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How Does Bullying Affect Females in School?

Itzel Ramirez

California State University, Monterey Bay

Abstract

Bullying is a major issue that schools are still having issues with. Students today are being bullied the most during their middle school years. In order to understand how we can address these issues and prevent it from continuing in this community, this report answers the following research questions: Is bullying a problem and why? What are the solutions or interventions to prevent bullying? What changes from elementary schools to middle schools that increase bullying for females? And how can we prevent females from bullying or becoming victimized? In a review of the literature on bullying from a female's perspective, the research shows that females are usually victimized by other females through social and verbal threats. This issue ranges from spreading rumors to exclusion of others. Another reason females are bullied is because of puberty. Another important finding is that female perpetrators use relational aggression to bully others. This report presents an interview of a local middle school to see what measures they have against bullying. The findings after conducting the interview showed that a major component to bullying in middle school is social media. The bullying continues to follow victims' homes because of social media opportunities. The recommendation to prevent bullying is an informational blog or flyer, in both English and Spanish, for parents that addresses the impact that social media has on bullying and several tips for parents to reduce bullying in this community.

School is a place where children go to learn new material or skills, yet some adolescents are faced with much more. Bullying has been an issue in schools for some time now and continues to be a problem. This is a social issue that adolescents encounter and rising as technology continues to evolve. In the past, bullying was done in face to face confrontations, but with the evolution of technology, adolescents gain more outlets to bully or be bullied virtually (Donegan, 2012, p. 33). The evolving technology makes it harder to control bullying because there are more opportunities for perpetrators to disguise their identity online (Donegan, 2012, p. 34). Bullying is a problem because it can traumatize and affect adolescents even in college (Adams & Lawrence, 2001, p. 8). School is a place where the adolescents' focus should be on learning and having fun. They shouldn't have to worry about being picked on. Research on bullying shows that 6th graders are affected by bullying the most ("11 Facts About Bullying", n.d.). Middle school is already a complicated time because adolescents are going through many emotions and changes, they don't need to be concerned about being bullied.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the information provided about bullying and see what the reason is that bullying increases in middle school. I looked at bullying through the girls' perspective to find the causes. Putting an end to bullying is imperative because it affects the children and can have a long-lasting effect (Vaillancourt, Hymel, & McDougall, 2013, p. 245). This paper views what makes a difference between elementary schools and middle schools that increases the chances of adolescent girls being bullied or being the perpetrator of bullying. It also contains several solutions/interventions for preventing bullying. Afterwards, I recommend a solution to help decrease bullying in schools. As a future educator, I want to decrease bullying in my community as much as possible. This research will help my professional and academic goals of finding the best solution to prevent bullying. The final product from this project will be of

interest to the local communities and schools as a resource for educators and parents to help children with bullying or preventing a child from becoming a perpetrator.

Literature Review

First, it's crucial to ask, "Is bullying a problem and why?" Bullying is a problem because adolescents are concerned about feeling unsafe due to bullying in school (Graham, 2016, p. 136). Students are worried about being harmed through physical, verbal, or psychological abuse (Graham, 2016, p. 137). A national survey was conducted where the data revealed that about 30-80 percent of school aged children experienced harassment from their peers and 10-15 percent were continuing to be victims (Graham, 2016, p. 136). The victims of bullying have several outcomes: mental health, physical health, and academic consequences (Graham, 2016). The mental health consequences range from low self-esteem, depression, feelings of anxiousness and loneliness. The physical health consequences vary from headaches, poor appetite, and sleep disorders. Lastly, the academic consequences include higher absent rates, decline in academic success and lower grades. Although not all victims of bullying experience these consequences, the reality is that most adolescents do. These results convey why bullying is a big problem for school-aged adolescents.

The primary question in this research paper is: What changes from elementary schools to middle schools that increases bullying for girls? According to Kenny, McEachern, & Alucede (2005), there are differences in the way boys and girls bully their peers (p. 13). Typically, adolescent boys bully both girls and boys, while adolescent girls generally bully other girls (Kenny et. al, 2005, p. 13). The type of bullying that girls endure from their female perpetrators are "social and verbal threats", this includes actions like spreading rumors, excluding others from friend groups, ignoring, talking about them behind their backs, manipulation, or name calling

(Kenny et. al, 2005, p. 13). Kenny et. al's (2005), study claims that girls are more vulnerable to comments based on their appearance, attractiveness, or peer groups (p. 13). One reason that Kenny et. al (2005), described that girls are bullied is based on puberty (p. 14). Girls go through puberty before boys do around the ages 10-14 years old. Some girls are affected by puberty at different ages and are the ones who are harassed by their peers (Kenny et. al, 2005, p. 14). Peers have a vital role in bullying (Rodkin, 2011, p. 11). Bullies gain their power from the attention they receive from peers. Peers that intervene during the bullying make a real difference for the victim (Rodkin, 2011, 14). By taking away attention from the bully, peers remove the power that bullies have.

