19.6 percent experience verbal bullying, 11 percent experience social-relational bullying, and 9.9 percent

experience physical bullying. For students with no disabilities 15.3 percent experience verbal bullying, 7.8 percent experience social-relational bullying, and 6.8 percent experience physical bullying (Rose & Gage, 2017). In contrast to the study Rose and Gage conducted, Blake, Zhou, Kwok, and Benz (2016) state “students with disabilities are presumed to be at greater risk of being the target of bullying than to act as perpetrators of bullying”. Blake and colleagues (2016) gain their information from two decades of research comparing students with no disabilities to students with significant social impairments and physical mobility limitations, stating that students with disabilities reported higher rate of bullying victimization. Blake and colleagues (2016) decided to conduct a study to try and find out in students with disabilities what risk factors exist that predict bully, victim, or bully/victim outcomes. The participants of the study were classified as having disabilities such as; learning disabilities, speech or language impairment, intellectual disability, severe emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, other health impaired, autism, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (Blake, et al., 2016). More males (1,810) participated than females (1,070) and their ages ranged from 15 to 19 years old. Major ethnicity groups were Caucasian followed behind by African American, Hispanic, and others such as; Asian, American Indian, bi- or multi-ethnic backgrounds (Blake, et al., 2016). Perceived safety, school belonging, students’ social interactions, emotional and behavioral functioning, and perceived social support were all measurements included in this study. The results found 3.7 percent of students reported being a victim and a bully, 10.3 percent of students reported only being a victim, 6.5 percent of students reported engaging in bullying, and 79.5 percent of students reported no bullying involvement. Blake and colleagues (2016) found that Caucasians, compared to African American students, were seven times more likely to be bully and victim, and compared to Hispanic students, Caucasians were 16 times more likely to be bully

and victim. In relation to victim only the study found that Caucasian students compared to African American students were seven times more likely to be victims. The study was unable to find any significant differences between gender, age, disability type, household income, school belonging, social interactions, and social support between bully-victim behavior and victims of bullying (Blake, et al., 2016). In relation to bullying others, the study found that students who had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder were three times more likely to bully their peers, and students who engaged in unstructured activities were also more likely to bully their peers (Blake, et al., 2016). Students with other health impairment were four times less likely to bully others. The main findings of this study were that ethnicity plays a vital role in predictive risk in relation to bullying (Blake, et al., 2016). The study also found that only when students had poor interpersonal skills and a disability were they more likely to bully and be victims (Blake, et al., 2016).

Characteristics of Victims

Anyone can become a victim of bullying. Naidoo and colleagues (2016) mention that children who are victims of bullying are more likely to come from a low socioeconomic environment. Aluede and colleagues (2008) stated bullies will target individuals who are different than themselves once they find these differences they will do anything in their power to exploit the differences. They choose victims who they feel will not retaliate, typically individuals with low self-esteem. Midgett and Dumas (2016) state emotional, academic difficulties, low self-esteem, and depression are all associated with victims of bullying. Victims see themselves as unattractive, unintelligent, insignificant, and most times put the blame of being bullied on themselves (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). They feel that if they were not this way than the bullying would not happen to them. As far as physical characteristics go bullies tend to go for the

individuals with noticeable physical characteristics. They pick individuals based on the amount of muscle mass they have. They are not going to start tormenting somebody who is bigger and stronger than they are. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state that victims of bullying typically are weak frail, and small in stature. It could end badly if the bullies decided to pick on someone bigger. They look for individuals who wear glasses, are overweight, or have obvious physical differences like big ears or acne (Aluede, et al., 2008). Bullies will pick a victim that appears physically or emotionally weaker than them. Bullies are even drawn to individuals with disabilities because they are different.

Rose and Gage (2017) state 14.5 percent of youth without disabilities report victimization compared to 21.6 percent of youth with disabilities whom report victimization. That is nearly a ten percent higher rate of victimization among youth with disabilities. These students are different and have either mental or physical differences that set them apart from their peers. Blake and colleagues (2016) state that students are more likely to be socially excluded by peers if they have more visible disabilities such as; physical mobility limitations and autism spectrum disorder. When these children with disabilities do not have the support they would gain from peers it almost extends an invitation to bullies welcoming them to their next victim. Blake and colleagues (2016) state bully victimization can be protected and bullying behavior can be mitigated when students have friendships and social interactions with friendly peers.

Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state, “about two-thirds of bully victims are passive or submissive and the other one-third have the aggressive attitudes” (p. 103). Bullies enjoy the satisfaction they receive from picking on somebody smaller. It makes them feel superior. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) mention that victims of bullying also tend to be more cautious, insecure, more sensitive than peers, they do not have good communication skills or problem-

solving skills, are more quiet, and anxious. These individuals tend to keep to themselves. They also do not take well to bullying. Victims of bullying will typically result to crying and withdrawing when attacked by bullies (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). When these individuals cry and withdraw it only satisfies that superior feeling bullies feel.

Role of the bystander

Bullying is not just something that affects the children who are the victims of it, but it also affects the children who witness the bullying occurring. Midgett and Dumas (2016) state that these children who witness the bullying are known as bystanders. More than two thirds of students report being a bystander to bullying unfortunately, these bystanders have been found to be at a greater risk of developing substance abuse and have a higher risk of developing nonclinical outcomes as compared to other students (Midgett & Dumas, 2016). Bystanders have been found to have four different roles that they can be in. Bystanders can choose to carry the assistant's role in which they would help the bully victimize the target (Midgett & Dumas, 2016). They can carry the reinforcer's role where they would just laugh about the situation while doing nothing to stop it (Midgett & Dumas, 2016). Bystanders that reinforce a bully's behavior are only making the situation worse. When a bully is reinforced for their behavior they will continue this behavior until they no longer gain that satisfaction. These are the children who simply sit back and enjoy another individual be humiliated. Bystanders can also carry the role of outsiders. These are the ones who will not pick sides with either party and typically will walk away from the situation, but will not tell an adult of the situation either (Midgett & Dumas, 2016). Finally, bystanders can also carry the role of defenders these are the individuals who will actually step in to stop the bullying from happening. They are also the ones who will try to console the victims of bullying afterwards (Midgett & Dumas, 2016).

