Causes and Effects of Bullying In Schools

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Abstract

School bullying is a type of bullying that occurs either inside or outside of school. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or emotional and is usually repeated over a period. In schools, bullying occurs in all areas. It can occur in nearly any part in or around the school building, though it more often occurs during school breaks, in hallways, bathrooms, on school buses and waiting for buses, classes that require group work and/or after school activities. While bullying can be destructive and persistent, it can also be subtle enough that teachers are not aware of it. Since bullying can lead to long-lasting psychological, emotional, and physical problems, it is essential for teachers to recognize the signs of bullying and how to combat it. Documentary research approach, which consists of reviewing, analysing and examining information, recorded media and texts was adopted for the study. The study found that bullying in school sometimes consists of a group of learners taking advantage of or isolating one learner in particular and gaining the loyalty of bystanders who want to avoid becoming the next victim. Bullying does not only impact the students, but also their family and classmates. Feeling powerless and confused, parents and other family members of bullying targets may experience depression, anxiety, and stress-related illnesses. Some parents become overprotective of their children if they feel they "failed" to protect them. Friends and classmates of the student who is bullied may feel powerless to help, guilt over not standing up for the target, and fearful of becoming the next target.

Keywords: depression, bullying, schools, bullied, powerless

Background

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (Halliday, Gregory, Taylor, Digenis and Turnbull. 2021). Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include: An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people (Burger, 2022). Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen

more than once. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose (Hinduja and Patchin, 2019). There is a new nationally agreed definition of bullying which all Australian schools now use:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm (Burger, 2022). It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening. By definition, bullying involves an imbalance of power (Jeffrey, Miller and Linn, 2001). A bully has power over another student

because of factors such as size, gender, age, standing among peers, and/or assistance by other students. Among boys, bullying tends to involve differences in strength; among girls bullying is more focused on differences in physical appearance, emotional life, and/or academic status (Jeffrey, Miller and Linn, 2001). Some bullies target peers with physical impairments, such as speech impediments (e.g., stuttering). Many stutterers experience some degree of bullying, harassment, or ridicule from peers and teachers and administrators need to be aware that although bullying generally happens in areas such as the bathroom, playground, crowded hallways, and school buses as well as via cell phones and computers (where supervision is limited or absent), it must be taken seriously. Teachers and administrators should emphasize that telling is not tattling Kosciw,, Greytak, Giga, Villenas and Danischewski, 2016). If a teacher observes bullying in a classroom, he/she needs to immediately intervene to stop it, record the incident, and inform the appropriate school administrators so the incident can be investigated. Having a joint meeting with the bullied student and the student who is bullying is not recommended, it is embarrassing and very intimidating for the student that is being bullied.

Students and parents need to be a part of the solution and involved in safety teams and antibullying task forces. Students can inform adults about what is really going on and also teach adults about new technologies that kids are using to bully (Kosciw, , Greytak, Giga, Villenas and Danischewski, 2016). Parents, teachers, and school administrators can help students engage in positive behavior and teach them skills so that they know how to intervene when bullying occurs. Older students can serve as mentors and inform younger students about safe practices on the internet. From 2016 to 2019, some research indicates that school bullying increased 35%. Others have noted that bullying is "definitely on the rise," and while we will explore a series of causes of bullying throughout this piece, it is important to also think of the contextual time we live in (Pervanidou, Makris, Bouzios, Chrousos, Roma and Chouliaras, 2019). Many people do interact on social platforms, and there is a degree of anonymity therein -- even if you use your real name, it is possible that you are talking to someone you have never met in real life. Real-life interactions are obviously substantially different from online interactions, and this can result in cyberbullying. While we do not want to get deeply political here, as it is a dividing line for many these days, the fact is that the USA President from 2016-2020 was a bit of an online bully, and his removal from Facebook and Twitter by the end of his Presidency somewhat underscore that. There is actually research about how Trump's election made men more aggressive, including this snippet (Pervanidou, Makris, Bouzios, Chrousos, Roma and Chouliaras, 2019).