In a survey conducted in the U.S., 34% of female participants answered that they believed bullies had a higher social rank than victims (p. 66). According to Pellegrini & Bartini (2000), female adolescents have more negative attitudes regarding bullying than males. Swearer & Cary's (2003) survey found that bullying occurred equally between female and male participants (p. 71). Their results showed that bullying is a power differential; in their case it was older students who bullied lower students (Swearer & Cary, 2003, p. 71). This study was done amongst 6th, 7th, and 8th graders and followed them for three years. This imbalance of power between female perpetrators and victims is proposed numerous times in the research. Female perpetrators use the same power imbalance that they were excluded from to harm others. In bullying amongst females, both the victim and perpetrator learn about competition, unequal self-worth and psychological warfare (SooHoo, 2009). This dominance of power and oppression results in female perpetrators learning to degrade their victims and the victims becoming submissive to the harassment (SooHoo, 2009). When victims become submissive to the constant harassment, they lose their sense of self.

For female perpetrators, relational aggression is the common type of bullying. Relational aggression is a behavior used to cause harm to others that both male and female perpetrators do either by social exclusion or gossip. Relational aggression begins to show amongst females at around 11 years old (Virtanen, 2013, p. 378). This is around middle school age. According to Virtanen (2013), the media has much to do with normalizing relational aggression in females (p. 380). The popular T.V. show, *The Bachelor*, is one example that was used by Virtanen. She describes how the T.V. show exhibits this type of behavior from the female participants. They are kind with each other face to face, but behind each other's backs they begin to display other intentions. With females being exposed to this type of behavior they begin to think it's normal and therefore partake in it (Virtanen, 2013). The approval of this type of behavior decreases the prosocial behavior in female adolescents and escalates bullying. The exposure to this type of behavior increases the chances of other participants to be involved. They see someone doing it and think it's fine if they do it too.

The final main factor of bullying is social media. The ways that we communicate today are different than in the past. Now we have the internet where new information is posted online and viewed instantly. Social media platforms create opportunities for perpetrators to harass others online through cellphones, chatrooms or emails (Catanzaro, 2011, p. 91). Catanzaro (2011), states that adolescent girls use social media platforms to bully others for several reasons. Those reasons include the difficulty in detecting the perpetrator when messages are sent anonymously, distance between the perpetrator and victim, and the lower risk of being caught by parents or teachers (Catanzaro, 2011, p. 91). For these perpetrators, they use social medias to harass victims because it follows them home. Adolescents with social media can't escape the harassment in school because they still get harassed online. In a study on cyberbullying, 95% of

participants responded that they have internet access at home, and of those participants, 24% have access in their bedrooms (Holfeld & Grabe, 2012, p. 402). In this study, adolescents who perpetrated cyberbullying reported using the Internet more than those who didn't participate in cyberbullying (Holfeld & Grabe, 2012, p. 402). Holfeld & Grabe's (2012), study showed that female adolescents were involved more in cyberbullying, in the form of victim or perpetrator, than male adolescents. Their data argues that female adolescents using the internet often while bullying others face to face is a predictive indication of cyberbullying (Holfeld & Grabe, 2012, p. 407). This study demonstrated how cyberbullying is a problem in middle school students, especially female adolescents.

There are several solutions/interventions in place to prevent bullying in schools. One intervention that teachers use to counteract bullying is to nurture an environment of collaboration and affection in their classrooms. Using this intervention, teachers create anti-bullying messages by reinforcing values such as kindness, tolerance, respect, and accountability (Shore, 2009, p. 40-41). Another intervention is holding a classroom meeting early in the year to discuss bullying. Through this intervention, teachers educate and bring awareness of bullying to children to prevent it in their classrooms (Shore, 2009, p. 42). An additional solution is urging spectators of bullying to act in defense of the victim. Peers can reduce bullying when they see it by stopping the bully, helping the victim through support or friendship, or informing school staff (Shore, 2009, p. 44). Peers that intervene during the bullying make a real difference for the victim (Rodkin, 2011, 14). Having a friend helps victims feel less alone.