Family Background

The families of bullies and victims are not all that similar. With bullies, parental involvement is normally very minimal, whereas with victims, parental involvement can almost be perceived as being overbearing. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state in the United States the parents of bullies can be hostile, rejecting, and indifferent to their children. These parents are not normally around, therefore parents typically do not know whereabouts of their children or activities that they are engaging in. If parents do by chance find out that their children are engaging in bullying activities, no punishment is typically given. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state when parents become aware of the bullying situation their children is involved in they often times make up excuses for their behavior. They resort to saying “boys will be boys” or that it is just a rite of passage (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2015). These parents do not hold their children accountable for their actions at all. When parents do decide to discipline their children, it normally is not consistent. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) say when children are actually punished it is a form of physical punishment and in the form of an angry emotional outburst which often leads to the child being ignored in the end for long periods of time. Punishment for these children basically goes from being almost nonexistent to extreme. As a result, these children believe that aggressive acts can and will cause them to meet their goals.

Parental involvement in victims is more than involvement in bullies. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state parents of victimized children notice their child being anxious and insecure as a result they develop parenting styles that are overprotective and sheltering. These parents believe that if they become overprotecting and sheltering that it might protect their child from burrowing deeper into the hole. These parents want to protect their children from anything and everything that could cause them harm. Naidoo and colleagues (2016) state that some of the most

likely children to be bullied are those that are close to their parents. Victim's parents occasionally avoid conflict because they feel their children will not know how to cope. As a result, victims do not learn the necessary skills for dealing with conflict associated with bullying (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Some research has shown that some parents become overly involved in their child's activities to compensate for their child's social deficiencies (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Over involvement from parents might even be a cause and consequence of bullying (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). In contrast, Garaigordobil and Machimbarrena (2017) states that the risk of aggressiveness is increased in children that have a lack of affection, dedication, low supervision, no clarity of limits or rules, and low parental support. Not only, can low parental support be involved in an individual becoming a bully, but it can also shape an individual into becoming a victim.

Effects bullies face

Bullies, just like victims, also face effects as a result. Bullying typically begins in grade school. It has been found that ongoing bullying can lead to more violent behavior in later grades. Mental health difficulties are something that many bullies experience (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). "Nearly one third had attention-deficit disorder, 12.5 percent had depression, and 12.5 percent had oppositional-conduct disorder" (Smokowski & Kopasz, p. 103, 2005). Raskuaskas and Stoltz (2007) found that delinquency in late adolescence and early adulthood, poor psychosocial adjustment, externalizing problems, and academic problems are all issues associated with being a bully. Surprisingly, research has found that individuals who bully are more likely to underachieve in school, have issues in an employment setting, and have an increased risk of developing antisocial development in adulthood (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Whitted and Dupper (2005) also found that children are more likely to become involved in the

criminal justice system if they bully. Meaning these children are more likely to end up in the criminal justice system because they are engaging in criminal activities. By the age of 24, it was found that 60 percent of children who were bullies in grade 9-12 had at least one conviction and 40 percent had more than three convictions (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Research has also found that individuals who bully are more likely to be involved in excessive drinking and drugs compared to victims and bully-victims (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). In comparison, Naidoo, and colleagues (2016) mention as perpetrators of bullying grow older they are more likely to be involved in substance abuse. Research has found that individuals who bully in school are more likely to have children who bully, have displayed aggression toward their spouses, and use severe physical punishment on their children (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Parenting style in the home can lead to children becoming bullies. Research has found that bullies were more likely to have parents with permissive and negligent parenting styles. Garaigordobil and Machimbarrena (2017) found that parents of severe aggressors of traditional bullying compared to parents of children who had no signs of aggressive behavior showed signs of having more parental stress, less parental competence, and using more authoritarian and permissive parenting styles.

Effects of bullying on victims

Victims of bullying face long-term and short-term effects. These are problems that result because of bullying that affect their everyday life. These are children who go to school everyday fearing harassment, taunting, and humiliation (Aluede, et al., 2008). Both boys and girls that reported bullying admitted to being depressed. Victims of bullying are also more likely to be suicidal (Aluede, et al., 2008). Surprisingly, research has found that suicide is more likely to be attempted by girls, but ending life by suicide is more likely to be committed by boys (Klein, et

al., 2012). Victims do not see themselves as normal people, they do not feel like they can even relate to their peers. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) found that if bullying continues victims could begin to see themselves as being failures and outcasts. In the beginning, they may feel just like everyone else, but eventually the constant torment will begin to wear him or her down. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) also found that suicidal ideation, feelings of abandonment; loneliness, reduced academic performance, increase apprehension, and chronic absenteeism are all problems that victims of bullying often face. Both Smokowski & Kopasz (2005) and Aluede and colleagues (2008) found an increased risk of suicidal tendencies between victims of bullying. Beran, et al., (2015) mention cyber bullied children are also at risk for developing a sense of loneliness, distress, lack or loss of friendships, anger, lack of safety at school, not being accepted by peers, low self-esteem, physical injuries, alcohol and drug use, having possession of weapons, and eating disorders.

