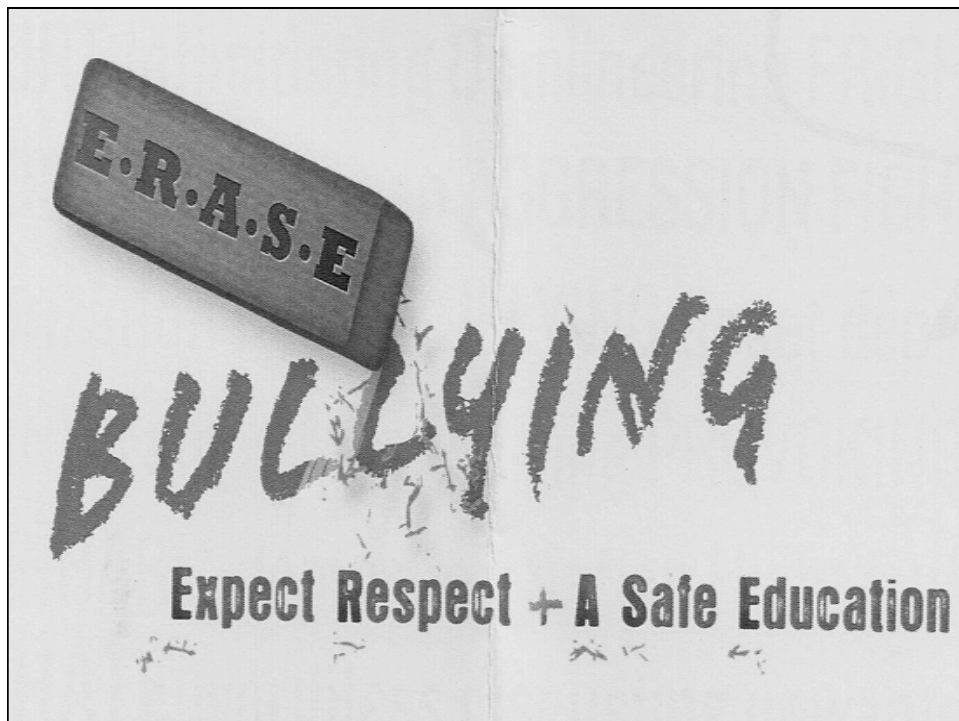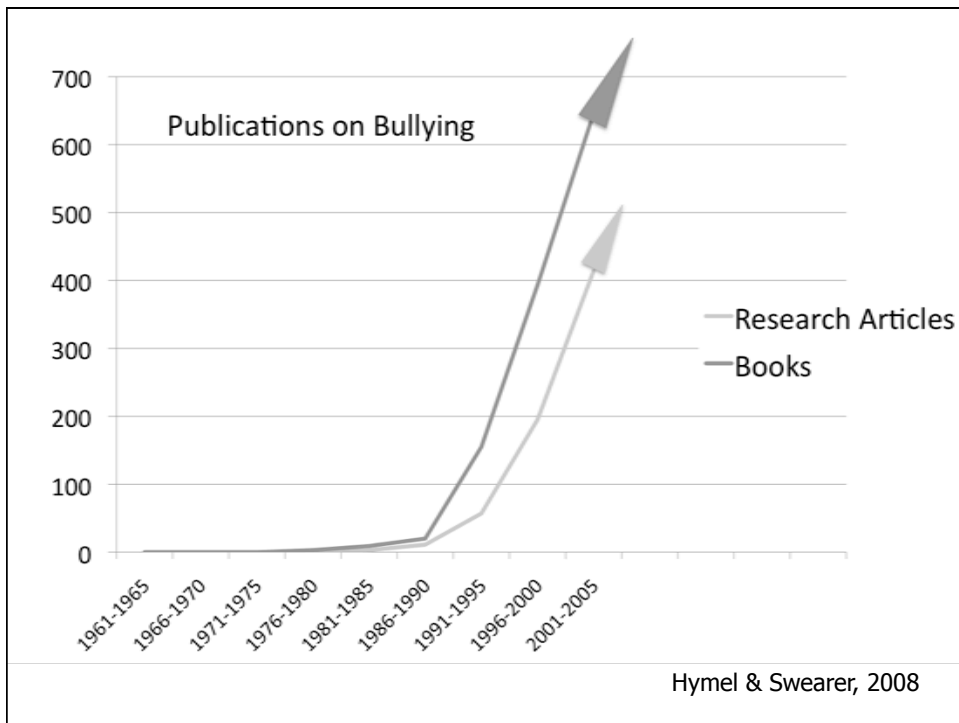# HOW CAN WE REALLY ERASE SCHOOL BULLYING?
What does the research tell us?

SHELLEY HYMEL
Faculty of Education
University of British Columbia

UBC

24 January 2013

Publications on Bullying

Research Articles
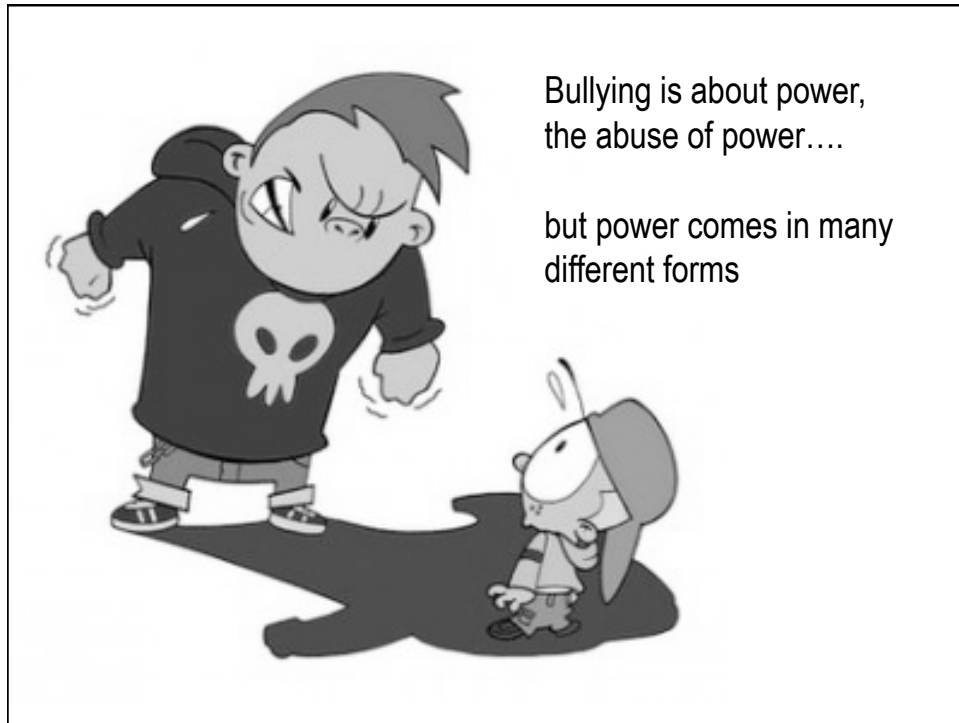Books

Hymel & Swearer, 2008

What have we learned?

