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# An Anti-Bullying Program in Review

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AN ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAM IN REVIEW

By

Jane M. Vega, B.S.

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ABSTRACT  
AN ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAM IN REVIEW

Jane M. Vega, B.S.

Marquette University, 2012

This project will focus on one parochial Catholic elementary (K4-8) school that implemented the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) over four years ago. This qualitative research examines the impact that support or lack of support had on the program outcomes. The study will provide research on the OBPP along with various, alternative anti-bullying programs, efficacy of the anti-bullying program, and review the school community awareness of the OBPP. The research participants are administrators, faculty, staff, parents and community's members who directly affect the Olweus Bullying Prevention program.

*Keywords: Anti-Bullying Program, Olweus, Bullying*

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Jane M. Vega, B.S.

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## Introduction

Schools should be settings that provide a place for open discussion, where diversity and differences are respected, communication between adults and students is encouraged as well as supported, and conflict is managed. School bullying is hardly new. Many adults have been victimized by a school bully sometime during their childhood. For some, it could have been teasing that caused hurt feelings or an act of violence. Today, along with hurtful teasing, exclusion, and sexual harassment children have to deal with high tech harassment such as online threats, inappropriate cell phone photos, and adult content web sites. School safety is perhaps the only educational priority, over academic achievement, for those parents who understand that children must be safe in order to learn.

Because children are affected by their surroundings, it follows that interventions (i.e. anti-bullying programs) need to target the multiple environments in which youths function. A whole school model, including the relevant social environment, along with a child's home and surrounding community are the places to start (Espelage, & Swearer, 2004). When we foster positive social and emotional engagement among our students, and continue that relationship inside classrooms holding each student accountable, we begin to provide our students with a safe and conducive learning environment (Espelage, & Swearer, 2004). St. Ann's (pseudonym) parochial elementary school is situated in a semi-urban environment in a large Midwestern city. The school implemented the Olweus Bullying Preventive Program (OBPP) over four years ago to encourage students to embrace the school's mission of Learn, Live and Love through Jesus, and to create an environment free of bullying.

The results of a study by Fein et al. (2002) found that, "Cultures and climates of safety support environments in which teachers and administrators pay attention to students' social and



emotional needs as well as their academic needs” (p.11). A culture of safety creates a ‘bully free zone’ in which bullying is not accepted as a normal rite of passage through adolescence. This type of climate provides students with a sense of well-being and respect, minimizing the potential for school violence (Fein et al., 2002).

A school that ignores bullying can promote fear and impede the healthy psychosocial development of students, potentially resulting in physical violence (Fein et al., 2002). One of the reasons that bullying is ignored in schools may be the result of the erroneous assumptions educators and parents have about bullying. Urbanski and Permuth (2009) found “Commentary such as ‘bullying is an inevitable part of growing up,’ ‘it is a rite of passage,’ ‘all kids have to deal with bullies,’ ‘it is harmless,’ and it is just ‘kids being kids’” (p.5), is not a true statement about bullying. Bullying is a form of peer abuse that has short and long term effects on everyone involved (Urbanski & Permuth, 2009).

## **Literature Review**

### **Defining Bullying**

In order to understand, prevent and intervene in the bullying–victim relationship everyone involved must understand what is and what is not bullying. It is critical to understand that boys and girls can be bullies or be bullied and the only gender differences are the tactics they use (Olweus, 1993a). OBPP defines an act of bullying as, “A person or student is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons” (Olweus, 1993a p.9). Olweus’ (1993b) definition includes three important elements: Bullying (1) is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions; (2) includes a pattern of behavior repeated over time; (3) and involves an imbalance of power or

strength. All three elements must be present to meet the Olweus definition of bullying. This definition incorporates three subsets of aggression, physical, verbal, and relational.

School personnel generally address physical bullying (direct) because it is observable. It is overt behavior between students, which often involves hitting, and kicking. Verbal bullying, non-physical but meant to hurt a student's feelings, often includes teasing, name-calling, or verbal threats (Olweus, 1993a). Shore (2005) describes "Relational" bullying as a form of isolation, such as gossiping, or starting negative rumors with the goal of damaging relationships. For example, relational bullying may include spreading rumors or telling others not to play with the victim. In the Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, and Kaukiainen (1992) study, the authors referred to "Relational" bullying as an "Attempt to inflict pain in such a manner that he or she makes it seem as though there has been no intention to hurt at all" (p. 118).

Roberts (2006) describes the Olweus concept of negative actions as "Purposeful acts designed and intended to inflict intentional injury or discomfort on another person" (p.14). Negative actions can be carried out verbally in the form of threats, taunting, teasing and name-calling. Physical contact, in the form of hitting, pushing, pinching or restraining someone, would also be a negative action. In addition, intimidation and social exclusion (Relational), making faces or refusing to comply with another person's wishes, are examples of negative actions (Olweus, 1993a).

Bullying behavior is repetitious and occurs over time. It would not be considered bullying when two children of equal strength get into an argument or conflict (Olweus, 1993a). Olweus' intent is to exclude the occasional negative interactions that occur between students.

Power and control are major components of bullying behavior. Olweus (1993a) noted that an imbalance of power always exists between the bully and the victim. "Associated with the

imbalance of power is the fact that the children either actually are or believe that they are incapable of defending themselves, usually in a nonphysical way” (Roberts, 2006, p.15). For Olweus, the imbalance of power is a critical factor, but the concept of “violence” has been intentionally excluded.

An example of bullying, as defined by Olweus, was outlined in a Journal of Adolescent Health editorial. Aalsma and Brown (2008) describe an incident involving a sixth-grade boy who rides the bus home every day and is kicked by a smaller, emotionally impaired second-grade boy. This example would not be considered bullying by the Olweus’ standard. The actions of the second grader were deliberate and repeated but there was no imbalance of power. The act is behavior-based but the absence of a power imbalance removes it from the Olweus definition of bullying. The sixth-grader could defend himself against the second-grader if he chose to pursue that action. Power imbalance remains a fundamental aspect that separates bullying from other aggressive behaviors.

Monks and Smith (2006) discussed how children of different ages must understand that bullying includes many different things: “Young children do not pay so much attention to the characteristics of repetition or imbalance of power and intention as do older children” (p.803). Monks and Smith (2006) note that “Very young children used adjectives and direct examples more than older children, but rarely mentioned repetition or the actions being unprovoked” (p.803). Researchers Smith, Crowie, Olafasson, and Liefoghe (2002) discovered that children under the age of eight were more likely to “Distinguish between aggressive and non-aggressive scenarios, whereas older children were able to make fine-tuned distinctions between types of aggression: physical, verbal and social exclusion” (p.1129). The Olweus Bullying Prevention

Program (OBPP) clearly defines the meaning of bullying and uses a number of tools to help children, of different ages, cope with the behavior.

The OBPP operational definition of bullying is the sole applicable definition employed for the purposes of the present research. The section that follows focuses on a discussion of comparable intervention programs and a research analysis of the effects of bullying.

### **Olweus Bullying Prevention Program**

In 1983, three elementary school age boys committed suicide in Norway ostensibly from the consequences of severe bullying from their peers. In response to this tragedy, a nationwide campaign against bullying was put into operation and the Norwegian Ministry of Education initiated the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP). In order to evaluate the impact of the program a longitudinal study was conducted from 1983-1985 and included 2,500 fifth through eighth grade students from 42 schools (Olweus & Limber, 2010a).

A cohort design was used allowing the researchers to utilize same-aged students from the same schools and compare this group over a two-year period (Olweus & Limber, 2010a). Student participants were selected from 112 classrooms in 28 elementary schools and 14 middle schools. The students completed an empirical evaluation at the beginning of the study. After eight months, a 62% drop in being bullied was tallied, with a 33% reduction in bullying others. In addition, the study showed further incident reductions after 20 months: 64% drop in being bullied and 52.6% reduction in bullying others (Olweus & Limber, 2010b). To summarize their findings:

1. Both boys and girls had a reduction in direct bullying (direct physical attacks) and indirect bullying (social isolation);

2. A reduction in general antisocial behavior such as vandalism, theft, and school absenteeism;
3. Vast improvement in the social climate within the classroom and school life in general (Olweus, 2006, p.12).

OBPP is designed for the classroom and includes methods to reach out to parents and the community for involvement and support. Administrators, teachers and staff members are primarily responsible for introducing and implementing the program (Olweus, 2006). Olweus' intentions, when he developed the OBPP, were to "Reduce existing problems of bullying among students at school, prevent the development of new bullying problems and achieve better peer relations at school" (Olweus & Limber, 2010a, p. 126). The program targets a restructuring of the school environment in order to reduce the opportunities and rewards for engaging in bullying and to build a sense of community among students and adults (Olweus & Limber, 2010a).

OBPP was developed for students in elementary and junior high school between five and fifteen years of age. Because this intervention program is not course specific, the components, core principles, rules, and supportive materials, can be applied to any after-school programs, camps or community youth programs. The OBPP has been proven to help students understand that bullying is not just a school issue but also one that affects the atmosphere of all areas of their lives (Olweus, 2006).

In the teacher guide Olweus (2006) describes the intervention program as being based on a few key principles derived from research on the development of aggressive behavior:

It is important to try to create a school environment and preferably a home characterized by:

- Warmth and positive interest and involvement on the part of the adults;

- Firm limits for unacceptable behavior;
- Consistent use of nonphysical, non-hostile negative consequences when rules are broken;
- Adults in the school (and home) who function as authorities and positive role models (p. 10).

These principles have been translated into a number of concrete measures in the school, classroom, and at an individual level (one on one discussion).

The target group at the school level is the entire student population, without a focus on students who identified as victims or bullies (Olweus, 1993a). The school level components (see Table 1) concentrate on the goals of developing attitudes and creating conditions that decrease the extent of bullying at all grade levels. Each school's administrative staff should develop an individualized, long-term plan of action for the entire school. The plan should be concrete, detailed and based in part on the results of the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire administered to the entire school population. One of the plan's goals is to create some degree of collective commitment to, and responsibility for, the program.

Other elements of the school components concentrate on preventing the development of new bully/victim relationships. In reviewing and refining the school supervision system, Olweus (1993a) notes that:

It is *at* school, rather than on the way to and from school, that most of the bullying occurs. Accordingly, it is important to have an adequate number of adults outside together with the students during break periods, and that the school provides good supervision of the students' activities during all break periods such as recess and lunchroom breaks (p.70-71).

Those who supervise must be ready to intervene quickly and decidedly in all situations even if there is only a suspicion of bullying. Olweus (1993a) points out “The guiding rule of action should be to intervene too early rather than too late” (p.71). Early intervention gives both, the students who bully, and others that may get involved, a consistent and clear message that bullying is unacceptable. The bullying incidents observed by supervisors must be discussed with the faculty, addressed in the classroom and shared with the entire school community (Olweus, 1993a).

The primary focus of the classroom level is similar to the school level except that it targets more of the class as a whole. This level includes regular classroom discussions regarding peer relationships and issues related to bullying. The classroom level provides a forum for teachers to stay up to date on the social issues that concern students. In order to avoid bully/victim problems and create a better social climate in the classroom, teachers and students must agree on a few simple rules about bullying. Olweus emphasizes the importance of getting children involved in the classroom discussion regarding the rules that deal with both direct and indirect bullying. He suggests posting rules in the classroom. Olweus (2006) recommends four starting points:

- We will not bully others;
- We will try to help students who are bullied;
- We will try to include students who are left out;
- If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home (p.10).

The OBPP program goal, for the individual level, is to change the behavior or situation of individual students. At this level, the target groups are those students who have been known to,

or are suspected of, being either bullies or victims (Olweus, 1993a). The primary aim in dealing with bullies on an individual level is to make them stop the emphasizes that “The message to the bullies must be absolutely clear: We don’t accept bullying in our school/class and will see to it that it comes to an end” (p. 97). Olweus (1993a) believes that it may be easier for the teacher to have these discussions with bullying students if some of the measures previously described have already been implemented; for example, the class rules against bullying.

Table 1

*OBPP Components*

<b>Olweus Bullying Prevention Program Components</b>	
<p><b>SCHOOL-LEVEL COMPONENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee.</li> <li>• Conduct committee and staff trainings.</li> <li>• Administer the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire schoolwide.</li> <li>• Hold staff discussion group meetings.</li> <li>• Introduce the school rules against bullying.</li> <li>• Review and refine the school’s supervisory system.</li> <li>• Hold a school kick-off event to launch the program.</li> <li>• Involve parents.</li> </ul> <p><b>CLASSROOM-LEVEL COMPONENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post and enforce schoolwide rules against bullying.</li> <li>• Hold regular class meetings.</li> <li>• Hold meetings with students’ parents.</li> </ul>	<p><b>INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL COMPONENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervise students’ activities.</li> <li>• Ensure that all staff intervene on the spot when bullying occurs.</li> <li>• Hold meetings with students involved in bullying.</li> <li>• Hold meetings with parents of involved students.</li> <li>• Develop individual intervention plans for involved students.</li> </ul> <p><b>COMMUNITY-LEVEL COMPONENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve community members on the Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee.</li> <li>• Develop partnerships with community members to support your school’s program.</li> <li>• Help to spread anti-bullying messages and principles of best practice in the community.</li> </ul>

*Note.* Adapted from “Olweus’ Core Program Against Bullying and Antisocial behavior: A Teacher Handbook,” by Dan Olweus, 2006, *Scope and Sequence*, p.05. Copyright 2007 by Hazelden Foundation.