Where and When Bullying Happens

Bullying can occur during or after school hours. While most reported bullying happens in the school building, a significant percentage also happens in places like on the playground or the bus. It can also happen travelling to or from school, in the youth's neighborhood, or on the Internet (Koo, 2007). Bullying can happen at school, at home or online. It is never okay and it is not a normal part of growing up. Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time

(for example, through sharing of digital records) (Burger, 2022).

Bullied students reported that bullying occurred in the following places:

- 42% in the hallway or stairwell at school
- 34% inside the classroom
- 22% in the cafeteria
- 19% outside on school grounds
- 10% on the school bus
- 9% in the bathroom or locker room (Berger and Kathleen, 2007:45).

Bullying is widespread in the United States. Bullying negatively impacts all youth involved including those who are bullied, those who bully others, and those who witness bullying, known as bystanders (Olweus, 1999:34).

- Bullying is common. About 1 in 5 high school students reported being bullied on school property. More than 1 in 6 high school students reported being bullied electronically in the last year.
- Some youth experience bullying more than others. Nearly 40% of high school students who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual and about 33% of those who were not sure of their sexual identity experienced bullying at school or electronically in the last year, compared to 22% of heterosexual high school students. About 30% of female high school students experienced bullying at school or electronically in the last year, compared to about 19% of males. Nearly 29% of White high school students experienced bullying at

school or electronically in the last year compared to about 19% of Hispanic and 18% of Black high school students (Olweus, 1999).

- Bullying is a frequent discipline problem. Nearly 14% of public schools report that bullying is a discipline problem occurring daily or at least once a week (Olweus, 1999).

Main features of bullying:

- The misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm (Goldsmid and Howie, 2014).

Types of Bullying (Burger, 2022:67)

Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. physical – examples include: hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence (Burger, 2022).

Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes: verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic, threatening to cause harm, inappropriate sexual comments (Burger, 2022).

Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships (Burger, 2022).

Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include: deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or

social acceptance, embarrassing someone in public, telling other children not to be friends with someone (Burger, 2022).

Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio. Coupled with the increasing use of computers and the internet, the use of such technology and social media has moved some bullying from the schoolyard to the internet (Burger, 2022). According to the website Stop Cyberbullying, schools experience difficulties in controlling off-campus bullying due to the perception that their role stops at the gates of the schoolyard. Schools are under pressure to not exceed their authority and to avoid violating students' right to free speech. Suggestions have been made that principals act to include cyberbullying in their code of ethics, allowing disciplining of bullying outside of school facilities.[citation needed] According to Professor Bernard James, "the timidity of educators in this context of emerging technology is working in the advantage of the bullies (Burger, 2022). Educators do appear to have support from the students. For example, three high school students from Melville, New York, organized a Bullying Awareness Walk, where several hundred people turned out to show their support (Burger, 2022).

Researcher Charisse Nixon found that students do not reach out for help with cyberbullying for four main reasons:

- They do not feel connected to the adults around them
- The students do not see cyberbullying as an issue that is worth bringing forward
- They do not feel the surrounding adults have the ability

to properly deal with the cyberbullying

- The teenagers have increased feelings of shame and humiliation regarding the cyberbullying (Burger, 2022).

Research suggests that cyberbullying is sometimes an extension of bullying already taking place elsewhere (Beaty and Alexeyev, 2008). Students who are cyberbullied have, in many cases, also been bullied in other ways before (e.g., physically or verbally at school). There are few students who are bullied exclusively over the Internet. Some cyber victims are physically stronger than cyber bullies, which leads these bullies to prefer online confrontations to face-to-face contact.

Specific forms of bullying:

Bullying behaviour can include specific forms (Hugh-Jones and Smith, 1999:67):

Racist bullying: belittling, mocking, intimidating or shaming someone because of their physical appearance, ethnic background, religious or cultural practices and/or the way they dress or talk. For more information, refer to Racist bullying

Homophobic and transphobic bullying: bullying on the basis of sexuality or gender expression. It can include physical violence, cyberbullying, name calling, exclusion, 'jokes' and/or sexual harassment. It is a common experience for young people who are same sex attracted, gender diverse or for those who may not behave according to gender stereotypes. Many Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and gender diverse, Intersex, Queer, Asexual and questioning (LGBTIQA+) students may not feel confident or safe enough to tell anyone about being bullied, especially if they have not disclosed their sexuality or

gender identity to friends, family or teachers. For more information, refer to Safe Schools.