"A person is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons."   Olweus, 1991

Three critical components:
- ✓ Intentionality
- ✓ Repetition
- ✓ Power Differential

Bullying is about power, the abuse of power….

but power comes in many different forms
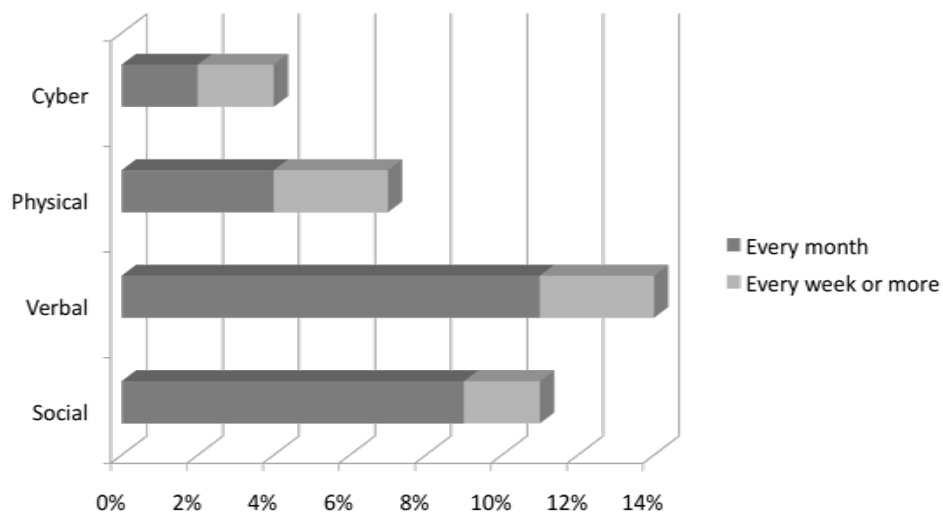
Forms of Bullying

	Of Concern	Of Serious Concern
Physical Bullying	pushing, spitting, shoving hitting, slapping, kicking, etc.	threatening with a weapon, defacing property, stealing
Verbal Bullying	mocking, teasing, dirty looks, name-calling	intimidating phone calls, racist, sexist, homophobic taunts, verbal threats, coercion, extortion
Social or Relational Bullying	gossiping, setting up for embarrassment, spreading rumors, exclusion from group	inciting hatred, racist, sexist, homophobic alienation, setting other up to take the blame public humiliation
Cyber or Electronic Bullying	use of internet, email or text messaging to threaten, hurt, single out, embarrass, spread rumors or reveal secrets about others	

Involvement in Bully-Victim Incidents

- 8-10%
- 8-12%
- 1-5%
- 70-80%

□ Victims
■ Bullies
■ Bully-Victims
■ Witnesses
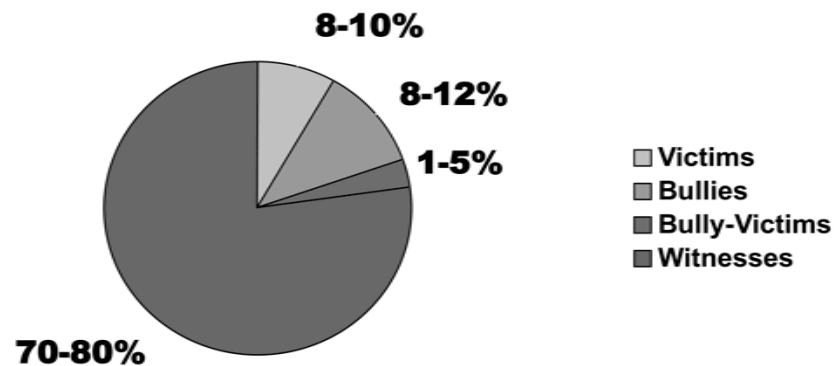
Victimization across forms of bullying
(n=1700 students, grades 4-7, from 14 BC schools)

