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The Effectiveness of a Classroom-Based Intervention for Social Aggression

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The Effectiveness of a Classroom-Based Intervention for Social Aggression

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Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Texas at Austin

August 2007

Dedication

To my husband and my parents for all their support.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge Daniel Hoard and recognize the invaluable support and collaboration he provided during this process. I would also like to acknowledge all the students who helped us collect data and facilitate the intervention groups. Special thanks to Sarah Ricord Griesemer, Shanna Reeves, and Puja Patel.

The Effectiveness of a Classroom-Based Intervention for Social Aggression

Publication No._____

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2007

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This study sought to determine if a six session classroom intervention coupled with a teacher education program was sufficient to alter behaviors related to socially aggressive behaviors of fourth grade students. The treatment manual for this intervention was developed by Pamela McDonald Schaber and Daniel Hoard (Schaber and Hoard, 2006), following a review of the literature on ecological intervention for overt and social/relational aggression. The objectives of the intervention were to reduce aggressive behaviors through an ecological approach by: 1) educating students on types of bullying (physical and social), the role of the bystander in contributing to bullying, and the consequences for individuals and the classroom environment when bullying occurs; 2) challenging sympathetic attitudes about the appropriateness of bullying; 3) providing students with strategies for intervening when they observe bullying; 4) modeling bystander interventions; 5) giving students an opportunity to practice bystander interventions; and 6) empowering classrooms to develop a code of conduct for working together to reduce bullying.   Participants were 71 fourth grade students from a Central Texas elementary school. Participants completed the Social Experiences Questionnaire –

peer-report which is a peer-rating measure of their classmates' frequency of social aggression and prosocial behavior. They also completed the Participant Roles Questionnaire – self-report to determine how often they engaged in the different roles associated with bullying (i.e., bully, defender, assistant…). The main findings were that social aggression decreased for boys but not girls, and bully behavior decreased for both boys and girls. Unexpected findings were that prosocial behavior decreased from pre-test to post-test, and there were no changes evidenced in defender, assistant, and reinforcer behaviors. Implications and limitations for the findings are provided.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Bullying is an international problem that occurs in every country for both boys and girls (Bosworth, Espelage, & Simon, 1999; Eslea, Menesini, Morita, O'Moore, Mora-Merchan, Pereira, & Smith, 2004; Smith, 2004). Across the world, children feel unsafe in their schools due to bullying. Bullying negatively affects the school climate and children's ability to learn (Bosworth et. al., 1999).   In the United States there are varying estimates of bullying behavior ranging from 10% to 75% with the most common rate around 25% (Griffin & Gross, 2003; Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton, & Scheidt, 2001; Swearer & Cary, 2003). In the average American classroom, 3 in 20 students are either bullies or victims (Crockett, 2003) with 85% of students participating as bystanders (Elsea et. al., 2004; Hawkins, Peplar, & Craig, 2001). One study looking at bullying behavior using a stratified random sample of all middle schools in the United States both private and public, estimated the number of students involved in moderate rates of bullying to be 2,027,254 and the number of students involved in frequent bullying to be 1,681,030 (Nansel et. al., 2001).

Bullying has been inconsistently defined over the years and throughout the various countries that participate in research on bullying (Griffin & Gross, 2003). Despite the various definitions, there are five features of bullying on which researchers agree: 1. The bully's intent is to cause harm or instill fear in the victim; 2. Bullies generally target the same victims repeatedly; 3. The victim does nothing to outwardly provoke the bully; 4. Bullying occurs in social groups within the social context; and 5.

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Bullying involves a power differential where the victim has less perceived power (Griffin & Gross, 2003).

Children participating in bullying behavior, both the perpetrator and victim alike, suffer many negative effects. Victims and bullies have poorer psychosocial functioning than their non-involved peers (Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000; Kumpulainen, Rasanen, & Henttonen, 1999; Nansel et. al., 2001). Specifically, bullies have been found to have higher conduct problems (Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000; Nansel et. al., 2001), like school less (Nansel, et. al., 2001), have more alcohol use and poorer academic achievement (Nansel et. al., 2001). They also have been shown to lack empathy (Carney & Merrell, 2001) and have high rates of depression (Bosworth, 1999). Compared to their peers, victims are more insecure, lonely (Kristensen & Smith, 2004; Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000; Nansel et. al., 2001), have fewer friends (Carney & Merrell, 2001), are more anxious (Kristensen & Smith, 2004; Nansel, et. al., 2001; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003), more depressed (Nansel, et.al., 2001; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003; Seals & Young, 2003), have a lower self-esteem (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Kristensen & Smith, 2004; Nansel, et. al., 2001; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003), are more immature and can develop externalizing problems (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003), and have poor communication and problem solving skills (Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000). Victimization can become so painful that children contemplate or commit suicide (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). Children who are both bullies and victims have the poorest psychosocial functioning of all their peers resulting in similar more magnified concerns (Nansel, et. al., 2001). Negative effects for bully/victims include conduct problems, poorer academic achievement, poorer

relationships with peers, loneliness, (Nansel, et. al., 2001), and low self-esteem (Androue, 2001). Effects also carry into adulthood. Victims are more likely to be depressed and have interpersonal problems while bullies are more likely to continue their bullying behavior often leading to criminal adult behavior (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Kumpluainen & Rasanen, 2000).

Interventions for bullying behavior have been implemented world wide with mixed results (Smith, 2004; Smith & Ananiadou, 2003). The most successful anti-bullying program has been the Bergen Anti-Bullying Project in Norway implemented by Olweus (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003; Stevens, De Bourdeaudhuij, & Van Oost, 2001). The Bergen program was implemented nation-wide and resulted in up to a 50% reduction in the rate of children bullied and who bully others (Stevens et. al., 2001). Specifically, children were asked to rate themselves and the degree to which they engage in various bullying and victim behaviors. Intervention results demonstrated that children rated themselves as less likely to bully and less likely to be victimized after the intervention. Other programs have been modeled after the Bergen program, but have not experienced the same degree of success (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003). Reasons for the modest success rate in most interventions include but are not limited to the following: 1. Interventions need to address multiple system levels, 2. Interventions need to procure a high level of school investment, 3. Interventions fail to maintain change over time, 4. Interventions need to raise students' awareness of bullying, 5. Interventions typically target physical aggression and not social aggression, 6. Interventions are more successful in primary

schools over secondary, and 7. Interventions need to target not only children involved in bullying but bystanders as well (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003).

One particular point of interest is point number five, that interventions rarely, if ever target social aggression (Underwood, 2003). Specifically defined, social aggression is direct or indirect behaviors involving relationship manipulation, spreading rumors, and social exclusion with the intent to harm others by harming their social relationships, peer status, and friendships (Underwood, 2003). The definition of social aggression evolved out of simultaneous tracks of research investigating indirect aggression and relational aggression. Indirect aggression commonly refers to covert behaviors such as social exclusion (Feshbach, 1969; Feshbach & Sones, 1971) whereas relational aggression often refers to spreading rumors and embarrassing another in social situations (Griffin & Gross, 2003). Underwood (2003) then combined these two terms and labeled indirect and relationally aggressive behaviors as social aggression.

Social aggression has as many negative effects as bullying behavior. Studies have demonstrated that boy and girl victims of social aggression experience increased loneliness and depression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Underwood, 2003) low-self esteem (Prinstein, Boergers, & Vernberg, 2001), and poor self-concept (Paquette & Underwood, 1999). More specifically, social aggression seems to promote feelings of social anxiety, social avoidance, (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996) and social isolation (Underwood, 2003). In a qualitative study of adolescent girls, Owens, Slee, & Shute (2000c) found that girls in particular, suffer from overwhelming anxiety, depression, and loneliness when victims of social aggression. Social effects can be so severe that girls often will want to leave

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school or may even contemplate suicide (Owens, Shute, & Slee, 2000b). Girls can also experience fear, paranoia, irrational self-talk, low self-confidence, and overall psychological pain often resulting in overall low self-esteem (Owens et. al., 2000a; Owens et. al., 2000c). Girls who are involved in social aggression can also have increased externalizing symptoms (Owens et. al., 2000c & Prinstein et. al., 2001).

As with physically aggressive bullies, perpetrators of social aggression also experience negative side-effects. Studies have shown that both boy and girl perpetrators are usually classified as rejected by peers, are lonelier, are perceived as less pro-social, and are more depressed than their peers (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Underwood, 2003). One study found that when girls use relational and overt aggression they were more likely to develop externalizing symptoms in general, and Oppositional Defiant Disorder or Conduct Disorder in particular (Prinstein et. al., 2001). It should be noted that if children can find a successful balance between using social aggression and pro-social tendencies, they can often be perceived as popular by their peers and seem to be protected from developing undesirable emotional/behavioral outcomes (Hawley, 2003; Xie, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002). Popular bullies are just now gaining the interest of the research community and much is to still be learned about their behavior and how frequently they occur in the peer culture.

Considering the negative effects of social aggression, interventions need to address not only the physical aspects of bullying, but also the social aspects of bullying, especially considering the prominent use of social aggression. Social aggression is deeply embedded in peer culture and is often used to control and manage hierarchies

within the peer culture (Xie, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002a). Children throughout all levels of status engage in socially aggressive behaviors and the role of bystander becomes critical for its propagation. Social aggression is a group behavior and cannot occur without support from an audience. Because of its group nature, intervening at all levels of the peer culture becomes critical. Ecological interventions that include bystanders as well as bullies and victims are necessary to fully address the complex social nature of social aggression (Carney & Merrell, 2001). By intervening with bystanders, the very systems that support socially aggressive behavior can be undermined so that bullies who use social aggression have lost their support hence making socially aggressive behaviors powerless (Vaillancourt, Hymel, & McDougall, 2003). Additionally, in keeping with an ecological focus, it will be important to change the systems in which peer cultures exist, the classroom and the school. Teacher support should be enlisted in an intervention to help support and enforce positive peer culture changes (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). Schools can help to create environments where socially aggressive behavior is not tolerated or supported and where there is a system in place that outlines how to effectively handle socially aggressive acts (Vernberg & Gamm, 2003).

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a systemic, ecological intervention program specifically targeted at socially aggressive behaviors in young boys and girls. A systemic focus was maintained by targeting children actively involved in bullying, and by targeting bystanders as well. Bullying occurs within the social context of children and is part of children's group dynamic (Eslea et. al., 2003; Moutappa, Valente, Gallaher, Rohrbach, & Unger, 2004; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003;

Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). By intervening at the whole classroom level, and focusing on the social milieu, group dynamics and behavioral interaction styles could change to reflect more pro-social attitudes and less socially aggressive behaviors (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow, 2000).

In addition, the intervention actively included teachers by requiring that teachers were present for intervention sessions. By being present, teachers were able to learn effective strategies for intervention and learn the importance of intervening with social aggression and other aggressive behaviors. Teachers are part of the classroom ecology and will likely continue to be important figures for maintaining and enforcing change within the classroom. At the end of the intervention, each classroom was asked to come up with a no tolerance policy for any bullying (socially and physically aggressive behaviors). The entire fourth-grade classroom, students and teachers alike, will work together to enforce and follow the policy; serving as a model for other grades within their school.

