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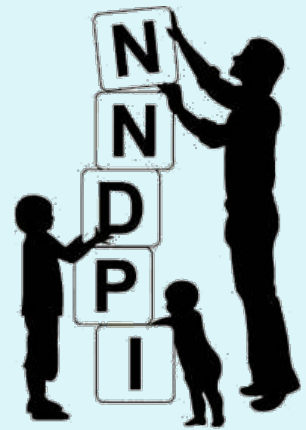
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# School Breakfast Clubs: Does Attendance Impact Upon Children's Peer Relationships?

Pamela L. Graham, Greta Defeyter  
and Riccardo Russo

# What is a Breakfast Club?



- Safe place to go before the start of the school day
- Opportunity to meet with friends and staff
- Nutritious breakfast
- Activities to take part in

(Defeyter, Graham, Walton and Apicella, 2010)

# Benefits of Breakfast Club

School breakfast participation has been linked to improvements in:

- Classroom behaviour (Bro et al, 1994)
- Maths grades (Murphy et al, 1998)
- School attendance (Simeon, 1998)

Benefits associated with school breakfast participation have been attributed mainly to the breakfast meal.

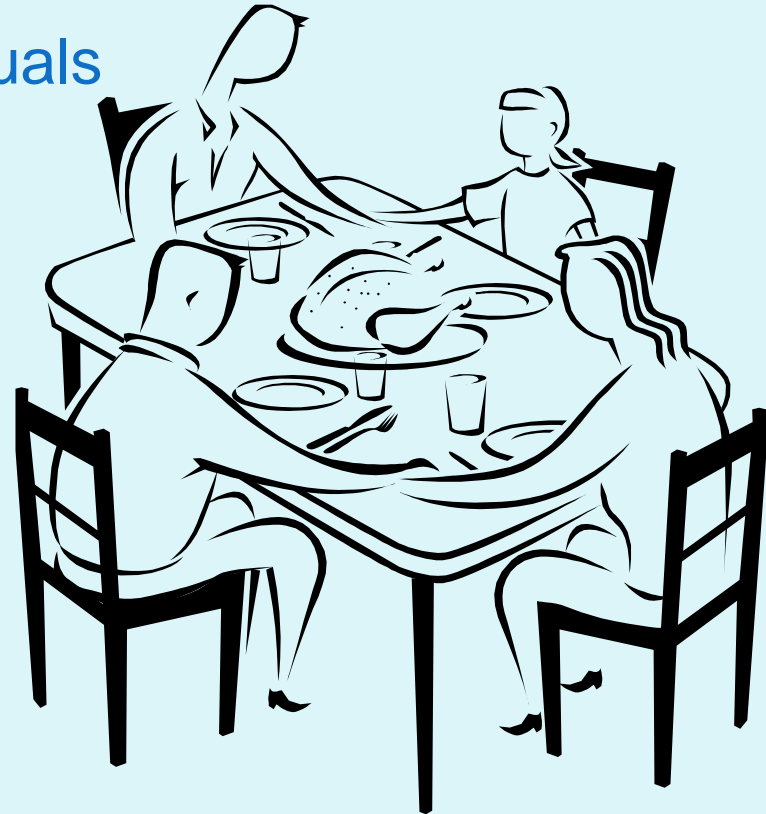
Potential impact of the social environment has received little attention



# The Breakfast Club Environment

## Group Mealtimes

- Build a sense of community and belonging (Fulkerson et al, 2006)
- Facilitate interaction between individuals (Cason, 2006)
- Opportunity to teach social skills (Eisenberg et al, 2004)



# More Than Just a Meal?

## Out of School Activities

- Positive peer interaction  
(Bartko & Eccles, 2003)
- Development of friendship  
(Bartko & Eccles, 2003)
- Protection from victimisation  
(Hodges et al, 1999)



# Aim of Present Study

To investigate whether breakfast club attendance facilitates children's peer relationships in school.