Overt or covert bullying (Hugh-Jones and Smith, 1999):

Bullying can be easy to see and detect (overt) or hidden, subtle and hard to detect (covert). This means that schools need to be alert to possible subtle signs of bullying and check in regularly with students (Burger, 2022). Overt bullying involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or observable verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting. Covert bullying can be very difficult for someone outside of the interaction to identify. It can include hand gestures and threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with (Burger, 2022). Social bullying (spreading rumours, manipulation of relationships, excluding, isolating) is often covert bullying (Hugh-Jones and Smith, 1999). Some behaviours can appear to be bullying but are actually harassment. Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment, disability harassment or racial discrimination. For instance, sexual harassment is unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation.

Factors that make some students more vulnerable

While any student can be a target for bullies, there are factors that make some students more vulnerable to be being bullied. These include (Hugh-Jones and Smith, 1999:76):

- being different in some way

- being introverted and non-assertive
- having depression or anxiety
- lacking quality friendships at school
- displaying higher levels of emotionality
- exposure to family violence
- having a disability
- having a history of trauma
- belonging to a minority group, where isolation or lack of community support is an issue.

Causes of Bullying

The causes for bullying are varied, meaning any student can become a target, regardless of gender, race, religion, or socioeconomic status (Hoffman, 28 June 2010). Understanding why students bully others can help teachers better combat it. Factors that can lead to bullying include differences in appearance, social status, race, and sexual orientation. The National Center for Educational Statistics found that 25% of African American students were bullied in 2016, while 22% of Caucasian students, 17% of Hispanic students, and 9% of Asian students were (Hoffman, 28 June 2010). Some students who bully others have low self-esteem; however, there are others that have much higher self-confidence. Those with high self-confidence tend to lack compassion and empathy and can respond aggressively whenever they feel threatened.

Current societal events and conversations can compound bullying problems. As an example, bullying based on sexual orientation has increased as the conversations surrounding LGBTQIA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual) have increased in recent years (Burger, 2022). In some cases,

students' need for attention and the desire to be perceived as brave and confident can cause them to bully. Students who experience issues at home, such as abuse and neglect or a divorce, can cause them to bully others due to despair, anger, or jealousy.

Effects of Bullying

Bullying can result in physical injury, social and emotional distress, self-harm, and even death. It also increases the risk for depression, anxiety, sleep difficulties, lower academic achievement, and dropping out of school (Burger, 2022). Youth who bully others are at increased risk for substance misuse, academic problems, and experiencing violence later in adolescence and adulthood. Youth who bully others and are bullied themselves suffer the most serious consequences and are at greater risk for mental health and behavioral problems (Eidler, 2013).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Warning Signs of Being Bullied (Walz, 2016:65):

These are some of the warning signs victims of bullying might display:

- Sudden decreased interest in school (wants to stay at home);
- Sudden loss of interest in favourite school activities;
- Sudden decrease in quality of school work;
- Wants the parent to take her to school instead of riding the bus;
- Seems happy on weekends, but unhappy, preoccupied, or tense on Sundays;

- Suddenly prefers the company of adults;
- Frequent illnesses such as headaches and stomach aches;
- Sleep issues such as nightmares and sleeplessness;
- Comes home with unexplained scratches, bruises, and torn clothing;
- Talks about avoiding certain areas of the school or neighbourhood;
- Suddenly becomes moody, irritable, or angry and starts bullying others (e.g., siblings, children in neighbourhood)
- Seeks the wrong friends in the wrong places (e.g., drug users, gangs, etc)
- Talks about being sad, anxious, depressed, or having panic attacks;
- Wants to stay home on weekends;
- Talks about suicide.