To further improve the chances of an efficacious intervention, fourth-grade classrooms were targeted for the whole-classroom intervention. Research studying the developmental trajectory of social aggression indicates that as children age, they become more socially aggressive (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992; Underwood, 2003). It is thought that socially aggressive behaviors rapidly increase in pre-adolescence usually during the transition between elementary school and middle school. Then in middle school, socially aggressive behaviors level out and become stable over time (Borg, 1999; Smith & Ananiadou, 2003; Smith, Madsen, & Moody, 1999). Because of

this rapid escalation in pre-adolescence, it was hypothesized that early intervention would

decrease the normal escalation of socially aggressive behavior by a marked degree.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will first review how the construct of bullying evolved from being included as a subset of the construct of aggression to a separate category of behavior with varying degrees and types of behavior as well as the different roles assumed in bullying. Following this discussion, the emergence of social aggression is discussed and reviewed. How bullying manifests within the social context is next discussed and theories explaining how bullying is maintained are explored. Then, the types of interventions that have been used in the past will be discussed and a social-ecological framework for bullying will be proposed as an ideal model for intervention. Lastly, the intervention for this study will be proposed.

<u>Historical Development of the Construct of Bullying</u>

<u>The Birth of a New Construct: Bullying</u>

Aggression in youth has been a dominant topic in the research literature on children. The beginning point for the plethora of studies examining youth aggression seemingly started as a byproduct of the creation of juvenile court, which was created at the beginning of the twentieth century (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow, 2000). Once a special court was designated to examine juvenile acts of delinquency, psychologists were called in to assess why these youths were engaging in such anti-social acts. Psychologists then started to become interested in how delinquency developed and how it was maintained. This interest waned during 1910-1942, but then in the 1950's delinquency rose at a rapid rate (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow, 2000), leading to increased resolve in determining how best

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to intervene with such anti-social behavior. Since then, the study of the aggression associated with antisocial behavior, conduct disorders, and oppositional defiant disorders, has resulted in a large body of theoretical, intervention, and prevention research (see Domitrovich & Welsh, 2000; Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow, 2000).

Out of this large body of work, the construct of bullying emerged and was further established with the publication of Olweus's book written in 1978, *Aggression in schools: bullies and whipping boys*, which many consider to be the inception of bullying research (Smith, 2004). Following the publication of Olweus's book more researchers became interested in bullying and began studying how bullying develops, how it impacts involved children, and how to best intervene and prevent bullying. The study of bullying quickly mushroomed and developed into a distinctive body of literature apart from aggression (Griffin & Gross, 2003).

To understand how bullying evolved into a separate body of research, it is helpful to consider the different definitions commonly found under the umbrella of aggression: reactive aggression, proactive aggression, relational aggression, and overt aggression (Griffin & Gross, 2003). Reactive aggression is defined as an immediate and defensive reaction to a perceived threat. Proactive aggression is defined as aggression that is unprovoked and generally used to accomplish a goal. There are then two types of proactive aggression: instrumental and bullying. Instrumental aggression is goal directed aggression aimed at obtaining an object while bullying is goal directed aggression aimed at coercing or dominating another individual. Overt aggression is considered to include behaviors that are openly confrontational and usually include threats and physical attacks.

Relational aggression includes behaviors not directly aimed at the victim, but instead behaviors such as social exclusion, spreading rumors, and embarrassing others in a social setting. (Griffin & Gross, 2003)

From Griffin and Gross's review of the literature, bullying is most commonly thought of as a type of proactive aggression. If bullying is thought to be a subtype of proactive aggression which is a subtype of aggression, then the extent to which bullying can be understood and defined is limited. Only considering bullying as a proactive form of aggression, provides a narrow lens with which to examine a very complex behavior. In response to this narrow view of bullying, researchers have recently started examining the extent to which bullying takes on the form of other types of aggression, specifically, reactive aggression.

In order to clearly understand how bullying can also be seen as a reactively aggressive behavior, it is important to review how proactive and reactive aggression has been treated in the literature. When research on childhood aggression began, researchers considered aggression to be a homogenous construct with uni-dimensional features (Kempes, Matthys, de Vries, & Van Engeland, 2005). At that time, theorists argued that aggression was either a frustrated response (reactive aggression) or a socially learned behavior (proactive aggression). These two theories were thought to be competing, but over time researchers have come to a consensus that both theories are valid, and there are two separate types of aggression, reactive and proactive aggression.

Once reactive and proactive aggression earned their separate places in the literature, researchers began examining the two constructs more closely. Specifically,

Crick & Dodge (1996) developed a model, called the social information processing model, which helped explain how the two separate behaviors might develop. The social information processing model posits that there are five mental processing stages that children undergo when faced with a social stimulus: 1) Children focus their attention on the stimulus and begin to encode the information, 2) Once children encode the social information, they make attributions regarding the motivation of the individual(s) they are interacting with, 3) Next they generate a list of possible response behaviors, 4) From this list, they quickly evaluate the consequences of each possible response, and 5) Finally, they enact the behavior they selected which presumably will have the most favorable consequence. Crick & Dodge (1996) hypothesized that errors could be made at any one of these five stages, and concluded that whether or not an individual is reactively or proactively aggressive depends on which stage the error occurs.

For reactive aggression, the error occurs in one or both of the first two stages, encoding and assigning attributions (Dodge & Coie, 1987; Kempes et. al., 2005). Studies have shown that reactively aggressive children falsely encode social information. They perceive ambiguous stimuli as threatening, causing them to make hostile attributions for relatively benign behaviors (Crick & Dodge, 1996; Dodge & Coie 1987). Hostile attributions then lead to aggressive responses which usually initiate a response from the stimulus thus confirming the aggressive child's false assumption that the stimulus was hostile. Aggressive children are then caught in a negative cycle of aggressive response serving to alienate their peers and leading to peer rejection, indicating that reactive aggression is characteristic of weak, victimized children (Dodge & Coie, 1987).

For proactive aggression, the error occurs in the last three steps, response generation, evaluation, and selection (Dodge & Coie, 1987; Kempes et. al., 2005). Proactively aggressive children have difficulty selecting appropriate responses and instead they often choose to honor instrumental goals over relational goals. In other words, they value meeting their own needs even if the relationship is sacrificed. In young children, proactively aggressive behaviors do not lead to peer rejection and victimization, instead, young children, seem to hold proactively aggressive peers in high regard and seek to imitate them (Hawley, 1999; Kempes et. al., 2005). In later childhood, though, proactively aggressive peers become less favored and peers begin to react negatively to proactively aggressive behaviors (Hawley, 1999; Kempes et. al., 2005).

The study of these two separate constructs, reactive and proactive aggression, and the understanding of their development in children (i.e., social information processing model), has led researchers to conclude that reactive aggression is more characteristic of victims of bullying while proactive aggression is more characteristic of bullies. This narrow view of bullying and victimization persisted in the literature until recently when other explanations for aggressive, bullying behaviors began to emerge. Specifically, researchers began challenging the idea that social information processing deficits were the sole cause of bullying behaviors and argued that another theory, Theory of Mind, might be responsible for the development of aggressive and bullying behaviors as well (Arsenio & Lemerise, 2001).

Theory of Mind is defined as an individual's ability to understand another's point of view and anticipate the needs of others (Arsenio & Lemerise, 2001). In the context of

bullying, Arsenio & Lemerise (2001) posited that bullying is not solely due to errors in information processing and that bullies can have Theory of Mind. Bullies can be socially adept and have well-developed social cognitive skills. It may be that some children have a greater understanding of what others are thinking and feeling, and they can then use their superior knowledge to manipulate their peers through bullying. Rather than making unconscious errors, these socially skilled peers may have different goals and may be deliberately choosing aggressive responses because aggression has been useful in goal attainment in the past.

Once aggressive, bullying behavior is considered as a complex goal-directed behavior that is a result of deliberation and past success rather than solely an error in social information processing, it becomes clearer that bullying is a complex behavior that cannot be fully understood as a subtype of proactive aggression. Instead, bullies may use any number of aggressive responses (i.e., proactive, reactive, relational, or overt) to meet their social goals. With this understanding, reactive aggression may not be an unconscious response to a perceived threat, but rather a calculated defensive move to maintain social position. Relational aggression might be used to alienate a potential threat while overt aggression might be used to assert social dominance. How these specific types of behavior are used to obtain goals will be further explained when considering how bullying behavior manifests in peer culture.

Given the complex nature of bullying and how bullies might use aggression to meet their needs, bullying developed into a separate construct from aggression and could no longer be thought of as merely a subtype of aggressive behavior. Once the construct

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of bullying was established, research began examining the different roles in bullying, the development of bullying over time, the cause of bullying, and how best to prevent and intervene with bullying.

<u>Different Roles Involved in Bullying</u>

    <u>Bullies.</u> The different roles of bullying are: bully, victim, bully/victim, and bystander. Children who are considered bullies are children who consistently bully their peers during interactions. Research on bullies has indicated that there are most likely different types of bullies (Camodeca, Goossens, Terwogt, & Schuengel, 2002; Salmivalli & Nieminen, 2002). In the past, it was thought that bullies have an aggressive personality and can either aggress against another person without provocation (proactive aggression) or can react to a threat with aggression (reactive aggression).   Recent research has started to look at which behavior is more predominant and results indicate that there is a group of bullies who use only proactive aggression, bullies who use only reactive aggression, and bullies who use both (Camodeca et. al., 2002; Salmivalli & Nieminen, 2002).

    In general, bullies have poorer psychosocial functioning than their non-involved peers (Bosworth et. al., 1999; Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000; Nansel et. al., 2001). They often have higher levels of conduct problems and are more likely to abuse alcohol and smoke cigarettes (Griffin & Gross, 2003; Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000; Nansel et. al., 2001). Bullies are usually more aggressive and have more positive attitudes toward violence (Androue, 2001; Kristensen & Smith, 2004). Bullies often have distinct school functioning as well. They are less likely to like school, generally have poorer academic

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achievement, and poorer views of the school climate (Nansel et. al., 2001). Bullies can also be perceived as more hyperactive (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000), but it appears that only the "rejected" bully is perceived this way (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003).

Bullies have a distinct interpersonal style as well. They are often domineering (Carney & Merrell, 2001) and can be Machiavellian (Sutton & Keogh, 2000). Sutton & Keogh (2000) studied personality characteristics of bullies and found that bullies are more likely to have psychotic and extraverted personality styles. Psychotic personality styles are characterized by tendencies to be loners and to be insensitive and hostile toward others (Miro & Martinez, 2005). Extraverted personality styles often include impulsive and sociable behaviors (Levine & Jackson, 2004). Bullies also use coercive behaviors in friendship groups and often lack empathy for their victims (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Studies have indicated that high status bullies often have high social intelligence which makes it easier for them to manipulate and coerce their peers (Carney & Merrell, 2001).

Despite these undesirable qualities, bullies are still more likely to have higher self-esteem (Seals & Young, 2003), although, this is a mixed finding in the literature and could be due to the status of the bully. If the bully has high status in the peer group, they may be more likely to have a higher self-esteem, whereas, if bullies are low status, they may suffer from low self-esteem (Seals & Young, 2003). In pro-bullying peer cultures, bullying can have few social consequences (Eslea et. al., 2004).