- Friendship quality
- Peer victimisation



# Participants

8 primary schools  
n = 268  
163 females                      105 males  
Mean age = 8.4 years  
Age range = 6.3 years – 10.11 years

## Breakfast Club

n = 94

59 females  
35 males

Mean age = 8.24  
years

## After School Club

n = 86

47 females  
39 males

Mean age = 8.75  
years

## Control

n = 88

57 females  
31 males

Mean age = 8.24  
years



# Friendship Qualities Scale

(Bukowski, Hoza and Boivin, 1994)

- + Companionship – free time spent together
- + Help – mutual help, assistance and protection
- + Security – reliance and conflict resolution
- + Closeness – emotional bond between friends
- Conflict – fights, arguments and disagreements



False	Partly False	Don't Know	Partly True	True
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# Multidimensional Peer Victimisation Scale

(Mynard and Joseph, 2000)

- Physical victimisation – punching and kicking
- Verbal victimisation – name calling
- Social manipulation – turning friends against each other
- Attacks of physical property – damage or theft of possessions

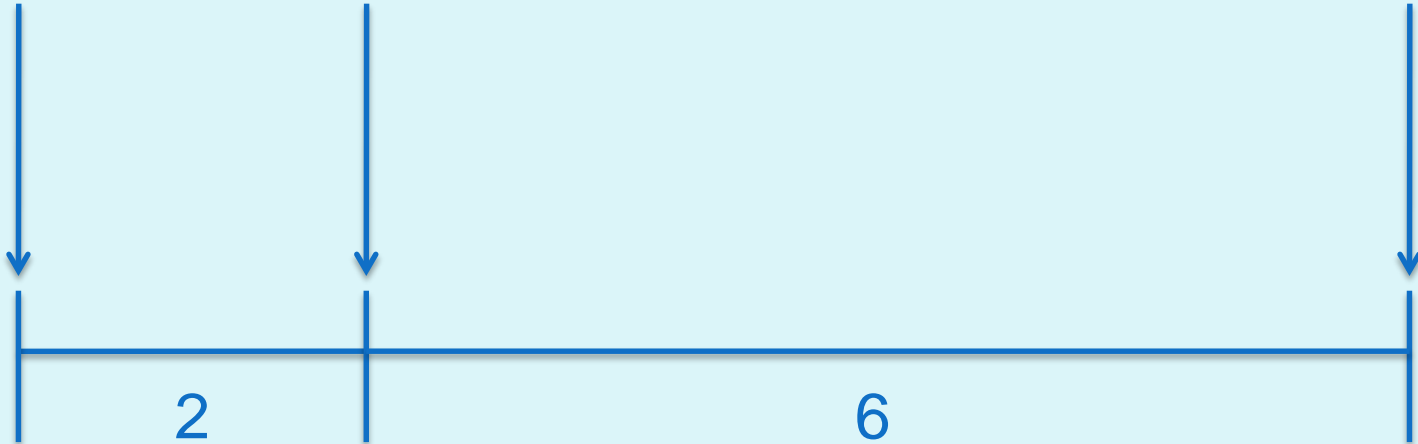


# Procedure

Breakfast  
clubs  
started

Time 1

Time 2



2  
months

6  
months

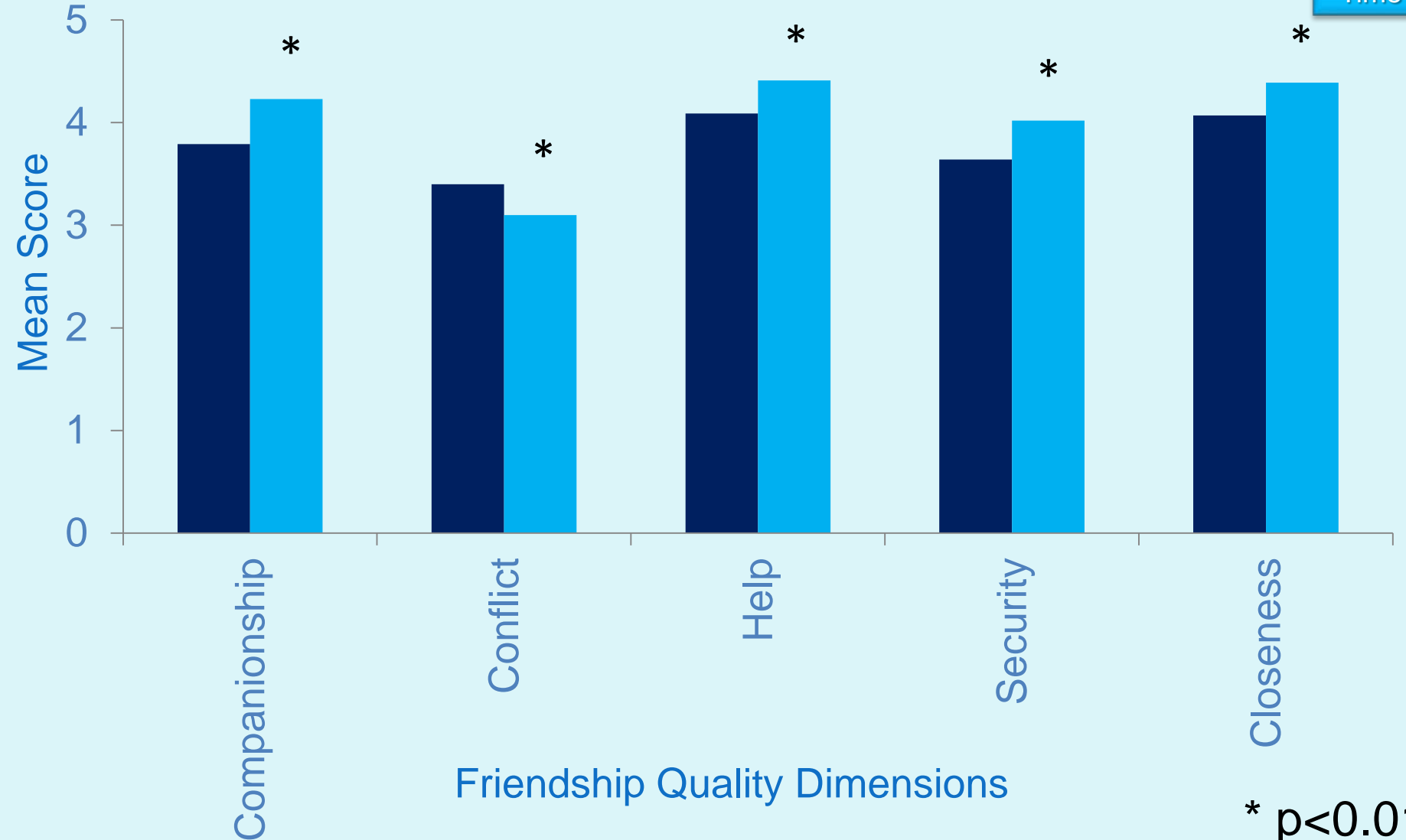
Friendship Qualities  
Scale  
&  
Peer Victimisation  
Scale

Friendship Qualities  
Scale  
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Peer Victimisation  
Scale