Cyber
Physical
Verbal
Social

■ Every month
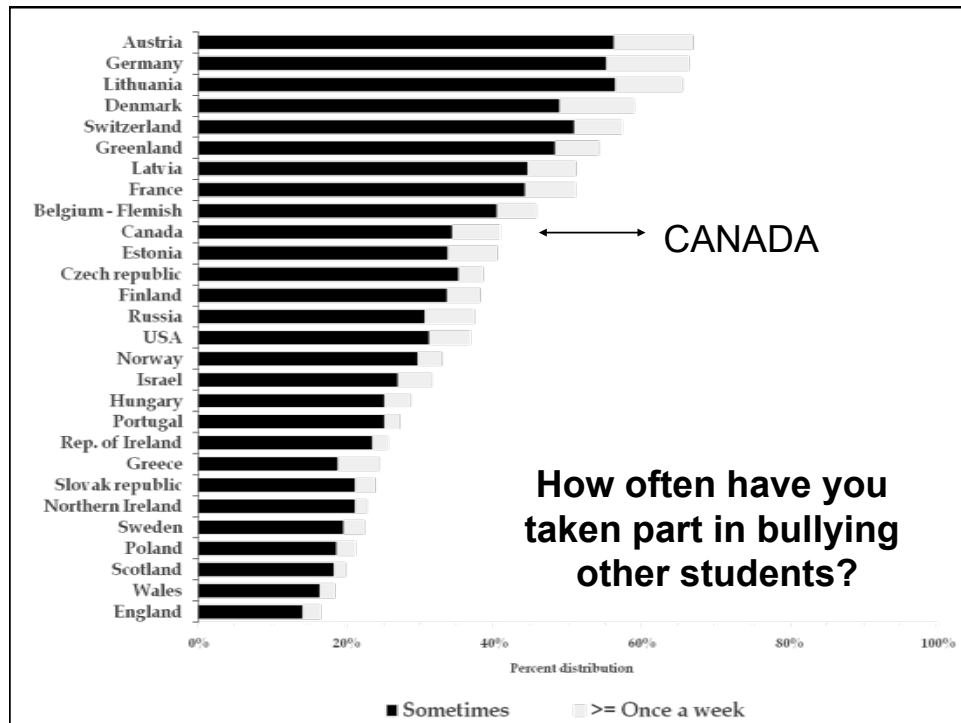■ Every week or more

0% 2% 4% 6% 8% 10% 12% 14%

Victimization Across Forms of Bullying
(n=19,551 secondary students from 18 BC schools)
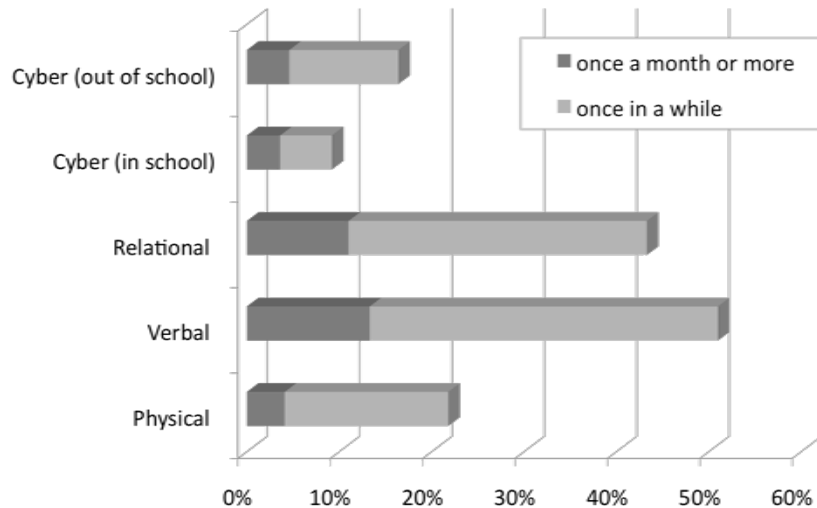
Canada in international comparisons?

CANADA

How often have you taken part in bullying other students?

Correlates and Consequences

Victimization
- academic difficulties
- school truancy/avoidance
- somatic complaints (e.g., headaches, stomachaches)
- stress-related illness,
- low self-esteem
- social withdrawal/isolation
- anxiety
- depression
- suicide
- aggressive behaviour

Bullying
- externalizing problems
- antisocial problem behaviour
- mental health problems
- dating aggression
- sexual harassment
- moral disengagement
- anxiety
- depression
- suicide
- delinquency and criminality

SCHOOL BULLYING & LATER CRIMINALITY
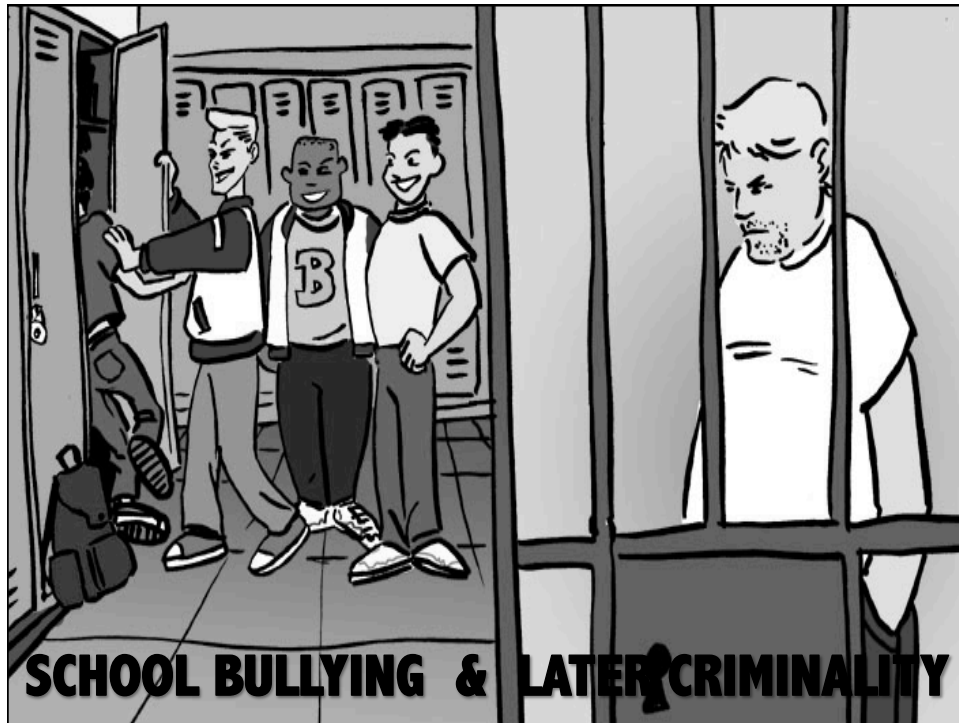
WHY?

Three possibilities
- Psychopathology
- Human nature
- Part of growing up

Why?

Psychopathology?

Prevalence of Mental Disorders in Children and Youth
(Waddell & Shepherd, 2002)

Children (age 4-17) diagnosed with specific mental health disorders

	Estimated % of Population	in 100,000 students	Estimated #
Anxiety	6.6%		6,500
Conduct Disorders	3.3%		3,300
ADHD	3.3%		3,300
Depression	2.1%		2,100
Substance Abuse	0.8%		800
Pervasive Developmental Disorder		0.3%	300
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	0.2%		200
Tourettes	0.1%		100
Eating Disorders	0.1%		100
Schizophrenia	0.1%		100
Bipolar	<0.1%		<100

Mental Health Disorders and Involvement in Bullying
(Kumpulainen, Räsänen, & Puura, 2001)

Among children who bully, 70% had a psychiatric disorder (most frequently, attention deficit disorder, oppositional/conduct disorder, depression, somatization, anxiety)

Among bully-victims, 67% had a psychiatric disorder (most frequently, oppositional/conduct disorder, depression, attention deficit disorder, anxiety)

Among children who are victimized, 50% had a psychiatric disorder (most frequently, attention deficit disorder, depression, anxiety, oppositional/conduct disorder)
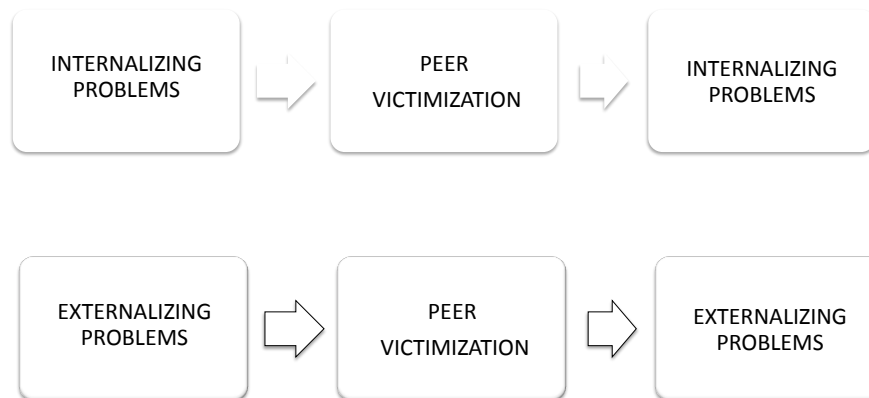