As a result of bullying, victims may feel depressed, anxious, angry, stressed, helpless, out of control, and may experience a significant drop in school performance, or, in rare cases, commit suicide (bullycide).[citation needed] They tend to feel more lonely and problematic adjustment to school (Burger, 2022). Over the long term, they may feel insecure, lack trust, exhibit extreme sensitivity or hypervigilance, develop mental illnesses such as avoidant personality disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or develop other health challenges (Walz, 2016). They may also desire revenge, sometimes leading them to torment others in return.

Anxiety, depression, and psychosomatic symptoms are common among both bullies and their victims; and alcohol and

substance abuse by them are commonly seen later in life (Walz, 2016). It is known that people with depression feel much better when they talk to others about it, but victims of bullying may feel reluctant to talk to others about their feelings, for fear of being bullied for doing so, which can worsen their depression (Walz, 2016). In the short term, bystanders who witnesses bullying may experience anger, fear, guilt, and sadness. If they are witness to regular episodes of bullying, they may begin to exhibit the same symptoms as the victims themselves (Walz, 2016).While most bullies, in the long term, grow up to be emotionally functional adults, many have an increased risk of developing antisocial personality disorder, which is linked to an increased risk of committing criminal acts (including domestic violence (Coloroso, 2004). Bullies have been shown to have higher levels of social loneliness and lower levels of school adjustment.

How to Reduce Bullying

The cost of school violence is significant across many nations but there are educational leaders who have had success in reducing school bullying by implementing certain strategies (Burger, 2022). Some strategies used to reduce or prevent school bullying include educating the students about bullying, restricting of recording devices in the classroom, employing security technology, and hiring school safety officers. How schools respond to bullying, however, varies widely.

There are two main methods employed in controlling bullying (Burger, 2022): Prevention (acting before something happens) or reaction (acting when something is happening or has just happened).

Preventative solutions may include:

- Education: The education of students, parents, and teachers as to what constitutes bullying may help people understand the harmful nature of bullying. Teachers, school bus drivers, and other school professionals are taught how and when to intervene (Walz, 2016). Examples of activities used to teach students about bullying include: presentations, role-play, discussions about identifying and reporting bullying, teaching bystanders how and when to help, use of arts and crafts to build understanding of the effects of bullying, and classroom meetings to talk about peer relations.[citation needed] (Burger, 2022). A systematic review found that bullying is an indicator for later criminal behaviour, regardless of other major childhood risk factors, suggesting that anti-bullying programmes may be viewed as a form of early crime prevention (Walz, 2016).

- Restrictions on recording devices: It has been suggested that the use of mobile phones can lead to an increase in cyberbullying, which is why some schools have banned them throughout the school day (Walz, 2016).

- Security technologies: Schools may opt to install video cameras to monitor behaviour. However, skeptics argue that cameras may invade the students' privacy, especially if lax restrictions on the longevity of, and access to, the recordings leads to their misuse (Burger, 2022).

- Guards in the school: Schools may choose to employ internal security guards or watchmen to ensure the students'

safety. Experts believe that the use of security guards inside the schools may assist in reducing incidents of bullying as the guards get to know the students and who may then be able to predict and prevent issues before they arise (Walz, 2016).

The recommended reactions to cases of bullying are manifold, various methods may be called for, depending on the type of bullying, and the people who are involved (Burger, 2022). Some suggestions for appropriate reaction are:

- Avoid rigid confrontations: It is recommended that bullies not be met with physical violence, to avoid contributing to promoting the apparition of violent environments in society (Burger, 2022).
- Reports of the witnesses: Witnesses, whether known to the victim or not, are an important source of information in cases of bullying. It is recommended that anonymity be maintained where possible (Burger, 2022).
- Intervention by a bystander: It is recommended that bystanders, and other third persons, avoid intervening in a conflict situation, due to their potential to aggravate the situation.[citation needed]
- Parental response: Experts advise that involved parents avoid talking directly to each other. Instead it is recommended to contact the school and allow the appropriate school personnel to take action, assume responsibility, and act as a mediator (Burger, 2022).
- Teacher response: Teacher interventions are considered important in many anti-bullying programs. In many countries teachers have a legal obligation to

prevent their students from harm. Teachers can intervene by using authority-based interventions, by using non-punitive approaches to bullying, by supporting victims, and by involving other teachers or professionals (Burger, 2022). Some other teacher interventions have been found to be helpful in reducing bullying. These interventions include clearly pointing out boundaries, making it clear that the behavior exhibited is not acceptable, and involving school principals. Discussing school bullying and the associated negative consequences with the entire class has also been found to be helpful in reducing bullying (Hinduja and Patchin, 2019)