Not only are victims of bullying dealing with emotional wounds they often times have to deal with physical wounds too. Bruises, cuts, scratches, torn clothing, and damaged property are all things victims of bullying experience (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Midgett and Doumas (2016) found that feeling unsafe, having a lower achievement, the feeling of not belonging, and feeling sad were all problems that victims of bullying experience. Victims can also experience internal problems as a result of bullying. Victims can experience headaches, migraines, eczema, psoriasis, athlete's foot, ulcers, sweating, trembling, panic attacks, irritable bowel syndrome, aches and pains in the joints and muscles (Aluede, et al., 2008).

Cornell, Gregory, Huang, and Fan (2013) and Aluede and colleagues (2008) found a correlation between individuals who reported being bullied and dropping out of school. Victims of bullying were more likely to drop out of high school as a result of the implications of bullying

received in previous years. This could result in victims having a difficult time concentrating on not only their schoolwork, but also their academic performance (Aluede, et al., 2008). Whitted and Dupper (2005) mention roughly 160,000 students in the United States stay home from school each day because they have an immense amount of fear of being bullied.

Since most bullying occurs in school research has found that victims often time avoid going to school by missing at least one day a month and when in school avoiding isolated areas such as restrooms (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state the development of eating disorders among adolescent girls is strongly associated with victimization and internalizing disorders. Unfortunately, for victims the hardships they face as a result of bullying can lead them long into adulthood. Most former victims of bullying reported high numbers of issues with their personal relationships in adulthood. Smokowski and Kospasz (2005) mention male victims develop psychosocial problems such as having a problem of being oneself around women that can cause problems in the sexual part of the relationship. It has also been found that in the most extreme cases of victimization, some victims have retaliated by murdering those who had committed the bullying (Smokowski & Kopasz 2005). Victims with children occasionally have a difficult time developing conflict resolution skills. As a result, they risk their children becoming future victims.

Prevention

Garaigordobil and Machimbarrena (2017) found that in order to have a positive effect on the reduction of bullying and cyber bullying the use of authoritarian and permissive parenting styles would have to be decreased, parental stress that parents face would need to be decreased, and parental competence would need to be increased. In comparison McCormac (2014) states in the lives of students who were bullied parent, teacher, classmate, and school support all had a

positive influence. Surprisingly, Ziv and Dolev (2013) found that when music was played there showed significantly reduced bullying occurrence, lower arousal levels, and higher enjoyment of recess. Cornell and colleagues (2012) found that students are less motivated to attend school, have poorer academic performance, and must be in a school climate that is full of fear and insecurity all because of bullying.

In order to prevent bullying from happening, measures have to be taken in the school environment. McCormac (2014) mentions students are required to receive some sort of bullying education in forty states as mandated by law. Whitted and Dupper (2005) state school-level, classroom-level, and student-level interventions must be implemented in order to make a change. School-level intervention programs main purpose is to change the overall culture and climate that students feel in the school. Classroom-level intervention programs are meant more to target adults and teachers inside the school. Finally, student-level intervention programs are meant to actually target both small and large groups of bullies and victims. In comparison, McCormac (2014) states individual counseling, teacher training, classroom curriculum, conflict resolution training, and the use of multidisciplinary approaches were all strategies used in the most effective interventions. In order to have effective prevention programs, teachers and students have to be made aware that bullying is a problem. It cannot be ignored otherwise it is going continuously get worse. "It is believed that bullying among elementary school-age children may be the antecedent to more violent behavior in later grades, it is critical that prevention begins in elementary school and include multiple years of intervention using well-tested, standardized interventions with detailed lesson plans and student materials" (Whitted & Dupper, p. 169, 2005). Bullying education is believed to be more effective when incorporated with children's literature because of how overcrowded the curriculum already is (McCormac, 2014). Bullying

intervention programs are short-term solutions if only implemented in elementary schools. In order to make bullying prevention a long-term solution, programs must be implemented in grades beyond elementary school and adults have to be willing to help in these efforts. Whitted and Dupper (2005) state that in order for intervention efforts to be successful school staff has to recognize that bullying is an ongoing problem and every adult in the school must understand that each adult plays a vital role in ending bullying. In order to have effective prevention programs everyone must be involved, this includes parents, teachers, and any other adult in a child's life. Whitted and Dupper (2005) also state in order to see the best possible outcome for bullying prevention strategies and programs they have to be developmentally appropriate, enjoyable and meaningful for the students, culturally sensitive, provide necessary training, and be cost-effective. If a child is only handed a brochure about why bullying is wrong chances are that child will not even take a second look at it. It will just become another piece of paper that ends up in the trash. McCormac (2014) states there are multiple ways in which students can be engaged such as: small or large group discussions, writing, role-playing, artwork, and activities that analyze literal interpretations of books and turn them into personal meanings and real-life applications. Programs that are the most effective have to be able to draw in the attention of the child. If the program does not have the attention of the child, the program will likely fail. If bad programs are costing less, but are not helping the problem school officials will just end up with a bigger problem on their hands. School officials would be better off spending more resources and money on an effective program especially if the program is guaranteed to yield the best results of reducing or even stopping bullying completely.