The next intervention is the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system. The PBIS framework is a method that schools are implementing to reduce bullying in schools by providing training to school staff, parents, and children (Bradshaw, 2013). The PBIS

system offers support to schools to foster positive behaviors as well as diminish challenging behaviors that affect student learning (Ryoo, Hong, Bart, Shin, & Bradshaw, 2018, p. 630). It uses frequent videos in schools to address bullying (Ennis, Hirsch, MacSuga-Gage, & Kennedy, 2018, p. 10). This emphasizes a teacher-centered system that uses rules and positive reinforcement to avert issues and control behavior (Cook, Frye, Slemrod, Lyon, Renshaw, & Zhang, 2015, p. 169). The PBIS system can be effective for all school-aged children (Swain-Bradway, Swoszowski, Boden, & Sprague, 2013, p. 33). This form of intervention has been implemented in many schools throughout the U.S.

Bringing awareness and finding a solution/intervention to prevent bullying is something that all schools need. Decreasing bullying is vital for middle schools. Children are the future and we need to make sure that their development is not affected. They will embark on society as adults and continue to flourish our society. Now that I've described why bullying is a problem, I will examine the solutions/interventions that are set in place in a local middle school for preventing bullying. This project is taking the social learning framework of Albert Bandura to help prevent bullying in middle schools.

Methods

In order to investigate how local schools are addressing this issue, I interviewed a principal. I interviewed the principal of a local middle school to find out their view on this topic and how they deal with the problem. This approach was used to answer the question: what changes in middle school that increases the likelihood of being bullied? I prepared several questions to ask the interviewee. Once the participant agreed to be a part of the research, I set up an appointment to begin the interview. Once the interview was done, I viewed the information that I gathered and looked for any similarities or differences between the research and the

responses to find a solution to help with this problem. By interviewing a local school, we can help make the community a better place as well as other schools. This is a way that I can give back to the community that I grew up in. As a future educator, I want to work with students and make a difference in the school I attended as well as the community. In this paper, I included the questions that I asked the principal and the responses for others to see in the Appendix.

In view of the findings of the literature review about the increase in bullying in middle schools, I elected to explore local school data from the website *EdData*. From this website, I collected data of two local elementary schools and a local middle school. The data that I analyzed from these local schools included demographics, suspension rate, suspensions by most serious offences, students suspended for defiance only, expulsion rate, expulsions by most serious offences, and students expelled for defiance only. I focused on suspensions and expulsions from these local schools because if a student is engaged in bullying, they can be suspended or expelled from school as ascertained in the interview with a middle school principal.

This paper observes the work of theorist Albert Bandura's social learning theory to prevent bullying. This theory stresses the significance of observing, modeling behaviors, and attitudes of others (McLeod, 2016). The social learning theory recognizes that an individual's behavior is a result of experiences and that individuals learn to behave in certain ways through positive/negative reinforcements or punishments (McLeod, 2016). This learning theory incorporates the environment as a significant factor to the individual's learning development as they gain knowledge through observational learning (McLeod, 2016). I chose to use the social learning theory because of the findings in the literature review. In the literature review, one reason that females are bullied, or bully has to do with the media normalizing relational aggression in females through T.V. shows (Virtanen, 2013). This finding relates to Bandura's

social learning theory because he declared that children observe the behavior of others, such as parents, characters on TV, friends or teachers, and emulate their behavior (McLeod, 2016). The individuals that are observed by the children serve as models for their behavior. Bandura expressed that children are more likely to imitate an individual's behavior who resemble them (McLeod, 2016). For example, an adolescent who is a girl will more likely imitate her mother's behavior or a female character she sees on a T.V. show.

Utilizing this theory will educate others to be cautious of what they say and do or what they allow their children to see because they will imitate those behaviors. In this learning theory, Bandura also expressed that children seek approval from their models, an external reinforcement, but the feelings of approval that the child receives result in an internal reinforcement (McLeod, 2016). Bandura expressed that children will behave in ways that will gain approval of others (McLeod, 2016). This can be seen when adolescents bully others for peer approval. Bandura also includes another form of reinforcement: vicarious reinforcement (McLeod, 2016). This is another reason that I chose this theory to utilize in preventing bullying. Through the vicarious reinforcement, children consider what happens to others before they decide whether to imitate their behavior (McLeod, 2016). Bandura specified that individuals don't imitate everything they observe but give some thought prior to the imitation (McLeod, 2016). The social learning theory has the four mediational processes: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (McLeod, 2016). The attention process is the behavior that individuals are exposed to (McLeod, 2016). For children to imitate a behavior, it must capture their attention. Retention process is how well the behavior is remembered (McLeod, 2016). Children may notice a behavior but won't always remember it and therefore, can't imitate it. The reproduction process is having the capability to perform the modeled behavior (McLeod, 2016). Physical abilities limit individuals from

reproducing the behavior or skill. Motivation process is the will to perform the behavior (McLeod, 2016). This process considers the reinforcements and punishments of behaviors. If the outcome of a behavior is rewarded there is a higher chance of imitating the behavior. Employing this theory teaches children about observing the outcome of another person's actions before imitating them.

