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Peer Relationships

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Bullying Differences Between Girls and Boys

In the research article, "Gender Differences in Direct and Indirect Forms of Bullying," the two researchers used two waves of a longitudinal panel study. They collected information on 1,222 youths from 15 different schools across the U.S. Data was collected from the correlates and consequences for both boys and girls of two forms of bullying. There are three forms of bullying discussed in the article. The first form is physically harming a person (e.g., hitting, kicking, and pushing) or indirect forms of victimization including making fun of, excluding, and/or spreading rumors about a person. The second form is victimization that occurs repeatedly over time and the last is victims who do not have equal strength or power to the bully.

The research on school based violence and bullying suggests that males are more likely to be both perpetrators and victims of direct bullying. Slightly more than half (53%) of the students in the study's sample are female and the average age of students at Wave 1 is approximately 12.25 years. Hispanic students are somewhat overrepresented in the sample (50%) because of the large number of participating schools located in the Southwest, but there are relatively large proportions of White students (37%) and Black students (13%) as well. In terms of bullying victimization, the results are consistent with previous research suggesting that indirect bullying rates are approximately twice those of direct bullying. Males are significantly more

likely to experience direct bullying than are girls, particularly in terms of repeat victimization. Although a majority of both boys (63.8%) and girls (70.3%) report never being physically attacked or threatened, boys are more likely to be classified as both intermittent and repeat victims of direct bullying than are girls. In contrast, the study finds that girls are significantly more likely to experience indirect forms of bullying victimization and are more likely to be bully the same victim repeatedly. More than one third of girls report repeated experiences of indirect bullying.

References

Carbone-Lopez, K., Esbensen, F.-A., & Brick, B. T. (2010). Correlates and consequences of peer victimization: Gender differences in direct and indirect forms of bullying. *Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice*, 8(4), 332–350. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541204010362954>