Victims. Children who find themselves frequently victimized by bullies are often passive and submissive (Olweus, 1994); however some victims are also aggressive. Salmivalli's & Nieminen's (2002) research indicates that sometimes victims use reactive aggression against their aggressor. It appears then that there are two types of victims, submissive victims and provocative victims (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Hanish & Guerra, 2004). Submissive victims are the children who react to bullying behavior with insecurity, anxiety, and withdrawal. These children are the victims that are seen as passive and submissive. Provocative victims are the children who are more likely to use reactive aggression and respond to their aggressor by using aggressive behaviors.

Despite the type of victim, provocative or submissive, victims often feel helpless and lose self-respect (Carney & Merrell, 2001). In addition, victims have the lowest peer status of all the roles (Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, Kaukiainen, et. al, 1996). Research indicates that they are often socially rejected, have low social acceptance, and are often classified as having rejected peer status (Androue, 2001; Salmivalli et. al, 1996). Their low social status and tormented existence can lead to school drop-out (Carney & Merrell, 2001). In extreme cases, victimized children can carry out extreme acts of retribution or may attempt suicide (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003).

Victims suffer from psychosocial effects as well often feeling depressed, lonely, and having low self-concepts (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Griffin & Gross, 2003; Kristensen & Smith, 2004; Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000; Nansel et. al., 2001). They may have few friends to provide social support (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Eslea et. al.,

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2004; Griffin & Gross, 2003; Kristensen & Smith, 2004). These negative effects can follow them into adulthood leading to impaired interpersonal and psychosexual functioning (Carney & Merrell, 2001).

Interpersonally, victims have difficulty managing confrontation and are often more aggressive than non-involved peers (Champion, Vernberg, & Shipman, 2004). Some victims (provocative type) choose aggression as their first response and often will interpret ambiguous situations as threatening (Champion et. al., 2004). Victims are more often than not "weaker" peers (Carney & Merrell, 2001). They may have a disability, be overweight, or be awkward in some way (Glover, Gough, Johnson, & Cartwright, 2000). They also tend to have poor social skills (Eslea et. al., 2004), be less assertive, and less extroverted (Androue, 2001). In addition, they tend to have poorer communication and problem solving skills (Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000). To compound matters, victims have an internalized coping style (Androue, 2001). They are less likely to retaliate (at least some victims) and are less likely to discuss their problems (Griffin & Gross, 2003).

Bully/Victims. Children who function in the role of bully-victim are the most uncommon (Boulton & Smith, 1994; Salmivalli et. al., 1996). Bully/victims are children that are sometimes bullies and sometimes victims. These children are the most aggressive children and tend to use both proactive and reactive aggression. As a result then tend to have the poorest psychosocial functioning out of all the roles (Nansel et. al., 2001; Wolke, Woods, Bloomfield, & Karstadt, 2000). Like bullies, they have higher rates of conduct problems (Nansel et. al., 2001). In school they have poor academic achievement and tend to like school less than non-involved peers (Nansel et. al., 2001).

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In general, they tend to be the least liked children at school and often elicit negative reactions, resulting in fewer friendships, if any (Griffin & Gross, 2003).

In addition to externalizing problems, bully/victims also have internalizing difficulties. They have the lowest self-esteem of all the roles and they tend to feel lonely and isolated (Androue, 2001; Nansel et. al., 2001; Seals & Young, 2003). They are often anxious and aggressive and are at highest risk for behavior problems (Kristensen & Smith, 2004). These children can be overly hyperactive and annoying (Griffin & Gross, 2003). These problems have been shown to persist into adulthood (Kumpulainen & Rasanen, 2000).

Interpersonally, bully/victims have neurotic and psychotic tendencies (Androue, 2001; Kristensen & Smith, 2004). Like bullies, they also score high on Machiavellism, yet instead of working in their favor, they often are not socially accepted (Androue, 2001). Bully/victims use externalizing coping strategies and demonstrate poor problem solving abilities (Androue, 2001). They often interrupt others, do not follow social rules, and can be challenging to interact with, increasing the likelihood that over time they will be less liked and more at risk for bullying (Griffin & Gross, 2003).

Bystanders. The final role is the bystander role. Bystanders are children who provide the audience for bullying episodes. Salmivalli (1996) argues that there are different types of bystander roles surrounding bullying. Specifically, Salmivalli added reinforcer, defender, assistant, and outsider to the traditional roles of bully and victim. The reinforcer supports the bullying by providing an audience for the bully. Audience members can be active (i.e., laugh) or passive (i.e., observe). Assistants are active

participants in bullying, but usually follow the bully rather than initiate bullying on their own. These children are usually friends with the bully and they help aide the bully and protect the bully. The defender actively defends the victim, stepping in and attempting to intervene with the bullying behavior. The outsider does nothing and tries to stay away from bullying situations.

Despite the participant role assumed, bystanders are still involved in the bullying process even if they are not actively participating in the victimization process (Salmivalli et. al., 1996). They are still contributing to the initiation and continuation of the bullying process through their awareness. It is even possible for children to contribute through ignoring. The bully may perceive ignoring as a silent form of acceptance, effectively reinforcing the behavior. Bullying also has negative effects on the bystander. Bystanders often feel powerless and may lose self-respect for themselves for not intervening (Carney & Merrell, 2001).

How Do Girls Fit In: the Emergence of Social Aggression

Over the past twenty or so years of research on bullying behavior, there has been much debate on how and if both boys and girls bully. When researchers began studying aggression in children, they at first concentrated on physical forms of aggression believing that physical aggression was the most pervasive (Fry & Gabriel, 1994). With the focus mainly on physical aggression, it was first believed that boys were the main perpetrators and that girls were typically non-aggressive (Griffin & Gross, 2002; Nansel et. al., 2001; Seals & Young 2003). One study examining sex typed behavior and bullying found that femininity is negatively associated with bullying and masculinity is

positively associated with bullying (Young & Sweeting, 2004). Other studies have also found that boys are more likely to be in all of the roles (bully, bully/victim, and victim) involved in bullying (Kumpulainen, Rasanen, & Henttonen, 1999; Nansel et. al., 2001).

Recent research, however, has started to shift the idea that boys bully the most often, and has started to embrace the idea that girls might bully as well, but might do so in different ways. It largely depends on whether or not indirect and relational aggression is considered to be part of the bullying definition researchers use. With this recent shift, research has started to recognize that bullying takes on different, previously unrecognized forms, namely, indirect, relational, and social aggression. Indirect aggression was first introduced by Buss (1961) and then researchers later defined and studied it in children. In 1995, Crick and Grotpeter introduced the term, relational aggression. They have since developed a body of research on relational aggression in children. These two terms for aggression, indirect and relational, have maintained rather separate pathways in the literature and have rarely been combined together even though they both seem to be present in boys and girls. Then another term was introduced by Cairns, Cairns, Neckerman, Ferguson, & Gariepy (1989) called social aggression. Galen and Underwood (1997) further defined social aggression and found that it could be used as a more general term that encompassed both indirect and relational forms of aggression.

Indirect aggression. When indirect aggression was first defined, it was defined as verbally aggressive behaviors that are difficult to identify, meaning the perpetrator can go unrecognized by the victim. Buss (1961) noted that these behaviors can be quite useful, but difficult to operationalize and measure. Given these difficulties, researchers

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concentrated their efforts on the more easily identified concept of physical aggression (Underwood, 2003). Almost a decade later, Feshbach and Sones (1971) began researching indirect aggression in an attempt to define and later measure it in children. Through their research (Feshbach, 1969; Feshbach & Sones, 1971), they defined indirect aggression as an exclusionary behavior aimed at rejecting other children through subtle or indirect means. They found that girls were far more likely to use indirect aggression than boys and later hypothesized that indirect aggression could also include nonverbal behavior (e.g.,, ignoring), urging researchers to further study the matter.

After Feshbach and Sones (1971), the study of indirect aggression seemed to lull and it was not until the Finnish team including Lagerspetz and Bjorkqvist once again began researching indirect aggression that the term was once again evaluated (Underwood, 2003). Since then the Finnish team of researchers have accumulated a large body of research aimed at better understanding indirect aggression. They define indirect aggression as a behavior that is meant to harm through a circuitous route where the original perpetrator remains unidentified (Bjorkqvist, et. al, 1992; Bjorkqvist, 1994). The main pathway that perpetrators use appears to be social manipulation. It has been hypothesized that one reason indirect aggression might be more common in girls is because girls tend to organize in cliques (tight circles of friends) where boys' friendship groups tend to be less organized and defined (Bjorkqvist, et al., 1992; Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, & Peltonen, 1988; Galen & Underwood, 1997). Cross-cultural studies of indirect aggression indicate that indirect aggression occurs across cultures although at varying rates (Bjorkqvist 1994; Osterman et. al., 1994).

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The social manipulation involved in indirect aggression requires a certain level of verbal skill and intelligence and usually occurs more frequently in older children, peeking at age 11 (Bjorkqvist, et. al., 1992; Bjorkqvist, 1994; Kaukiainen et. al., 1999). Bjorkqvist et. al. (1992) proposed a developmental theory for aggression hypothesizing that aggression progresses from physical aggression, to direct aggression, to indirect. Bjorkqvist (1994) also suggested that the effect/danger ratio is the reason indirect aggression is so appealing. The effect/danger ratio is where a person seeks the behavior with the greatest effect and the least amount of danger. Indirect aggression appears to be the primary strategy for pre-adolescent girls (Cairns et. al., 1989). Empathy, however, can mitigate the use of indirect aggression. The more empathy present in an individual, the less likely that individual will resort to indirect aggression (Kaukiainen et. al., 1999).

As mentioned previously, studies have indicated that girls tend to use indirect aggression more than boys (Feshbach & Sones, 1971; Bjorkqvist et. al., 1992; Bjorkqvist, 1994); however, some studies have not found significant differences between boys and girls (Osterman et. al., 1994; Tapper & Boulton, 2004). Across studies, it seems that boys and girls use indirect aggression at the same rate until about the age of 11 when the use of indirect aggression peaks and girls start to use the strategy more often than boys.

One reason girls might resort to indirect aggression more than boys, is because it is an effective strategy for goal attainment. Several researchers had previously inferred that a main goal for girls is close group membership; therefore, the reason girls use indirect aggression is because it harms this main goal (Bjorkqvist, 1992; Lagerspetz, 1988). More specifically, Owens, Shute, and Slee (2000b), undertook a qualitative study

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to observe the motivations behind the use of indirect aggression. Owens et. al. (2000b) sought to confirm this hypothesis. In their qualitative results, they found several motivations for using indirect aggression: (a) Alleviating boredom/creating excitement, (b) Attention seeking, (c) Group inclusion, (d) Belonging to the right group, (e) Self-protection, (f) Jealousy, and (g) Revenge. Based on their research, there seems to be many different reasons girls choose to use indirect aggression against their peers.

Effects of indirect aggression have been less well-studied than the occurrence, but preliminary findings indicate that victims of indirect aggression can suffer from low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression (Owens, Slee, & Shute, 2000c). Victims seem to become stuck in a negative pattern of self-talk and can even begin to contemplate suicide (Owens et. al., 2000c).