Through this research, the Major Learning Outcomes (MLO), that were incorporated in this project included the MLO 1: Developing Educator. Through this project, I thought and wrote about the responsibilities of a California public educator in the classroom, school, and community contexts. This MLO was used to gain skills that I can apply as a future educator in my community. I also incorporated MLO 3: Innovative Technology Practitioner. I used technology to research and write an effective paper to help prevent bullying in my community. I used the technology to learn about the research that had already been done by professionals. I also incorporated MLO 4: Social Justice Collaborator. This learning outcome is important because as a future educator, I want to make sure that the school I work in is just and sustainable for my future students. In this project, I gained knowledge and reflective practices on becoming a responsible educator that will help me advance in my career.

Findings

For the principal interview, I wanted to observe if there had been any changes in the school administration that would result in different bullying preventions. The first two questions were to gain insight on how long the principal had been teaching or was the principal in the middle school. The results were that he had been at the middle school for a total of 19 years, but the last 5 of those years he became the principal. These results show that the administration was altered a while ago but has remained the same for 5 consecutive years. The next question was to

understand what the current status of bullying was in the school. His response was that bullying must be a power struggle. This issue is expressed in the literature review where lower grade students are usually bullied by higher grade students. He also expressed how bullying has been overinflated. He expressed that some students complain that they are being bullied, but their response to how they were bullied did not fit with it being a repetitive pattern. I questioned the principal if bullying was a serious problem in this middle school/community to see if it relates to the findings in the literature review. The response to this question was that bullying is a serious problem in the school/community because it distracts others from the goal of learning/paying attention. He further explained how social media opportunities follow students' home and how they can't escape it even when they're out of school. This demonstrates that the findings in the literature review about social media is a big problem in middle schools. Pipher & Gilliam (2019), demonstrate that excessive usage of social media leads to depression and anxiety. Donegan (2012), demonstrated a study that revealed females are usually more affected emotionally by cyberbullying than males. Availability to the internet or social medias is a serious problem in society because they give access to constant communication where the bullying can take place and diminish the self-esteem of adolescent girls.

The following questions were to examine if the local middle school used any bullying preventions/trainings that were discussed in the literature review. The principal's response was that they use the PBIS system to educate students on bullying. This prevention was heavily discussed in literature reviews to prevent bullying through rewarding positive behavior. The other prevention bullying prevention system that this middle school uses is the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program Second Step. Second step teaches empathy to students and is taught once a week using different scenarios. This middle school uses a socio-emotional curriculum to

teach students how to communicate or deal with their emotions and actions. This program is different from the preventions discussed in the literature review but has the same goal of preventing bullying by teaching children empathy to identify others' feelings and how their actions will affect others. There are several books that can be found online to teach students social emotional learning. Emeynardie (2016), has an article with several children's books that can be used in curriculums to teach social emotional learning. This middle school also has 3 counselors on campus that are there to help students who think they don't have a voice. To learn if this middle school trains teachers in bullying prevention, I asked the principal to explain any training that teachers go through. His response was that they receive training in PBIS and the Second Step systems. Another training he discussed was having a weeklong challenge for students on kindness/anti-bullying programs. This is something that the school does every year to bring awareness to anti-bullying. The next question was to view the effect that this middle school's bullying preventions has. The principal specified that by the end of the school year, they look at data on reports made on bullying and compare them to the previous year. By implementing these prevention programs, their goal is to reduce the incidents every year. This is a great way to ensure that the preventions are working. If the data collected is the same as the previous year, then it means that the programs are stable, however, if the data of incidents reported increases from the previous year, the principal will realize that the interventions are ineffective and will need to find a different intervention.

I included a question to investigate who handles bullying in the school. In this middle school, the first offence of bullying is reported to teachers, the second offence is reported to administration, principal, or vice-principal as well as counselors. The counselors are available to offer support or strategies for the victim or perpetrator. I questioned the principal on the

consequences that this middle school gives to students who are bullying others to see how students are punished. His response was that it ranges depending on the severity of the bullying. If the bullying is name calling, the student receives detention, but if it's constant harassment, the student is suspended. This information helps explain the information gathered from the EdData website that will be discussed in further detail in the next section. The final question that I asked was to see how the principal deals with bullying. The principal answered that with students who are constantly being called names, he gives them strategies depending on reactions of what they want. With more severe harassment, the students receive bigger consequences. He addresses the long-term support for the victim, such as strategies or changes in schedules to prevent the bully and victim from confrontation. This interview was used to gather information on bullying in a middle school and how it can differ from an elementary school setting. Social media is the main indicator. At the middle school age, more adolescents have access to computers or phones than elementary school children and therefore are given more opportunities to perpetrate bullying or become the victim.