Common Antecedents?
(Sourander et al., 2000)

Bullying (age 16)

Depression (age 8)

Victimization (age 16)
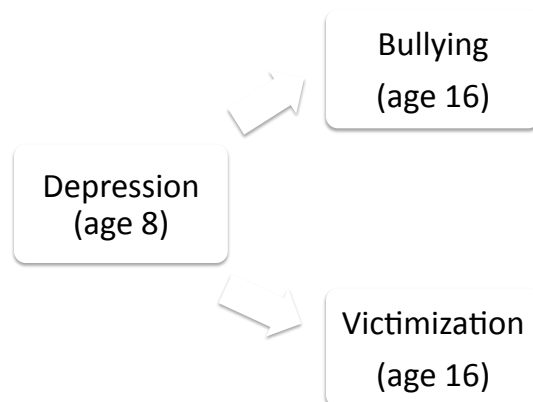
Multiple Pathways
(Reijntjes et al., 2010, 2011)

| INTERNALIZING PROBLEMS | → | PEER VICTIMIZATION | → | INTERNALIZING PROBLEMS |

| EXTERNALIZING PROBLEMS | ⇒ | PEER VICTIMIZATION | ⇒ | EXTERNALIZING PROBLEMS |

CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILDREN/YOUTH WHO BULLY

- ⬆ **Antisocial & physically aggressive behavior** (e.g., Craig, 1998)
- ⬆ **Externalizing problems & hyperactivity** (e.g., Khatri et al., 2000; Kumpulainen et al. 1999)
- ⬆ **Impulsivity** (O'Brennan, Bradshaw & Sawyer, 2009; Olweus, 1995; Schwartz, Proctor, Chien, Juvonen, & Graham, 2001)
- ⬆ **Machiavellianism, manipulates others for own gain** (Sutton & Keogh, 2001)
- ⬆ **Narcissism** (Ang, Ong, Lim & Lim, 2010)
- ⬆ **indifference to pain they cause others** (Rigby & Slee, 1993)

- ⬇ **Empathy** (e.g., Espelage, Mebane & Adams, 2004; Funke 2003; Gini, Albiero, Benelli & Altoe, 2007; Roberts & Morotti, 2000; Olweus 1993, 1997)
- ⬇ **Anxiety** (e.g., Craig, 1998; Olweus, 1993)

COLUMBINE
by
Dave Cullen
2009
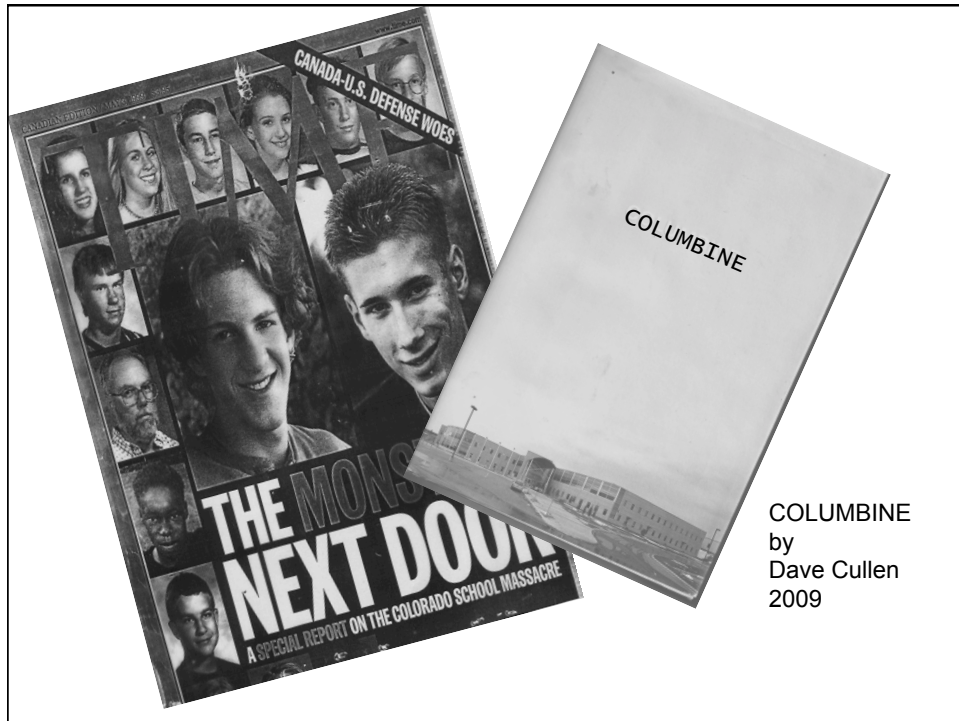
Psychopathic Tendencies and Bullying
(Fanti & Kimonis, 2012)

Longitudinal study of nearly 1500 Greek-Cypriot youth assessed in grades 7, 8 and 9.

Self-reports of
- Bullying and victimization
- Three dimensions of psychopathy
  - –Callous, unemotional traits
  - –Impulsivity
  - –Narcissism
- Conduct Problems

Psychopathic Tendencies and Bullying
(Fanti & Kimonis, 2012)

Impulsivity and especially Narcissism predicted high levels of bullying in early adolescence, regardless of levels of callousness or conduct problems.

All three psychopathic traits contributed to greater levels of reported bullying, suggesting that "the combination confers the greatest risk"

Combination of Callous-unemotional traits AND Conduct Problems, however, predicted the highest levels of bullying, even as levels of bullying declined with age. This represented 2.8% of the sample.

Implications

- Early identification critical – need to pay attention to early and multiple indicators of risk
- Early prevention and clinical intervention needed, with promising new approaches to reducing negative behavior in students with psychopathic traits
- Warning: traditional, punishment-based discipline less effective and focus on rewards more effective with youth with psychopathic traits (Fanti & Kimonis, 2012)
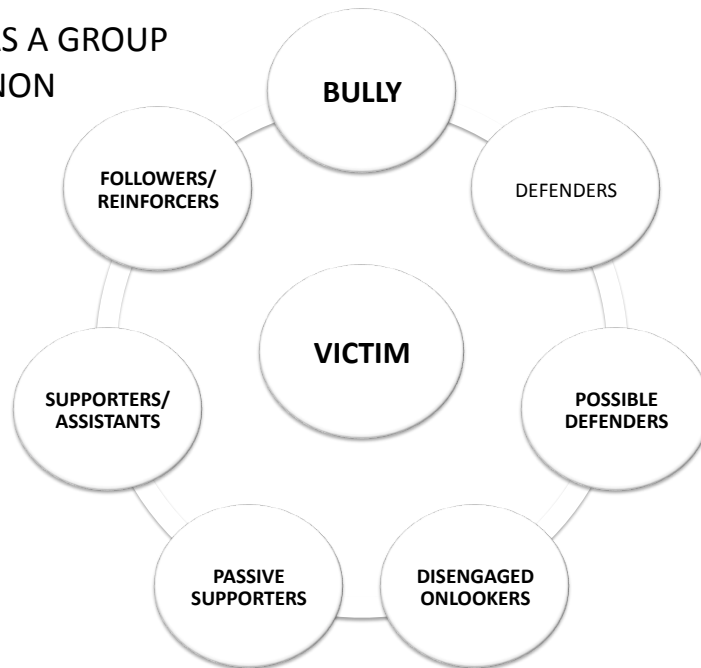
HOW OFTEN DO YOU TAKE PART IN BULLYING OTHERS?