Relational aggression. In the mid 1990's Crick introduced the term relational aggression to the research community. Since then a significant amount of research has been generated examining the occurrence of relational aggression in children. Relational aggression can be defined as behaviors that intentionally manipulate relationships in order to harm or damage peers' relationships with others (Crick, 1996; Crick, Bigbee, Howes, 1995; Grotpeter & Crick, 1996; Roecker, 2001; Xie, Swift, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002). An example of relational aggression is threatening friendship withdrawal or exclusion as a way to harm someone else (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Relational aggression seems to increase as children age becoming most predominant in pre-adolescence and early adolescence (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

At first glance, relational aggression appears to occur more frequently in girls than boys (Crick, 1996; Crick, Grotpeter, Bigbee, 2002; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Grotpeter & Crick 1996; Rys & Bear, 1997). Roecker (2001), however, found no consistent differences between boys and girls and the amount of relational aggression received. Tomada and Schneider (1997) in an attempt to test the cross-cultural validity of relational aggression found that while relational aggression does occur in Italian children, girls do not engage in relationally aggressive behaviors more often than boys. In fact, boys used relational aggression slightly more than girls. It is unclear why different samples have achieved different results, but the fact remains that relational aggression is occurring in both boys and girls.

More significant gender differences might lie in how relationally aggressive behaviors are perceived by both genders. Girls seem to perceive relational aggression as more harmful and damaging (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). In addition, while both boys and girls perceive relational aggression as a normative behavior for their age group, girls seem to see it as more normative than boys (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Girls also seem to find relational provocation more distressing than boys (Crick et. al., 2002). Research on friendship patterns of girls and boys indicates that girls prefer to be included in tighter social groups and have close friendships where boys seem to prefer a looser social structure (Bjorkqvist, et. al., 1992; Lagerspetz, et. al., 1988; Galen & Underwood, 1997). It could be that girls perceive relational aggression as more distressing because it thwarts a valued social goal of group closeness (Crick, 1996). Girls also seem to use relational aggression in close, dyadic friendships (Grotpeter & Crick, 1996). Girls who reported

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high levels of relational aggression in their friendships reported higher levels of hostility and betrayal. Girls may use the increased intimacy in their friendships as weapons against each other, threatening friendship withdrawal and group exclusion.

Despite gender differences, relational aggression is harmful to both sexes. Children associate relational aggression with aggressive behavior and angry emotions (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). They also see relational aggression as mean and harmful behaviors. Victims of relational aggression have been found to have higher rates of internalizing disorders such as depression, social anxiety, anxiety, and loneliness (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Prinstein et. al., 2001). Victims can also have higher rates of externalizing disorders (Prinstein, et. al., 2001). Perpetrators of relational aggression can suffer from concurrent and future social mal-adjustment, especially in children who also exhibit low pro-social behavior (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Children who are frequent victims of relational aggression can suffer from overall low self-concept and negative self-esteem (Paquette & Underwood, 1999). Hawley (2003), however, noted that if relational aggression occurs concurrently with a high incidence of pro-social behavior, perpetrators can often be seen as well-liked, having positive characteristics, obtaining positive outcomes, and being popular. Hawley's research indicates that perhaps relational aggression can be effectively used to obtain social goals and maintain social position.

Hawley's research may be a window into why relational aggression is so prevalent in childhood, its effective. Children who use it less effectively, may be trying to emulate their more successful peers, but do not have the social competence or social

intelligence to pull it off. Another suggestion for why relational aggression occurs is that children make errors in their social information processing by making relational hostile biases triggering negative affect (Crick et. al., 2002). Children who are more relationally aggressive may perceive relationship slights and thus react with relational aggression. Relational aggression does seem to be more of a reactive behavior (Xie et. al., 2002b) and often precedes an immediate response or retaliation. Like indirect aggression, relational aggression can be useful in obtaining social goals. Unlike indirect aggression, the perpetrator is usually known and a retaliatory response often follows.

Social aggression. The term social aggression was first introduced by Cairns, Cairns, Neckerman, Ferguson, and Gariepy (1989). They defined social aggression as behaviors aimed at manipulating social relationships through group exclusion or character defamation. Research on social aggression (as defined by Cairns et. al.) indicates that in order for social aggression to occur, the perpetrator must belong to a social network (Xie, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002a; Xie, Swift, Cairns, Cairns, 2002b). Perpetrators often do not act alone and must involve a third party. The more connected the perpetrator is to the social network, the more effective the socially aggressive behavior will be. Individuals who are at the center of their social networks are often the most socially aggressive.

In this context, social aggression is an instigator behavior and often will not be accompanied by a retaliatory action in the same conflict. By its very nature, social aggressors often go unidentified, making social aggression an adaptive behavior because it accomplishes social goals with limited consequences. Outcome research on this type of

social aggression suggests that the use of social aggression appears to be normal and does not lead to negative outcomes (Xie et. al. 2002b). Research does suggest, however, that social aggression can often lead to physical aggression. If the perpetrator is identified, the victim will often later retaliate in a more physically aggressive way. Social aggression may thus be an ideal place to start intervention because if teachers/parents can recognize social aggression and intervene, they may be able to prevent physical aggression.

The term social aggression was further developed by Galen and Underwood (1997) who more broadly defined social aggression as the intent to do social harm. Underwood (2003) then went on to explain that social aggression is a broad term that allows for both covert and overt relationship manipulation as well as nonverbal behavior. It includes such behaviors as social exclusion, spreading rumors, and relationship manipulation. She designed it to encompass all behaviors that are intended to do harm by harming relationships, friendships, and peer status. Underwood's broader definition of social aggression subsumes relational and indirect aggression, making it an ideal term for research because it casts a wider net for more subtle behavior, and it brings together two formerly separate bodies of research: relational and indirect. Given this broader definition of social aggression and its inclusion of relational and indirect forms of aggression, the rest of this paper will use Underwood's definition of social aggression.

Gender differences in the use of social aggression are inconclusive. Findings are very similar to relational aggression. When girls are found to use the behavior more frequently, they are also found to view it as more harmful and disruptive (Galen &

Underwood, 1997). In this same study, findings indicate that in the seventh-grade, girls perceive social and physical aggression as equally harmful while fourth and tenth-graders see physical aggression as more harmful. It could be that the middle-school years are more vulnerable to the effects of social aggression. Girls also seem to rate physical and social aggression as more harmful than boys, indicating that girls might perceive aggression in general more negatively than boys. Incidence of social aggression seems to increase with age for girls and decrease with age for boys. These two separate developmental trends might be one explanation for why research has not consistently found gender differences.

<div align="center">Bullying in the Social Context</div>

Overview of Peer Culture and Structure

Peer culture is the social environment that children form together. Peer culture has its own values and social mores and is separate and unique from adult culture (Corsaro & Eder, 1990). Children do not merely imitate what they see in the adult culture, but instead take what they learn from watching adults and create unique and independent social structures. It is through these social structures that children learn social skills and how to interact with their environment (Corsaro & Eder, 1990). Peers serve as sounding boards for children where each person can safely experiment with different interpersonal strategies and then through this experimentation learn which strategies work best.

The development of a peer culture starts during the preschool years where children are beginning to interact with larger groups of non-related children. It is through

these interactions that they begin to assert their independence from adults (Corsaro &

Eder, 1990). The main goal of forming friendships at this age is to gain control of their

lives and challenge adult authority. Through these friendships, children learn social skills

and use increasingly complex entry strategies to gain acceptance into various play

groups.

In elementary school, children are in the final stages of negotiating their

autonomy from adults and peers become more important. During this time, children

begin to look for control and independence within their peer groups. They strive to

influence and control their peers' attitudes and behaviors. By negotiating through peer

conflict, children are learning and developing necessary interpersonal strategies and

social skills that will teach them how to function in the social world. (Corsaro & Eder,

1990)

In pre-adolescence, groups of children begin to migrate together and form cliques.

Cliques are horizontal structures where friendship groups are established and individuals

are sociometrically connected (Adler & Adler, 1995; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). Cliques

are usually formed around commonalities be it gender, race, behaviors, or attitudes

(Adler & Adler, 1995; Espelage, Holt, & Henkel, 2003). Individual cliques act as

microcosms of the surrounding peer culture. Each clique is governed by the social rules

of the peer culture, but each clique also develops its own social rules unique to that

clique. Each clique develops distinct characteristics and often forms rigid boundaries

with outsiders (Adler & Adler, 1995; Corsaro & Eder, 1990). Entry into a clique is

strictly monitored and rules are formed around entry status and recruitment of new

members (Adler & Adler, 1995). By late adolescence groups are firmly established (Corsaro & Eder, 1990).

Cliques are also organized into vertical structures, which refer to the distribution of social power and status (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). Within each clique, members are organized hierarchically (Adler & Adler, 1995). Within cliques, there is often a leader, followers, and wannabes (Adler & Adler, 1995). A hierarchical structure also exists between cliques. In middle school there is usually one clique atop the hierarchy referred to as the popular group (Adler & Adler, 1995; Corsaro & Eder, 1990). Then in high school there are usually several high status cliques since high school has more opportunities and group activities in which individual cliques might excel (Corsaro & Eder, 1990).

The high social positions within cliques are coveted among peers because to occupy the upper echelons of peer culture entails that an individual has power and control over lower peer members. The most popular children become examples to their peers and others perceive their lives to be exciting (Adler & Adler, 1995). Leaders of the popular children also decide who can and cannot belong in the popular group. Leaders form unspoken rules for selecting members and excluding others. Members of the popular group may continuously change as lower ranked members fall in and out of favor.

So how does one gain the coveted position of leader of the populars? Well, in order to become a leader in the peer group, children must learn superior resource control skills (Hawley, 1999). There are two types of resource control skills, prosocial skills and

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coercive skills. Which skill is most useful depends on the developmental stage and the goal. In preschool, coercive methods for getting ones' way are accepted and envied. The dominant preschooler is often watched, admired, and imitated; however, as children mature, overtly coercive strategies are less and less liked by others. Children begin to learn more prosocial ways to gain attention and control resources such as through cooperation and helping (Hawley, 1999). Children also learn how to use more subtle coercive strategies. Competitive children are both prosocial and coercive. It is knowing when to use prosocial strategies and when to use coercive strategies that helps give leaders a leg up over their peers.

How Does Bullying Fit Into the Peer Culture?

Before going into greater detail about how bullying behavior can be used to gain or lose social status it is first important to look at historical viewpoints of bullying behavior. Bullies were once considered to be rejected by their peers and to belong to either small social networks or to be outsiders (children not affiliated with a clique) (Boulton & Smith, 1994; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). As mentioned earlier, they were thought to have processing deficits and lack certain social skills. Because of their individual flaws, bullying interventions were targeted at individuals. It was thought that bullies needed to be rehabilitated and taught social skills and empathy so that they might successfully re-integrate back into their peer culture; however, after years of failed interventions, researchers began to realize that perhaps bullies could not be separated from their social context so they looked to the peer culture to see how bullying behavior manifested.

As a better understanding of peer culture developed, researchers began to develop a clearer picture of how power and status were distributed and attained in the peer group. It soon became clear that bullies were not just existing on the outskirts of peer culture, but instead occupied varying levels of status and existed throughout different peer networks (Xie, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002a; Xie, Swift, Cairns, & Cairns, 2002b). Bullies could occupy the highest levels of social status and power (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). The difference then between low status bullies and high status bullies was their ability to use prosocial and coercive strategies to their advantage. Some children are able to use physical and social aggression (coercive strategies) quite well, employing it when necessary to achieve their goals. They are the leaders. Other children are not socially cognizant enough to know when to use physical and social aggression to their advantage. Instead, they use aggression indiscriminately and as a result are often at the bottom of the hierarchy.