The community level is an important component since bullying does not stop at the schoolhouse doors. This component of the program was adapted in the United States to fit our



culture. In addition, an effort was made to include community members in the anti-bullying initiative by involving them in a school's anti-bullying activities within the community. Olweus & Limber (2010b), discuss the importance of inviting at least one community member to join the Members of the Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee (see Table 1) to help implement the program.

Olweus (2006) emphasizes, "It is crucial that the content of the program be presented to the relevant school personnel in an effective manner and one that stimulates active acquisition and dedicated staff" (p.16). In addition, guidelines must be established to precisely delineate what is an adequate implementation of the program and what is a deviation from the method. It is important to coordinate the program components and activities along with staff cooperation. In addition, it is critical to the program that the staff, faculty and administration develop the same attitudes, rules and methods of intervening with students (Olweus, 2006). Consistency and coordination of the program will encourage positive behavior and address behavioral problems. Olweus (2006) makes it a point that the entire school, including those who do not have teaching functions, and representatives of the parents and the students be involved in the OBPP implementation and execution.

There are important characteristics of the OBPP that distinguish it from other anti-bullying prevention programs. Olweus' program is universal in that it represents a school-wide endeavor including administration, teachers, parents and volunteers. The OBPP is based on an adult-child relationship model where teachers are encouraged to think of the child's overall social relationships and not just their education. Another distinguishing characteristic of the OBPP is that it is both system-oriented and individual oriented. Finally, OBPP is a research-

based program that is not time driven or based on a one or two year implementation process (Espelage & Swearer, 2011). Black and Jackson (2007) summarize the program:

The Olweus Bully-Victim Questionnaire starts with a needs assessment, to identify prevalence, types, areas and attitudes related to bullying. A coordinating committee, comprised of teaching and non-teaching staff and community members, uses the Needs Assessment/Questionnaire data to develop school specific implementation plans using the OBPP model. The OBPP model outlines school, class and individual level interventions with flexibility for cultural and developmental tailoring. Core components of the program are rules against bullying, a bullying awareness day, improving supervision, parent involvement, class councils, working systems of positive and negative consequences and individual interventions (p.624).

### **Evaluations of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program**

The first major evaluation of the OBPP in the United States occurred in 1994 (Limber, Nation, Melton, Tracy & Flerx, 2004). The Institute of Families in Society (IFS) at the University of South Carolina received a grant from the United States Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Limber et al., 2004). A large percentage of the grant was earmarked for the implementation and evaluation of the OBPP in six rural elementary schools districts in South Carolina. The faculty at the IFS was familiar with the Olweus program results in Norwegian schools and recognized that no other violence-prevention program to date had produced such impressive results. The IFS was interested in determining if this program could have the same positive results in an American setting (Limber et al., 2004). The IFS hired a project director, part-time faculty and graduate students to help with the implementation and to collect and input the project's evaluation data from participating schools.

The IFS was determined to maintain the original integrity of the program and based on Olweus' recommendations "The staff refined their training agenda, materials and techniques in preparation for the subsequent training of staff from participating schools" (Limber, et al., 2004, p. 57).

The intervention-targeted students in middle schools and, schools throughout the state were separated into two groups, Group A, and Group B. Group A consisted of schools "That were located in non-metropolitan region of the state, representing every region of the state, each region was able to be matched to another participating school district in a neighboring county on the basis on students and community demographics" (Limber, et al., 2004, p. 58). Schools in Group B started in the second year of the program and consisted of schools that matched the region and the community demographics in Group A. In the end, the sample contained data from 12 schools: six schools in Group A and six in Group B.

Limber et al. (2004) wanted to mirror the Norwegian OBPP model and use the same ecological model. Similar to the OBPP goals the IFS's intentions were to reduce bullying and antisocial behavior in middle schools by involving the child's ecological surroundings. The Norwegian OBPP program, consisted of core components that were used in the classroom, school and at the individual level. The researchers in the IFS study modified the program to "Ensure the program met the needs of the rural, American, middle-school population and to involve the larger community in bullying prevention activities" (Limber et al., 2004, p. 58). The IFS program team added two primary modifications to the original OBPP: "The development of school-wide rules against bullying (as opposed to classroom rules); and the engagement of the broader community in bullying-prevention activities" (Limber et al, 2004, p. 58). The researchers believed that in the American middle school culture it would be advantageous to

create school wide rules and not classroom rules. The primary reason for this modification was that American middle-school students change classes throughout the day and establishing school-wide rules would provide a uniformity of control.

The evaluation occurred over a three-year period; starting in 1995 (Pre-test), students in the fourth, fifth and sixth grades completed the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire. In the second year, 1996, students in grades fifth through seventh were administered the questionnaire and in the third and final year, students in sixth, seventh and eighth grades completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire was not compulsory for any of the student participants. In total the IFS collected data from 5,317 students at baseline, 5,137 in year two and 3,835 in the final year (Limber et al., 2004).

The results, after one year showed a 16% reduction in students who bullied others at the intervention schools and 12% increase in bullying among students in comparison schools, resulting in an overall relative reduction of approximately 28% (Limber, et al., 2004). Espelage & Swearer (2011) noted that the study conducted by Limber et al. (2004) showed an increase over time in the frequency of self-reported antisocial behavior among students in comparison schools while students in the intervention schools had no increase or a slower rate of increase in general delinquency and school misbehavior. The study (Limber et al., 2004) indicates, “The program appeared to slow the age-related rate of increase in students’ involvement in antisocial behavior” (Olweus & Limber, 2010a, p. 129). There was no significant change in the frequency with which students reported being bullied. In light of the initial positive results, subsequent research and a follow-up consultation with Olweus, Limber et al. (2004) outlined several U.S. based modifications to the original program:

- The School's Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee receives at least 1.5 to 2 two days of training compared to the original one day of training;
- Create an on-site coordinator to administrate The Bully/Victim Questionnaire and who processes the results of the questionnaire; take an active role of the Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee and assist with the training of the staff. This role is critical in helping to successfully launch and sustain the OBPP;
- In order to meet the additional attention to the issue of bullying in the U.S., a national train-the-trainer model has been developed with some assistance from the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services (p.79).

At the time of this study, 85 nationally trained instructors from 26 states had received provisional or full certification in the OBPP (Limber et al., 2004). Unfortunately, the program only continued for one additional year due to lack of adherence to the original intervention program.

In a separate study, Black and Jackson (2007) observed the effectiveness of OBPP in six elementary schools in the inner city of Philadelphia. All the schools in the study were large, urban institutions with a diverse student population. The researchers used an observational measuring tool, Bullying Incident Density (BID), to study bullying behaviors that included physical, verbal, and emotional bullying occurring primarily during lunchroom and recess periods. The three primary research questions were:

1. Can observations be used as a form of program evaluation?
2. Does the OBPP reduce observable bullying behavior?
3. How do lunch and recess observation data compare to the Bullying-Victim Questionnaire completed by the students (Black and Jackson, 2007, p. 626)?

Another tool used to evaluate the program was the Fidelity of Implementation Instrument (FII). Mihalic (2002) describes the FII concept as, “Implementation fidelity sometimes called integrity or adherence, is a process of how well the program is being implemented in comparison with the original program design” (p.2). Mihalic (2002) delineates the four primary components:

1. Adherence: Whether the intervention is being delivered as it was designed;
2. Exposure: The number of sessions implemented, length of each session, or the frequency with which program techniques were implemented;
3. Quality of the Delivery: The manner in which a teacher, staff or volunteer delivers a program;
4. Participant Responsiveness: The extent to which participants are engaged by, and involved in the activities and content of the program (p. 2).

This tool was based on the original 14 OBPP core interventions. A checklist was used to note if a school did or did not satisfy a core intervention (see Table 1).

The Fidelity of Implementation was expressed as “Fidelity of implementation (percent) = Number of components implemented/Total number of components (14)” (Black & Jackson, 2007, p. 628). The project coordinators measured fidelity throughout the entire four years of the study. The results of the Fidelity of Implementation ranged from 21% to 57% in the first year of the study; by the fourth year, the range increased from 64% to 100%. There was an increase in the rate of fidelity, due to an individual schools Fidelity of Implementation percentage changing throughout the four years. For example, School One began at 57%, in the second year it increased to 93% and then dropped to 86% in the fourth year. Thus, the Fidelity of Implementation did not show a linear increase (Black & Jackson, 2007).

According to Black and Jackson (2007) after four years, the schools found a reduction in bullying occurrences of 45 %. The bullying incidents went from 65 at the baseline to a reduction of 36 incidents per 100 student hours. “Students reported bullying increased by 5% from 37.8% ( $n=3,741$ ) to 39.7% ( $n=1,598$ ). There was no significant correlation between the BID and changes in reported bullying of students or BID and fidelity of implementation” (Black & Jackson, 2007, p. 633). One explanation for the lack of correlation is that each school targeted high-risk areas such as the lunchroom and recess periods. “Thus, fidelity of implementation could have been a very low 21%, but schools still saw changes in BID in high risk areas” (Black & Jackson, 2007, p.633).

Black and Jackson (2007) found the BID to be a useful tool to evaluate program outcomes: “By standardizing the number of incidents per 100 student hours, comparisons were made between groups or grades allowing coordination between committees to use the data to prioritize high-risk groups and to distribute resource more effectively” (p.635). The researchers noted that although student observations are quick and low cost they have their drawbacks. Using observation as a tool to measure bullying outcomes must be done consistently with procedures and guidelines for all observers (Black & Jackson, 2007). In addition, observation can only measure something that is seen. Within the Olweus, definition of bullying this method would only encompass physical bullying.

Black and Jackson’s (2007) research indicates that there is a need to provide further study. Not all faculty and staff may be ready for change at the same time. In addition, there is regression throughout the intervention phases, so understanding the impact the BID has is important in measuring outcomes. The schools observed in this study found that while most of their personnel were ready for change, others needed two or three years to prepare. Black and

Jackson (2007) noted “Understanding what gets people motivated to change may facilitate implementation and ultimately program success” (p. 635).

The Black and Jackson (2007) study determined that the greatest reduction in BID came from intervention in schools that were consistent in enforcing rules, established student participation, and increased supervision by adults during lunch and recess periods. In addition, those schools that demonstrated an interest in students by addressing interaction on a one-to-one basis showed a reduction in BID. “To impact bullying, we have to learn more about the developmental and social roles that bullying plays in society” (Black & Jackson, 2007, p. 636).

In a related study, Bauer, Lozano, and Rivara (2007) examined the effectiveness of the OBPP using a non-randomized controlled study of 10 public middle schools in Seattle, Washington; seven used the OBPP intervention and three a less formal program. The researchers chose to limit their sample to middle schools because the OBPP was originally targeted for this age group. Bauer et al. (2007) used the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire and integrated a few of these questions into the school climate surveys to determine the effectiveness of the OBPP. They analyzed all available school climate survey data from those Olweus indicators and alternates that measured key program target outcomes at different time points, pre- and post-implementation (Bauer, Lozano & Rivara, 2007).

Questions were taken from the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire; two questions concerned relational bullying and two involved physical bullying. If a student responded positively to at least one of the pair of indicators, the student was coded as experiencing relational or physical victimization (Bauer et al., 2007). Questions from the school climate survey were used to measure student attitudes, safety, perceptions of others’ readiness to intervene and the general school experience. “The schools that implemented the OBPP were



evaluated with respect to the Olweus standard to adequately capture teachers' use of core components with the program's intended regularity and consistency to remain involved with students" (Bauer et al., 2007, p.269).

An independent expert in bullying prevention evaluated the school surveys, for the implementation of fidelity, based on the individual core components. "The scale consisted of a 4-point scale: 0 = no effort/activity, 1 = attempted but not to Olweus standards, 2 = meets Olweus standard or 3 = exceeds Olweus standard" (Bauer et al., 2007, p. 269). The inter-rater reliability was 87%, 113 of the 130 coded observations were in 100% agreement. Bauer et al. (2007) found that "Statistically significant differences between implementation of fidelity, t-tests with equal variances were performed to examine differences between implementation efforts by school, classroom and community level scores" (p. 270). Due to the lack of identifying information, students could not be linked to individual responses (Bauer et al., 2007).

The data showed intervention schools implemented more core components than comparison schools. Only one of the intervention schools carried out the Olweus community components. The comparison schools attempted to apply anti-bullying activities without rules, resulting in a nominal measurable effect. "The biggest difference in the intervention schools and the comparison schools were activities to engage parents, methods to keep abreast of bullying incidents, holding regular staff discussions and classroom meetings" (Bauer et al., 2007, p.273).

The middle school students, in the comparison and intervention schools at baseline, reported being victims of relational bullying more frequently than physical bullying 30.4% compared to 24.8% (Bauer et al., 2007). The study noted that the intervention schools had a lower number of incidents in both physical and relational victimizations. Relational victimization decreased by 28% and physical victimization decreased by 37% among white

students; however, there were no program effects for minority students (Bauer et al., 2007).

Bauer et al. (2007) observed, “Among intervention schools 21% were more likely to perceive other students actively intervening on behalf of student victims. Additionally, in regard to student attitudes 6<sup>th</sup> graders were 21% more likely to feel sorry for victims and want to help” (p.272). By not being able to identify individual responses, it was difficult to directly confirm any change in attitudes. Because the OBPP was developed in Norway, for a relatively homogenous population, the program may not readily translate to a multi-ethnic society (Bauer et al., 2007).

Bauer et al. (2007) suggests:

In light of the various roles of the family and ethnicity/race on student behavior and attitudes, we encourage schools not to stop implementing the OBPP. One reason is that this program is the only available bullying prevention program that is comprehensive and encompasses a whole school approach. Additionally, it is a vehicle for schools to bring about change because it establishes a common language and provides the necessary framework for schools to tackle bullying (p.273).