SAMPLE OF NEARLY 500 STUDENTS, GRADES 8-10 FROM 1 SCHOOL

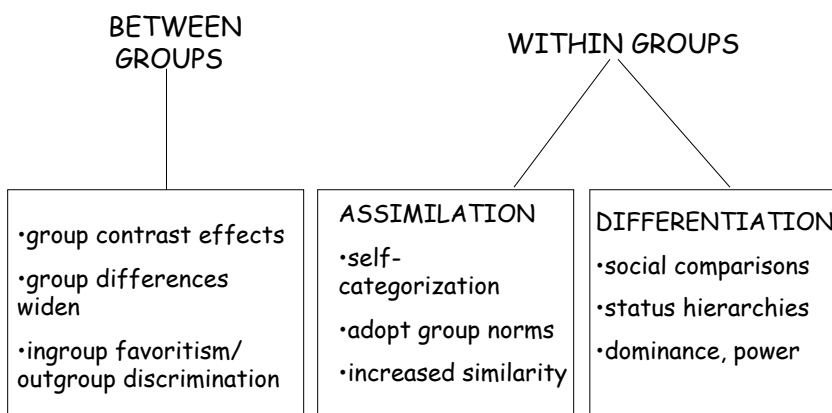67% report bullying others AT LEAST "few times" or "once in a while"

Why?

Human Nature?

BULLYING AS A GROUP PHENOMENON

- BULLY
- FOLLOWERS/REINFORCERS
- DEFENDERS
- SUPPORTERS/ASSISTANTS
- VICTIM
- POSSIBLE DEFENDERS
- PASSIVE SUPPORTERS
- DISENGAGED ONLOOKERS

Group Socialization
(Harris, 1995, 1998)

BETWEEN GROUPS

WITHIN GROUPS

	ASSIMILATION	DIFFERENTIATION
•group contrast effects •group differences widen •ingroup favoritism/outgroup discrimination	•self-categorization •adopt group norms •increased similarity	•social comparisons •status hierarchies •dominance, power

Why?

Part of Growing Up?

Frequent Victims
(once a month or more)

Legend:
- electronically bullied
- socially bullied
- verbally bullied
- physically bullied
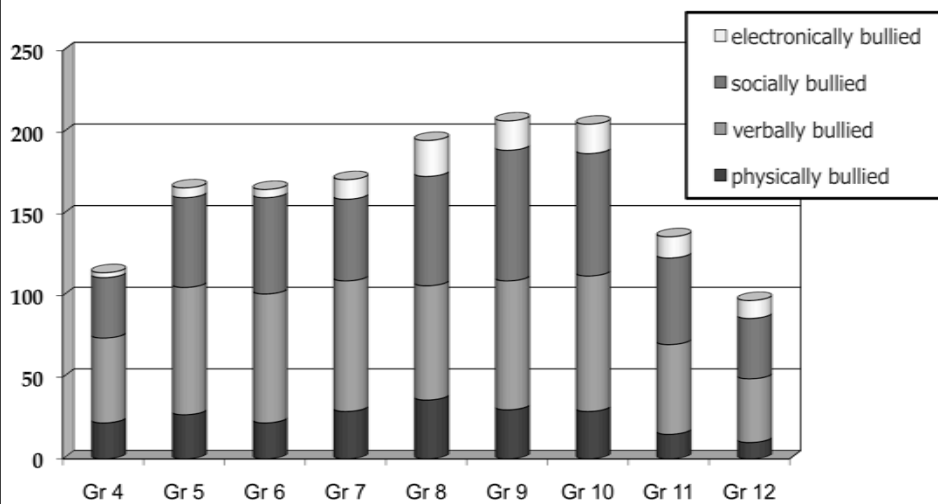
Domains of Social Development

- Social Participation
- Perspective-taking
- Friendship conceptions
- Empathy
- Prosocial Reasoning

- Brain Development
- Identity Development
- Moral Development

Why do people bully?

- **Child psychopathology**
- **The gradual social development of our children**
- **The nature of human beings**

Not all bullies are the same….

Olweus (1993), Salmivalli & Nieminen (2002)
- bullies versus bully-victims

Farmer et al. (2010)
- socially integrated vs socially marginalized bullies

Peeters, Cillessen & Scholte (2010)
- socially intelligent, popular bullies,
- popular moderate bullies
- unpopular, less socially intelligent bullies

Implications

- **If bullying behavior is a group phenomenon that increases throughout the school years, and is linked to later life difficulties, it is important to address the problem early on.**

- **As one of the primary socialization forces for our children, and a primary context in which bullying occurs, schools are the most cost-effective context in which to address bullying.**

Why intervene at the school level?

It's the right thing to do....

Every individual has the right to be spared from oppression and repeated, intentional humiliation. It is a fundamental democratic right to not be victimized in school.

Dan Olweus, 1991

It makes economic sense…

Cohen (1998) estimated that each high-risk youth

– **who becomes a typical career criminal costs society $1.3-1.5 million (US$) in external costs over a lifetime (e.g., lost wages, medical costs, stolen property, incarceration, criminal justice system).**

– **who becomes a high school drop out, costs society $243,000-$388,000 (US$) over a life time**

– **Overall estimate of saving one high-risk youth: $1.7 to 2.3 million over a lifetime.**

– **Pay now or pay later.**

It can impact achievement….

"I just want the bullying to stop. That is all I ever wanted. I used to love going to school. Now I hate it."

9-year-old Verity Ward quoted in the Sunday Telegraph, 12 March 2000

Peaceful Schools Project,
Topeka, Kansas

backoffbully.com

Twemlow, Fonagy, Sacco, Gies, Evans & Ewbank
   (2001, American Journal Psychiatry)
   Peaceful schools program leads to decreased discipline referrals and increased academic achievement

Fonagy, Twemlow, Vernberg, Sacco & Little
   (2005, Medical Science Monitor, vol. 11)
   Creating a peaceful school learning environment: The impact of an anti-bullying program on educational attainment in elementary school.

How to address bullying in schools?