At the top of the hierarchy, there are two types of popular children, those that are cool because they undermine class rules and bully others and those that are cool through pro-social behavior. Prosocial leaders are cooperative and helpful toward their peers (Hawley, 1999). They often might be the defenders, coming to the aid of victims when bullying occurs (Hawley, 1999). They have successfully managed to obtain position by being well liked. Their empathy and helpful attitude toward others causes children to gravitate toward them.

On the other hand, is the "cool" bully who uses Machiavellian behavior to coerce and dominate others and maintain social position (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003; Sutton &

Keogh, 2000). "Cool" bullies are often considered to be the most popular children in their class and be the head of the popular clique. They maintain this position through clever manipulation and socially aggressive behaviors. Alder and Adler (1995) studied the various strategies popular bullies use to manipulate their peers, and one clever strategy bullies use is to increase the degree to which their group is exclusive. By actively excluding outsiders the group becomes more cohesive. Individual members are insulated from the larger peer culture helping to ensure their loyalty to the leader because if they were ousted from their clique, they would not have any friends. The outsiders would remember how the once popular group member treated them unfairly and scorn any attempts at friendship.

Another useful strategy employed by "cool" bullies is to carefully recruit new members. The popular group targets future desirable members and then begins to separate them from their friends through socially aggressive behaviors. Populars might start rumors about the new recruits close friend forcing the new recruit to switch sides and to disassociate from their undesirable friend. At the same time, populars use prosocial strategies to befriend the new recruit. New recruits are overjoyed at the attention of the popular group and are often made to feel special and deserving. New recruitment usually occurs at the beginning of the school year. Once all new members are recruited, members resort back to socially aggressive behaviors to re-establish the hierarchy and status within the group.

"Cool" bullies also use socially aggressive behaviors to maintain status within the group. Friendship alliances are not held sacred and children are often persuaded to

abandon friends and form new alliances. Above all, members want to form an alliance with the leader. The leader takes advantage of their desires and whenever a member begins to threaten the leader's position, the leader will quickly act to exclude the advancing member and will form new alliances within the group. New members eagerly accept the leader's offer of friendship and power is once again re-established with the leader in control. This continuous cycling of positions also helps keep the members striving hard for the leader's attention. There is always a possibility that they will regain their favored position so they work hard to imitate and adore the leader.

Given the nasty behavior of "Cool" bullies, it may be surprising that they are considered popular by their peers, but research demonstrates that not only do non-aggressive children rate "cool" bullies as popular, but they also provide reinforcement for the bullies' behavior through applause, laughter, and passive viewing (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003; Salmivalli 1996). It could be that peers are afraid to go against the bully's powerful status. They might be afraid the bully will turn on them. It could also be possible that children are so accustomed to the way their culture works that they accept the rules of engagement without question. They also might harbor a secret wish to be a member of the popular group and do not want to ruin their chances. Whatever the reasons for their support, bullying is maintained through bystander support.

At the bottom of the hierarchy are the children who have not mastered prosocial and coercive strategies. Some children have natural abilities for resource control strategies while others seen to lack deficits (Hawley, 1999). A subset of these children often will try to use coercive strategies to get a leg up, but are never successful. This is

the group of children that are perceived as rejected by both their teachers and their peers (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). This group of children better fits the "traditional" role of the bully. These "rejected" bullies are victims to the more powerful bullies. They continuously attempt to fight back to defend against their victim status, but are often unsuccessful (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). The very characteristics that afforded them their victim status becomes more obnoxious over time as they redouble their efforts to obtain group entry (Adler & Adler, 1995). In the literature, these children are often thought of as bully/victims and are the most at-risk peer group (Nansel et. al., 2001; Wolke, et. al., 2000).

Children in the "victim" role might not employ either strategy. These children might not have the necessary social intelligence or social skill to effectively use prosocial or coercive strategies. As mentioned previously when describing victims, they are often perceived as different from their peers and might have natural disabilities that make it difficult for them to easily understand the complexities of the social rules that exist in their peer culture. Part of the human condition is asymmetry (Hawley, 1999). Some children are going to be good at these skills and some are not.

The Structure of Bullying: Theoretical Explanations

There are two theoretical perspectives that might help to explain how the social network influences bullying: Dominance Theory and Social Cognitive Theory (Moutappa, Valente, Gallaher, Rohrbach, & Unger, 2004). Dominance Theory suggests that children use aggression against weaker peers to gain social status and resources (Hawley, 1999). Social Cognitive Theory suggests that children model aggressive

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behavior after one another therefore propagating aggression (Bandura, 2002).

Researchers examined which of these two theories best explained how the social network influences bullying and concluded that Social Cognitive Theory best describes the use of aggression within a peer network (Moutappa et. al., 2004; Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004).

It seems that aggressive peers befriend other aggressive peers (Moutappa et. al., 2004). Aggression can also be contagious within the social climate. Children often say they are against bullying, but then do nothing to intervene when they see it (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). It could be that the pressure to model their peers and conform to the high status group overrides their beliefs that bullying is wrong (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004). Furthermore, the presence of non-aggressive peers in a social group increased the group's chance for victimization, suggesting that non-aggressive groups do not have the strength or status to defend one another. It would then be better to passively watch bullying take place, than to intervene. Over time, anti-bullying attitudes become less supported and the peer group as a whole begins to adopt and accept pro-bullying attitudes (Salmivalli & Voeten, 2004; Smith, Madsen, Moody, 1999).

Development of Bullying Over Time

In review, bullying is a larger term encompassing many different types of aggressive behavior, namely, reactive aggression, proactive aggression, overt aggression, and social aggression. When all of these behaviors are considered to be part of bullying, the gender divide between boys and girls is greatly decreased. The fact is that both boys and girls bully, they just vary in the type of bullying they prefer or that they find useful (Griffin & Gross, 2002). Another consideration is that bullying follows specific

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developmental pathways over time and may start out as one type of behavior and then by the time children reach high school, ends up looking very different. Recent research considering bullying in its broadest conception (all types of aggressive behavior) has started to look at these specific developmental trends and the implications for both boys and girls.

Originally, when research was focused on more direct aggression as bullying, researchers thought that bullying declined over time, peaking in the pre-teen years (Smith, Madsen, Moody, 1999). Now it is thought that in the early elementary years, children use more direct and overt forms of bullying and then over time, direct aggression decreases and social aggression increases (Boulton, Trueman, & Flemington, 2002; Camodeca et. al., 2002; Griffin & Gross, 2003; Greene, 2004; Seals & Young, 2003; Wolke et. al., 2000). The peak time still seems to be between 9 and 15 perhaps because this is when there is the greatest overlap of different types of aggressive behaviors (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Nansel et. al., 2001; Swearer & Cary, 2003). This age group also includes the shift from primary to secondary school where peers may feel they have to re-establish the social hierarchy (Swearer & Cary, 2003).

The shift from direct aggression to social aggression might be very different for boys and girls. For girls, the shift seems to occur very early and is often in full swing by secondary school (Boulton et. al., 2002; Smith, 2004). Boys on the other hand, take longer to make the shift from direct aggression to social aggression and may never do so completely (Boulton et. al., 2002; Smith, 2004). Overall, though, sex differences in

bullying are not notable. Both boys and girls engage in all types of bullying behavior (Bosworth, 1999; Boulton et. al., 2002; Swearer & Cary, 2003; Wolke et. al., 2000).

There are several possible reasons why bullying changes over time, but it is generally believed that as children grow older, they become more adept at social intelligence and at handling social interactions with peers leading to a decrease in direct bullying behavior (Camodeca et. al., 2002; Smith et. al., 1999). Over time, children start to form complex peer relationships and they begin to use their knowledge and status to use more covert, socially aggressive behaviors to achieve their goals (Smith, et. al., 1999). Accordingly, younger children have a broader and simpler understanding of bullying. They often do not recognize how to use power unbalancing to achieve their needs, while older children define bullying as more socially aggressive behaviors (Smith, et. al., 1999).

When considering the shift in bullying behavior from direct aggression to social aggression, it becomes clear that bullying is a stable behavior over time (Borg 1999; Camodeca et. al., 2002; Greene, 2004; Eslea et al., 2004; Kumpulainen et. al., 1999). It seems that there is at the very least a core group of students who continue to bully (Hanish & Guerra, 2004). Hanish and Guerra (2004) examined the stability of the various roles in bullying and concluded that some children remain in their roles and some move about. The most notable shift was from bully to bully/victim, suggesting that over time bullies moved from a position of power in the peer hierarchy to a rejected position. It could be that bullies who were unsuccessful at shifting from direct aggression to social

aggression lost their dominant position in the hierarchy and continued bullying, but also became victims of their more skilled socially aggressive peers.

Victimization, however, might have a different developmental pathway than bullying. Research suggests that victims decrease over time (Borg, 1999; Eslea et. al., 2004; Smith et. al., 1999). This at first might seem confusing because if bullies are stable and victims are decreasing, then who are the older bullies victimizing? There are three possible explanations. One, bullies frequently bully younger children because they are more vulnerable and less likely to react. There has been some support for this hypothesis, but it is not believed to be the only reason (Smith et. al., 1999). Another reason is that over time bullies focus their attention on certain victims, effectively reducing the victim pool to a select few who are repeatedly victimized (Borg, 1999; Camodeca et. al., 2002). Similarly, the final reason is that most children learn effective strategies for dealing with bullies; it is the repeatedly victimized children who cannot find relief for their victim status (Smith et. al., 1999). Thinking of these older victims, it is not difficult to start to understand the devastating effects bullying can have on children. Repeated and singular victimization has an extreme impact on an individual. These children are often at the bottom of the social hierarchy and are rejected and isolated from their peers (Hanish & Guerra, 2004).

Measurement of Bullying

Peer nominations. Peer nomination measures ask children to nominate peers who exhibit certain behaviors. Peer nomination data are most helpful when looking for extremes of bullying behavior. For example, if the majority of students pick Jenny as the

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most likely to spread rumors, then it can be concluded that Jenny probably spreads rumors more than any other children in her class. If Jenny is also nominated on other socially aggressive behaviors, it can be concluded that Jenny is the most socially aggressive child in her class. The disadvantage of using peer nominations is that only children who use bullying behaviors most frequently are nominated, not every child receives a score, and peer nominations fail to consider more minor participant role behaviors.

One commonly used peer nomination measure is Crick and Grotpeter's Social Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ) (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). The SEQ was first developed in 1995. It is a peer nomination instrument consisting of 19 items to describe pro-social behavior (five items), overt aggression (three items), relational aggression (five items) and isolation (two items). Each item was chosen based on previous research (see Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). The measure is administered by providing children with a class roster and then asking them to nominate up to three classmates for each of the items. The SEQ is then scored by summing the number of nominations for each child (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). After the nominations have been summed, they are standardized within each classroom resulting in standardized scores for overt aggression, relational aggression, prosocial behavior, and isolation.

Crick and Grotpeter (1995) tested the psychometric properties of the SEQ using a sample size of 491 third-sixth graders from a mid-sized mid-western town. The majority of participants were Caucasian (60%) and African American (37%). They performed a principal components factor analysis with Varimax rotation of the factors yielding four

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factors for the nineteen items: pro-social (eigenvalue = 2.02), overt aggression

(eigenvalue = 3.59), relational aggression (eigenvalue = 2.02), and isolation (eigenvalue

= 1.14). They subsequently dropped two items, one item from the isolation scale and one

item from the relational aggression scale.