The following is the school information from local elementary and middle schools that I gathered from the website *ed-data.org* (Ed Data Education Data Partnership). To investigate if bullying does increase from elementary school to middle school, as evidenced in the literature review, I decided to look at the data from local schools. As declared above, I analyzed the following categories: demographics, suspension rate, suspensions by most serious offences, students suspended for defiance only, expulsion rate, expulsions by most serious offences, and students expelled for defiance only to compare elementary and middle schools. To acquire a fair measurement of data, I reviewed data collected in the 2017-2018 school year because the 2018-2019 data wasn't all updated. The first piece of information that I observed was the

demographics to see if the number of students were similar in the schools. The data revealed that the local elementary schools had less students than the middle school. According to the data, in the 2017-2018 census enrollment, the elementary schools had an average of 681 students enrolled while the middle school had 840 students enrolled (Ed Data Education Data Partnership). This website contains information from schools that are accessible online for the public.

After looking at the demographics, I searched for the suspension and expulsion rates in the schools. As demonstrated in the chart, the percentage of students who were suspended critically increased from elementary schools to middle schools. In both elementary schools, the data revealed that the suspension rate was below 1%, while in middle school they had an 11.9% suspension rate in the 2017-2018 school year (Ed Data Education Data Partnership). I included the data on "Suspensions by Most Serious Offences" to demonstrate where bullying may fall in this section. Although bullying is not on the list, it can be implied through the categories: Other Defiance Only, Violence with Injury, or Violence without Injury. As seen from the chart below, there is 2.97% increase for the category "Students Suspended for Defiance Only in 2017-2018" in the middle school section as opposed to the 0% from both elementary schools (Ed Data Education Data Partnership). The next category that I included demonstrates the difference in expulsions from elementary schools and middle school. The data showed a small difference between the elementary schools and middle school. The elementary schools had a 0% expulsion rate, while the middle school had a 0.6% expulsion rate (Ed Data Education Data Partnership). Using the data from the website and the responses from the interview of the middle school principal, there is evidence of an increase in suspensions between the schools that involve bullying.

Local School Data collected from <i>EdData</i>			
	Elementary School A	Elementary School B	Middle School C
Demographics 2017-2018	Census Enrollment: 699	Census Enrollment: 663	Census Enrollment: 840
Suspension Rate 2017-2018	0.3%	0.1%	11.9%
Suspensions by Most Serious Offences 2017-2018	Violence Without Injury- 2 Total- 2	Drugs- 1 Total- 1	Drugs- 29 Other Defiance Only- 34 Other Non-Defiance- 11 Violence with Injury- 41 Violence Without Injury- 67 Weapons- 9 Total- 191
Students Suspended for Defiance Only 2017-2018	0%	0%	2.97%
Expulsion Rate 2017-2018	0%	0%	0.6%

Expulsions by Most Serious Offences 2017-2018	N/A	N/A	Drugs- 3 Weapons- 2 Total- 5
Students Expelled for Defiance Only 2017-2018	0%	0%	0%


(Ed Data Education Data Partnership)

Recommendation

Using the information gathered from the literature reviews, interview, and school data I decided that the best way to spread awareness and prevention of bullying is by creating an article, intended as a blog or flyer, with tips for parents to help prevent bullying for their daughters. This article, seen below, was written in English and Spanish to ensure that all parents have equal access to this article. I created a copy in Spanish because over half of the students in this area of Monterey County are English Second Language learners. This article was written as a blog and flyer post for those parents who don't have access to the Internet. The intention of this article is to have as many parents see it and learn how they can help reduce bullying in their community. Parents play a key role in preventing bullying. Parents want to protect their daughters from suffering and will do what's in their power to secure their safety. By informing them on the dangers of social media, limiting the access their children have to the internet or phone, and being models that the children will emulate they can prevent bullying. In this article I provided graphs about where their child can be exposed to bullying online and how it increases in middle school. These graphs are provided to show a visual for parents to look out for.