Bully-Proofing Your School: Whitted and Dupper (2005) define Bully-Proofing Your School as being a multilevel program that provides all students with the necessary skills and

courage to stand up to bullies and improves the school climate. This is not just a program that begins in elementary school and ends, but it is a program that is implemented well into middle school. Menard, Grotpetter, Gianola, and O'Neal (2008) state that heightened awareness that bullying is a problem, being taught effective protective skills for dealing with bullying, providing victims of bullying with assistance, having a resistance towards victimization, and ensuring a positive school climate is created are the major components of this intervention program. A questionnaire is used in schools to assess the extent of bullying. Once the extent of bullying has been assessed classrooms will create rules and expectations regarding zero tolerance to bullying (Menard, et al., 2008). Midgett and Dumas (2016) state students are taught creative problem solving, adult help, relate and join, empathy, and stand up and speak out which is also known as the CARES strategies. Materials on the program and how to develop bully-proofing efforts in school are given to teachers and educators for free (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Research has shown that there is an association between bullying and bystanders. Midgett and Dumas (2016) state that researchers have found that bullying behavior is increased when bystanders reinforce the bully and bullying behavior decreases when bystanders actually intervene and stand up for the target. McCormac (2014) states the frequency of bullying is influenced from bystanders; therefore, anti-bullying interventions are needed for bystanders. This found that the key to reducing bullying was having a decrease in bystanders reinforcing the bully (McCormac, 2014).

Bully-Proofing Your School is a program that even targets bystanders. It teaches them how to intervene bullying to help the victims. Even though research has shown that this program is effective, a lot of man-hours go into it. A minimum of 15 hours of teacher preparation and 270 days of program implementation for students and teachers is required for implementation of bully proofing in schools (Midgett & Dumas, 2016).

The Bullying Prevention Program: The Bullying Prevention Program is a comprehensive program that targets students not only in elementary school, but also middle and high schools (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). The main two goals of this program are to improve peer relations and prevent bullying programs among schoolchildren. This is a program that is implemented at the school level, the class level, and the individual level (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). In relation to the class level regular class meetings are held with students and classroom rules on bullying are established and enforced. In relation to the school level, questionnaires are implemented in order to determine the prevalence and nature of bullying in each school. They have a school conference day to discuss bullying, plan interventions, and form a coordinating committee (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). In relation to the individual level, interventions are conducted for children who have been described as bullies and victims and then followed up by having discussions with parents of the children involved in bullying. Regular class meetings are held with students and classroom rules on bullying are established and enforced. Whitted and Dupper (2005) state antisocial behaviors have been reduced, bullying among children has been reduced, and the social climate of classrooms has been improved all because of this program.

Steps to Respect: Whitted and Dupper (2005) state Steps to Respect is a multidimensional program targeted at interventions at the individual, classroom, and school levels. Recognizing, refusing, and reporting are the three r's that children are taught in their curriculum. As a result of this program children are able to develop friendship skills and it helps prevent bystanders that normally would support bullying behavior (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). This program also teaches adults and teachers how to effectively respond to bullying. Whitted and Dupper (2005) also state that an effective method to reducing bullying behavior is demonstrated by the Step to Respect program teaching certain skills. With this program, a three-

hour long staff training is required for all of the school staff. The training allows staff to be able to effectively respond to bullying while also increasing their awareness of bullying. The staff also establishes lessons that focus on responding to bullying, managing one's emotions, solving problems effectively, and making and keeping friends (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). McCormac (2014) mentions the Steps to Respect program is a selective intervention aimed towards students involved in bullying while providing universal interventions at the classroom and school levels. When conducting research McCormac (2014) found there was less acceptance of bullying, greater bystander responsibility, and increased adult responsiveness in the schools that implemented the Steps to Respect program. Even when the program was only implemented for a three-month period, results still showed a decrease in victimization (McCormac, 2014). Thirty-three random elementary schools in California implemented the Steps to Respect bullying intervention program. McCormac (2014) states there was a thirty-one percent decrease in bullying and victimization and there was also a decrease in destructive bystander behavior in the schools that implemented this intervention program.

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program: Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) state the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is one of the most widely used intervention programs when it comes to addressing bullying and it is a comprehensive intervention. This is a program that addresses bullying in children in both elementary school and middle school. With some adaptations this program can even be effective in high schools. Teachers and staff in these schools are relied on for implementation. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) mention the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program wants schools to develop school environments that are warm and about involvement, they want schools to develop limits on what unacceptable behavior and consequences that are firm to the rule breakers, and have the adults in the schools not only act as

authority figure, but also as role models. This bullying program wants these schools to have this warm and involved environment immediately. This is a program where all students participate in the interventions, but students who bully or are at risk of being bullied have additional interventions that they can participate in. The Violence Prevention Works (2016) website states existing bullying problems among students are reduced, ensuring that any new development of bullying is prevented, and ensuring that schools have better peer relations are the three main goals of this prevention program. Unlike other program this is not a curriculum program, it does not just have to be implemented at a school, but can be anywhere that children attend on a regular basis such as; after-school programs, camps, or community youth programs (The Violence Prevention Works, 2016). Smokowski and Kospasz (2005) also state that this program was initially started in Norway and researchers found that fifty percent or more of participants reported a less frequency of being bullied and bullying others. This program has also shown antisocial behaviors in students have been reduced and the social climate of these schools has shown major improvements (Smokowski & Kospasz, 2005). Schools that have implemented this prevention program have also found that students that are victims of bullying report having a greater support and the students believe this intervention program is stronger and more effective at addressing the issue of bullying (The Violence Prevention Works, 2016).

Bullying Reduction Strategies

Research has suggested that schools should implement some strategies to further prevent bullying from occurring in schools. It is believed that by implementing a comprehensive evidence-based bullying prevention program that bullying can be decreased in schools. School policies have to remediate or correct behaviors associated with bullying rather than punish students for bullying (Brewer, 2017). It is believed that if schools implement a zero tolerance for

weapons, discrimination, harassment, and gang related activities there will be a reduction of bullying activity (Brewer, 2017). Another way to reduce bullying behaviors would be to implement security measure throughout the entire school that would consistently monitor the behavior of students in classroom, hallways, and anywhere else on school grounds (Brewer, 2017). Brewer (2017) also states that schools should develop a suicide prevention and awareness program and have mental health resources in schools such as; school counselors, school psychologists, and social workers. Activities such as; brain boosts, community gardening, service projects, breathing exercises, and any activities that encourage laughter need to be implemented in school to help students dealing with stress be able to not only reduce their stress, but also control it (Brewer, 2017).