- Suspension and Expulsion: Where no other solution for bullying is working, or in cases where the bullying is very severe, it maybe necessary to suspend or expel the offender.[citation needed] Severe measures such as detention, expulsion, and suspension could however also have iatrogenic effects and increase aggression (Hinduja and Patchin, 2019)
- Moving: In cases that are more difficult to solve, the victim may consider a change of institution or even moving with his or her family to another location (Hinduja and Patchin, 2019)
- Psychosocial support: After the bullying ends, victims of bullying may require support, such as help with making new friends and/or taking up new activities (Hinduja and Patchin, 2019)

Effective national responses

Based on UNESCO case studies of six countries that have succeeded in reducing school violence and bullying (Eswatini, Italy, Jamaica, Lebanon, Republic of Korea and Uruguay) as well as two countries that have maintained low levels over time (the Netherlands and Sweden), there are a number of factors that contribute to effective national responses (Walz, 2016).

Factors that contribute to effective national responses include (Walz, 2016:65).

- Political leadership and high-level commitment, together with a robust legal and policy framework that addresses violence against children and school violence and bullying. Many successful countries also have an emphasis in national policies that promote a safe learning environment, a positive school and classroom climate, and a strong commitment to child rights and empowerment.
- Collaboration and partnerships. At the national level, this includes partnerships between the education sector and other sector ministries, civil society organizations, academic institutions, professional associations, and the media. At the school level, it includes partnerships involving all stakeholders in the school community, including head teachers, teachers, other staff, parents and students, local authorities, and professionals in other sectors. More specifically, the involvement of all students, including bystanders, and the use of peer approaches, have been a key factor in countries that have made the most progress.

- Evidence-based approaches, informed by accurate and comprehensive data and systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of existing programmes. Effective systems for routine reporting and monitoring of school violence and bullying and rigorous evaluation of the impact of programmes and interventions are critical. Bullying prevention programs that reach parents through trainings and material sent home, as well as role-playing scenarios that students can work through, have been found as relevant components to reduce the problem behavior according to research from David Finkelhor and colleagues from the University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Center.
- Training and support for teachers and care and support for affected students. Training in successful countries has focused on developing skills to prevent and respond to school violence and bullying and to use positive approaches to classroom management.

The following tips can help parents understand the problems their children may face when harassed at school. Parents and educators must stay vigilant, look for these warning signs, and attempt to address problems quickly. Learners must feel safe at school; parents and other adults can help learners who suffer at the hands of bullies.

What Parents Can Do (Goldsmid and Howie, 2014:87).

- Remember: For behaviour to be labelled as bullying, it has to be persistent (repeated over time) and intentionally designed to hurt or

frighten your child. Remember the bully has power and control over your child!

- Assure children that you will immediately investigate and report the situation with the school principal or senior teacher;
- Check if your child needs to avoid certain areas on school property at certain times;
- Suggest that your school increases supervision in the high-risk areas where the child has to go or more closely monitor the child's interactions with other learners;
- Encourage your child to talk to an adult, such as a supportive teacher, every day to provide an update on the mistreatment;
- *Stay calm;*
- Be sensitive to the fact that your child may feel embarrassed and ashamed;
- Find out what happened, who was involved, and when and where it happened, and keep a record of this information;
- Express confidence that you, the adults at school, and your child will be able to find a solution.
- Ask your child to express his/ her thoughts and feelings about what happened;
- Explain that bullies seek to hurt and control. So your child must not let them know he is hurt by their behaviour.
- Let your child know that it is normal to feel hurt, fear, and anger;
- Avoid being a "fix-it" dad or mom by calling the bully's parents. Most of the time, this action is not effective. However, not all parents of bullies respond in a protective manner.