The helpful tips in the article for parents on how to prevent bullying for their daughters included noticing a change in their child, limiting access to social medias until they're of age, and discussing the consequences of bullying with their child. Parents want to instill the value of empathy to their children to prevent them from bullying. In the article I wrote, I talk about the necessary steps parents should take when they notice changes in their child. The first step is hearing the child out and sympathizing with the child. One of the steps is to never blame the child or tell them that it's part of growing up. If the bullying continues, the parents need to take action by talking with the principal or teacher to stop the bullying. Another tip that I wrote in the article is to not allow their child to use social media because it's intended for children 13 years and older. Nowadays, children as young as elementary school are using social media without being at the age that the social medias require. By limiting this access to the social media platforms and Internet, parents are reducing the amount of time adolescents spend online. Pipher & Gilliam (2019), argue that adolescent girls find themselves susceptible to the developing digital world of social media. The consequences that arise of their need to stay connected heightens their levels of anxiety and emotions that they already confront during their adolescent years (Pipher & Gilliam, 2019). A report on the amount of time adolescents spend on social media showed that they spend an average of 6-9 hours a day online (Pipher & Giliam, 2019). Reducing the time online decreases the opportunities to bully or be bullied and their mental health. This also improves adolescent girl's self-confidence by not comparing themselves online. The tip for parents teaching their children about the consequences of bullying with their daughter comes from the literature review findings on relational aggression and the social learning theory by Bandura on observing behaviors. Parents need to teach their daughters that relational aggression behavior is unacceptable. Limiting the exposure to this type of behavior decreases the


chances of their child participating in the same behavior. This article is an effective solution to help parents by giving them tips on how they can prevent bullying for their daughters and decreasing the rate of bullying in schools and the community. Parents' role in preventing bullying is modeling correct behavior. These ideals help their children in the future because modeling positive behavior will prevent them from bullying when they're older.



BULLYING

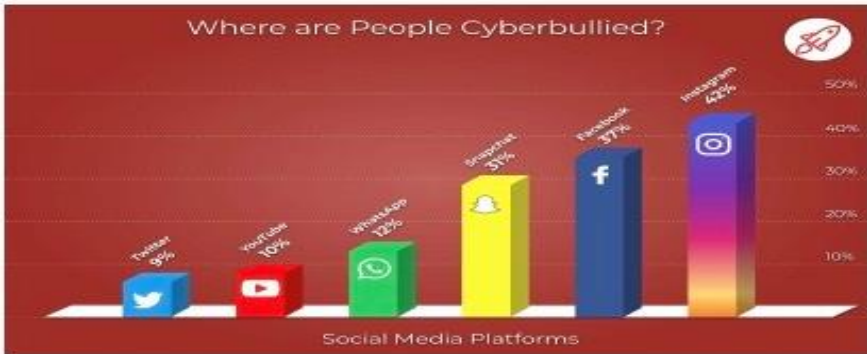
Attention Parents!

Helpful tips on how to prevent bullying amongst girls



BULLYING

Teens experience different forms of bullying. Social media is a main factor in preventing bullying. The graph below shows the different social media platforms in which kids are being bullied. Children are being bullied at school, but can't escape the terror because it follows them home in the forms of social media. Nowadays, children are having more access to these social medias even though the age requirement is 13 years or older to have an account. This leads to the reason that more children are being bullied in middle schools. Looking at



Where are People Cyberbullied?

Social Media Platform	Percentage
Twitter	9%
YouTube	16%
WhatsApp	13%
Snapchat	33%
Facebook	37%
Instagram	42%

Social Media Platforms

Image via Broadband Search, "51 Critical Cyberbullying Statistics in 2020")

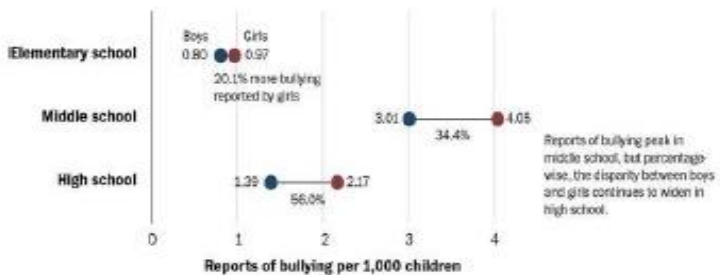
of social media. Nowadadays, children are having more access to these social medias even though the age requirement is 13 years or older to have an account. This leads to the reason that more children are being bullied in middle schools. Looking at

the image at the right", there is an increase in bullying that girls experience from elementary school to middle school. According to the research, during the middle school years is when girls experience the most forms of bullying. In their high school years, there is a decrease in bullying for girls.

Tips for parents to decrease bullying occurrences in their daughters:

Tip #1: Noticing the changes in your daughter will decrease bullying. When your daughter exhibits behavior or attitude changes, there is something bothering her and you need to get to the bottom of it. Have a conversation with your

Girls report experiencing more bullying throughout their childhoods



School Level	Boys (per 1,000)	Girls (per 1,000)
Elementary school	0.80	0.97
Middle school	3.01	4.05
High school	1.39	2.17

Reports of bullying per 1,000 children

SOURCE: Department of Education washingtonpost.com/storyline

Image via Department of Education washingtonpost.com/storyline

daughter to find out what's bothering them. When your daughter begins to address their issues, you need to listen and sympathize with her. *It's important to never blame your daughter for being bullied or advise them that it's part of growing up.* After listening to your daughter, if the bullying continues, the next step is to go to the school and talk to the administration. It's important that you remain calm otherwise you will expose your child to negative behavior.