Whitson (2017) states the six strategies for preventing bullying are know what bullying is, connect with kids, make time, smile, be present, and intervene on the spot. Adults need to be able to know what bullying is. There is a difference between being rude spontaneously and causing actions that are intentional and relentless. Behavior that is intentional and relentless are key characteristics of bullying behavior. In order to effectively prevent bullying adults have to first know there is a problem. Children will not just share information with anyone, they are more willing to relay painful information to people they feel genuinely care for them (Whitson, 2017). In order for adults to be able to genuinely care for the child they have to make the time to do so. Adults cannot even begin to build a relationship with a child if they never even take the time to do so. A child can feel acknowledged, valued, and even worthy when adults smile at them, say hello, and greet them (Whitson, 2017). Something so simply can make a child's entire day. Walking the halls between classes, mingling with students, keeping a watchful eye during recess, sitting amongst students on the school bus, and developing programs to monitor online

student behavior allow adults to be present during times when bullying is likely to occur (Whitson, 2017). Finally, when teachers or adults witness bullying they need to intervene. Often times adults do not know what to say in situations like this. Whitson (2017) suggests using direct, dignified, brief statements because they let everyone around know that the adult is observant and aware of the situation while also not humiliating or alienating the aggressor.

Erin Hellwig (2015) states ensuring schools have a clear definition of bullying, removing labels, having clear and enforceable rules and expectations, rewarding positive behavior, having open communication, engaging with parents, looking for warning signs, clearing the scene if and when bullying occurs, monitoring hot spots for bullying, and knowing state laws and district policies of bullying are effective strategies to help prevent bullying. Schools in the same school district need to have the same definition of bullying. School staff also needs to be able to determine the difference between bullying and teasing among students (Hellwig, 2015). Teachers and staff are placing judgments on students that can cause issues later on when they call the student victim or bully (Hellwig, 2015). In order to prevent this from happening teachers have to address the situation with an open mind and find out exactly what the problem is. They have to be as nonjudgmental as possible. Children who are doing the bullying need to know that their behavior is wrong and they need to know how their actions are affecting the victim (Hellwig, 2015). Rules and expectations need to be age-appropriate in order to be most effective. When children are younger rules need to be simpler, but once the child is older rules need to be complex in order to reach their maturity level (Hellwig, 2015).

With rules one should also have consequences to inform children that if they engage in behaviors that break the rules there will be consequences. Teachers and staff cannot always point out bad behavior without also pointing out the good behavior. Children will be more likely to

engage in good behavior if they know that good behavior is rewarded (Hellwig, 2015). Teachers have to be able to have open communication with their students. Students are more likely to come to their teachers with problems if they know they can openly come to that particular teacher.

When bullying is reported to teachers they in turn have to report it to higher officials. As a result, this can help prevent future occurrences from happening. Parents and teachers have to work together in order to effectively prevent bullying from occurring. The only way parents and teacher will work together is if teachers actively engage parents in what is going on with their children in school such as; grades, friends, behavior, and attitudes (Hellwig, 2015). When bullying occurs there can often times be warning signs. Teachers, staff, and parents all need to be aware of warning signs in order to prevent the bullying from continuing. Some warning signs include; unexplainable injuries, frequent headaches, declining grades, loss of friends and interest in school, and decreased self-esteem (Hellwig, 2015).

Bullying incidents have to be broken up immediately after they are noticed. School personnel should always break up the crowd and bystanders first and then separate the bully and the victim (Hellwig, 2015). Once the issue has been addressed school personnel need to get the facts from the bully, victim, and bystanders. Bullying is not something that is going to end instantly. School personnel have to keep on it and constantly remind one of the consequences for breaking the rules (Hellwig, 2015). Children are more likely to feel safer and bullies are less likely to engage in bullying activity when adults are present (Hellwig, 2015). Teachers and staff need to remain vigilant in all areas of the school to prevent bullying from occurring. Lastly, in order to effectively prevent bullying everyone should be aware of what the laws and policies are in that particular state along with the policy of the school district (Hellwig, 2015). Ensuring

everyone knows the policy and how to enforce ensures everyone remains on the same page and keeps children feeling safer (Hellwig, 2015).

Warning signs of bullying

Children who are being bullied often times exhibit many different warning signs. In order to be able to effectively prevent bullying, adults need to know what some of these warning signs of bullying are. Children who are bullied often times have damage to their clothing, damaged personal items, unexplained bruises and cuts, and scratches all as a result from fighting (Violence Prevention Works, 2016). These children typically do not have any friends and if they do have friends they do not have many. Children that are bullied are often times afraid of going to school, walking to and from school, riding the school bus, and even participating in school related activities (Violence Prevention Works, 2016). If bully victims do walk to school they will typically take a much longer route or one that makes no sense to their peers. These children will also typically display a disinterest in schoolwork and can even begin to suffer academically from falling grades (Violence Prevention Works, 2016). Children who are bullied can experience a loss of appetite. If a child who normally has no issues eating all of a sudden starts showing signs of distress when it comes to meal there is an underlying problem that will need to be further examined. Victims of bullying can even experience trouble sleeping and when they are able to fall asleep they can have bad dreams.