In conclusion, Bauer et al. (2007) recommended that schools with an ethnically diverse student body continue with the implementation of the OBPP, “To encourage the process of ethnic exploration while advocating the development of tolerance and sensitivity to others” (p.273).

Pagliocca, Limber, and Hashima (2007) evaluated the effectiveness of the OBPP in three suburban elementary schools in Chula Vista, California. This study was funded by a School Community Policing Partnership grant from the California Department of Education and the Office of the Attorney General. The school district believed that “Bullying in the school

environment has an impact not only on the victim, but also on the perpetrator and on the entire school community” (Pagliocca, Limber & Hashima, 2007, p. 5).

Pagliocca et al. (2007) applied a selection cohorts design to evaluate the OBPP over a three-year period. Using the Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire, they anonymously surveyed students, teachers and parents. The Pagliocca et al. (2007) evaluation reported the following results:

For being bullied:

1. Self-reports decreased 21% after one year;
2. After two years a drop of 14%;

For bullying others:

1. Self-reports of 8% decrease after 1 year;
2. Decrease of 17% after two years (p. 5).

After one year, bullied students perceived that teachers and adults attempted to intervene to stop the bullying. At the end of the three year study: the school’s bullying policies had been communicated clearly to students and parents; that the rules about bullying were clearly defined and, that they knew how to respond to bullying. The increase marked an improvement from 72% in year one to 97% in year three (Olweus & Limber, 2010b).

### **Additional Prevention and Intervention Programs**

“The ability to resolve conflict, to treat each other with kindness, and to share are not innate characteristics of most children, learning these skills should be a part of good educational programs” (Horne, Bell, Raczynski, & Whitford, 2011, p.228). Horne et al. (2011) believe that “Children will incorporate these skills, value the safety of a bully-free school environment, and perpetuate a non-violent approach to social interactions throughout their school years” (p. 228).

A psycho-educational program, Bully Busters, was designed to “Facilitate the teachers’ acquisition of skills, techniques, and intervention and prevention strategies specifically related to problems of bullying and victimization, as well as to enhance teachers’ self-efficacy for confronting bullying and victimization in the classroom” (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004, p.261). The Bully Busters prevention program focuses on enhancing the social environment in the middle school by making changes in the social system to prevent bullying. Horne et al. (2011) states “ In short, our goal is for all people within the school system to support a peaceful environment, to be informed of the nature of the problem, and to be prepared to prevent and respond to bullying” (p.229).

The Bully Busters prevention program involves developing a school culture that encourages peer action to reduce or eliminate the problem and altering the faculty and administrative response to bullying and aggression. Researchers Horne, Orpinas, Newman-Carlson and Bartolomucci (2004) found that “Changing the environment is more powerful than changing individuals, that prevention is better than intervention, and that changing the environment requires support and understanding among teachers” (p. 299).

Horne et al. (2004) suggest that “Programs developed to change the perpetrator, to change the response of the victim, or to modify the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim might sufficiently solve the problem” (p. 299). Based on their study Horne et al. (2004) found that it is crucially important to start with the school culture and work with the largest population affected by the aggressor, thus facilitating school-wide change.

Prevention is better than intervention and, based on the premise that violence happens during a chain of events, it is helpful to understand where the chain began (Horne et al., 2004). In order to meet the program goals the entire faculty must participate in the Bully Busters

training program encouraging the behavior to extend beyond the individual classroom.

Changing the environment requires support and understanding among teachers. They have many resources to share with each other and a formalized structure gives teachers a tool that provides support and encouragement during an often-taxing day. Establishing a support team, to review new interventions or solve current conflicts with students and share effective classroom management, will add another layer to the formalized structure (Horne et al., 2004). The team's goal should be to help prevent bullying incidents before intervention is necessary.

One method Bully Busters uses, in their training of teachers, are the ABC's of behavior: Antecedents, Behaviors, and Consequences. Helping teachers understand the Antecedent (what caused the bullying); the Behavior may change avoiding any Consequences. Horne et al. (2004) provides this example:

When students are told to line up to go to lunch and are left on their own as they begin to form a line (Antecedent), a bully may take this opportunity to push and shove his way to the front (Behavior) and as a result some children may get hurt or begin to push back causing an aggressive behavior (Consequence) (p. 301).

In response Horne et al. (2004) suggest that the Antecedent may have been to provide line-up instructions to the students; two lines with no more than ten children in each line, the Behavior is that the students now have clear instructions to follow, and the Consequence is a pleasant lunch hour.

The most effective means by which teachers can manage the problem of bullying is by developing increased knowledge and awareness of the problem; by ensuring that there are minimal opportunities for acts of bullying to materialize; and by offering student support,

training, and education aimed at attacking the root causes of the bullying behavior (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004, p.260).

Horne et al. (2011) indicate that the foundation of the Bully Buster intervention program is “Respect” and the three primary values that support the Bully Busters Intervention Program are:

1. All children can learn;
2. All people in school deserve to be treated with respect and dignity;
3. There is no place for violence, aggression, or bullying in our schools (p.231).

Horne et al. (2004) believe that in order to demonstrate respect in the school, teachers must utilize clear and specific language that is not sarcastic, critical, or punitive.

The Bully Busters program was implemented in the form of a three-day staff development-training workshop. Newman-Carlson and Horne (2004) describe the program’s subject matter to include, information pertaining to bullying and victimization, prevention strategies, recommended interventions, stress-management techniques, as well as classroom activities. The training program has eight modules, each addressing one element of the bully/victim and discussed in the Bully Busters Teachers Support team:

Module 1: Increasing Awareness of Bullying,

Module 2: Preventing Bullying in your Classroom,

Module 3: Building Personal Power,

Module 4: Recognizing the Bully,

Module 5: Recognizing the Victim,

Module 6: Recommendations and Interventions for Bullying Behavior,

Module 7: Recommendations and Interventions for Helping Victims,

Module 8: Relaxation and Coping Skills (Horne et al., 2004, p.307).

In the staff workshop, each teacher was provided with a manual containing the modules that included worksheets and classroom activities. This manual was both an instructional guide and a classroom curriculum resource. The workshop began after the second week of school and met for two hours every week for the next three weeks. In order to validate fidelity of implementation of the program, teachers adhered to the training manual and weekly meetings were conducted with the supervisor of the workshop. In addition to these meetings, teachers attended team meetings and completed a weekly checklist of classroom activities.

Newman-Carlson and Horne's (2004) evaluation of the Bully Busters middle school curriculum demonstrated that those teachers who participated in the program reported a number of statistically significant positive outcomes compared to the control groups. Participating teachers reported an increase in knowledge and use of bullying intervention skills along with personal self-effectiveness, related to working with specific types of children. In addition, teachers in the program saw a reduction in bullying, measured by the number of disciplinary referrals. This evaluation provided evidence that the middle school Bully Busters program curriculum adequately increased teacher's knowledge and effective use of bully prevention and intervention techniques (Horne et al., 2004).

Several years later Horne et al. (2011) reported on another Bully Buster study, conducted at the elementary school level, by Browning, Cooker and Sullivan (2005):

At the conclusion of the training program participants in the treatment group demonstrated significantly better results than the control group on the following seven outcomes:

1. Awareness of bullying.
2. Knowledge of prevention strategies that can be used in the classroom.

3. Identification of behavior characteristics of bullies and victims.
4. Interventions in reducing bullying behavior.
5. Ways to help victim bullying.
6. Techniques for relaxation and stress management for students.
7. Personal stress reduction (Horne et al., 2011, p. 237-238).

The Bully Busters program relies heavily on the involvement of the classroom teachers. If teachers are resistant or are disinterested, there is little chance of program success or creating an atmosphere that encourages a safe and productive learning environment. This is in contrast to the Olweus program where all components of a student's ecological environment play a part at creating a positive atmosphere. The whole school community helps to build and nurture students. To depend solely on teachers does not appear to provide students with support from parents and administration. In addition, not all teachers in the elementary or middle school classrooms participated in the program, leaving students with a potentially conflicting set of rules.

A number of similar programs have been initiated in several states. SafePlace is the primary provider of comprehensive sexual and domestic violence prevention and intervention services in Austin, Texas. Recognizing an opportunity to prevent dating violence before it starts, SafePlace initiated the Expect Respect School Project in 1997 with funding and technical assistance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Rosenbluth, Whitaker, Vallie & Ball, 2011). This intervention program used a multilevel approach to prevent bullying and sexual harassment. The stated goal was to involve all members of the school community in identifying and responding to bullying and sexual harassment. "The goal of the program is to prevent violence and abuse in future dating relationships by increasing effective responses to



bullying and sexual harassment among students and adults who witness these behaviors” (Rosenbluth et al., 2011, p. 242).

The foundation of the Expect Respect Program is based on the Olweus bullying prevention model and includes a multi-level, multi-component whole school program. Similar to the Olweus program, Expect Respect engages all members of the school community by teaching them how to recognize and respond effectively to aggressive behaviors (Rosenbluth et al., 2011).

Expect Respect is based on five core components:

- Classroom curriculum;
- Staff Training;
- Policy Development;
- Parent Education;
- Support Services (Rosenbluth et al., 2011).

The classroom component of the Expect Respect Program is a 12-week course designed for fourth and fifth grade students. “The project staff believed that students in these grades would benefit most from the project because they would soon be exposed to more serious forms of bullying and sexual harassment in middle school and, for many, new roles as boyfriend and girlfriend” (Rosenbluth et al., 2011, p. 243). The curriculum, a joint publication of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women and the National Education Association Professional Library, is offered in conjunction with fourth and fifth grade reading material (Whitaker, Rosenbluth, Valle & Sanchez, 2004). The lessons were developed to help students distinguish between playful teasing or joking around and hurtful teasing and bullying.

The program was originally designed to be implemented by teachers and taught by SafePlace staff and school counselors. Whitaker et al. (2004) explains that the “Intent in having

SafePlace staffs co-teach the curriculum was for SafePlace staff to serve as models for the teachers, allowing them to observe the first year and take on responsibility for teaching the lessons in subsequent years” (p.331). In a related study, Farrington and Ttofi (2009) reported, “The classroom curriculum was designed to increase the ability and willingness of bystanders to intervene in bullying situations thus reducing the social acceptability of bullying and sexual harassment” (p. 30).

Training began with a six-hour session for project staff, administrators, counselors, and fifth grade teachers. In addition to this initial training class, one three-hour course was provided each semester for all school community members. The goal was to raise awareness in the entire community, on the subject of bullying and sexual harassment, and teach school personnel how to respond effectively to witnessed or reported incidents (Whitaker et al., 2004).

An anti-bullying policy was developed by participating school administrators, to ensure consistent responses to bullying and sexual harassment. The policy included a statement of philosophy (Mission Statement), a definition of bullying and sexual harassment, expectations of actions concerning incidents, and a statement of commitment to maintaining confidentiality (Whitaker et al., 2004). Once the policy was finalized, the school administration was encouraged to share this statement with staff, students, and parents and provide the necessary training.

Parent Education, through educational presentations and newsletters, was offered twice a year in an attempt to build support for the project and its objectives (Rosenbluth et al., 2011).

Rosenbluth (2011) explained:

The presentations provided information about the project; the vocabulary used to discuss bullying and sexual harassment at school; strategies for helping children who are bullied,

bully others, and witness bullying; tips for responding to and preventing bullying among siblings and resources available to them (p. 332).

The newsletters provided; information regarding additional resources available in the community, books dealing with the subject of bullying and sexual harassment and suggestions on how to help students who have been bullied.

SafePlace trainers offered support services to assist with school-based counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual harassment. For example, one of the meetings instructed teachers on how to respond to children who repeatedly were either the targets or perpetrators of bullying or harassment. This session provided teachers with alternative methods of responding, suggesting interviewing the victim and bully separately to ensure safety for victims vulnerable to further incidents (Whitaker et al., 2004).

A longitudinal evaluation was conducted with the support of the Austin School district Director of Guidance and Counseling. Twelve schools, representing a cross-section of the Austin school district, were divided into pairs in four distinct geographic areas in Austin. These school pairs were matched for similarities in ethnicity and English proficiency. Through random assignment, one school in each pair was placed in the intervention group and one in the comparison group (Whitaker et al., 2004). At the outset the intervention schools had 929 participants and the comparison schools totaled 834 (Whitaker et al., 2004).

A questionnaire was used to assess the impact of the Expect Respect Project and was administered at both, the beginning and at end of the fall semester, and at the end of the spring semester. These self-reporting questionnaires contained questions on actual bullying behaviors, student reactions to verbal and physical bullying, student perceptions of staff reactions to verbal and physical bullying and students' identification of bullying and sexual harassment (Rosenbluth

et al., 2011). Due to a shortage of instructors trained in program implementation, only three of the six schools from each group participated each semester.

In summary, Whitaker et al. (2004) found, that with respect to awareness of bullying and sexual harassment there was a significant increase in the accurate identification of those behaviors that constitute sexual harassment in the intervention schools. The researchers found no significant change in the awareness of bullying in either the intervention or comparison schools. “The absence of significant results in bullying awareness may be associated, in part, with a mismatch between the design of the student questionnaire and the curriculum” (Whitaker et al., 2004, p. 344). The focus of the questionnaire asked students to respond to questions that identified behaviors that constituted bullying and sexual harassment. The curriculum focused on bullying and sexual harassment behaviors, within specific contexts, that were absent in the survey.