They then calculated internal consistency using Cronbach's Alpha, and the scales

demonstrated the following reliabilities across scales: overt aggression (α=.94), relational

aggression (α=.83), prosocial behavior (α=.91), and isolation (α=.92) (Crick & Grotpeter,

1995). A correlation coefficient was also calculated between the overt aggression scale

and the relational aggression scale. The resulting coefficient of $r = .54$ indicates that

overt and relational behaviors are related but not the same (see Crick & Grotpeter, 1995).

Further studies have provided additional evidence for the psychometric strength

of the peer nomination SEQ (Crick, 1996; Crick 1997; Grotpeter & Crick, 1996). In

Crick (1997), the relational aggression item that was dropped in the 1995 study was re-

analyzed for the new sample sizes, and demonstrated sound psychometric properties (α =

.88). As such, future analyses (Zimmer-Gembeck, Geiger, Crick, 2005) of the relational

aggression scale included all five of the original items. In addition, two items were added

to the overt aggression scale resulting in a five item scale (Grotpeter & Crick, 1996).

Factor analysis on the SEQ (using the five item relational aggression scale and the five

item overt aggression scale) has repeatedly yielded the four factor structure of relational

aggression, overt aggression, prosocial behavior, and isolation (Crick, 1996; Grotpeter &

Crick, 1996). Test-retest reliability over a 4-week period has also been high ($r = .82$, $r =$

.90) (Grotpeter & Crick, 1996). Furthermore the overt aggression and relational

aggression scales continue to be moderately correlated with one another (r = .63).

Peer-ratings. Peer rating measures are different from peer nominations in that

they ask children to rate every child in their classroom. Each child rates their classmates

on the frequency of certain behaviors, making it possible to measure the change in

frequency over time.   Peer rating measures also provide a more sensitive assessment of

peer perceptions regarding different forms of aggression than peer nomination measures

(Underwood, 2003).   In addition, peer ratings provide multiple perceptions on each

child's behavior. The disadvantages of using peer ratings are that it is a lengthy and time

consuming process. Another potential pitfall is that children may be rating peers based

on a limited number of behavioral observations because they may not be close to that

particular peer. Despite the lengthy process of peer ratings, several studies have utilized

peer rating procedures, demonstrating that children are able and willing to complete peer

ratings forms (Bjorqkvist, 1992; Kaukiainen et. al., 1999; Lagerspetz et. al., 1988;

Osterman et. al., 1994; Salmivalli, 2005).

A commonly used peer rating measure in studies of aggression is Salmivalli,

Kaukiainen, & Voeten's (2005) Participant Role Questionnaire (PRQ). The PRQ is

based on Salmivalli's research on participant roles and is founded on the idea that there

are varying levels of participation in bullying. The PRQ is a 15 item questionnaire that

asks students to think of bullying situations and then asks how often each person in their

class would behave in the ways described. The 15 item version (for other versions see

Salmivalli, et. al., 1996, Salmivalli, Lappalainen, Lagerspetz, & Kirsti, 1998) of this scale

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has five scales with three items per scale: the bully scale, the reinforcer scale, the assistant scale, the defender scale, and the outsider scale. Internal consistencies for each scale were calculated using Chronbach's Alpha with each scale demonstrating adequate reliability: bully scale ($\alpha=.93$), assistant scale ($\alpha=.95$), reinforcer scale ($\alpha=.90$) defender scale ($\alpha=.89$) and outsider scale ($\alpha=.88$). The PRQ is scored by summing the scores given by each student and then dividing by the number of evaluators. Final summed scores are continuous and range from 0.00 to 2.00 for each student on each scale (Salmivalli, et. al., 2005).

 Self-report. Another way to measure bullying is through self-report. Self-report questionnaires generally ask students to answer questions about where and when bullying occurs as well as endorse whether or not they participate in bullying behaviors (Griffin & Gross, 2003). Self-report measures are ideal because they are time efficient, involve relatively little manpower, and are cost effective (Crothers & Levinson, 2004). The down side of self-report is that children often underreport their bullying behavior (Crothers & Levinson, 2004). Children either do not realize how much they bully, or they wish to look socially desirable.

 The most common self-report measure of bullying is the Revised Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (BVQ) (Griffin & Gross, 2000). The BVQ contains 37 likert scale items. Items ask questions regarding physical, relational, verbal, and indirect and sexual aggression. Items also assess where bullying occurs and individual attitudes toward bullying (Olweus, 1996). Answers are used to determine if students are bullies, victims, or non-involved. The BVQ has been used worldwide and reliability estimates

have been calculated for over 5000 children ages 11-16 (Griffin & Gross, 2003). Internal

consistencies are around .80 and reliabilities are around .90. The BVQ has also

demonstrated construct validity and has been found to correlate highly with aggression

and anti-social behavior scales (Griffin & Gross, 2003).

Crick and Grotpeter (1996) also developed a self-report measure, the Social

Experiences Questionnaire – self-report (SEQ –self-report), to assess more relational

types of aggression. The SEQ-self-report was based on their previously developed peer-

nomination measure (the SEQ-peer nomination see p. 41). They reworded items to make

them more suitable for a self-report format by changing the statements so that each

statement reflected how one was treated by peers rather than how other individuals

behave in a social context. The SEQ has three subscales, relational victimization, overt

victimization, and prosocial behavior. There are five items for each subscale, resulting in

15 total items. A 5- point likert rating scale (ranging from 1 = never to 5 = all the time)

was used. A principal components factor analysis with Varimax rotation was performed.

Results indicate that, as predicted, the SEQ has three factors: relational victimization

(eigenvalue = 4.5), overt victimization (eigenvalue = 2.0), and prosocial behavior

(eigenvalue = 1.1). Crick and Grotpeter also examined the degree to which items

crossloaded and as a result dropped two items from the overt victimization scale,

resulting in a three item scale for overt victimization.

Crick and Grotpeter's original SEQ –self-report included a relational aggression

scale, but items did not address nonverbal behaviors. Underwood (2003) argues that

nonverbal behaviors are an important feature of social aggression. Recently an

adaptation of the SEQ- self-report has been used that includes nonverbal behaviors. Paquette and Underwood (1999) added two items to the SEQ –self-report to expand the relational aggression subscale so that it represented the broader term of social aggression which included relational aggression and indirectly aggressive behaviors. They added items addressing nonverbal socially aggressive behaviors such as eye rolling and making faces. Using a correlational analysis, Paquette and Underwood determined that these two items correlated with other relational victimization scale items ($r = .23-.67$). The range of correlations was similar to the original relational victimization scale. Furthermore, Paquette and Underwood examined which items on the relational victimization scale children were most likely to endorse and the eye rolling item was the most commonly endorsed item, indicating its importance.

Teacher report. Teacher reports ask teachers to rate each child in their classroom on the frequency of various bullying behaviors. Teachers are around their students every day and have the opportunity to witness their everyday interactions which should make them ideal reporters of bullying behavior; however, research on teacher reports has indicated that teachers are often not reliable sources (Crothers & Levinson, 2004). More specifically, teachers seem to be able to identify physically aggressive behaviors, but have more difficulty identifying more subtle forms of aggression such as social aggression (Underwood, 2001). One reason this might be the case is that physical and direct forms of aggression are easy to identify while social aggression is often insidious and deeply embedded in the peer culture. As noted earlier, children report that they feel teachers are unaware of how much social aggression takes place within the peer culture.

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Teacher rating forms are most appropriate when rating young children who may not be able to rate themselves or each other or more direct types of aggression. In general, though, self-reports or peer nominations/ratings are more reliable than teacher report when rating relational/indirect/social aggression (Smith, 2004).

Observational methods. Direct observational methods are where outside observers watch children interact and take note of their behavior. Direct observation provides the distinct advantage of having the least amount of bias of all the methods. Observers can often provide an objective viewpoint of what is occurring and how frequently it is happening. The problem with directly observing bullying is that bullying is often covert (Crothers & Levinson, 2004). For the same reasons teachers have difficulty identifying subtle peer behavior, observers do also. Observers might have an even tougher time because they are not as aware of the peer culture as teachers might be. Research has continuously demonstrated that direct observation of bullying is not as reliable as other methods (Crothers & Levinson, 2004).

Conclusions regarding measuring bullying behavior. In conclusion, self-report and peer nomination/rating measures have been identified as the most reliable reports of all types of bullying behavior (Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Smith, 2004). Peer nominations and peer ratings are especially ideal when using whole classroom interventions because they tap into social networks and the peer culture (Crothers & Levinson, 2004). Research has indicated that children are reliable reporters of bullying behavior in others (Crothers & Levinson, 2004). In reality, children are the most aware of their social network and the different roles their peers occupy. In comparison to other

methods of assessment, peer nominations and peer ratings are the most reliable sources

for identifying the different roles peers occupy and the types of aggression other peers

use. When reporting on other children, they do not have to worry as much about social

desirability. It is often easier to report objectively about someone else's behavior over

one's own behavior; however, each method of measurement has distinct advantages as

well as disadvantages. For this reason, researchers recommend that multiple methods

(i.e., self-report, peer-rating, other-report) of assessment be used when trying to measure

a complex behavior such as bullying (Wolke, et. al., 2000).

<p align="center">Anti-Bullying Interventions</p>

A Review of Anti-Bullying Interventions

In the past thirty years of bullying research, many different types of interventions

have been implemented with varying degrees of success. There have been interventions

targeting only bullies and victims, interventions that follow a curriculum, and

interventions that have a whole-school approach. A review of the research indicates that

the ideal characteristics interventions should include are: 1. The intervention is founded

on a theoretical perspective (Stevens et. al., 2001), 2. Actively works to explain facts and

dispel myths (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004), 3. Before the intervention, bullying

behavior is assessed at a school-wide level, 4. Students develop a code of conduct

(Greene, 2004), 5. Programs recognize the social context of bullying and interventions

target the peer culture (Greene, 2004; Salmivalli, 2005; Stevens et. al., 2001; Valliancourt

et.al., 2003), 6. Systemic approaches (Stevens et.al., 2001), 7. Strategies are implemented

that work for all types of aggression (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003), 8. Students learn to

identify bullying behavior in each other (Greene, 2004), and 9. Students are held accountable for their actions and there is a school-wide plan for how to handle bullying situations (Greene, 2004; Stevens et. al., 2001). Keeping these ideal characteristics in mind, the different types of interventions will now be discussed.

Interventions targeting individual aggressors and victims. One type of school-based intervention that has been attempted is an intervention that specifically targets the aggressors and the victims. These interventions may take the form of cognitive-behavioral groups, social skills groups, psycho-education, assertiveness training, anger management, individual therapy, etc… (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Wilson, Lipsey, Derzon, 2003). These interventions are mainly targeted at reducing physical aggression and serve mostly male populations. Social aggression is often not discussed or directly targeted, and girls are mostly ignored (August, 2001; Wilson, et. al., 2003).