Even children who are perpetrators of bullying can exhibit warning signs. There is a chance a child could be bullying another if he or she is constantly getting into fights or has friends that engage in bullying (Hellwig, 2015). Children that appear increasingly aggressive and cannot seem to stay out of the principal's office could be engaging in bullying. Hellwig (2015) states having new belongings, putting one's problems on others, having difficulty accepting

responsibility for one's own actions, and worrying about popularity and reputation in school can all be warning signs that a child is engaging in bullying.

Analysis

What effects do school bullying have on not only the victim, but also the bully and what is the most efficient way in preventing bullying from occurring into adulthood? In order to prevent problems well into adulthood bullying needs to be addressed at the school level. Whitted and Dupper (2005) state that one in four children report being bullied and one in five children report being a bully. That is twenty-five percent of the children in United States schools reporting being bullied and twenty percent of children in the United States reporting being the bully. The Casey Foundation (2011) states that the population of children in the United States is 74.2 million. If twenty-five percent of these children are being bullied that accounts for 18.55 million children. To some one in four or even one in five might not come as a problem, but if it continues on it will only get worse. The problems associated with bullying will carry into adulthood if not properly addressed.

A place that once was deemed as a safe place is now becoming a place that children actually fear. Whitted and Dupper (2005) state that nearly 160,000 students in United States schools stay home everyday because they are so afraid of being bullied. When these children stay home from school they are not gaining the necessary education that is needed to be able to survive the adult world. Both Whitted and Dupper (2005) and Cornell and colleagues (2012) found an association between bullying and dropout rates. Children that were bullied were more likely to dropout of school because they had developed this fear and hatred towards attending school.

Over the years college education has been deemed as necessary in order to succeed in life, but if these children that are bullied are missing school in middle and high schools how will they ever be able to succeed in college? Or if these children dropout of school unless they were to get a GED they would never be able to even attend college.

Employers are more likely to pay you more if you have completed either an undergraduate or graduate degree (Gulbrandsen, 2011). In today's day and age college education has become extremely important. Gulbrandsen (2011) mentions based off of statistics in 2009 from Bureau of Labor Statistics individuals without a high school diploma had unemployment rates that were twice as high as an individual who had completed an associate's degree.

Surprisingly, bullies and victims both experience negative effects because of the bullying. Bullies experience a range of different effects such as; later violent behavior, mental health difficulties, delinquency, academic problems, psychosocial adjustments, externalizing problems, later antisocial development, underachievement in school, issues in employment, involvement of criminal justice system, and excessive drinking and drug use. Smokowski and Kospasz (2005) mention that mental health difficulties such as; attention-deficit disorder, depression, and oppositional-conduct disorder are experienced by a lot of bullies. Bullies unfortunately have more of an involvement of the criminal justice system and substance abuse. This could be correlated, but I could not find any research relating the substance abuse and criminal justice system. Smokowski and Kospasz (2005) state that among individuals aged thirty more criminal convictions and traffic violations were associated with bullies. As bullies turned into adults it was found that they were more likely to display aggression towards their spouse and children (Smokowski and Kospasz, 2005).

When bullying is not addressed at a young age, it will begin to cause problems into adulthood. Bullies have a difficult time communicating with their spouses and family, which as a result creates a hostile environment. It can also teach the child that the way they are being treated is okay for them to treat their peers. This as a result, creates a vicious never-ending cycle of bullying. Smokowski and Kospasz (2005) mention that previous research has shown adults

were more likely to have children as bullies if they themselves bullied as children. Bullies that are not pulled out of the cycle will begin to develop academic problems and risk underachieving in schools, which relates to the issue mentioned earlier about college education becoming the norm. It cannot be expected that someone who struggles academically in high school, middle school, or grade school will do well in college.

Like bullies, victims have their own effects that they must deal with as a result of the bullying. Victims deal with issues such as; depression, anxiety, suicide, reduced academic performance, increased apprehension, chronic absenteeism, physical wounds, and increased rate of dropping out. Whitted and Dupper (2005) state that children who are bullied deal with disliking school, truancy, and school dropout. Victims of bullying will also even find ways of getting out of school like developing psychosomatic systems such as: headaches or stomach pains (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). The children that are bullied develop a fear of school, they are so afraid that if they attend school or attend certain areas in the school that they will continue to be victims of bullying. Aluede and colleagues (2008) mention that children that are victims of bullying will often times avoid areas like the cafeteria and restrooms as a way of avoiding potential bullies. As a result of being bullied, victims will often times begin to believe that they are failures and outcasts (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). This causes victims to have low self-esteem and feelings of unworthiness, which can contribute to suicidal tendencies.

In some ways bullies and victims experience the same effects. For both bullies and victims research has shown that attention deficit-disorder was common among both (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Surprisingly, attention deficit-disorder in victims is thought to come about because victims are always feeling the need of monitoring their surroundings and looking out for when the next attack might happen (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Aluede and colleagues (2008)

mention that bullies were more likely to carry weapons, but Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) mention that victims were more likely to carry weapons compared to non-victims. Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) reasoning behind this was in order to feel safe and potentially retaliate victims would carry weapons to school.

Bullies and victims are both related. It is basically a parasitic relationship where the bully benefits by gaining power and authority and the victim gets harmed physically, emotionally, and mentally. Bullies pick their victims by finding individuals who are different or already have a low self-esteem. Bullies go after individuals who appear weaker, because a smart bully would not pick a fight with someone who could easily harm them back. Bullies look for someone that appears to be an easy target. Unfortunately, for the victims it can be an instance of being at the wrong place at the wrong time. Had they never entered that location for example the school cafeteria the bully would have never noticed how weak and vulnerable this individual was. Most likely when the bullying started occurring, the victims would cry or react in some way that enticed the bully to continue the torment. The bully was receiving some sort of excitement and satisfaction by going after this victim. If the victim were to stand up for himself or herself the bully would possibly stop the torment only if the victim proved to be stronger than the bully. There would be no benefit to the bully for going after someone that could easily hurt himself or herself back.