Although The Expect Respect Elementary School Project ended in 2000, the lessons learned have helped to further the development of school-based bullying and sexual harassment prevention and intervention programs in Austin schools (Rosenbluth, 2011). The project garnered attention from the media, and the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor’s office in Texas. According to Rosenbluth et al. (2011) the most significant outcome of this study was “A school district policy and state law now provide increased protections for victimized students and counseling for youth affected by dating, sexual, or domestic violence and is available in many of Austin’s schools” (p. 250).

In a similar move, the Wisconsin State Senate passed Act 309 requiring action by both, local educators and the state, to enhance the safety of schools. The Act states “School districts must provide a safe, secure, and respectful learning environment for all students, in school

buildings, on school buses, and at school-sponsored events” (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.76). Keep it Safe, a bullying intervention pilot program, was developed for Wisconsin schools. “The process and activities are designed to address bullying and harassment among younger children and the adults who teach and parent them to improve a school climate that would ultimately improve student’s achievements in the classroom” (Holt, Keyes & Koenig, 2011, p.128). Wisconsin schools used a faculty survey as an initial assessment and planning tool. These schools were able to use the results of the survey to tailor the intervention programs to suit their individualized needs (see Table 2).

The Wisconsin educators that developed Keep It Safe suggested that four concepts be included in any intervention program design:

1. Engage the issue through an interactive activity, presenting norms as they exist on the issue, or personalized stories related to the issue;
2. Present important knowledge about the content area;
3. Practice key skills that relate to the content are;
4. Presenting lessons that can serve to assess knowledge and skill attainment by the learner (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.11).

After introducing the issue of bullying into elementary schools, a game was developed called the Bullying Bowl. Students would apply their understanding of bullying and work together to stop hurtful behavior (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010). The game topics included the definition of bullying, signs of bullying, the effects of bullying, schools and family rules concerning bullying, and the resources available. For example, at the elementary school level, teaching children the difference between “tattling” and “telling,” and the impact of

negative rumors, are important lessons in preventing bullying behavior (see Table 2). For middle school students the topics concentrated on developing assertive behavioral responses to bullies.

Practicing key program skills in the elementary schools is illustrated by the acronym ACT. The “A” refers to acting on bullying by reporting the behaviors, the “C” refers to providing care and empathy for both the victim and the bully without showing acceptance of the bully’s actions. Finally, the “T” represents talking to key adults and friends who believe that bullying is not acceptable (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010). “The middle school approach takes it one-step further and adds “RE” to form REACT. “R” recognizes that bullying behavior is not acceptable and “E” represents establishing rules against bullying” (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.11). In addition, at the middle school level, the program teaches students how to respond, as a bystander, when they observe bullying behavior (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010).

The program is designed to assist school districts develop effective bullying prevention policies that meet their individualized needs:

- An assessment needs to be conducted to determine the prevalence of bullying, where it is happening, who is involved, and when it is happening;
- Programs must be implemented K–12 and must be comprehensive in nature, including policy, curriculum, and interventions;
- Administrators must provide strong leadership and commitment for anti-bullying programs to be successful;
- Policy needs to be communicated regularly to students, parents, teachers, and others;
- Rules against bullying need to be enforced consistently;
- The climate of the school must discourage bullying;

- Parents need to be educated about bullying, and they need to be involved in prevention efforts;
- Quality bullying prevention programming, strategies, and resources need to be developed or purchased;
- Strategies for hot spots such as buses, cafeterias, lavatories, and other locations need to be developed;
- Environmental redesign may need to be considered;
- Technological monitoring may be effective;
- Training needs to be provided for administrators, teachers, and all school staff, including cafeteria workers, bus drivers, playground supervisors, and others;
- The district's computer-use policy needs to include cyber-bullying in the listing of unacceptable uses of district equipment;
- Resources need to be identified to assist bullies, victims, bystanders, and families;
- Data must be maintained regarding the effectiveness of bullying prevention effort (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.78).

The pilot program, Keep It Safe, conducted in select middle schools in Wisconsin, showed greater positive results than those for the elementary program (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010).

The evaluation demonstrated that the elementary students in the treatment schools were most likely to improve their knowledge about bullying, specifically their ability to define and interpret bullying behavior. The other categories of questions – attitudes toward bullying, feelings of safety, and using prevention skills – showed no difference between

the students from the treatment and comparison schools overall (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.83).

An evaluation of the intervention school demonstrated that student perceptions of being safe in the school lunchroom declined and remained unchanged in comparison schools. “The fact that students did not feel less safe at post-test for three of the survey items concerning safety in and around school leaves the single negative finding open to interpretation” (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.84).

The middle school survey was encouraging; 38% of the items were positive and 24% had negative results (see Table 3). “The results indicate that the Wisconsin Bullying Prevention Program for Middle School Students is effective in helping students, identify bullying behavior, having the skills to respond appropriately to bullying and develop the attitudes to resist bullying” (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.84). The negative results for the middle school program dealt with students’ perceptions of; conditions in their schools, how seriously the school staff took bullying, and whether or not the school staff was working to prevent bullying in their schools (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010). The positive results for acquiring knowledge about bullying and identifying bullying behavior, were the same for both elementary and middle school students (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010). In contrast, middle school students showed positive results in their attitudes toward bullying and a willingness to use their bullying prevention skills.

These findings indicate the importance of an entire school staff addressing bullying as a serious issue and the importance of changes to the school climate. It appears that combining the program with a concerted effort to change how staff perceive of bullying, making it clear to the students that everyone is available and willing to help will decrease



the potential for bullying even more (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.87).

The State of Wisconsin, Department of Public Instruction (2010) evaluated the Keep It Safe program and determined:

That a classroom-only program does not improve the students' perceptions of safety and trust in the school staff to take bullying seriously. Therefore, it is logical to think that the overall school climate regarding bullying is an important factor in changing attitudes – and eventually behavior – related to bullying. The development of a program component to improve the overall school environment to be run in conjunction with the classroom program could be an important step in reducing bullying in our schools (p.86).

Table 2

*Elementary Students: Results by Items Categories from the Outcome Surveys*

Topics covered by the student survey	No of quests.	Statistically significant changes		
		Positive	No change	Negative
Defining bullying behavior	4	3	1	0
Identifying situations where bullying is happening.	4	2	1	1
Attitudes toward bullies and bullying	4	0	4	0
Feelings of safety in and around school	4	0	3	1
Using bullying prevention skills	6	0	5	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5 (22.7%)</b>	<b>14 (63.6%)</b>	<b>3 (13.6%)</b>

*Note.* Adapted from “Bullying Prevention Program: Excerpted from Time to Act and Time to React,” by Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, *An Outcome Evaluation of the Wisconsin Bullying Prevention: Summary and Discussion*, p.83. Copyright 2010 Department of Public Instruction.

The article excerpted from Time to Act and Time to React states “Students in Wisconsin schools

are depending on the adults in their lives to ensure a safe, supportive learning environment in which they can thrive and reach their full potential” (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, p.78).

Table 3

*Middle school students: Results by items categories from the outcome surveys*

Topics covered by the student survey	No of quests.	Positive	No change	Negative
Defining bullying behavior	2	1	0	1
Identifying situations where bullying is happening.	5	3	1	1
Attitudes toward bullies and bullying prevention	6	2	3	1
Bullying and safety at school	4	0	2	2
Using bullying prevention skills	4	2	2	0
Willingness to tell an adult about a bullying situation	8	3	3	2
TOTALS	29	11 (37.9%)	11 (37.9%)	7 (24.1%)

*Note.* Adapted from “Bullying Prevention Program: Excerpted from Time to Act and Time to React,” by Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2010, An Outcome Evaluation of the Wisconsin Bullying Prevention: Summary and Discussion, p.84. Copyright 2010 Department of Public Instruction.

In a related study, Ttofi & Farrington (2010) conducted a meta-analysis of the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs in schools. Four types of research, extending from 1983 through 2009, were included in their review; randomized experiments, intervention-control comparisons with before and after measures of bullying, other intervention –control comparisons and age-cohort design. Of the 622 reports, describing 53 different intervention programs, 44 studies matched their criteria. Their meta-analysis found that “School-based anti-bullying programs are effective; on average, bullying decreased by 20-23% and victimization decreased by 17-20%. More intensive programs were more effective, as were programs including parent

meetings, firm disciplinary methods, and improved playground supervision” (Ttofi & Farrington, 2010, p. 43).

Ttofi & Farrington (2010) found a dose-response relationship between the intensity and duration of the program is linked to the success of reducing the incidences of bullying in schools. They determined that new anti-bullying intervention programs should pay close attention to the playground environment; noting that playground supervision was a key element in an effective program. In addition, the researchers found that after a measurable reduction of bullying and victimization, strong and consistent disciplinary methods are a significant component of any school’s intervention program. The researchers credited the Olweus program for developing a range of firm sanctions such as, talking with bullies, sending them to the principal, making them stay close to the teacher during recess time, and depriving them of privileges (Ttofi & Farrington, 2010).

Interestingly, Ttofi & Farrington (2010) found that students in middle schools: had a higher level of cognitive abilities, decreased impulsive behavior, a better chance of making rational decisions, and an empathetic response towards their peers thus allowing intervention programs to be more effective. The results of Ttofi and Farrington (2010) analysis included:

- New anti-bullying initiatives should go beyond the scope of the school and target wider systemic factors such as family;
- Parent training/meetings were significantly related to a decrease in both bullying and victimization;
- Future anti-bullying initiatives should also bring together experts from various disciplines to make the most of their expertise;

- Establishing a whole-school anti-bullying policy was significantly related to effect sizes for bullying but not for victimization (Being bullied) (Ttofi & Farrington, 2010, p. 46).

Ttofi & Farrington (2010) suggest that future research should include a cost-benefit analysis. “For example, the benefits of reducing bullying might include less delinquency, less anxiety, and depression, less truancy, less medical or psychological treatment, and more successful lives generally” (p.46).

The researcher suggests that intervention programs are a necessity in schools and it is imperative that we understand the complex nature of bullying. We as a community need to listen, and respond accordingly to our students. It is our responsibility to provide an environment that is safe and conducive for learning with the long-term goal of changing students’ attitudes and perceptions surrounding bullying.

## **Methodology**

### **Design**

This research study examined the OBPP implemented at St. Ann’s school, seeking to gain an understanding of the impact of “support” on the program outcomes. Specifically, this study will examine key issues: the efficacy of the anti-bullying program, the attitude of the school community, and the atmosphere at St. Ann’s. A qualitative analysis was the methodological choice based on the limited nature of the subject matter. McLeod’s (2001) characterization of qualitative research is aligned with the focus of the present study:

At the heart, qualitative research involves doing one’s utmost to map and explore the meaning of an area of human experience. If carried out with integrity, this is a process that can result in unique learning both for the person who is the inquirer, and for the those

who are his or her audiences... good qualitative research requires an immersion in some aspect of social life, in an attempt to capture the wholeness of that experience, followed by an attempt to convey this understanding to others' (p. ix).

This method of inquiry allowed the participants, members of the school community, the opportunity to reflect on the OBPP and express their opinion as to the efficacy of the program. The focus was to gather information from school administrators, faculty, and parents as to the impact of support on the success or failure of the program.

For Creswell (2007) qualitative research begins with assumptions and considers the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Creswell (2007) believes:

To study the problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and the data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns and themes (p.37).

This method allows the researcher to gain insight into the individual's perspectives and allows the individual experiences to form the data. He proposes we use the qualitative method "When we empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study" (Creswell, 2007, p.40). This method allows the researcher to write in a literary style that will gather the participant's rich experiences and listen to their stories in their natural environment. In addition, he states, "The final report provides for the voices of participants, a reflexivity of the researchers, a complex description and interpretation of the problem, and a study that adds to the literature or provide for a call of action" (Creswell, 2007, p. 51).

Creswell (2007) noted “Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case), over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and reports a case description” (p.73). This study used multiple sources of information to provide a detailed in-depth picture of the school’s progression after the fourth year of the OBPP. This research attempts to describe the parameters of the OBPP; outlines the dimensions of comparable programs and examines the role support plays in the overall success of bullying intervention programs. The researcher found that the case study method offered the best opportunity to analyze this subject matter.

A qualitative research case study provides the foundation to build a holistic image based on the views and experiences expressed by the participants. One method or tool in qualitative research to gather data is the responsive interviewing model. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), “In the responsive interviewing model, the goal of the researcher is to generate depth of understanding, rather than breadth” (p. 30). This method of interviewing adapts to the varying relationships between researcher and conversational partners and leads to more ‘give and take’ in the conversation. The responsive interview, a data collection tool, permits a trusting relationship to develop and the ability to gather information that is different in kind and quality than any other method.

The design of the responsive interview allows the researcher to provide an explanation or reason for the study, listen to the responses, pause for self- reflection, and furnishes the flexibility to decide if there is a need to readdress the issue or simply move on. The interview is a mechanism or tool to listen and learn from the responder and to capture their experience. Responsive interviewing supplies the conversational partners a chance to change direction, ask

open-ended questions, or pause a moment to reflect in an effort to gain a better understanding of the topic.

Rubin and Rubin (2012) explain “In the semi-structured interview the researcher has a specific topic to learn about, prepares a limited number of questions in advance, and plans to ask follow-up questions” (p.31). The interview guide (see Appendix C, D &E) provided a tool to ask a few closed questions for collecting straightforward data and the flexibility to use open-ended questions. In addition, this method gave the participant a chance to explain their feelings and attitudes, in more depth. Robert Hooper (1988), in his paper, “Speech, for Instance: The Exemplar in Studies of Conversation,” refers to this technique as “letting the tape recorder run” (p.54).