One example of an intervention that targeted specific individuals is the S.S. Grin intervention developed by DeRosier (2004). S.S. Grin is a manualized treatment that includes social learning as well as cognitive-behavioral techniques. The manual is specifically designed to target children who are highly disliked, socially anxious, and bullied. By participating in the intervention it was hoped that participants would build on behavioral and cognitive skills, promote prosocial attitudes, and help establish adaptive coping strategies. These various skills were taught through role-playing, didactic instruction, and modeling. Results indicated that S.S. Grin was efficacious for this group of children. By the end of the intervention, children were more self-confident, were able to build positive friendships, and became more well-liked by their peers.

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From this example, it is evident that individual approaches can be successful; however, the success was experienced only by the individual participants and did nothing to combat the peer culture of bullying. Accordingly, a meta-analysis examining the effectiveness of interventions specifically targeting victims and bullies concluded that overall they were effective at reducing aggressive behavior by 7% (Wilson, Lipsey, Derzon, 2003). Intervention programs were most effective where the base rates of aggression were higher, and the largest effects were found for behavioral programs and social competence training programs. It seems that while these interventions can be effective for their target population, they may not be as helpful for changing peer culture.

Moreover, these interventions do not directly target the social environment in which bullying occurs or the more insidious forms of bullying such as social aggression. In addition, programs targeting individuals often do not have lasting effects and are ineffectual for the entire school community (Suckling & Temple, 2003). Programs that target only the victim and attempt to help the victim enhance self-esteem and increase assertiveness are often ineffective because they do not address the larger social context. Victims are often not safe enough to practice their new skills (Greene, 2004). These programs are reminiscent of more traditional views of a bully as "rejected" and do not consider the idea of the "cool" bully (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). Similarly, individual approaches do not take into account the peer culture of children (Greene, 2004). They focus only on the individual level and fail to address the complex interrelationships of multiple systems that act to maintain bullying behavior (i.e., the peer group, the overall school climate, and the family).

Curriculum-based approaches. Another type of bullying intervention intervenes by developing an academic curriculum and implementing it with children. Previous interventions using this approach have had curriculums focused on developing empathy, developing knowledge and skills related to bullying, and encouraging peer involvement in promoting anti-bullying (Rigby, 2002).

One example of this approach is the Bully Buster program (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). The Bully Buster program is a manual designed for teachers. The general goal was to intervene with bullies, victims, and bystanders. Specifically, the intervention aimed to increase awareness, recognize the roles involved in bullying, teach children intervention strategies, and teach them relaxation and coping skills. Results suggested that teachers reported a decrease in bullying and the intervention helped to reinforce the relationship between teachers and students.

As this example illustrates, these approaches can be effective at reducing children's aggressive behavior and increasing children's bullying awareness (Rigby, 2002). Again the weakness to these past approaches is that they focus on physical aggression and do not target other more indirect forms of aggression, namely social aggression. They also fail to intervene with multiple systems. While they have a broader focus than intervention with individuals, they only target peer relationships and ignore the broader school system and the role of the family.

Systemic approaches. Systemic approaches are multi-modal approaches that attempt to intervene with bullying on several different levels, often involving individual interventions, curriculum-based approaches, teacher training, whole-school policies

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promoting no tolerance for bullying behavior, and involving parents and the community. There are two successful examples of this approach: the LIFT program (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow, 2000) and the Bergan Anti-Bullying Intervention (Olweus, 1996).

The LIFT program was developed to intervene with delinquency and aggression, not bullying, but it is a good example of a systemic intervention in the United States (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow, 2000). The LIFT program was based on Patterson's Coercion Theory, which describes a coercive process between children and their parents where the child refuses to cooperate, the parent insists, the child escalates behavior, and then the parent gives in. The child is then negatively reinforced and will most likely use the same behavior pattern in the future. Once this behavior is learned at home, it can transfer to the school. The LIFT program targets these problem child behaviors both at home and at school. The intervention is designed to help children stop defiant and oppositional behaviors and help parents use more effective discipline and monitoring strategies. The uniqueness of the LIFT program is that it chose not to target only at-risk children, but instead targeted all children, taking a preventative stance.

Specifically, the LIFT program included a classroom curriculum component that lasted 10 weeks. Each session was one hour and occurred twice a week. Sessions included role plays, practice, and lectures. Children then had an opportunity to practice their newly learned skills on the playground using the Good Behavior Game. The Good Behavior Game divided children into small groups and each group had the opportunity to earn rewards for prosocial behavior exhibited on the playground. The LIFT program also included a parent component. Parents met for once a week for six weeks. In the parent

sessions, parents learned the same skills their children were learning and then were taught how to encourage these behaviors at home.

The theory of the LIFT program was that by intervening with the social milieu of children, group dynamics could change and different interactional styles might emerge. The LIFT program has demonstrated that it was effective at reducing delinquency rates and promoting behavior change at the group level. While the LIFT program was not specifically designed to intervene with bullying, the systemic nature of the program and the attempt to intervene with group dynamics makes an ideal example of a systemic intervention.

The Bergan Anti-Bullying Project (Olweus, 1996) is also an example of a systemic intervention, one that was specifically designed to target bullying. The goal of the program was to restructure the social environment (Carney & Merrell, 2001). The program involved both teachers and parents and taught them both how to be responsible for children's social behavior. Firm rules and consequences were promoted for both home and school environments. Awareness was also promoted for everyone involved, including the teachers, children, and their families. Teachers and parents increased their level of supervision paying particular attention to bullying hot spots. Each class then came up with their own rules and problem solved difficulties throughout the school year. When bullying did occur, serious talks were given to both parties. In order to help the continued success of the program, a coordinating group was put in place to oversee implementation and to use PTA meetings to keep parents involved. (Carney & Merrell, 2001)

These two interventions illustrate that systemic approaches can be effective at reducing and changing aggressive behavior patterns. Accordingly, Smith and Ananiadou (2003) examined systemic school-based intervention programs aimed at physical, relational, and indirect forms of aggression world-wide and found that in general bullying interventions that adopted whole school policies and that were unique to each school environment were successful at reducing the incidence of bullying; however, results indicated that positive effects were mostly seen with boys and not girls (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003). Smith and Ananiadou mention that one reason the interventions were more successful for boys was that physical and verbal bullying were easily recognized and intervened with while more indirect forms such as social exclusion were harder to identify and were often not considered to be targets of intervention by teachers and peers alike. In other words, teachers and peers often did not recognize social exclusion as a bullying behavior.

Implications for Future Interventions

Now that the different types of interventions used in the past have been discussed, it is important to focus on what researchers have learned and what are the implications for future interventions. On the whole, it appears that individual and group interventions are not the most effective intervention modalities for bullying (Greene, 2004). Instead there needs to be a focus on school-wide prevention strategies (Greene, 2004; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003; Sutton & Keogh, 2000). Schools that support bullying, even if they do so passively, create environments where children do not feel safe and do not feel supported (Greene, 2004). Greene posits (2004) that in order to successfully intervene with the

school climate, schools need to get the message across that bullying behavior is not acceptable. In addition, everyone at the school needs to understand the dynamics of bullying behavior. A survey should be given to determine the prevalence and the location of bullying behavior. Schools should establish policies and procedures to address bullying. Teachers and volunteers need to provide extra supervision for bullying hot spots and, there needs to be a child-friendly way to report bullying. Overall, interventions need to promote school-wide prosocial attitudes.

School-wide strategies should pay particular attention to the bystander (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Greene, 2004). Given that some bullies are powerful and have high status it will be difficult to persuade them to change their behavior so instead, the focus needs to be on how to change the environment so that they no longer have support and status for their bullying behavior (Vaillancourt, Hymel, & McDougall, 2003). Bullies repeat their behaviors because they receive positive support from their peer group. In order to successfully intervene with these behaviors, bystanders need to be made aware of how they are helping to support the behavior and then given tools to stop that support (Vaillancourt et. al., 2003). Bystanders can easily switch their alliance with the bully and start intervening on behalf of the victim (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003).

One study examined how bystanders currently intervene and how often they intervene by coding children's interactions on the playground (Hawkins, Peplar, & Craig, 2001). Results indicated that peers only intervene in 19% of bullying episodes. In general, children report that they intervene more often than they actually do. When they do intervene, boys intervene more than girls and half of all interventions were aggressive.

Typically, children would often start with assertive strategies and would then switch to aggressive strategies when these would no longer work; however, results indicated that non-aggressive strategies were equally effective as aggressive strategies. It appears from this study, that children do know how to intervene, the challenge then is to help them feel more confident about non-aggressive strategies and to help them intervene more frequently.

In a review of the research, several intervention strategies have been shown to be effective. One strategy is to implement a buddy system so that children are not alone in unsupervised areas (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). For this particular strategy, it is important to partner high status, prosocial children with more victimized children so that the buddy has the power to intervene. Ignoring the bullying has also been shown to be an effective strategy (Smith, 2004). Reporting the bullying episode can also be helpful and support no tolerance polices (Smith, 2004).

Teachers should be equally involved in any intervention. One way to involve teachers is to educate them on the ins and outs of peer culture. Once teachers have a better understanding of bullying behavior they will be better able to intervene when they see it (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). Teachers can also help promote awareness and implement no-tolerance policies (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). Teachers should also be taught ways to be supportive of children who report bullying (Smith, 2004). Just by helping teachers become more aware that bullying is occurring and the different forms it can take can help. In a survey of students' views regarding bullying, 80% of students

reported that teachers and schools did not know bullying occurred (Swearer & Cary, 2003).

Another common thread in the literature is that interventions are not paying enough attention to the various different types of bullying behavior, namely social aggression (Smith & Anandiou, 2003). As mentioned previously, past interventions have not been successful at reducing bullying for girls with the belief that girls use social aggression more. One study in particular, interviewed students to see if they thought their school intervention was successful (Glover et. al, 2000). Students reported that bullying just started taking more verbal, socially aggressive forms, and teachers often did not notice because it just looked like the students were having a conversation.

Vernberg and Gamm (2003) analyzed problems that interventions encounter at the varying intervention levels and had several suggestions for future implementations. They argued that all levels of the intervention need support. If one area is not supported it can act to undermine the other areas. For example, if an intervention only intervenes with the school system and not the family system, the family system can act to undermine changes made at the school level. They also argue that community support is needed. Businesses, community members, and schools should work together to help support and implement an intervention. In addition, teachers and school staff should be involved in the process so they can feel they are involved.

They also noted two historical attitudes that sometimes get in the way of effective interventions. One attitude is on the cultural level. Historically, US culture has accepted aggressive behavior. People believed that bullying was a fact of life and was a rite of

passage that children must endure; however, recent violence outbreaks at schools across the country are slowly shifting this attitude. To further indicate the shift in attitude, there has been increasing legislation asking schools to protect children.

The other attitude has been on the part of the school. In the past, schools only had the responsibility of educating the young, not also tending to their socio-emotional health. With recent cultural changes, though, schools have to take charge of nurturing children's socio-emotional health and many schools are still resistant. They feel that educational concerns should take priority and social concerns should not take the place of valuable educational time. If bullying interventions are to be successful it will be important to make sure school staff is on board and there is community support. One way to help ensure school-wide acceptance is to enlist the help of a powerful person (i.e., the principal).