The only way to reverse the effects of bullies and victims would be implementing strong prevention programs that could essentially stop bullying from continuing to happen or even happening in the first place. While most states have required schools to have some sort of bullying prevention program not all of the states implement the same program. Some of the programs that schools have implemented are Bully-Proofing Your School, the Bullying

Prevention Program, Steps to Respect, and Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. Bully-Proofing your School is a multilevel program that teaches students the skills necessary in order to be able to stand up to a bully and changes the climate of the school for the better (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Teachers, parents, and students are all able to gain free information on bullying prevention efforts appropriate for elementary, middle, and high schools. The one major downside of this program is that Whitted and Dupper (2005) state that while in 1998 it was deemed as a model program there unfortunately, is no evaluation data available for this program. Like Bully-Proofing your School, the Bullying Prevention Program is a prevention program available for elementary, middle, and junior high schools. Whitted and Dupper (2005) state that the intention of this program is to improve student relations while also preventing bullying problems. Unlike Bully-Proofing your school the Bullying Prevention Program has actually been found to reduce antisocial behaviors, improve the social climate of classrooms, and reduce bullying among students (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). The Steps to Respect Program seems to take the prevention program seriously. Interventions are given at the individual, classroom, and school levels. Children are taught to recognize, refuse, and report any types of bullying (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Teachers are required to participate in a three-hour long training program, which allows them the necessary skills to recognize bullying and effectively respond to reports of bullying (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). Less acceptance of bullying, greater bystander responsibility, and increased perceived adult responsiveness were all a result from implementing the Steps to Respect program (McCormac, 2014). The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is known as being one of the most recognized programs when it comes to addressing bullying (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). While this program does not target students in high schools it does target those students in elementary and middle schools. General antisocial behavior was reduced and the

school climate had significant improvements when schools implemented the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005).

While all of these bullying programs seem to have their own way of battling the issue of bullying none of them really correlate with one another. These four bullying programs were more different than they were similar. The only thing that they really had in common was they all wanted a way to reduce the rates of bullying in their schools. The only way to ensure that victims and bullies receive the necessary attention they need is to implement strong prevention programs. Victims and bullies both experience some pretty serious problems as a result of the excessive amounts of bullying. Effective bullying program such as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program and the Bullying Prevention Program have been found to reduce bullying in their schools, change the school climate of their schools, and most importantly reduce antisocial behavior.

Recommendations

Bullying is a serious issue. It is something that just seems to keep gaining more and more fuel. For example, it might have started out as a little leaf catching on fire, but then the wind blew and it turned into this massive wildfire. Bullying is the exact same way. It might start off as one child calling another a mean name or by teasing them. When the problem does not get addressed it can lead to bullying in front of an audience and sometimes can even get physical. This in return leads to victims developing a fear of school, a place that should be completely safe. These children no longer want to attend school and can end up with failing grades, truancy issues, and worse even dropping out of school. Once the wildfire reaches that magnitude it becomes almost impossible to address, too much damage has already been done.

Bullying needs to be addressed immediately. It is recommended that beginning in first maybe even the second grade the topic of bullying needs to be incorporated into the learning material. Kalb (2000) states that by age seven children have the ability to tell the difference between right and wrong depending on where they live. The earliest that bullying should be addressed is first grade and the latest is second grade. By the second to third grade children should be able to have a reasonable understanding of what bullying is and why it is wrong. School officials and teachers as well as parents all need to be involved in ensuring that knowledge of bullying is being understood. Schools could incorporate so many different bullying learning activities such as; creating skits, reading stories on bullying, or even watching movies or videos about bullying.

Not only do children have to have an understanding of bullying they must also know that if they were to engage in bullying that there would be consequences. The consequences need to be severe enough that children will not want to engage in this sort of behavior. If Bob decides to

bully Susan and all that happens to Bob is getting told no that is wrong the likelihood of the behavior happening again is extremely high. For the first occurrence having a talk with the bully could possibly be beneficial, but if it continues to occur something else needs to be done. Again, school officials, teachers, and parents all need to be involved in this equally. All adults in a child's life play a vital role in how they grow up. Therefore, when it comes to addressing bullying everyone needs to be involved and everyone should be on the same page. If schools are telling the child what they are doing is wrong, but as soon as they get home their parents tell them what they are doing is fine there will be no change in behavior. The same applies if the situation was reversed and it was the parents saying the behavior was wrong and the school was saying that the behavior was fine.

Another thing that is recommended is that once bullying has been made aware both the victim and the bully need to participate in some sort of counseling program. This counseling program could help understand exactly what both victim and bully are going through and possibly even why the bully decided to engage in the behavior. The counseling should also be a multiple session ordeal; one session would not be beneficial. The counseling would also be beneficial in helping the victims to deal with all the emotional and mental issues that are associated with being victims of bullying. Both victim and bully need to feel like they have a safe to come and talk to another individual about their feelings without being punished for them. Children have feelings. The problem arises when they decide to act on these feelings and it results in injuring another. The counseling could help victims build up their self-esteem and self worth. It would allow them to see themselves as strong and independent instead of feeling like failures and outcasts.

The final thing that is recommended is for schools to develop one maybe even two universal prevention programs. It is a great thing that most states have developed regulations for bullying programs, but there is not one program that seems to be the go to. It is suggested that five different schools implement five different bullying prevention programs. Before the programs are implemented and about six months to a year after the program has been implemented the rates of bullying should be determined. The results from both before the program and after the program being implemented should be compared. With the results, the two schools showing the most decrease between both rates should be used as the official bullying prevention programs. Having two options would allow schools to test and determine which program was more beneficial to reducing bullying in their schools.