The topic of bullying is both sensitive and personal; therefore, it is important that the dialogue with each of the participants be established with a promise of confidentiality. The goal of the interviewer is to provide an atmosphere of comfort and relaxation, conveying a sense of trust and a promise of an accurate transcription of their experiences.

### **Participants**

The six participants were purposefully selected to help answer the question of how “support” or lack of it affects the OBPP. Purposive sampling provides a process to help locate participants that match the criteria of the study and determine the size of sample. One characteristic of purposive sampling is that it permits the researcher to stop once theoretical saturation is reached. Theoretical saturation is the point in data collection when additional data does not provide any new insights to the researcher’s purpose or question (Creswell, 2007). The primary research question examines the impact that support or the lack of support has on the

program outcomes; therefore, the participants were purposefully selected based on their role in the school community.

The OBPP recommends that all four components; school, individual, classroom and the community need to be active in the program. Without the four components, the program's chances of reaching positive outcomes are unlikely. The same is true in this limited study; granting each participant an equal opportunity to express his or her viewpoints throughout the interview.

One criteria of the study required that all participants must be active at St. Ann's pre- and post-OBPP. The participants included two intermediate teachers, two parents that have children enrolled at the school and two administrators. All but one administrator were active in the school pre- and post-OBPP. The exception, Doris (pseudonym), was not employed by St. Ann's when the program started four years ago, but currently plays an active role in the implementation of the OBPP. Five of the six participants are active teachers or parents of children in the program before and after the OBPP was initiated.

The two administrators in this study were not picked randomly but rather purposefully selected. Katie, (pseudonym) one of the two administrators has been employed for over five years at St. Ann's and provides the day-to-day management of the OBPP. Doris, the second administrator, has responsibilities, which cover the school, faculty and staff, and administers the school's policy and procedures. All participants selected the location and time for the interviews and chose either their office or classroom.

St. Ann's administration approached those faculty members who currently teach grades third through fifth, and asked for study volunteers. Five teachers volunteered to participate in a 45-minute interview discussing the OBPP; the first two volunteers were selected for this study.



An email was sent to participating faculty members with the informed consent attachment for their perusal. At the request of the participating faculty, interviews were conducted in the classroom, one prior to the start of the school day and the second during a break in parent-teacher conferences.

The process of selecting parents was conducted using the St. Ann's student directory.

The St. Ann's directory is set-up by classroom and has an alphabetical family listing. Families whose children who had not attended St. Ann's for the past four years were not part of the sample. Once the sample was compiled, a family name was written on a separate piece of paper and placed in a bowl. The researcher wanted to interview a parent of a boy and a girl at each of the grades levels. An independent individual picked seven family names from the bowl. These names were given to the interviewer to start the process of purposively selecting participants. Each family was contacted, via telephone or e-mail, to ask if they would be willing to participate in the study. The first two parents agreed. The parent participants selected their home as the interview location and requested that it be during the time that their child was in school.

### **Informed Consent**

On December 2011, Marquette University Institutional Review Board granted permission to conduct this research study with six participants. No participants were contacted prior to project approval. In January of 2012, after agreeing to participate in this study, the interviewer met with an administrator at St. Ann's to review the procedures and consent form and explain the purpose of the study (see Appendix A & B). St. Ann's granted this researcher's request to interview two faculty members, two administrators and two parents of children enrolled in the third through fifth grades. Each was provided a copy of the informed consent, which expressed:

The Purpose: Evaluate the results (support) of the OBPP.

The Procedure:	Respond to questions on the subject of bullying at St. Ann's.
The Duration:	The interview contained to 45 minutes and once the transcription was complete, the interviewee would have an opportunity to review for accuracy.
The Risks:	Risk was minimal and had no impact on employment for faculty and administrators.
The Benefits:	The school would be provided with conclusive data from a sample of stakeholders.
Confidentiality:	All data will be coded and pseudonym assigned.
Voluntary:	Participants can withdraw at any time.
Contact Info:	Contact information on any areas concerning this project. (See Appendix A & B).

Prior to the scheduled interviews, this researcher offered to share the interview protocol (see Appendix C & D) with each of the participants. One faculty member requested and received the protocol. The participants agreed to review the consent form prior to the start of the interview and were given the opportunity to ask any questions.

According to Rubin and Rubin (2012) "Interviewees agree to participate in the study, to talk openly about the researcher's concerns; in return the researcher has an absolute responsibility to behave ethically and that all promises made are kept" (p. 85). In the Researcher Agreement of Consent (see Appendix A & B), it explains in detail the subject of confidentiality and the reason for assigning a pseudonym to each participant. These pseudonyms were used throughout the study; during the interview, the data collection stage and the discussion of the findings. The researcher asked each participant to choose a pseudonym: Katie, Doris, Bob,

Marie, Patty, and Elizabeth to maintain confidentiality. Member checking was used to verify the content of the interviews.

### **Data Collection**

The interviews for the six participants occurred in February and March of 2012, over a period of three weeks. The location and time of the interviews were arranged based on the convenience of the participants.

All interviews were conducted using face-to-face, semi-structured and open-ended questions such as, “How would you measure success in this program?” These interviews are the primary data source for this study. The interview guide (see Appendix C, D & E) was helpful in allowing the participants to expand upon each topic, encouraging the free flow of information, while keeping on track with the subject matter. The interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Each participant was mailed a transcript of their interview to review for accuracy and a member check. In addition, the researcher took observational notes, using key words from the interview, to help recall body language or other non-verbal responses.

Individual interviews began with a short conversation on the purpose of the study, assigning a pseudonym and reviewing the questions. The interviewer turned on the recording device and gave a verbal guarantee not exceed the 45 minutes time commitment, asked permission to record the interview and restated the promise of confidentiality. The length of time of the interviews ranged between 40 to 65 minutes. One parent’s interview was extended with the participant’s approval and the interview continued without further interruption.

### **Research Questions**

The primary data collection for this study focused on the six-participant interviews. The researcher discovered that by using a responsive interviewing model, with open-ended questions,

dialogue between conversational partners was relaxed and allowed participants to share their experiences. Rubin and Rubin (2012) noted that:

The role of the researcher is to gather narratives, descriptions and interpretations from an array of conversational partners and put them together in a reasoned way that re-creates a culture or describes a process or set of events in a way that participants would recognize as real (p.7).

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

The interviewer gathered the data and reviewed for content validity to ensure an accurate interpretation of the data. Rubin and Rubin (2012) describe data analysis as:

Analysis takes you step by step from the raw data in your interviews to clear and convincing answers to your research question. Your analysis is strengthened by what you have initially built into your design; the richness, the thoroughness, the balance, the nuance and detail that allows you prepare a report that is vivid and convincing, based on what your interviewees have said (p.190).

After the first interview, this researcher noted that there was some hesitation between questions. Additional time was granted to the participant to reflect on the questions and the interviewer determined that additional clarification was needed. The second interview resulted in an improved conversational flow, as opposed to a 'question and answer' type response. Individual interviews were transcribed, providing a full and accurate verbatim transcription. Each transcription was dissected for clarity and common themes. To verify validity the interviews were sent via email to each of the participants. One participant changed a few words to clarify a point. The process described above is referred to as member checking. Creswell and Clark (2011) describe member checking as a frequently used approach, "In which the

investigator takes summaries of the findings, back to the key participants in the study and ask them whether the findings are an accurate reflection of their experiences” (p.211). This method is a common procedure used in qualitative research to validate the data, results and their interpretations, by placing a high level of validity on both the researcher and participants.

Upon receiving the transcriptions, the researcher reviewed the written documents, paying particular attention to any biases the researcher may have projected, applying a sense of reflexivity or self-reflection. It was noted that on occasion, an explanation was given for a question when the participant was simply reflecting on the question. Potential bias worth noting is that the researcher is the mother of an alumnus of St. Ann’s and this subject matter was a concern to the parent participants. The researcher was aware of distinct personal reactions experienced during the interview process. Highlighting quotes with common themes helped the researcher find and begin to gather the evidence to compile the research findings.

Each question was highlighted and reviewed searching for words, phrases, and examples that would provide a meaningful interpretation; those that described and supplied relevance to the emerging themes. Rubin and Rubin (2012) refer to this process as coding, whereas Creswell and Clark (2011) describe this data analysis as triangulation. This process provides a method to link several codes together. These links start to form a common theme and begin to create validity (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The researcher found a rich mix of examples and stories that when brought together created a common theme and provided data to support the research findings.

In summary, the researcher took several steps in analyzing the data to ensure validity and provide the reader with a clear interpretation of the participant’s experience with the OBPP. Transcribing the interviews verbatim, to ensure an accurate record, was the first step. In

addition, the researcher engaged in a period of self-reflection to address any bias or preconceived opinions. The next step was a member check, where the interviewer, as promised, shared the transcripts with each participant and asked for feedback. Combining transcriptions and the manual notes helped to recall the emotions and facial reactions of the participant. As a final step, the researcher relied on triangulation/coding tools to help gather common phrases and themes and help connect each participant's experiences.

## **Findings**

### **Overview**

The researcher has gained an understanding from the interviews and data collected as to how the OBPP at St. Ann's functions. All six participants understood participated in and expressed support for the OBPP. Each of these participants believes progress has been made in reducing incidents of bullying and that the OBPP is a positive influence on the atmosphere and behavior of the children at St. Ann's. The focus of this study will reveal how the support or lack of support influenced the OBPP within the school. The findings show minimal differences in opinion between participants.

Table 4 provides a visual overview of the study participants and their connection to St. Ann's. Participants generally conformed to the original study requirements. The single exception was the participant possessing unique and specialized operational insights in the OBPP and is a pivotal leader at the school. Throughout the interviews, each participant shared his or her experiences concerning the OBPP. All of them were passionate about the welfare of the children at St. Ann's and are committed to creating a safe, faith-based and conducive learning environment.

Table 4

*Snapshot of Participants*

Pseudonym	Doris	Katie	Bob	Marie	Patty	Elizabeth
Role	* Administrator	* Administrator	* Faculty	* Faculty	* Parent	* Parent
Criteria	* Employment is less than four years at St. Ann's	* Employment is greater than four years at St. Ann's	* Employment is greater than four years at St. Ann's	* Employment is greater than four years at St. Ann's	* Parent of children at St. Ann's for past 11 years	* Parent of children at St. Ann's for past 12 years
Criteria	* Leadership role	* Specialty teacher	* Intermediate grades 3-5 <sup>th</sup>	* Intermediate grades 3-5th	*Child in intermediate grade	*Child in intermediate grade

**Themes**

Upon completion of member checking and recorded audio playback of the tapes the researcher used the transcriptions to gather common themes:

1. St. Ann's Mission Statement in Relation to the OBPP;
2. The Topic of Bullying at Home;
3. Bullying;
4. St. Ann's Imprint on the OBPP and;
5. Awareness & Commitment to the OBPP.

**St. Ann's Mission Statement in Relation to the OBPP**

"...Learn, Live and Love through Jesus" is the mission statement at St. Ann's. On the school's website, it acknowledges that they are a Catholic School, recognize each other as brothers and sisters in Christ and gain virtue from one another. In their Mission/Vision statement, there are 11 bullet points that affirm their convictions, including the belief that children are a gift from God and that each child has the right and personal responsibility to learn. Other important components of the Mission/Vision statement are that the home, school, and church are intricately intertwined in the development of the child; a challenged mind, a faith-filled spirit, a healthy body and all members of our community are teachers and learners. This

mission statement is addressed to the school community. The researcher found it refreshing and forward thinking to consider all members of the community as learners, with an open mind to new ideas and a culture willing to accept differences.

When both conversational partners were comfortable, the researcher began the interview by addressing the mission statement. The opening question asked all participants if the mission statement was part of the daily curriculum, if they answered 'yes' they were asked to give an example. Katie and Bob had similar comments, Katie stated:

I do not think directly, [I] have it in my curriculum...it is stenciled on my wall and I've made it by what I hope kids feel in the classroom. For me, as a [specialty] teacher, its more I try to model the, Learn, Live, and Love for the kids. Therefore, I try to show them the way I act towards other teachers or the way I treat the students in my classroom or the way I respond to questions they might have (Katie, personal communication, February 2012).

Bob agreed that the mission statement was part of his daily curriculum: "A handful of ways. First of all, it sets an example, a leadership example" (Bob, personal communication, February 2012). Bob spoke about a novel he reads in class called "Maniac McGee." The book is written by Jerry Spinelli and reveals a story about racism, homelessness, baseball and love. Bob's description of the book:

This is a story about a kid that crosses over between the east and west side with blacks on the east side, whites on the west side and they call each other names. [What the story] is trying to say is; do we treat people as a group or as individuals? What does our faith tell us? So the [message is] we are learning through their behavior. The book ends up being very positive because of the crossover where they finally see each other as



individuals and not just east or west siders. This [story] goes back to loving through Jesus and that we see people not as a race (Bob, personal communication, February 2012).

Katie and Bob believed that by setting good examples, being a role model on how we treat each other and by listening to our faith the school mission statement is exemplified through our action.

These are Patty's comments concerning the school's mission statement:

Some of the ways I see it being used [mission statement] are more commonsense based that every school should be working on, more character building traits. I do believe just the exposure of Jesus and God in their daily work, choice of books and in the themes that they go over, and over.... I do believe it is intertwined. Possibly not in all classrooms every single day, but I do think that it is intentional (Patty, personal communication, March 2012).

Doris found the mission statement to be evident throughout the school (posters in the hallways) and her explanation is in alignment with the comments from the faculty and parents:

It is visible when people are in our building through our actions and that is the most critical thing that I make sure happens... I have [received] feedback from visitors that they can tell the culture exists in the school. It is through, the actions of the teachers and how they carry themselves as Christian role models, which provide an example to the students. We try very hard to make sure our students' actions reflect these values. I think it is evident and based on our Christian values we do live it every day (Doris, personal communication, February 2012).