Bullying Interventions in Schools:
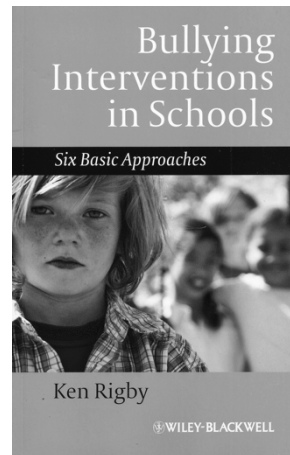## Six Basic Approaches (Rigby, 2010)

Traditional Disciplinary Approaches

Restorative Practices

Mediation

Strengthening the Victim

Support Group Method

Method of Shared Concern

Bullying Interventions in Schools

Six Basic Approaches

Ken Rigby

WILEY-BLACKWELL

Children who bully….

Formative Consequences
for Children Who Bully

- Find alternatives to detentions/suspensions
  - Work the first time or not at all

- Direct and immediate consequences are necessary, but what kind?
  - Provide clear message that what they are doing **is bullying** and **is unacceptable**
    - Quick, immediate, no-nonsense talks work better than long lectures
  - Build awareness skills, empathy, and insights
    - Inductive, other-centered discipline to increase empathy
  - Counter/Discuss morally disengaged reasoning
  - Provide youth with alternatives to bullying
    - Re-channel bullies into socially appropriate leadership & responsibility
    - Make students responsible & accountable for their behavior

---

Helping students become responsible for their behaviour

- School-based community service

- Restorative vs Punitive Discipline Practices
  - Restorative Justice
  - Restitution Self-Discipline (Diane Gossens)

Punitive versus Restorative Discipline
(Conversation Peace, Fraser Community Justice Initiatives, 2006)

Punitive Discipline:	Restorative Practices:
Focus is on punishment	Focus is on accountability, healing, reparation
Harm is defined in terms of broken rules and guilt	Harm is defined in terms of people hurt and relationships damaged
Justice = proving who is right and who is wrong; achieved when those found guilty are punished	Justice = understanding, dialogue and reparation, achieved when people take responsibility for their actions, relationships are healed and harm repaired
Action directed by authorities to person who caused harm	Action is determined by all parties together

---

Restitution Self-Discipline

Diane Gossen
Saskatoon,
Saskatchewan

Children who are victimized….

Providing safety and support for Victims:
Take an active role

- "Be There"
  - School staff are present/available in hallways and on school grounds
    - Make direct contact with students
    - Get to know all the students
    - Diffuse situations before they escalate
- "Safe Havens"
  - Schools provide safe setting in free periods for victimized students
  - Schools provide surveillance and monitor "hotspots" (which can shift)
  - Williing to help a child re-locate to a new school if efforts fail
- Support all children in developing positive connections with peers
  - Social Emotional Learning initiatives (see casel.org)
- "Adopt a Student" and "Be a Hero" initiatives
- Assertiveness Training (e.g. see safeteen.ca)
- Help victimized children to cope

Children who witness....

The critical role of the "bystander"

Craig & Pepler: Peer solutions

Peers were witnesses in 85% of bullying incidents:

- they only spent 25% of their time helping the victim.
- they only intervened in 19% of bullying episodes (adults intervened in only 4% of incidents)
- most peer interventions (57%) were effective in stopping bullying within 10 seconds.

Age Changes in Bystander Responses
(Trach, Hymel, Waterhouse & Prevost, 2010)

As students got older, they were LESS LIKELY TO
- Talk to an adult about the bullying
- Help the victim
- Tell the bully to stop
- Get their friends to help solve the problem (boys only)

As students got older they were MORE LIKELY TO
- Get friends to get back at the bully
- Walk away
- Stay home from school
- Ignore or avoid the bully (boys only)
- More likely to talk to another student about the bullying (girls only)
- More likely to do nothing

BYSTANDER HELPLESSNESS

It's okay to report bullying to school authorities.   **70-82% yes**

It is my responsibility to do something
when I see bullying.   **45-72% yes**

If you tell on a bully, people will think
you are a "tattle tale" or loser.   **58-86% yes**

Kids who tell on bullies are often the next victims.   **76-87% yes**

Across schools….
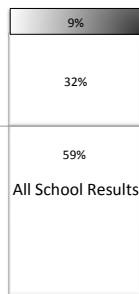> **20-36% agree that it is "better not to get involved."**
> **26-38% believe that there is "nothing I can do to stop it".**
> **28-33% admit that they are "too frightened to intervene."**
> **51-67% agree that they are "just glad it's not me".**

Collective Efficacy about Peer Help
(School Climate Study - Smith, Hymel & Schneider, 2008-11)

9% HIGH

32% MEDIUM

59% LOW

All School Results

Examples:
How often most students in their school would help out or intervene…

 "…when a student is making fun of or teasing another student who is obviously weaker"

"…when a student or group of students is pushing, shoving, or trying to pick a fight with a weaker student"

Enhancing Bystander Participation:
Some new approaches

Anatol Pikas' Method of Shared Concern, Australia
   Adult-facilitated efforts to bring all participants together to change the situation

Ishu Ishiyama's Anti-Discrimination Response Training (ART) -
   Helping students to become "active witnesses"

Lisa Dixon Wells & Dwayne Peace, Dare to Care , Alberta
   www.daretocare.ca
   Take the Time: An anti-bullying program that empowers youth to change their own school climate

Are we asking too much of bystanders?

W alk Away
I gnore
T alk it Out
S eek Help

www.witsprogram.ca

Anti-bullying Resources

DO ANTI-BULLYING
INTERVENTIONS WORK?

Evidence-Based Practice

❑ Selecting Interventions that have been proven effective

Different interventions can yield similar results (Rigby, 2005)

- Norway Intervention
  Olweus program emphasizing discipline, rules, consequences, and sanctions

- Finland Intervention
  Salmivalli et al. program emphasizing problem-solving methods and whole-group approach

Both report 42% reduction in victimization

Evidence-Based Practice

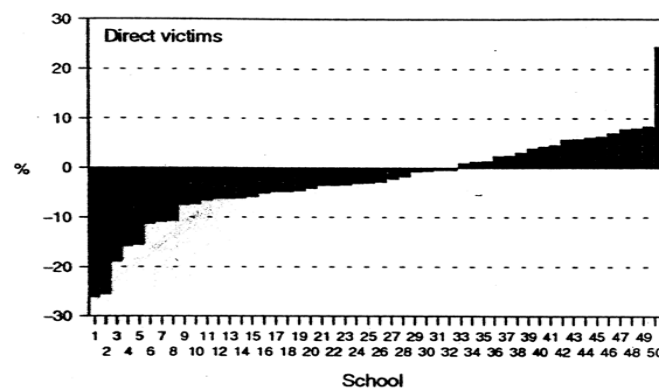❑ **Selecting Interventions that have been proven effective**

But ...

proven effectiveness elsewhere is no guarantee of success

(e.g., Smith, Schneider, Smith & Anadiadou, 2004)

Reported variations in outcomes between schools for the Schleswig Holstein Program (Hanewinkel 2004)

Hanewinkel

Fig. 5.1 Changes in low-level direct victimisation, for individual schools, from pre-test to post-test.