Tip #2: Limit the access to the Internet or social medias. As seen in the graphs above, social media platforms are where children are bullied outside of school. Your daughter should not have a social media account if they are not 13 years or older. Limiting this access to the social media platforms and Internet, you are reducing the amount of time your child spends online and decreasing the opportunities to bully or be bullied.

Tip #3: Teach your daughter about the consequences of bullying. You need to make it clear to your daughter that relational aggression behavior is unacceptable. You want to teach them to treat others the way they would like to be treated. Limiting the exposure to this type of behavior decreases the chances of your child participating in the same behavior.

Using these tips to prevent bullying for your daughters will reduce the rate of bullying in the schools and community. Your role in preventing bullying is modeling correct behaviors for your daughter to model. This will impose positive behavior in your daughter that she will maintain as she becomes an adult ending a cycle of bullying. Together we can make the world a better place for children to grown and learn. You can make a difference!



Image via SVG Silh image 1376708ⁱⁱⁱ

ⁱ 51 Critical Cyberbullying Statistics in 2020. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.broadbandsearch.net/blog/cyber-bullying-statistics>

ⁱⁱ Rich, S. (2014, July 29). There's a gender gap in bullying - watch it widen as kids grow up. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/storyline/wp/2014/07/29/theres-a-gender-gap-in-bullying-watch-it-widen-as-kids-grow-up/>

ⁱⁱⁱ SVG > symbol bless live heartbeat - Free SVG Image & Icon. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://svgsilh.com/image/1376708.html>

(Images 1 & 2 are the English Version of the blog/flyer for parents.)

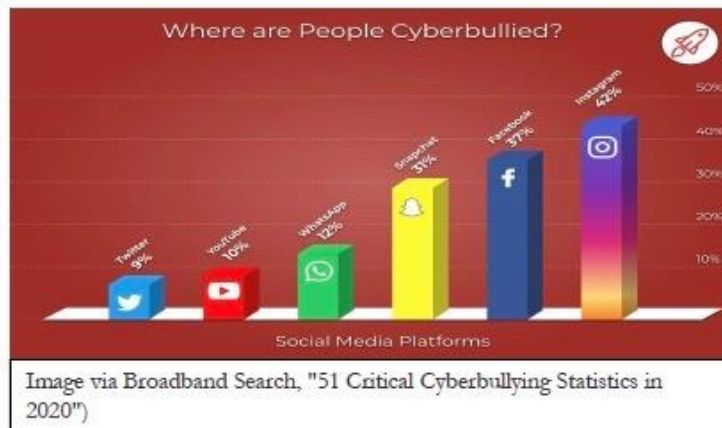


¡ Atención padres!



Consejos útiles sobre cómo prevenir el acoso entre las niñas

Los adolescentes experimentan diferentes formas de acoso escolar. Las redes sociales son un factor principal para prevenir el acoso escolar. El siguiente gráfico muestra las diferentes plataformas de redes sociales en las que los niños están siendo intimidados. Los niños están siendo



intimidados en la escuela, pero no pueden escapar del terror porque les sigue a casa en las formas de las redes sociales. Hoy en día, los niños tienen más acceso a estas redes sociales a pesar de que el requisito de edad es de 13 años o más para tener una cuenta. Esto lleva a

la razón de que más niños están siendo acosados en las escuelas intermedias. Mirando la imagen a la derecha, hay un aumento en el acoso que las niñas experimentan desde la escuela primaria hasta la escuela media. Según la investigación, durante los años de escuela media es cuando las niñas experimentan las formas más de acoso escolar. En sus años de escuela secundaria, hay una disminución en el acoso escolar de las niñas.

Girls report experiencing more bullying throughout their childhoods

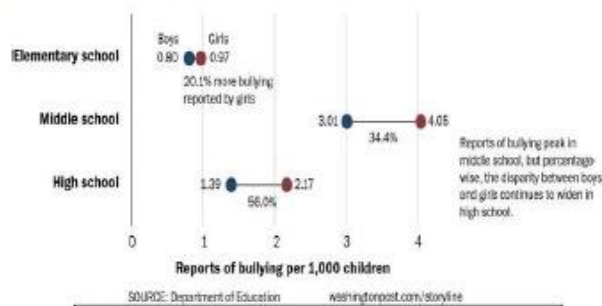


Image via Department of Education, washingtonpost.com/storyline

Consejos para que los padres disminuyan las ocurrencias de acoso en sus hijas:

Consejo #1: Notar los cambios en su hija disminuirá el acoso escolar. Cuando su hija exhibe cambios de comportamiento o actitud, hay algo que la molesta y usted necesita llegar al fondo de lo que le molesta. Tenga una conversación con su hija para averiguar qué les está molestando. Cuando su hija comienza a hablar sobre el tema de sus problemas, usted necesita escuchar y empatizar con ella. *Es importante no culpar a su hija por ser acosada o aconsejarle que es parte de crecer.* Después de escuchar a su hija, si el acoso continúa, el siguiente paso es ir a la escuela y hablar con la administración. Es importante que mantenga la calma de lo contrario expondrá a su hijo a un comportamiento negativo.