- Do not tell your child to retaliate. It is against the rules, and retaliation frequently makes the bullying worse and more persistent.
- Do not tell your child to ignore the bully. Most of the time, ignoring doesn't work;
- Teach your child to be assertive, but not aggressive;
- Don't promise that you will not tell anyone
- Ask for a copy of the school's policy .
- Involve your child in activities inside and outside school. Involvement in activities he or she enjoys increases the chances of high-quality friendships;
- Monitor your child's whereabouts and his friendships;
- Watch for signs of depression and anxiety in your child, and do not hesitate to seek professional counselling;
- Do not give up.

What Schools Can Do

Strategies to combat bullying in schools (Burger, 2022:78):

- Make sure an adult knows what is happening to their children;
- Enforce anti bully laws as part of the Code of Conduct for learners;
- Make it clear that bullying is never acceptable;
- Recognize that bullying can occur at all levels within the school;
- Hold a school conference day or forum devoted to bullying/victim problems;
- Increase adult supervision in the schoolyard, halls and toilets;
- Emphasize caring, respect and safety.

- Emphasize consequences of hurting others;
- Enforce consistent and immediate consequences for aggressive behaviours;
- Improve communication among school administrators, teachers, parents and learners;
- Have a school problem box where learners can report problems, concerns and offer suggestions;
- Help bullies with anger control and the development of empathy;
- Encourage positive peer relations;
- Offer a variety of extra-curricular activities which appeal to a range of interests;
- Keep in mind the range of possible causes: e.g., medical, psychological, developmental, family problems, etc (Goldsmid and Howie, 2014).

Symptoms of Bullying

Signs that a child is being bullied may include: unexplainable injuries, symptoms of anxiety and post-traumatic stress, lost or destroyed clothing, changes in eating habits, declining grades, continual school absences, self-harm, suicidal ideations, and becoming overly apologetic (Berger and Kathleen, 2007). Signs that a child is bullying others may include getting into physical or verbal fights, getting sent to the principal's office frequently, having friends who bully others, and becoming increasingly aggressive in normal activities (Berger and Kathleen, 2007). Signs that a child has witnessed bullying include: poor school behaviour, emotional disturbance, depression, post-traumatic stress, drug and alcohol abuse, and suicidal ideation (Berger and Kathleen, 2007).

Percentage of boys and girls who experienced bullying in the past 12 months

According to the American Psychological Association, "40% to 80% of school-age children experience bullying at some point during their school careers." Various studies show that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and students with disabilities experience bullying more often than other students (Burger, 2022).

Victims

Statistics show that in the U.S. school system 1 in 3 children are affected by bullying in their lifetime, and 30% report being involved in some manner (Burger, 2022).

- In a 1997 study of five Seattle high schools, students recorded their peers' hallway and classroom conversations. It was discovered that the average high school student hears about 25 anti-gay remarks a day.[citation needed]
- U.S. students who are homosexual, bisexual, or transgender are five times as likely to miss school because they feel unsafe after being bullied due to their sexual orientation.[94]
- According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the percentage of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students who did not go to school at least one day during the 30 days preceding the survey, due to safety concerns, ranged from 11% to 30% for gay and lesbian students and 12% to

25% for bisexual students (Burger, 2022).

- 61.1% of LGBT middle- or high-school students were more likely than their non-LGBT peers to feel unsafe or uncomfortable as a result of their sexual orientation (Burger, 2022).

- In the United States, a 2013 nationwide survey indicated that 20% of high school students were bullied on school property in the past year, 15% of the students were bullied electronically, and 8% of students ages 12–18 reported ongoing bullying on a weekly basis (Walz, 2016).

- According to the journal Evolutionary Psychological Science, victims of bullying are more likely to be sexually inactive compared to bullies.

- In a Canadian study that surveyed 2,186 students across 33 middle and high schools, 49.5% reported being bullied online in the previous three months. 33.7% of the sample reported being the perpetrator of cyberbullying (Burger, 2022).