# Results: Friendship Qualities Scale Breakfast Club

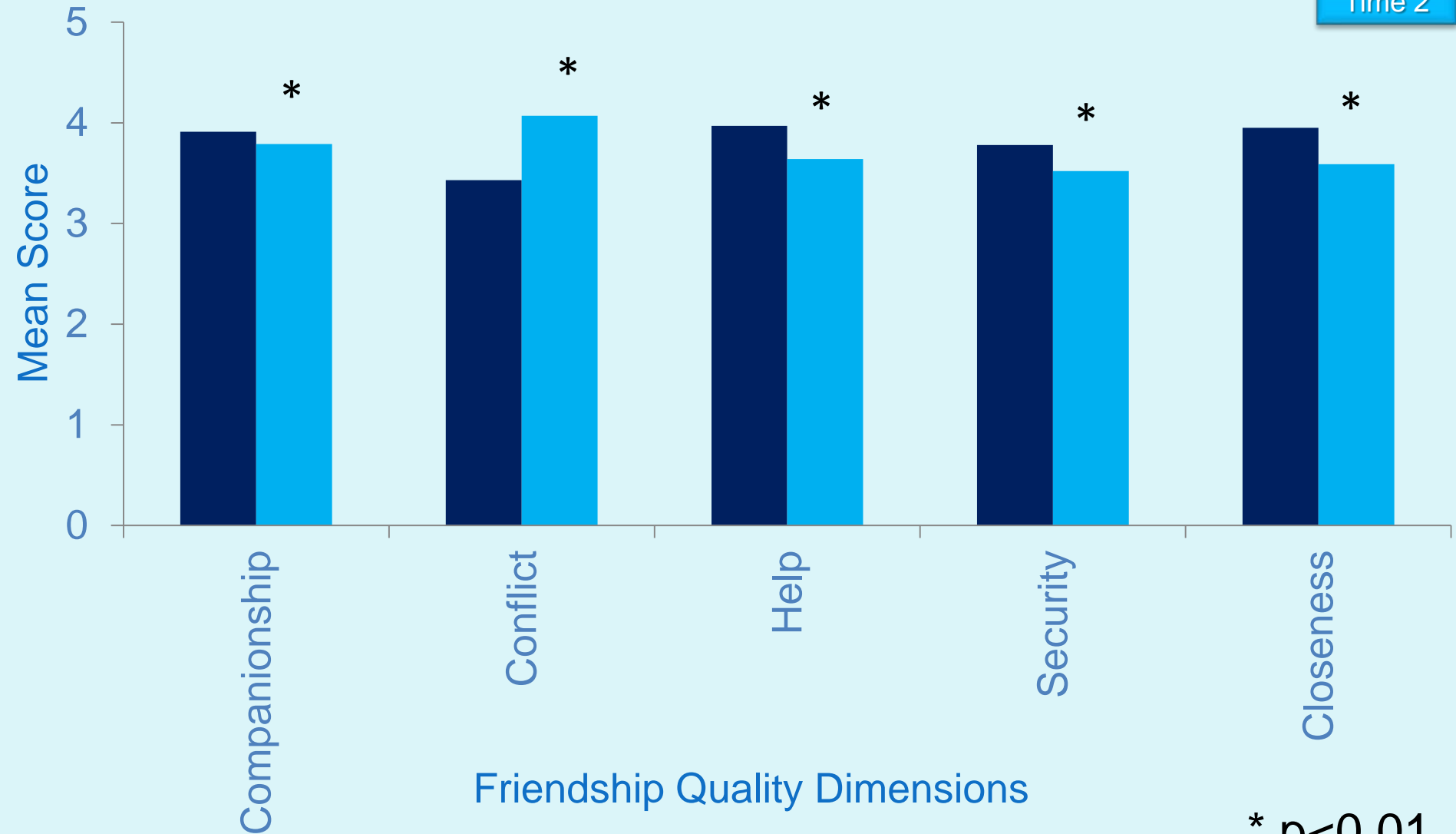
Time 1