Consejo #3: Enseñe a su hija acerca de las consecuencias del acoso escolar. Tienes que dejarle claro a tu hija que el comportamiento de agresión relacional es inaceptable. Desea enseñarles a tratar a los demás de la manera en que les gustaría ser tratados. Limitar la exposición a este tipo de comportamiento disminuye las posibilidades de que su hija participe en el mismo comportamiento.

El uso de estos consejos para prevenir el acoso para sus hijas reducirá la tasa de acoso en sus escuelas y su comunidad. Su deber en la prevención del acoso escolar es modelar los comportamientos correctos para que su hija modele lo mismo. Esto impondrá un comportamiento positivo en su hija que ella mantendrá a medida que se convierta en una adulta que termine un ciclo de acoso escolar. Juntos podemos hacer del mundo un lugar mejor para que los niños crezcan y aprendan. ¡Puedes marcar la diferencia!



Image via SVG Silh image 1376708[#]

¹ 51 Critical Cyberbullying Statistics in 2020. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.broadbandsearch.net/blog/cyber-bullying-statistics>

² Rich, S. (2014, July 29). There's a gender gap in bullying - watch it widen as kids grow up. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/storyline/wp/2014/07/29/theres-a-gender-gap-in-bullying-watch-it-widen-as-kids-grow-up/>

[#]SVG > symbol bless live heartbeat - Free SVG Image & Icon. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://svgsilh.com/image/1376708.html>

(Images 3 & 4 are the Spanish Version of the blog/flyer for parents.)

Conclusion

Bullying is an issue that many adolescents face, especially in middle school. Knowing how to help someone who is a victim of bullying or the perpetrator is as important as decreasing the rate. This paper focused on the perspective of females that are victims to many forms of bullying and reasons they are bullied. The issues that were addressed in the literature review suggested that puberty, relational aggression, and social media influence female perpetrators to bully other female or male adolescents. The findings in the literature reviews on bullying, were compared to the findings from the methods that I conducted to compare bullying in local schools. The justification for writing an article on helpful tips for parents is because parents are the key to decreasing bullying opportunities. Children are given phones or have access to the Internet at home where they can engage in bullying. By parents limiting the access to these opportunities and modeling positive behavior they change their children's actions and prevent bullying from continuing. These tips are beneficial for teachers and parents because adolescents are the leaders of the future and it's the teachers and parents' job to ensure their safety and growth as well as others.

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Appendix

Interview Questions/Responses from Principal of Middle School

1. How long have you been teaching/principal?
 - 19 years
2. How long has the current principal been in the position?
 - 5 years
3. What is the current status of bullying in your school?
 - Bullying is a repetitive pattern (ex. Same people being picked on). Has to be a power struggle. Overinflated.
4. Do you think bullying is a serious problem in your school or community?
 - Yes, distracts from the goal of learning/paying attention; social media opportunities.
5. What bullying prevention system is applied in your school?
 - Work with PBIS- teaches staff and students to reward on behavior/educating students on bullying.
 - Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program- Second Step. Teaches empathy to students. Taught once a week, using different scenarios.
 - There are also 3 counselors on campus.
6. What are the training teachers receive on bullying prevention?
 - PBIS
 - Training in Second Step
 - Weeklong challenge for students on kindness/anti-bullying programs
7. What effect does bully prevention have on your school site?

- At the end of the school year, look at the data on reports made on bullying. Then compare them to the previous year to see if there is a decrease.
8. Who handles bullying in your school?
- 1st offence- reported to teachers.
 - 2nd offense- Administration/principal/vice principal
 - Counselors are there for support & strategy
9. What type of consequences are given to students who are found bullying?
- Ranges from detention (name calling) to suspension (harassment).
10. Have you ever tried to help someone who was being bullied at school? What happened?
- When students are being called names, they are given strategies, reactions of what they want/fire back. Less likely to continue if they fight back.
 - Severe harassment is given bigger consequences.
 - The principal talks about long term support. Strategies and changes in schedules are made to prevent the bully and victim from being confronted.