The discussion with Doris was very memorable. In addition to her comments, noted in Table 5, she expressed how the entire community needs to work together to keep our children safe.

[These meetings help to create] an environment so they [children] can release that information and do not have to specifically say a person's name. [The meetings] give them an opportunity to do that. Kids are aware of it, parents are aware of it and it just has a way of creating a culture where everybody is on the same page working for a common goal, which is the interest of our children, well it is. Everything you do at a school should be community based because it is not just the staff, it is not just the students, it is not just the parents, it is a whole community. You know the old saying "it takes a village to raise a child," that is the concept at school too, everybody has to work together for the well-being of the child (Doris, personal communication, February 2012).

In the following questions the researcher inquired, how do you relate the mission statement into the bullying program goals? Table 5 is a summary of all participants' response.

Table 5

*Mission Statement Alignment with the OBPP*

Participant	Quote
Doris	When you are looking at a bully program or any program that you implement the bottom line is the well-being of the children. We want to make sure that children feel safe. One, [way would] be weekly meeting where[teachers] take the time to talk to the kids and give them the opportunity to share any experiences they had, good or bad, about how they were treated throughout the week. [These] meetings create an environment where they feel safe and they know they have the free will to express things in a very safe environment and not feel threatened if they do end up having to say, "Boy I don't like the way Tommy treated me when we went outside."
Katie	Well I do think they related because we [tie] the whole faith component to our program. With each rule, [we tie in a scripture]. A middle school teacher and her class chose the scriptures in our first year of implementation.
Bob	Respect is a big word that I use a lot in the context of the treatment of people, cohorts and buddies and people in the class. It is all about respect and respect seems to cover many of those areas. Again, the whole side of the religious curriculum is that we respect people. We treat people appropriately and you are not going to bullying [our classmates].
Marie	If you [a teacher] see unkind behavior, you have to stop it immediately. You cannot just wait. I might ask to see that child in private, at recess or pull them aside but that is not something you can let go. We do class meetings on a regular basis primarily through our religion discussion time.
Patty	At St. Ann's the faith base is strong. Whether they can tie it into the bullying, I do not know. I mean you automatically assume they are going to a Catholic school but it is so complex.
Elizabeth	I do. Every day they start the day with a morning pray. From my son in the middle school sitting on the prayer rug and passing the rock to my daughter's religion class discussing Christian values.

This statement emphasized the whole community approach at St. Ann's. Doris is committed to providing an exemplary learning environment. In faculty meetings, Doris reminds the faculty of the importance of the classroom discussion and the importance of adding the topic to their religious or other area of studies. To date, the number of 'Blue Sheets' reported are less than previous years. The Blue Sheet is a form filled out by a faculty, staff or administration member who reports an infraction. St. Ann's has not set-up a formal review process to evaluate their results, but there are procedures in place for this process.

Elizabeth shared a story, of how her family unites in a sharing of blessings with the power of prayer:

The other day I was driving our children to school and my daughter who struggles with math was having a math test. As we drove to school, I told her I would pray for her as I tried to comfort her about the upcoming math test. My son asked her what time do you have math class? He told her when I am sitting on the pray rug and I am handed the rock (spiritual symbol), I will pray for you today. In our home, we teach kindness, and how to be the best they can be, since grades are secondary to us (Elizabeth, personal communications, March 2012).

This example demonstrated how her family embraced the mission statement, To Learn, Live and Love through Jesus, not just in the classroom but also throughout their lives. Showing compassion for our fellow brothers and sisters is an underlying goal of both, the mission statement at St. Ann's, and the OBPP.

### **Topic of Bullying at Home**

To gain an understanding of the participant support for the OBPP, the researcher asked parents if they had ever discussed the subject of bullying in their homes. One parent participant

indicated that by talking about bullying in the home, parents could be confident that their children understand what bullying is and begin to converse about the topic at school with their peers and teachers (Patty, personal communication, March 2012).

Table 6

*Discussion of the topic of Bullying in the Home*

Participant	Quote
<b>Patty</b>	Yes. [I am happy] he recognizes what it is. I enforce that it is not right, that is not nice. You need to stand up for that person even if you disagree with the person who is being bullied; you need to stand up for them. Let's say its Joe doing it you need to say, "knock it off Joe. Let him go. Leave him alone".
<b>Elizabeth</b>	I think St. Ann's over uses the word bully. My daughter actually received a blue sheet when my mother was caring for our children one evening... She was very upset that one of her grandchildren could 'bully' another child. I must admit I do not remember the exact behavior but I do remember us talking to her about her behavior at school, and how we were not happy how she treated someone at school.

Elizabeth shared her views about bullying:

I read a research article on bullying and one of the explanations given why someone bullies is usually because they are hurting or broken from some traumatic event in their lives. I have experience caring for a child who has experienced abuse in her life. My adopted daughter was abused when she was a young child. Sometimes children who are broken from years of abuse lash out at others to try to make themselves feel better. A school cannot change that behavior on its own; they must have the support from the family. Did I complete the form? Sure, and I returned it and discussed the incident with the appropriate staff at school (Elizabeth, personal communications, March 2012).

Both parent participants acknowledged that teaching children about bullying is not just the responsibility of the school, but also that this same message and values should be taught and practiced in the home.

According to both parents, neither of them were aware if the number of incidents of physical or relational (non-physical i.e. inclusion, name-calling) bullying had changed in the past four years.

Patty explained:

I would say this program [OBPP] has made kids aware of the relational bullying. That is the toughest to cure, to stop, because kids are very savvy. Have the numbers [of incidents] changed? I cannot answer that with certainty, I am sorry I do not know (Patty, personal communication, March 2012).

Elizabeth commented:

Well again, I am not sure, I cannot say yes to that question. I will say the school [St. Ann's] as an institutional body has done all it can as far as setting procedures and guidelines, and most importantly making everyone aware of the consequences of poor behavior. I believe they have done a fine job of modeling good character traits and providing a faith-filled education for our children (Elizabeth, personal communications, March 2012).

The comments by the parent participants indicate that from their perspective, the program at St. Ann's has attained the goal of communicating the policy, procedures and consequences of the OBPP to both students and parents. The completion of a 'Blue Sheet' infraction form, is required and recorded when a violation of school policy is reported to a teacher. The form is subsequently delivered to the guidance counselor for review and the student and their parents. Both families were aware of the 'Blue Sheet'.

The Blue Sheet is a recommended tool of the OBPP (see Appendix F). The necessary information required to begin the process starts with the student's homeroom teacher and is

completed by the student in the presence of the guidance counselor. This form is a description of the student's behavior and includes questions concerning how he/she will act differently in the future. School policy requires that a parent sign the completed form and return it on the following school day. The Blue Sheet includes a discipline rubric (see Appendix F) that details the actions that will be taken after the first, second, and third incident. All participants understand the use of the rubric.

Both teachers took a moment to consider the last time they completed a Blue Sheet, "Let me think about that, Hmm... I believe I had one infraction last year" (Bob, personal communications, February 2012).

Doris' summary of the reflection sheet is noteworthy:

We have a nice reflection sheet, which is part of our discipline program and we have the rubric on the back which is very cut and dry so there is no "Well I..., No this is what you did so therefore this is the consequence." However, I think the key to the reflection piece is it requires a student to take the time to sit and reflect on how their behavior affected the people around them. It is the Blue Sheet as we call it. We actually have a similar sheet for regular discipline; we modified it in a way and made it blue. Therefore, we do call it the infamous Blue Bully Sheet. In a way, it makes kids look at who was impacted by their bully like behavior. I think it makes them more accountable, I feel, between last year, and this year I have seen less bullying, less blue sheets come my way. However, we hold kids accountable and we should...we should (Doris, personal communication, February 2012).

### **The Term Bullying**

Some researchers (Olweus, 1993, Espelage & Swearer, 2011) state that it is imperative to

define the term bullying to your audience. The administration at St. Ann's must clarify the term bullying and communicate a clear and precise message to all the faculty, staff, volunteers, parents and children. Two questions were asked related to the definition of bullying: "In your class meetings how do you address bullying?" and "Do the children use the term bullying?" Katie, a specialty teacher and the individual who was instrumental in implementing the OBPP, explained:

I hear the word 'bully' so much more than when I first started [OBPP]. Kids know what it is. I do see more of a comfort level with kids calling out others when they see bullying behavior. [The children] are more comfortable saying that conduct is 'bully behavior'. Whereas before maybe they would say, "That's not being very nice". In addition, when the kids hear the word bully it stops them because nobody wants to be a bully. I have definitely seen them call each other out. I guess little things, in the hallway like kids being a little more respectful of their surroundings. [Is it] because I know society talks about bullying all the time so the word is out there more than it has been? Since we have started the program, we have upped supervision at recess and in the lunchroom; those simple things have made an impact because the playground is always the number one place where anything happens (Katie, personal communication, February 2012).

The researcher noted that Katie had paused for a moment, allowing the researcher to ask a follow-up question: "Can you give an account of a child that has gone through the program who was a bully or bullied and realized what they have done or how it has changed their life and how these steps have helped this child?" Katie replied:

Yes. I thought of one person right away. This person was not the bully but the bullied. Because of the program and [for this child to know] that there was going to be actual

consequences for the people who are [bullying] this person, I've seen confidence levels grow and even had parents call me and say 'My child is a different child because he knows he is able to come to you or a teacher at school and something is going to happen'. I can think of one in particular, I am sure there are more... (Katie, personal communication, February 2012).

Bob referred to bullying as controlling behavior:

When I talk to the children or somebody says somebody was mean to me I try to go with that context of what was he trying to accomplish? Was he trying to control something? [For example], if they [students] are playing on the playground and Bobby comes in and states Tommy is always mean to me because he will not throw me the ball. Is it completely inclusive? No. Are you going to throw it to Bobby if he keeps dropping the ball? No. Are they trying to be a bully because they are not throwing you the ball and they will not include you in the game? You know that is Ahh.... From a game context, they are out on the playground, [playing together] that is where I think a lot of it, much of what I see, happens. Bobby is playing or Bobby is not playing or Bobby etc... Earlier in the year, somebody came in and said so-and-so gets me all the time when we are playing tag. Do they get [Bobby] because he is probably slower and one of the first to run? Probably. The child was very frustrated (Bob, personal communications, February 2012).

The researcher inquired with a follow up question: "Did you discuss how it is not agreeable to tag the slow one first every time?" Bob replied:

Right. Right. You are playing the game. You are out there. It is like any other situation in life; you have to figure it out a little bit. You have to be a little bit faster, maybe wait a



little bit for everybody else to be tagged, and then go. After a period, that is what he did so I never heard of that situation again. If somebody is going to do something, it is going to be repetitively. At this grade level [intermediate level], we [teachers] addressed it early on. That does not stop people from doing things or saying things that might be hurtful but it has helped in addressing the problem, in the classroom. It also helped on the other side where the child [aggressor] has something happen to them or they feel something happen to them. They are a whole lot more willing to come in and talk to you (Bob, personal communications, February 2012).

Marie's comment about discussing bullying in the classroom:

I think they [my class] are able to understand it better. I think they are getting a little bit more abstract in their thoughts, but I still do not think that they get the act is repeated over time. They still think that its one particular incident. [I explained] by giving an example: if a child was taking someone's lunch money [and] it was repeated [taking the money] not just once maybe throughout a couple of grades. That behavior [taking the money] has to be addressed. In our program [OBPP], we have a sheet, a Blue Sheet that they fill out, take it home and get it signed and return it the next day and given to the principle. [A bully] is someone doing something towards someone over the course of a few school years. It is not just one or two incidents, it is happening over time. It [the bullying] can start at 5<sup>th</sup> grade, at the grade level, I [teach] now, but it might be something that never existed before, so I have to watch for those new patterns too (Marie, personal communication, March2012).

The definition of bullying surfaced each time a question was put forth on this subject.

Both Bob and Katie repeated the message that, bullying is repetitive, it involves power or the

imbalance of power and it is unsolicited. In addition, and just as important, they mentioned that the students knew the consequences.

### **St. Ann's Imprint of the OBPP**

Bauer, Lozano, & Rivara, 2007; Black & Jackson, 2007; Olweus, 2006; Olweus & Limber, 2010a, suggest that each school add an imprint; the school's unique mark on their anti-bullying program. Combining a component or a unique dimension to the OBPP enhances the buy-in from the school community. Children are living, changing beings and schools need to be alert to variances in behavior and update programs as needed.

The notable imprint introduced at St. Ann's is the faith component. Their teaching curriculum is based on Christian values, faith, and spirituality with the underlying theme, "We all are children of God", and we must find God in all things. All participants' voiced a strong belief in leading by example, similar to Jesus' life. The participants believed that these examples exhibited the nurturing faith filled environment at St. Ann's. Katie, the specialty teacher, discovered that the difference between Catholic schools and public schools can be a bonus:

I think, again it goes back to the whole faith component. I feel that we are able to bring in the golden rule; what would Jesus do? I say that a lot when I have kids that are filling out the infraction form [Blue Sheet]. I ask them; is this what God wants? That is huge for us because public schools cannot bring up the subject [of faith]. They cannot put that in there. Table 7 list the comments concerning the faith imprint added by St. Ann's to the OBPP.