Time 2



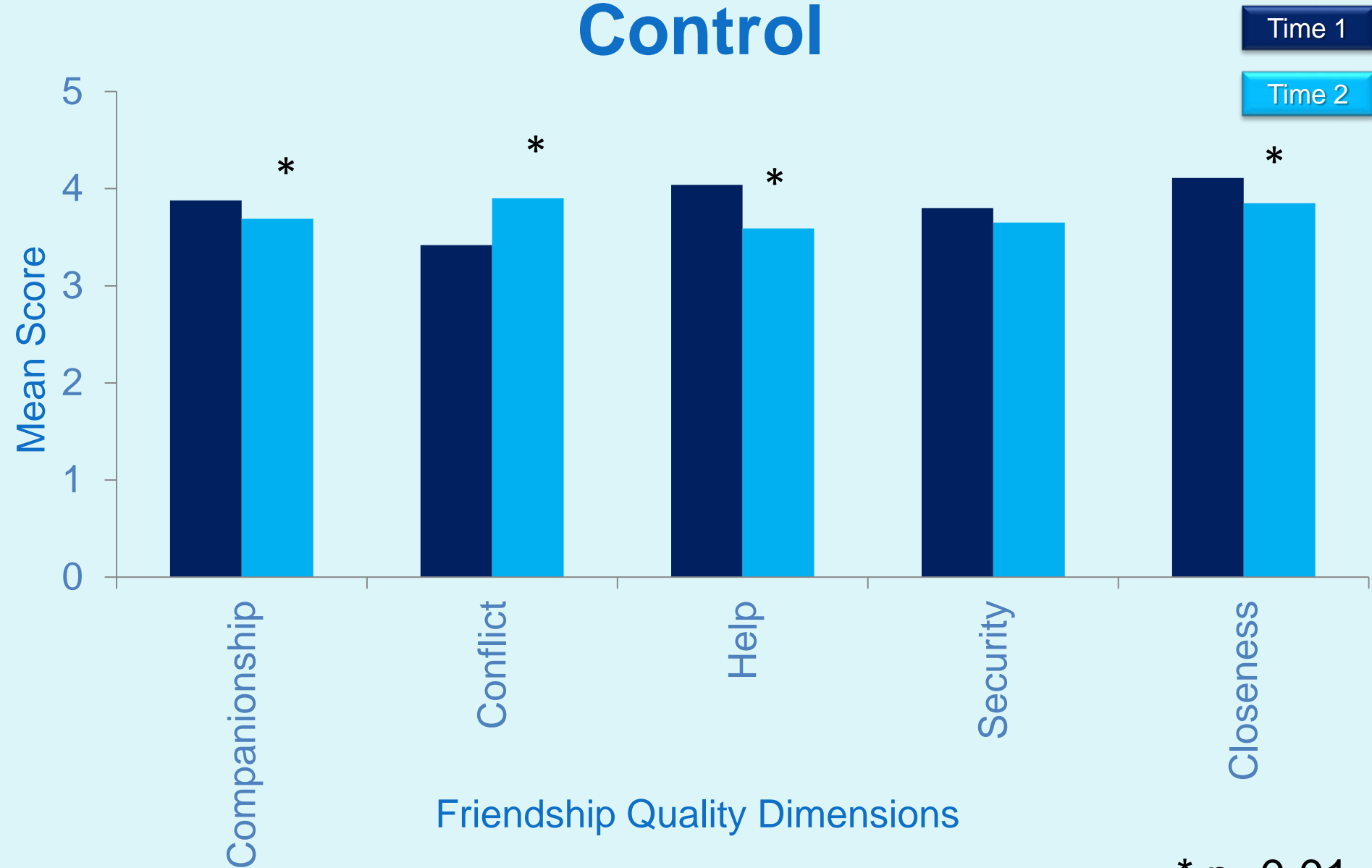
# Results: Friendship Qualities Scale After School Club