Evidence-Based Practice

Selecting Interventions that have been proven effective

BUT…proven success is no guarantee

SO… need to evaluate whether or not our efforts are effective

AND……don't want to discourage new approaches

CANDADIAN INITIATIVES: Some Examples

Alberta:
   Lisa Dixon-Wells & Dwayne Peace's *Dare to Care*
Saskatchewan:
   Diane Gossen's *Restitution Self Discipline*
Ontario:
   Mary Gordon's *Roots of Empathy*
Quebec:
   Mrs. Twinkle Rudberg's *Leave Out ViolencE* (L.O.V.E.)
British Columbia:
   Anita Robert's *Safeteen*
   Ishu Ishiyama's *Anti-Discrimination Response Training* (A.R.T.)
   Bonnie Leadbeater's *W.I.T.S. program*

Bullying as part of social emotional learning
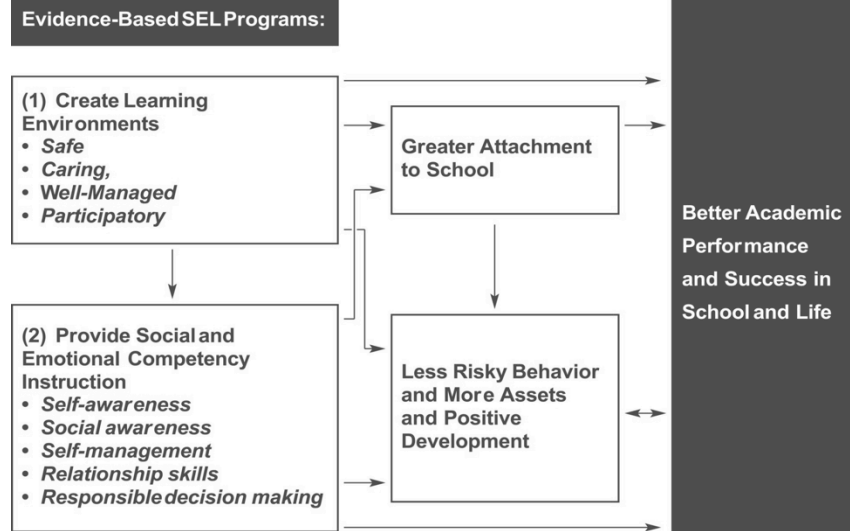

Social-Emotional Learning as a Foundation

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning

www.casel.org

MISSION:

To establish evidence-based social and emotional learning as an essential part of education from preschool through high school.
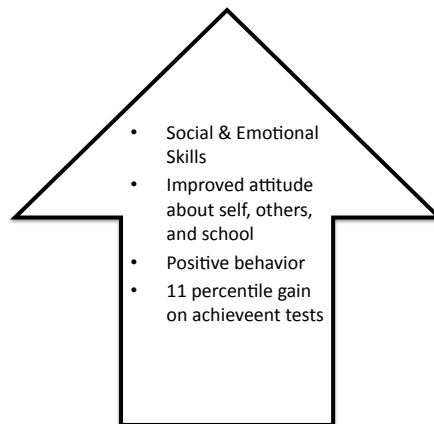
A Model for Student Success

Evidence-Based SEL Programs:

(1) Create Learning Environments
- *Safe*
- *Caring,*
- *Well-Managed*
- *Participatory*

(2) Provide Social and Emotional Competency Instruction
- *Self-awareness*
- *Social awareness*
- *Self-management*
- *Relationship skills*
- *Responsible decision making*

Greater Attachment to School

Less Risky Behavior and More Assets and Positive Development

Better Academic Performance and Success in School and Life

Social & Emotional Learning Core Competencies

SELF-MANAGEMENT
Managing emotions and behaviors to achieve one's goals

SELF-AWARENESS
Recognizing one's emotions and values as well as one's strengths and limitations

SOCIAL AWARENESS
Showing understanding and empathy for others

RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING
Making ethical, constructive choices about personal and social behavior

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS
Forming positive relationships, working in teams, dealing effectively with conflict

Social & Emotional Learning

Source: Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development*, *82,* 474-501.
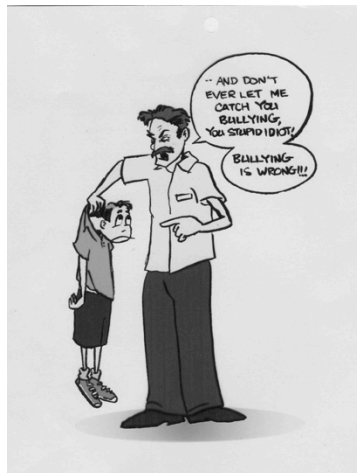
STUDENT GAINS

- Social & Emotional Skills
- Improved attitude about self, others, and school
- Positive behavior
- 11 percentile gain on achieveent tests

REDUCED RISKS FOR FAILURE

- Conduct problems
- Aggressive behavior
- Emotional distress

THE ROLE OF ADULTS

- Serious self-reflection:
  Do we model bullying for our children?

- Lessons from resiliency research…
  …..One adult can make a difference

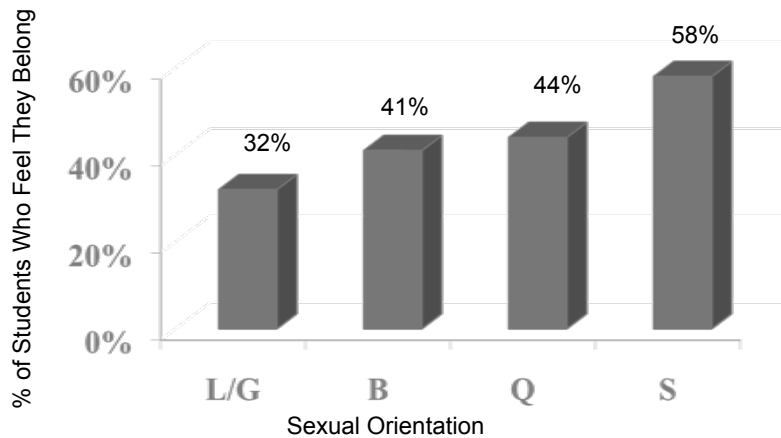**"Every child requires someone in his or her life who is absolutely crazy about them."**