Not all participants commented about St. Ann's unique imprint of faith on the OBPP. During the interviews, the researchers noticed in every classroom, hallway, the lunchroom and playground the faith component. Doris commented about one thing she was most proud of,

“When visitors come to our school, I have received many kudos on our children’s behavior and the respectful atmosphere we have” (Doris, personal communication, February 2012).

Table 7

*Faith imprint on the OBPP*

Participant	Quote
Doris	Every Christian follows what the Bible says. Where we could incorporate these teachings into this program we did... We want [students] to act like a Christian to their fellow man; we always have that reference to go back on. It is not debatable because here it is in the scriptures-this is what it says and this is what we follow as Catholics and Christians. So there you go. It is pretty concrete for kids to get it.
Katie	So looking at the scripture [One of our middle school religion teachers] chose them with her 8th grade religion class. They worked together as a class and came up with each one. Originally, we just had the rules, and then we have added this component, then our staff worked with them to find a scripture that they felt explained that rule. The faith component I do believe is our imprint. I feel the Learn, Live; Love is such a huge part. It is everywhere; it is on our website, and on our business cards. That is what we strive to show who we are at St. Ann's.
Bob	I would say that we have done a couple things to put our stamp on the program. [We have] a morning prayer and reading. It [prayer and reading] gives [to those] examples of Jesus or people treating other people [with respect] or [it provides] a life example. We have a house rule that is changed weekly. For example, ‘Hold the door for the person behind you’. On a monthly basis, in coordination with the Saint [of the month] certain characteristics are highlighted. To some degree all these faith based kind of programs tie into [OBPP].
Marie	The scriptures came from the middle school kids. I think we added the scriptures in the first year.
Patty	The faith base is strong at St. Ann’s. Whether they can tie it into the bullying, I do not know. I mean you automatically assume they are going to a Catholic school.
Elizabeth	I think about living our life as Jesus would want us to you. That is the imprint of St. Ann's not sure [it's the added imprint of OBPP].

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The highest ranking that an Archdiocesan school can be awarded is ‘An Exemplary Recognition School.’ St. Ann’s has earned this rank in the following areas: Mission, Community, and Climate, Advancement, Marketing and Recruitment. Doris added, “Our children are aware of our behavior expectation and in order to send the same message outside the classroom, we

increased our supervision four years ago, with the inception of the OBPP, in our lunchroom and on the playground (Doris, personal communication, February 2012).

### Awareness & Commitment to OBPP

Regarding awareness and commitment to the OBPP, the administration and teachers' comments were consistent, acknowledging that parental involvement needed improvement. The consensus from the administration was that parents are aware of the program. Katie suggested that some parents believed their child would never bully and would not follow-through with the consequences stated in the rubric, allowing their child to continue this unacceptable behavior.

Patty and Elizabeth, parent participants, supported the OBPP and were aware of the basic rules, guidelines and concept of the program. Patty's only concern was that the school needed to improve awareness and communication. Patty talked to her children about bullying behavior and reinforced the idea that this behavior was unacceptable at any level.

Table 8

### *Awareness & Commitment*

Participant	Quote
Doris	I think this is a challenge for every school and not just ours. I think we have to find a way to encourage our parents to come our meetings. We try to make it a convenient time and try to do all these different things to entice them to come.
Katie	Well to be truly honest I see the parents as a big obstacle for so many of us here. I do my job here, I do the bullying circle with the kids and I talk to them about being a bystander, I have done that every year. I use the cards with the bullying circle, it is awesome, I say to the kids; This is you (Tom) and this is you (John), I want you (Tom) here and how do I get you here? Too often, there is no acceptance or buy-in at home. Many times kids have gone home, after they have been reported for bullying, and I have had them come in, fill out the reflection form, take it home and then the next day I've have a parent contact me saying that they did not believe their child is a bully or should be considered a bully. Then for the child, it is as everything we did here is completely erased because the child comes back to school feeling that they got away with it.
Bob	In this organization, leadership is key. I do not think the <i>previous</i> leadership contributed. But because that didn't happen [leadership] there wasn't a consistency among the teacher group or consistency in the message sent to the parents.
Patty	I think the message is getting through. It is a slow process. I think it will take many years especially at a tightly knit community like St. Ann's where there are several parents who went there themselves and everybody, more than 70% of the kids families are from around the St. Ann's area, I think at a place with these stats. It will take longer.

Elizabeth viewed the word “bullying” as overstated and that St. Ann’s used this word often to explain bad behavior. She believed St. Ann’s did not have an issue with bullying but would continue to teach the same values in her home. Table 8 summarizes these comments in the participants own words.

For the last two years, the school board sent out parent surveys to all the families of children enrolled in St. Ann’s. The survey asked questions regarding athletics, enrichment, special focus areas, environment, cost of tuition, communications, bullying and cliques. In 2011, the response rate was 70%. Doris, an administrator, shared the responses regarding bullying and cliques from the last two surveys. The 2011 survey put forth questions on the subject of bullying and indicated that 68% of parents believed St. Ann’s has a bullying problem. Doris decided to seek out new avenues of communication with parents on the subject of bullying. During the summer, she enrolled in a class on bullying, which she explained:

One of the things stressed throughout the whole week of the class was that you really have to define to most people what bullying is. You can have a parent say, “My child came home today and they were bullied” and when you inquire and ask, “Well what happened?” “Suzie said my hair didn’t look pretty today.” Well I say to them, even though that is not a nice statement, it is not a bully statement. So we have to really define that and I brought that to my guidance counselor’s attention and based on that we have really tried to communicate out to parents through various communication outlets, through the electronic devices and our website (Doris, personal communication, February 2012).

In addition, during the school year the St. Ann’s guidance counselor would create scenarios that were used in the classrooms. The guidance counselor would question her class

about these scenarios by asking, “Would this be a bully situation or would it not be a bully situation?” The guidance counselor illustrated practical everyday situations that could occur at school. Doris stated: “These messages helped the students to resolve problems in a way that avoided escalation” (Doris, personal communication, February 2012). This year the survey showed that 70% of the surveyed parents had a broad awareness of the Anti-Bullying policy and discussed the rules of the OBPP at home. In addition, 26% of the parents surveyed agreed that the school had made a noticeable improvement. Each year St. Ann’s reviews the survey and strives to enhance their message to both parents and students. In 2012, the guidance counselor placed bullying news on the website along with bullying topics on the school blog. She also attends the school board meeting a few times a year to discuss the topic of bullying.

The researcher concluded the interview with following question: How would you measure success in the program? Every participant agreed that bullying would never be eliminated, because a school changes every year and new children arrive with unique background and life experiences, the best we could hope for is reducing the number of incidents (Katie, personal communications, February 2012). Another participant suggested that success in OBPP could be measured when a disagreeable family decided to withdraw their children from St. Ann’s. The OBPP clearly outlines the rules and consequences. Consequently, when a family leaves because they do not want to follow the rules, the system is working (Bob, personal communications, March 2012). Katie said, “We have seen some success. The number of self-reporting bullying incidents has increased. Our students are informing us of the bullying behavior” (Katie, personal communication, February 2012). Katie indicated that it is great to see our students following the OBPP rules. It is an entirely different situation when a student feels comfortable disclosing to you about observing an unkind act. Katie stated, “An increase in self-

reporting is positive; it signifies that students are able to recognize what is and what is not bullying” (Katie, personal communication, February 2012).

Doris acknowledged that the increase in the number of families that are aware of the program shows St. Ann’s is communicating effectively to our school community. A member of the faculty said “I measure success in the program when we share information at our weekly meetings (classroom and teachers), parents returning the Blue Sheet, and mostly by the lower number of incidents of bullying” (Marie, personal communication, March 2012). Peggy made a concise, brief statement, “It is all about awareness and the school is communicating more now than in the past, strong leadership is the key, does St. Ann’s have strong leadership, now they do” (Patty, personal communication, March 2012). Table 9 summarizes how each of the participants measure success:

Table 9

*Measuring Success*

Participant	Quote
Doris	I think a couple of things measures success: obviously, a decrease in the number of incidences and here at St. Ann’s we do an annual survey, [which] ask four questions concerning bullying.
Katie	I guess for me, having kids feel more comfortable reporting bullying. I feel like that is a huge problem. I get it, I understand why, I understand the fear of the bullying getting worse but I can’t stress enough to them that I can’t do anything if we don’t know it and we don’t see it.
Bob	I think one of the strongest points of the program is from the student’s standpoint, that they feel more comfortable and they are a whole lot more willing to report incidents of bullying to playground supervisors and to the teachers.
Marie	Our faculty meetings, we are sharing what is going on in our classroom with each other and keeping our new families aware of the program during orientation.
Patty	In terms of what successful is to me, that everybody is aware of what bullying is. However, to make it successful, again, I think you need incredibly strong leadership in the school.
Elizabeth	That children are not afraid to come to school, treat each other with respect.

## Discussion

This case study strives to gain an understanding concerning the importance of support or lack of support in relation to the success or failure of the OBPP at St. Ann’s. The goal of this research study was to listen and learn from the experiences of key participants who influence the

lives of the children at the school. These purposively chosen participants provided examples that collectively told a story of how the OBPP has become a positive influence woven into the fabric of the school. Every interviewee provided candid answers regarding his or her beliefs, and experiences.

Support for any program comes in a variety of ways, but the key to a program's success is first and foremost leadership. The principal position at St. Ann's has changed three times in the past five years with varying degrees of support for the program. The collective opinion concerning the former principle reveals an individual who, let teachers manage their classroom and was inconsistent regarding the OBPP, thus receiving nominal support from the parents.

The current administrator embraces the program and is active in policy preparation and who is open to communication between parents, faculty, and the community. The staff and parents believe an anti-bullying program put into effect requires strong leadership from the top. The specialty teacher echoed that sentiment by expressing that "We are presently making strides improving our program by looking at the positive, examining the tough questions, and by not seeing the glass half-empty but rather half-full" (Katie, personal communication, February 2012). The support from leadership was reflected in both interviews of participant teachers. They indicated that the principal's guidance and support is visible throughout St. Ann's. They acknowledged that her day-to-day involvement with discipline provides a united approach, and that the OBPP program has improved the climate inside and outside the classroom.

St. Ann's imprint on the OBPP is connected to their faith teachings. It would be an exaggeration to conclude from these interviews that the faith component alone made this program successful. St. Ann's is a Catholic school rich in Christian values and teachings. Class subjects revolve around their Catholic beliefs. The school's faith teachings are the foundation



that lends support to the OBPP. The Catholic teachings and the OBPP have many common themes:

- Be kind and treat others, as you would like to be treated.
- Help your fellow neighbor.
- Lead a helping hand to your brothers and sisters.

These similarities are one of the main reasons that the OBPP was implemented at St. Ann's

Under the current leadership at St. Ann's, sharing their success with the school community provides varied avenues of communications. Parents and students alike are obligated to learn and look for answers in many different areas. Information is key, and sharing this knowledge in the weekly school announcements, the school's website, blogging through the student body and community meetings, with the school board and parish committees is important. The message is consistent and accessible.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is very visible throughout the school. Each classroom has numerous items that are related to the program, from posters with rules and scriptures, to the mission statement stenciled on the walls. Several messages of support are not spoken but come across strongly. For example, a poster in the hallway states, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God". Another subtle message was outside the guidance room, which featured a framed photo of students who were honored for that month's character traits. When the researcher walked through the hallways, each student made eye contact, said "Hello" or "Good morning", which displayed respect to this visitor.

The parents that were involved in this case study expressed in their interviews that, the school is committed to a reduction in bullying, is well versed in the OBPP and its rules and consequences, and is committed to voicing the same message in their home. Bullying is not

acceptable. When the OBPP was placed into practice, a little over four years ago, it provided a forum to the school community. The OBPP gives structure, a standardized policy with procedures and provides one consistent voice to the school community. In addition, the administration, faculty and staff have discussions regarding the program, what works, what message has to be received by others; however, sometimes the school falls short on reporting results.

The school has a measurable tool in the Blue Sheet, but they currently do not tally these reports. One simple method to inform the school community on the progress contained in the sheets is to count the sheets. This process need not be accomplished monthly but perhaps on a quarterly basis. The information could support a campaign generated from the results on these Blue Sheets and transmitted to the school community using the multiple communication devices available to the school. This simple activity would inform the entire school community of the progress, efforts, and time that has been dedicated to this program. What parent or school board would not welcome the 112<sup>th</sup> day without a bully reported incident? The results would speak volumes about the success of the program and the administration would be congratulated.

The current school administration, along with the faculty and staff, reviews and addresses areas that require improvement each year. The researcher discovered that teachers as well as the administrator had a difficult time in recalling bullying incidents in the past year. Another question that went unanswered, how many reports were returned from the parents? Unfortunately, there was no tabulation of the results. St. Ann's has implemented the program as intended by the OBPP, embracing all four components during the past four years. The program was introduced before the school began requiring each faculty member to read Olweus' book, "Bullying at School, What we know and what we can do" and attend a three day training

program at the end of the summer. Katie mentioned that it probably took the faculty at St. Ann's two years to be comfortable with the program.

Today, most of the teachers and parents embrace the program but the guidance counselor realizes "Bullying will never go away, I'm just happy that our students recognize the behavior and come tell us and tell their parents" (Katie, personal communication, February 2012). She continued to explain, "Through this process, if it has been brought to my attention that a student is bullying another then we, as a school community have succeeded in communicating to our students that bullying behavior is not tolerated, thus allowing all of us to continue to build on the foundation of the school" (Katie, personal communication, February 2012).