Time 1  
Time 2



\* p<0.01

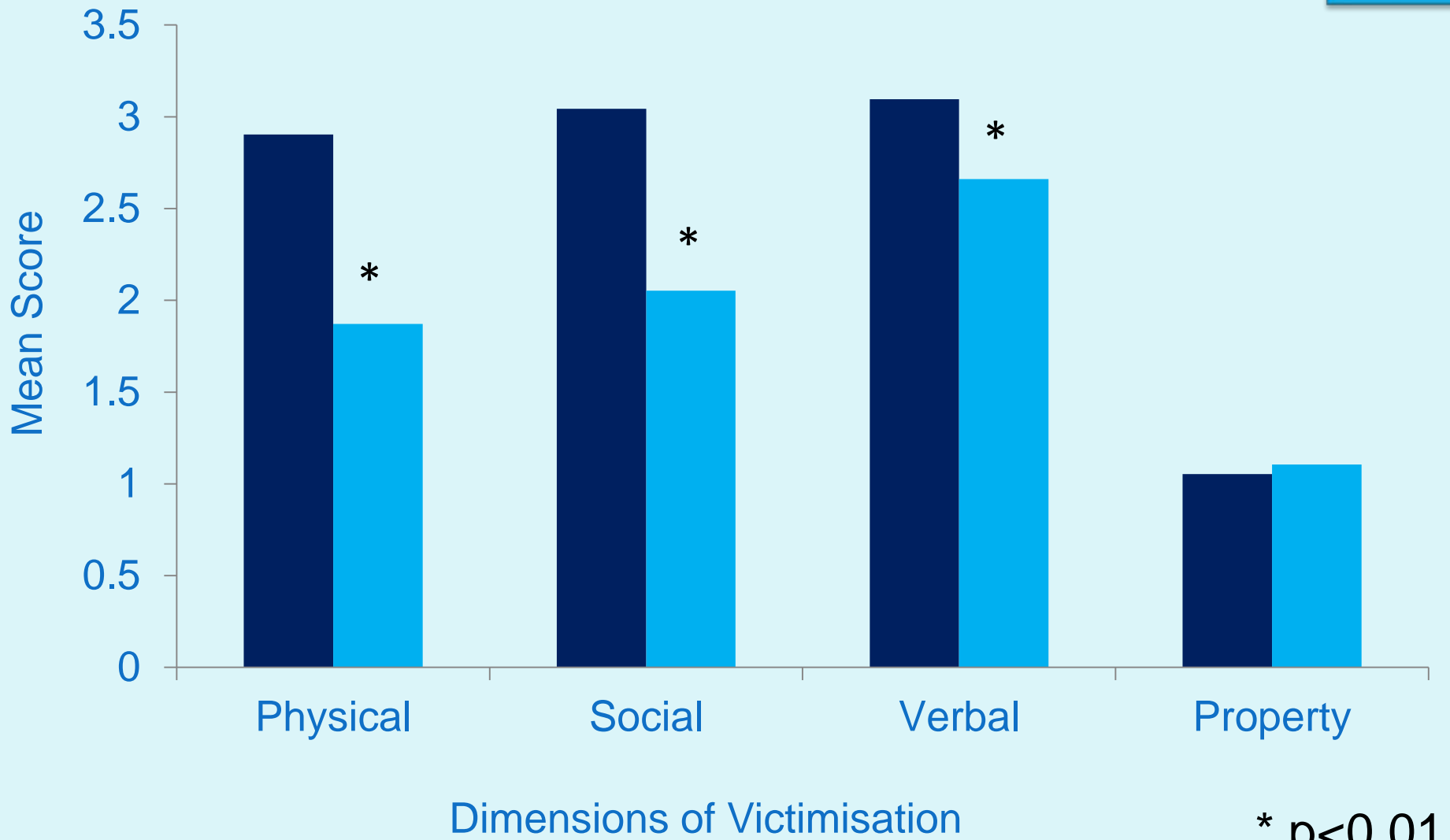
# Results: Friendship Qualities Scale Control