- *Urie Bronfenbrenner*
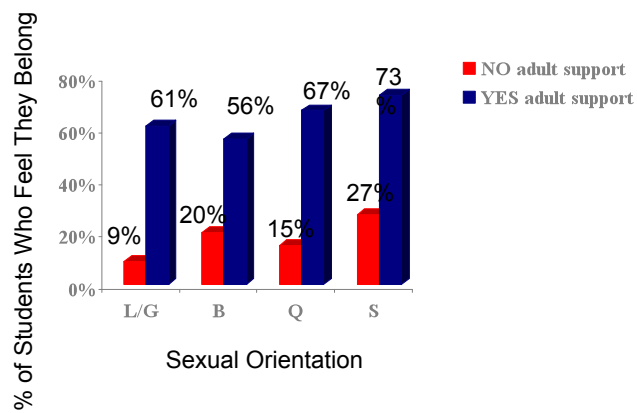
Teacher-Student Relationships Matter
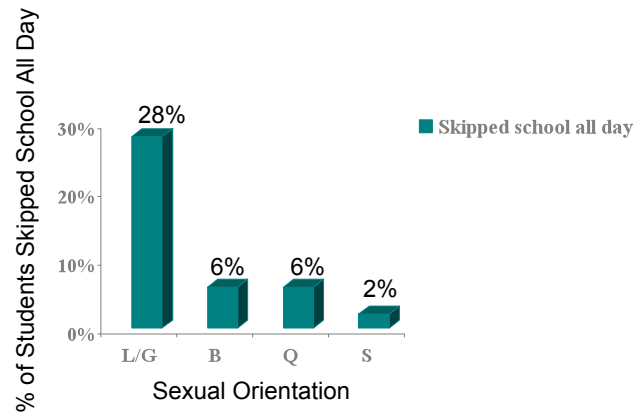
Significant Adults at School and Adjustment
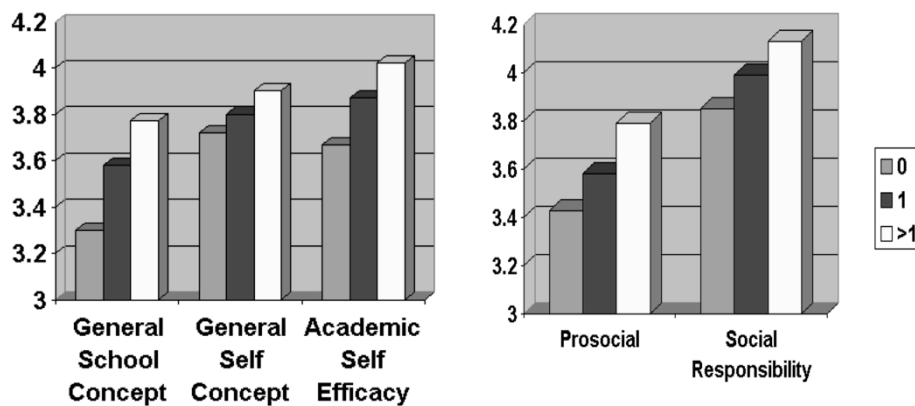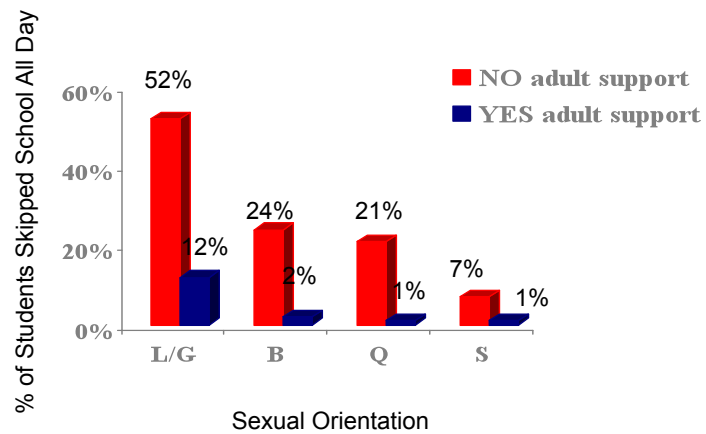
**School Belonging
(Agree/Strongly Agree)**

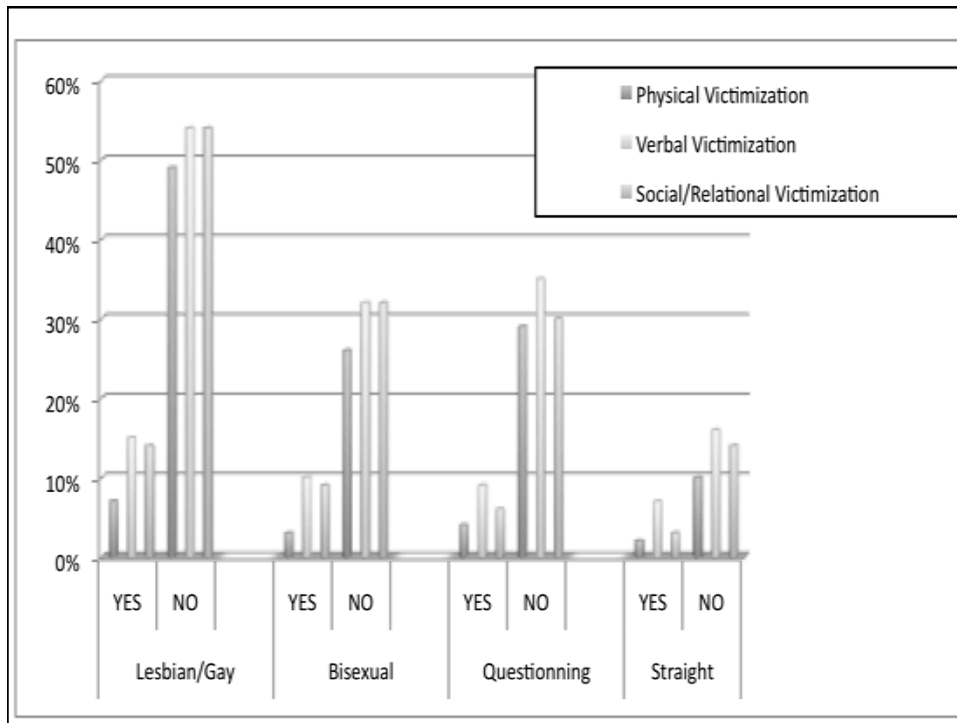**Adult Support and
Student Sense of School Belonging**

**Skipping School All Day
More than Once a Week**

**Adult Support and Skipping School
(More than Once a Week)**

In conclusion, there is no conclusion to what children who are bullied live with.

They take it home with them at night. It lives inside them and eats away at them.

It never ends. So neither should our struggle to end it.

Sarah, age 17