- At least 1 in 3 adolescent students in Canada has reported being bullied (Burger, 2022).

- 47% of Canadian parents report having a child who is a victim of bullying.

- The most common form of cyberbullying involved receiving threatening or aggressive emails or instant messages, reported by 73% of Canadian victims (Walz, 2016).

- A nationwide survey conducted by Trinity College Dublin, of bullying in first- and second-level schools in Ireland, estimates that some 31% of primary and 16% of secondary students have been bullied at some time.

- In a study of 32 Dutch elementary schools, 16.2% of the 2,766 participating children reported being bullied regularly (at least several times a month) (Walz, 2016).

Statistics referencing the prevalence of bullying in schools may be inaccurate and tend to fluctuate.[citation needed] In a U.S. study of 5,621 students ages 12–18, 64% of the students had experienced bullying and did not report (Walz, 2016).

*Bullies (*Walz, 2016:76).

- In a 2005 survey, 3,708,284 students reported being a perpetrator of bullying in the U.S. school system.

- Studies have shown bullies report having more friends than children who are victims.[citation needed

- Bullying behavior in perpetrators is shown to decrease with age.

- Developmental research suggests bullies are often morally disengaged and use egocentric reasoning strategies.

- Bullies often come from families that use physical forms of discipline. Adolescents who experience violence or aggression in the home, or are influenced by negative peer relationships, are more likely to bully. This suggests that positive social relationships reduce the likelihood of bullying.

- Bullies may show signs of mental health disorders. This trend is most evident in adolescents diagnosed with depression, anxiety, or ADHD.

- Poor theory of mind is associated with bullying.
- Up to 25% of students may encourage bullying, and more than 50% will not intervene in bullying situations.
- A study by Lisa Garby shows that 60% of bullies in middle school will have at least one criminal conviction by the age of 24.
- 10.6% of surveyed children said they sometimes bullied other children (moderate bullying), 8.8% said they had bullied others once a week or more (frequent bullying), and 13% said they had engaged in moderate or frequent bullying of others. 6.3% had experienced bullying and also been a bully.

Reluctance to Report

A majority of students do not report bullying in schools to adults. This can be due to fear of retaliation, not wanting to worry parents, being ashamed that they can't defend themselves, feeling that nothing can change the situation, and fearing the teacher or parent would make the situation worse (Beaty and Alexeyev, 2008).There is also a reluctance to report witnessing an incident, for similar reasons. Reporting bullying will increase with anti-bullying programs because students will feel more confident in their own abilities to intervene, and the abilities of the school to make a difference.

Victims of Bullying

Most bullies bully children in their same grade at school, but sometimes the bully is older. Having a large circle of friends tends to reduce the likelihood of a child being bullied, while a slightly physically weaker, smaller and nonassertive child has a higher likelihood of being bullied.

Measuring Your Effectiveness

Both before and after implementing anti-bullying measures, it is advisable to take surveys to measure the effectiveness of a program. Examples of surveys include:

1. Percentage of victims by bullying type

2. Number of victims and number of bullies

3. Number of students who are knowledgeable about bullying and know how to intervene

4. Attendance, behavior, and discipline of bullies and victims

5. Bullying rates at 'hot spots' (Beaty and Alexeyev, 2008).

Bullying in schools is a tough issue to tackle, but if schools, parents, and students all commit to stopping prevention and action, it can be stopped.

Conclusion

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power or strength. It is a repeated behavior and can be physical, verbal, or relational. While boys may bully others using more physical means, girls often bully others by social exclusion. Bullying has been part of school, and even workplaces, for years. More recently, though, technology and social media have created a new venue for bullying that has expanded its reach. Cyberbullying is bullying that happens online and via cell phones. Websites like YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat allow kids to send hurtful, ongoing messages to other children 24 hours a day. Some sites, such as Instagram, allow messages to be left anonymously. Preventing and stopping bullying involves a commitment to creating

a safe environment where children can thrive, socially and academically, without being afraid.

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