Conclusion

Bullying is defined as aggressive acts inflicted by one or more children with the intention of causing harm to another children whom they believe is unable to defend himself or herself (Smokowski and Kopasz, 2005). Bullying is an issue that occurs all around the world with one in four individuals falling victim to it in the United States alone. Bullying is also a growing problem and when left alone will only continue to grow worse and worse. Bullying is a communication issue because the issue arises when one individual has a difficult time communicating with another. The bully either has no idea or they are choosing to communicate to another individual in a way that causes pain. Situations and environments are turning from civil ones to hostile ones. For example, a large amount of bullying takes place at school. When children get bullied they begin to fear attending school, which as a result causes them to miss out on a lot of school. Although, these children know the reason for why they are missing school they do not tell their parents. Instead they make up excuses of having some illness instead of telling the truth. The victims of bullying now feel as if they are all alone and they have no one to communicate their thoughts and feelings to.

The purpose of this paper was to determine if prevention programs really made a difference when it came to the victim and the bully and what we can do to stop bullying from happening. It came as a great surprise that victims are not the only ones that deal with issues as a result of the bullying. Bullies just like victims experience problems because of the bullying. It makes the reader wonder why do bullies engage in this sort of activity if they too experience effects because of it. The answer to this question is that the feeling of power and superiority that bullies get when inflicting pain on another individual outweighs all the effects they experience. It at least lessens them in that moment.

As a result of bullying, some of the effects that bullies experience are later violent behavior, mental health difficulties, academic problems, antisocial development, underachievement in school, issues with future employment, and an involvement in the criminal justice system. Bullies developing academic problems and underachieving in school can result in students dropping out. Who would it really benefit to continue to attend school when I am doing this poorly already? All jobs require either a high school diploma or a GED in order to even get a job. Today, most jobs require some form of college education. It is unlikely, that a child who had issues in high school will be able successfully succeed in college. College is meant to be harder than high school. If issues had already developed in high school it could be very difficult if not impossible to succeed in college. Without a college degree, employers will pay an individual less. It was found that by the time bullies were thirty they had more convictions and traffic violations than their peers (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Having convictions on your record can also dampen getting jobs in the future. The problems that bullies face in their youth can have detrimental effects on their future.

Victims have their own problems that they have to deal with as a result of the bullying. Victims battle with depression, anxiety, and suicide. They also deal with feeling like failures and outcasts and having physical wounds. Like bullies victims also deal with reduced academic performance and risks of dropping out. Victims develop anxiety and fear over attending school, which results in them avoiding areas where victimization can be high. When these problems do not get addressed it can lead to issues well into adulthood. Victims that deal with anxiety and depression that does not get addressed can have an affect on future relationships. It can lead to victims developing trust issues, which can lead victims to not have any lasting relationships.

Bullying prevention programs are key to keep bullying from having lasting effects on both the victim and the bully. In this paper *Bully-Proofing Your School*, the Bullying Prevention Program, *Steps to Respect*, and *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* were the prevention programs looked at. *Bully-Proofing Your School* allowed students the necessary skills needed to be able to stand up to bullies and change the overall school climate, but it does not have any data evaluations available. The Bullying Prevention Program has the intention of improving student relations and preventing bullying programs. Unlike *Bully-Proofing Your School*, the Bullying Prevention Program has actually been found to reduce antisocial behavior, improve the social climate of classrooms, and reduce bullying among students (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). *Steps to Respect* taught students to recognize, refuse, and report any types of bullying. Schools that implemented this prevention program found that there was less of an acceptance of bullying, more responsibility from the bystander, and increases adult responsiveness (McCormac, 2014). The *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* is known as being one of the most implemented prevention programs and targets students in middle and elementary schools. In schools that implemented this program found that antisocial behavior was reduced and significant improvements were seen in the school climate (Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005).

Both the *Olweus Bullying Prevention Program* and the *Bullying Prevention Program* found that when schools implemented the prevention program that antisocial behavior was reduced and the climate of schools improved. When schools implement effective programs the effects that victims and bullies face can end up being less detrimental. The programs allow children to have the necessary skills to not fall victims of bullying and if by chance they do fall victims it allows them the courage to speak up to an adult. An adult having knowledge of

ongoing bullying will allow them to handle the situation effectively. It allows children to be able to voice their concerns and feelings and help them deal with the effects of bullying.

In order to ensure that prevention programs are more effective to helping victims and bullies deal with the effects would be changing a few things. Bully prevention programs have to be a group effort. All parties in a child's life need to be involved. They also need to be started earlier in childhood. Children know right from wrong by age seven, which means children need to know that bullying is wrong by then. Children who engage in bullying activities should be punished for it accordingly. Consequences that have a common ground of not being too harsh and not too easy either will be extremely beneficial. Whenever bullying does occur both victim and bully should be required to engage in multiple counseling sessions. Children have to be able to feel that they have a safe place to voice their feelings and concerns without being reprimanded or made fun of.

Communicating with people is the way of human life. Bullying occurs when one individual basically communicates ineffectively. Bullies communicate in means that cause harm physically, mentally, or emotionally to their peers. The effects that bullies and victims experience as a result of bullying can and will go into adulthood if not effectively addressed. It is vital for bullies and victims to have prevention programs that address the problem. Victims and bullies will go on to have a hard life if they do not receive any sort of help with the effects of bullying. Bullying is a worldwide issue that needs to be addressed and it needs to be addressed now.

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