\*  $p < 0.01$

# Results: Peer Victimisation Scale Breakfast Club

Time 1  
Time 2

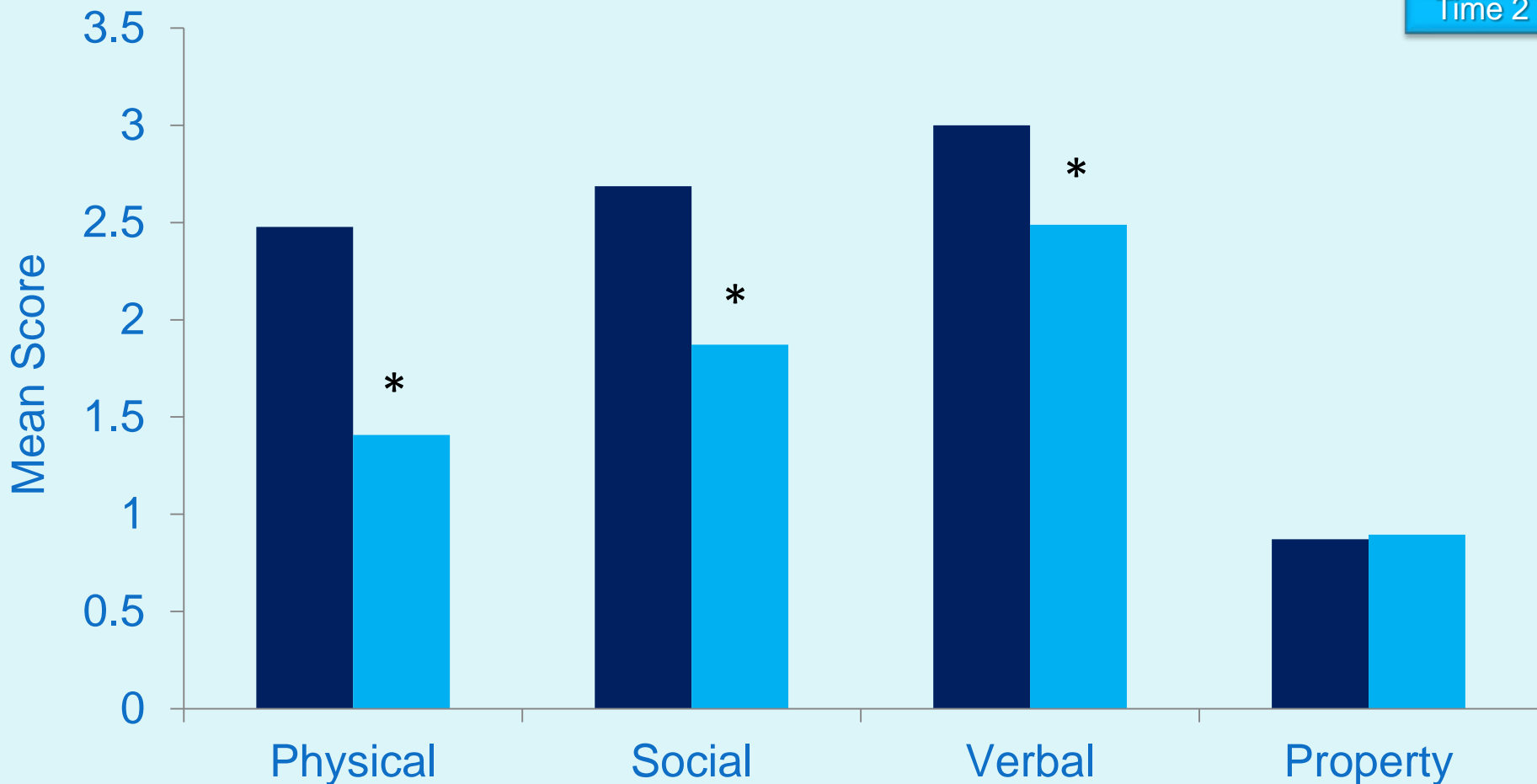


\* p<0.01

# Results: Peer Victimisation Scale After School Club

Time 1

Time 2

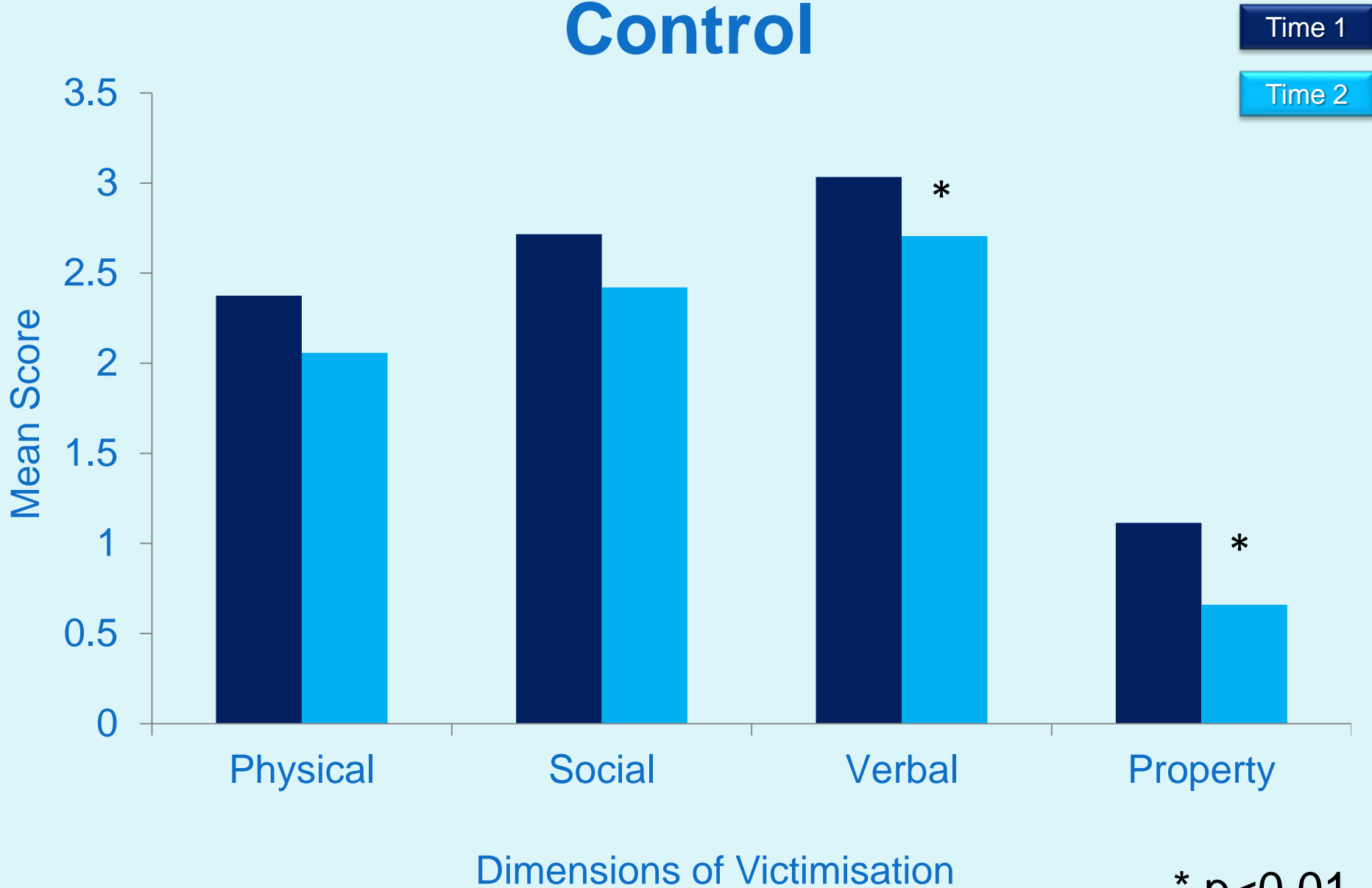


Dimensions of Victimisation

\* p<0.01



# Results: Peer Victimisation Scale Control



\* p<0.01

# Discussion

- No significant differences between groups at time 1
  - Findings cannot be ascribed to inherent differences between groups at time 1
  
- Breakfast club attendance did appear to facilitate children's relationships with their peers in school
  - Small group meal might be the driving force

# Discussion

- Out of school club attendance led to a reduction in victimisation across time
  - Out of school clubs might provide a protective peer group