### **Future Research**

Several researchers (Bradshaw & Waasdorp, 2011; Orpinas & Horne, 2006), who evaluated comparable programs, commented on the lack of methodological quality standards for evaluating anti-bullying programs. These standardized tools would prove helpful by systematic reviewers, scholars, policy makers, the mass media, and the public in assessing the validity of conclusions about the effectiveness of any interventions or prevention programs (Farrington, 2003). Such quality standards would provide guidelines to program evaluators concerning how components of the intervention should be measured, how the program can be evaluated, and what type of factors should be measured. Without these standards, it is difficult to evaluate any program success or apply any type of fidelity of implementation to compare one program to another.

In the literature reviewed, none of the studies attempted to talk to the student body or create a focus group to follow-up on any comments or questions that the students may have concerning the survey. Most of the studies requested that the student body complete a

questionnaire regarding the program, but never followed-up with the students directly. These discussions may yield interesting results and feedback for the school community. There are many regulations that a researcher must follow when dealing with minors but the results received from a few candid students may provide the awareness and acceptance that many anti-bullying programs lack.

### **Limitation of the Project**

The researcher focused on a very small sample of individuals that limited the scope of the study. St. Ann's currently has about 200 families and can accommodate approximately 500 students from K4 through eighth grade. Two parents cannot echo the viewpoints of every family at St. Ann's, nor can four staff members explain the point of view from each member of the school community. Although valuable information was compiled, gathered, and analyzed, the researcher is aware that it is only a snapshot of opinions from this population.

In addition, the researcher is a parent of an alumnus of St. Ann's. All participants were purposefully chosen for this study's since all criteria was realized, the purpose of the study's criteria were met. Absolutely no participant was chosen due to any previous relationship. Finally, this study was not capable of including a member of the community or permitting the researcher to observe the children during break periods. These limitations do not change the outcome of the study, but perhaps would have enhanced or provided additional support for the results.

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**Appendix A: Administrator & Faculty - Consent Form**

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
AGREEMENT OF CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS  
*Administrator & Faculty Members*  
Anti-Bullying Program Review  
Jane M. Vega  
Graduate Student

You have been invited to participate in this research study. Before you agree to participate, it is important that you read and understand the following information. Participation is completely voluntary. Whether or not you choose to participate in this research will have no impact on your employment or your relationship to the school. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this research study is to evaluate the results of the Dan Olweus Anti-Bullying program which has been implemented at this school. This will be done by interviews with administrators, faculty, volunteers, parents of current and past students and community members. I plan to report on the impact that the support or the lack of support had on the program outcomes, specifically, on the attitude and atmosphere in this Catholic grade school. You will be one of approximately six participants in this research study.

**PROCEDURES:** You will be asked to answer five to six questions about bullying at your school. The interview will consist of no more than five to six open-ended questions on the Anti-Bullying program, not last longer than 45 minutes, and be tape recorded to ensure accuracy. The tapes will later be transcribed and destroyed after three years beyond the completion of the study. Interviews will be conducted at the individual teacher's desired location and at a time that meets their schedule. There is the possibility of a brief follow-up interview via telephone for the purpose of clarification.

**DURATION:** Each participant will be asked to be interviewed for one session and reply to no more than five to six open-ended questions on the Anti-Bullying program which will last no longer than 45 minutes. After the transcription is complete the participant will be offered the chance to review it for accuracy. For confidentiality purposes, participant names will not be recorded and a pseudonym will be used in the research paper. All interviews will be conducted and completed by the end of March, 2012.

**RISKS:** There is no physical, legal, economic or natural risk for the participant. The risk in this study is no more than the participant would encounter in everyday life. Whether or not you choose to participate in this research will have no impact on your employment or your relationship to the school. There is a minimal risk of breach of confidentiality; however, there will be measures taken to minimize that risk. Only the researcher will have access to your consent forms and audio tapes. The interview transcripts will be anonymous.

**BENEFITS:** The benefits associated with participation in this study include candidate feedback from the community at large on the behavioral changes at the school since the inception of the program or show the lack of such support. Also, the school will have conclusive data from a sample of all stakeholders.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** All information you reveal in this study will be kept anonymous. All your data will be assigned an arbitrary name rather than using your name or other information that could identify you as an individual. When the results of the study are published, you will not be identified by name. The school will not know which teachers chose to participate and which declined. The data will be destroyed by shredding paper documents and deleting electronic files after three years of completion of this research study. There is a possibility of de-identified transcripts being used for future research.

**VOLUNTARY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION:** Participating in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Simply contact the P.I. and all records including audio tapes will be destroyed within three days of notification of intent to withdraw from study.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** If you have any questions about this research project, you can contact Jane M. Vega by email at [Jane.Vega@Marquette.edu](mailto:Jane.Vega@Marquette.edu) or by phone at 414-962-4655. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you can contact Marquette University's Office of Research Compliance at (414) 288-7570.

**I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO READ THIS CONSENT FORM, ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROJECT AND AM PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROJECT.**

_____	_____
Participant's Signature	Date
_____	_____
Participant's Name	Date
_____	_____
Researcher's Signature	Date

**Appendix B: Parent & Volunteers - Consent Form**MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
AGREEMENT OF CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

*Parents & Volunteers*  
Anti-Bullying Program Review  
Jane M. Vega  
Graduate Student

You have been invited to participate in this research study. Before you agree to participate, it is important that you read and understand the following information. Participation is completely voluntary. Whether or not you choose to participate in this research will have no impact on your relationship to the school. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this research study is to evaluate the results of the Dan Olweus Anti-Bullying program which has been implemented at this school. This will be done by interviews with administrators, faculty, volunteers, parents of current and past students and community members. I plan to report on the impact that the support or the lack of support had on the program outcomes, specifically, on the attitude and atmosphere in this Catholic grade school. You will be one of approximately six participants in this research study.

**PROCEDURES:** An administrator at school will provide a list of all parents whose children are in 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders and have attended the school before and after the implementation of the Anti-Bullying program. Qualifying families will be chosen randomly. The interview will consist of no more than five to six open-ended questions on the Anti-Bullying program currently administrator at your child's school and last no longer than 45 minutes, and be tape recorded to ensure accuracy. The tapes will later be transcribed and destroyed after three years beyond the completion of the study. For confidentiality purposes, your name will not be recorded and a pseudonym will be used in the research paper. The first two families that agree will be chosen. The Interview will be conducted at a desired location and time that meets their schedule. There is the possibility of a brief follow-up interview via telephone for the purpose of clarification.

**DURATION:** Each parent will be interviewed for one session and reply to no more than five to six open-ended questions on the Anti-Bullying program currently administrator at your child's school. The interview will last no longer than 45 minutes. After the transcription is complete the participant will be offered the chance to review it for accuracy. For confidentiality purposes, your name will not be recorded and an arbitrary name will be used in the research paper. The interview will be conducted and completed by the end of March, 2012.

**RISKS:** There is no physical, legal, economic or natural risk for the participant. The risk in this study is no more than the participant would encounter in everyday life. There is a minimal risk of breach of confidentiality; however, there will be measures taken to minimize that risk. Only the researcher will have access to your consent forms and audio tapes. The interview transcripts will be anonymous.

**BENEFITS:** The benefits associated with participation in this study include candidate feedback from the community at large on the behavioral changes at the school since the inception of the program or show the lack of such support. Also, the school will have conclusive data from a sample of all stakeholders.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** All information you reveal in this study will be kept anonymous. All your data will be assigned an arbitrary name rather than using your name or other information that could identify you as an individual. When the results of the study are published, you will not be identified by name. The data will be destroyed by shredding paper documents and deleting electronic files after three years of completion of this research study. There is a possibility of de-identified transcripts being used for future research.

**VOLUNTARY NATURE OF PARTICIPATION:** Participating in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Simply contact the P.I. and all records including audio tapes will be destroyed within three days of notification of intent to withdraw from study.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** If you have any questions about this research project, you can contact Jane M. Vega by email at [Jane.Vega@Marquette.edu](mailto:Jane.Vega@Marquette.edu) or by phone at 414-962-4655. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you can contact Marquette University's Office of Research Compliance at (414) 288-7570.

I HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO READ THIS CONSENT FORM, ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROJECT AND AM PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS PROJECT.

---

Participant's Signature

---

Date

---

Participant's Name

---

Date

---

Researcher's Signature

---

Date

**Appendix C: Interview Protocol – Administrators**

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS-  
Interview Questions  
Anti-Bullying Program Review  
Jane M. Vega  
Graduate Student

***Administrator:***

1. Learn, live and love through Jesus, Is this the current mission statement for St. Monica?  
? Is this statement part of the faculty's daily curriculum? If yes, can you give me an example how they include them in their daily curriculum?
2. How do you relate the mission statement into the Bullying program goals?
  - i. Well-being of our children,
  - ii. Positive school environment, and to
  - iii. Enhance the entire school community.
3. I noticed on the school's web site there is a presentation either presented to your students or it explains the program. And in this presentation there are four rules:
  - i. We do not bully others
  - ii. We help students who are bullied
  - iii. We include students who are left out
  - iv. When we know somebody is being bullied, we tell an adult at school and an adult at home.
4. How has the school placed their own "imprint on the program"? -- How do you see the schools strengths and weakness being addressed? How would you rate the school? In participation and adherence to the program? What would be your one wish for this program?
5. What are the learning outcomes you have achieved or hope to achieve? What does success look like? How do or will you measure your success. Measurements.
6. Do you see any change in behavior and attitude in the student body from last year to this year? Please explain
7. The Dan Olweus program is based on a whole-school based program that states the program is the responsibility of the faculty, parents, community, and administration where everyone must participate. Is there anything missing in this program? Is any group(s) in your opinion not supporting the program?
8. Has the school reduced the rate of both physical and relational (inclusion, name-calling etc. bullying?
9. Questions and Thank you.

**Appendix D: Interview Protocol – Faculty & Staff Members**

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS-  
Interview Questions  
Anti-Bullying Program Review  
Jane M. Vega

***Faculty & Staff Members:***

1. Learn, live and love through Jesus, Is this the current mission statement for St. Monica? Is this statement part of your daily curriculum? If yes, can you give me an example how you include them in your daily curriculum?
2. How do you relate the mission statement into the Bullying program goals?
  - a. Well-being of our children,
  - b. Positive school environment, and to
  - c. Enhance the entire school community.
3. What do you consider bullying? Can you give me example what is and what is not? What do you as a teacher do when you observe bullying? In your classroom, outside your classroom, and not one of your students?
4. How has the school placed their own “imprint on the program”? -- How do you see the schools strengths and weakness being addressed?
5. Do you see any change in behavior and attitude in the student body since the introduction of the Dan Olweus program? Please explain.
6. The Dan Olweus program is based on a whole-school based program that states the program is the responsibility of the faculty, parents, community, administration everyone must participate. Is there anything missing in this program? Any group in your opinion not supporting the program?
7. What do you see has your part? How do you engage students in this topic?
8. Has the school reduced the rate of both physical and relational bullying?
9. How would you measure success in this program? Future plans?
10. Questions and Thank you.



**Appendix E: Interview Protocol – Parents & Volunteers**

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY  
RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS-  
Interview Questions  
Anti-Bullying Program Review  
Jane M. Vega  
Graduate Student

***Parents & Volunteers:***

1. Learn, live and love through Jesus, Is this the current mission statement for St. Monica? Do you feel that this part of your child's daily curriculum? If yes, can you give me an example?
2. How do you relate the mission statement into the Bullying program goals?
  - a. Well-being of our children,
  - b. Positive school environment, and to
  - c. Enhance the entire school community
3. Dan Olweus describe bullying as "... when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending him or herself". Do you feel that St. Monica is addressing the issue of bullying with the Dan Olweus Program?
4. Has your child ever talk to you about bullying at school? If yes, how have you address the issue? If no, do you talk about bullying at home?
5. In your opinion has St. Monica reduced the rate of both physical and relational (non-physical i.e. inclusion, name calling) bullying?
6. Do you think the program is working? How would you measure success in this program?
7. How has the school placed their own "imprint on the program"? (Faith component)-- How do you see the schools strengths and weakness being addressed?
8. Age of children~~ Questions... Thank you.

**Appendix F: Bully Reflection Sheet**

**Student Bully Reflection**  
verbal/physical/harassment

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**What did you do?**  
*Please be specific. Start with "I." Tell me later about what the other student did.*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What was wrong with your behavior?**  
*Who did you hurt? How do you know you hurt them?*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**What problem were you trying to solve?**  
*Did you want attention? Did you want to be left alone? Were you trying to have fun? Were you already mad about something else?*

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Next time you have that problem, how will you solve it without hurting anyone?**  
*Please list three ways to solve the problem.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Developed by Stan Davis, 2003)

Behavior	1 <sup>st</sup> Time	2 <sup>nd</sup> Time	3 <sup>rd</sup> Time
<b>Verbal Bullying</b> -teasing, name calling, put downs, hurtful words	Student Reflection* Grades 4-8 possible SAT	Student Reflection* Loss of 1 recess Grades 4-8 possible SAT	Student Reflection* Call Home Loss of 3 recesses Grades 4-8 possible SAT
<b>Physical Bullying</b> -pushing, shoving, tripping	Student Reflection* Loss of 1 recess Grades 4-8 possible SAT	Student Reflection* Call Home Loss of 3 recesses Grades 4-8 possible SAT	Student Reflection* Parent Conference Consequences TBD Grades 4-8 possible SAT
<b>Harassing</b> Physical - punching, kicking Verbal - deeply offensive words	Student Reflection* Call Home Loss of recess 2 days Grades 4-8 possible SAT	Student Reflection* Parent Conference Loss of recess 5 days Grades 4-8 possible SAT	Student Reflection* In School Suspension Parent Conference

\*Parents must sign student reflections and send back to school the following day

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