A Proposed Model for Intervention: The Social-Ecological Approach to Bullying

In order to design effective interventions for bullying behaviors, researchers should first understand and consider the social ecology of bullying and the multiple contexts involved in establishing and maintaining aggressive environments (Swearer & Espelage, 2004). One model for understanding the social ecology of bullying is Swearer and Espelage's social-ecological framework of bullying (Figure 2.1). Swearer and Espelage developed their social-ecological framework of bullying to help explain the complex relationships that exist between individuals, families, peers, schools, communities, and cultures. When developing their model they borrowed from ecological-systems theory and more specifically, Brofenbrenner's theory.

The main tenet of ecological-systems theory is that individuals are part of inter-related systems that start at the individual and widen out to include all the systems in which that individual is involved (Swearer & Espelage, 2003). Bronfenbrenner further explained ecological-systems theory by dividing up an individual's social networks into four systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Swearer & Espelage, 2003). He referred to the first system as the *microsystem*. The *microsystem* consists of children and their relationship with one system (i.e., family, school, peers). The *mesosystem* includes the interrelationships between the various systems in a child's life such as the relationship between the family and the school. The *exosystem* includes systems that indirectly affect children's lives such as the school district. The *macrosystem* is the broadest category and refers to cultural mores and societal attitudes. All four systems are interrelated reflecting the complex environment in which children grow and interact.

Swearer and Espelage took Bronfenbrenner's four systems and developed a unique social-ecological framework for understanding bullying behavior. Rather than using the broadly defined systems, they specifically labeled each context of the child's life as it directly related to bullying behavior (see Figure 2.1). They started with the individual labeled as either a bully, bully-victim, victim, or bystander. Then they moved outward to the systems in which the individual directly functions: the school, the family, and the peer group. Next they included the broader systems that encompass the family, the school, and the peer group: the community and the culture.

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Each context and how it fits into the social-ecological framework of bullying will now be explained in greater detail.
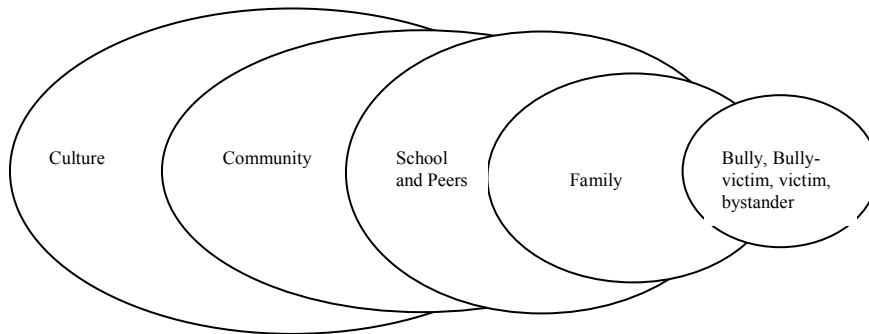
Fig 2.1 A social-ecological framework of bullying among youth (Swearer & Espelage, 2004)

The role of the individual. The first context Swearer and Espelage outline in their bullying framework is the role of the individual. They use the commonly identified roles of bully, bully/victim, and victim. The children in this level are the children that are actively involved in the bullying process.

The role of the family. The next context depicted in the diagram is the family. Family relationships help children develop the skills needed for positive peer interaction (Stocker & Youngblade, 1999). At an early age, families provide the environment where children develop their internal working model which later provides the framework for their relationships with others (Bowlby, 1977). If caregivers provide a responsive and sensitive environment for children when they are young, children will most likely develop a secure attachment. If caregiving is inconsistent and insensitive, an insecure attachment could result. Children with insecure attachments can then develop a "victim schema" where they have become accustomed to interacting with their dominating and

controlling parents so have developed an interaction style that is weak and helpless (Perry, Hodges, & Egan, 2001; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003). This "victim schema" can set the stage for victimization by bullies. These children become "easy marks."

Furthermore, children who are insecurely attached can also develop a "bully schema." Early parenting for these children is often characterized by discord and rejection (Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986; Stevens, De Bourdeaudhuij, & Van Oost, 2002). Parents often demonstrate permissiveness around aggression and may often use their child as a "whipping boy." The maternal relationship is often marked by an overly anxious mother who is persistently over-involved in her child's functioning. As a result of these early parenting experiences, children usually develop an insecure/avoidant attachment style developing a hostile and distant approach to the world (Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986).

Another theory that is helpful in understanding the transmission of coercive behavior in the family is the Social Learning Model. If children witness coercive interaction at home, they will most likely model the behavior at school and with their peers (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow, 2000). Bullies are more likely to come from homes with authoritarian parenting and the use of punitive measures (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2004; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Griffin & Gross, 2003; Loeber & Dishion, 1984). They see the behaviors work at home for them and their family members reinforcing the view that coercion is effective in goal attainment (Duncan, 2004; Oliver & Oaks, 1994). Research examining the relationship between coercive parenting and aggression indicates that parents who use coercive techniques can have children who are more aggressive (Carney

& Merrell, 2001; Hart, Nelson, Robinson, Olsen, McNeilly-Choque, 1998; Nelson & Crick, 2002). Similarly, marital conflict can also provide examples to children. If parents negotiate their interactions with a high incidence of conflict, they are providing a model for their children to do the same. For example, boys who live in homes with a high incidence of marital conflict, also demonstrate higher levels of aggression (Hart et. al., 1998).

Family systems theory also is helpful in understanding the occurrence of social aggression in children. Family systems theory posits that the family is made up of multiple sub-systems that interact with one another through a variety of interconnected relationships (Duncan, 2002). Conflict occurring in more than one sub-system can contribute to children's use of aggression (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Duncan, 2004). As previously mentioned, conflict in just the marital subsystem can provide a contribution. The sibling subsystem can also have an impact on how children relate to their peers (MacKinnon-Lewis, Smith, 2004; Starnes, Volling, Johnson, 1997). MacKinnon-Lewis et. al. (1997) demonstrated that sibling and parent relationships predicted more of the variance of peer aggression than parent relationships alone. Low family cohesion and an imbalance of power in the marital relationship have also been linked to children who bully (Stevens, De Bourdeaudhuij, & Van Oost, 2002). For victims, high levels of family enmeshment are predictive of victim status (Bowers, Smith, & Binney, 1992). Overall, dysfunction in the family system has been directly linked with aggression in children (Duncan, 2004).

The roles of the peer group and the school. The next contexts considered in the social-ecological model are the school and peer relationships. A great deal has already been discussed about how peer relationships contribute to the bullying process. Schools can also influence the degree of bullying present in their climates. As Swearer and Espelage (2004) state, a school that has a pro-bullying climate will have increased incidents of bullying behavior. Schools may not create bullying, but they can create a permissive environment where bullying behavior flourishes (Suckling & Temple, 2002).

The roles of the community and the culture. The fourth and fifth contextual levels of the social-ecological model are community and culture. These levels are much too broad and abstract for direct intervention, but if schools and families are actively involved in intervening and preventing bullying, it is hoped that the results would filter into the community. The more schools and families involved in the community, the likelier that it will be that values will start to shift regarding bullying. Theoretically, over time, with more communities participating, cultural values that reinforce bullying might start to change. This trickle down hypothesis would most likely take years and be difficult to measure.

In conclusion, interventions should attempt to intervene at all levels of children's social ecology. Encouraging schools to develop interventions that include all children and the systems in which they are involved, will help schools create environments where the school is no longer a fertile breeding ground for bullying behavior. Interventions that occur at the system level will reach victims, bullies, and bystanders. In addition, by including the family system, schools may also enhance the effectiveness of their

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interventions. Family-school collaboration can help create and maintain multi-system change. Research demonstrates that increased parent involvement at schools has been positively associated with benefits for children, teachers, and parents (Sheridan, Warnes, & Dowd, 2004). Increased benefits and the development of positive relationships between children, families, and schools will allow the intervention message to permeate the complex environments in which children function.

Theory of Behavior Change: Theory of Reasoned Action

When designing an intervention it is not only important to consider the role of the social ecology surrounding the child, but also to consider how to create change within the child. As mentioned previously, bullying behavior, specifically social aggression, is an entrenched behavior that helps children achieve goals and attain social position. The question then becomes, how can it be possible to change this behavior? One possible theory is the Theory of Reasoned Action (Meyer, Roberto, Boster, Roberto, 2004). The Theory of Reasoned Action subsumes that the best determinant for any given behavior is the person's intention to act or not act on said behavior. For every situation where social aggression might be an appropriate choice, the child has to make the decision to engage or not engage in social aggression. This choice point then becomes the target for intervention.

Mechanisms behind behavioral intention. To understand how to influence an individual's choices, it is important to first understand the mechanisms behind behavioral intention (choosing a behavior). According to Meyer et.al. (2004) behavioral intention is a union between a person's attitude toward the behavior and subjective norms. So when

individuals are faced with choosing a behavior to act on in a situation, they rapidly consider which behaviors are desirable to them, thus their attitude toward the behavior. Then they reflect on how that decision would be perceived by their social group. In other words, they would most likely choose the behavior they have a positive attitude toward as long as they believe that it would be well received by their reference group, the people whose opinions are important to them.

How then are attitudes toward behaviors formed? Attitudes are based on a joint process of assessing behavioral beliefs and outcome evaluation. Behavioral beliefs are the individuals' perceived outcome to performing the behavior. For example, a socially aggressive child might decide to spread a rumor about someone they are mad at because they perceive that by spreading the rumor they will feel vindicated and relieved or happy. Outcome evaluation refers to the individuals' evaluation of the consequences of acting on the behavior. So by spreading the rumor, other children will be on the side of the aggressor and will reject the victim, helping act out vengeance and fortifying the aggressor's social position.

Subjective norms are based on a union between normative beliefs and motivation. Basically, each person's subjective norms are based on what he/she thinks each person in their group thinks he/she should do. Individuals then evaluate the normative beliefs of their reference group, and then they also evaluate their own desire to comply with those beliefs. If individuals are motivated to comply with each person's beliefs in their group, then they will act in accordance with those beliefs. For instance, before spreading the rumor, the social aggressor in the example above will first consider how each member in

their group views spreading rumors. If group members would positively support rumor spreading and if the social aggressor holds their positive support in high regard, then he/she will be motivated to act in accordance with the group norms and will spread the rumor.

Effecting change in behavioral intention. By understanding the mechanisms behind behavioral intention, it becomes clearer how intervention can target an individual's choice point. As indicated earlier, interventions targeted at individuals have not proven to be very successful. It is difficult to change behaviors that are rewarded by an individual's social group and help to maintain that individual's social position.   So instead of directly targeting individual attitudes with the hope of changing behavior, it is best to indirectly target those same attitudes by changing the normative beliefs in the social group.

Normative beliefs influence subjective beliefs. By using a social ecological approach and targeting the classroom environment for intervention, it is possible to influence normative beliefs through education. By helping the classroom identify and define bullying behaviors, individuals in the social group may start viewing socially aggressive behaviors as undesirable. Students who previously provided passive support to aggressors can be taught how they can actively intervene. They can also be taught that bullying is unacceptable and should not be tolerated because it has negative impact on all those involved. Through this education, group acceptance of socially aggressive behaviors might start to wane and the aggressor will receive less perceived support for deciding to act in socially aggressive ways.

Changing normative beliefs will have a domino effect on behavioral intention. If the aggressor still holds the groups beliefs in high regard they will be less motivated to act on the behavior because they will perceive negative outcomes. In time, they might also adjust their subjective norms and attitudes toward aggressive behavior and start to favor more prosocial behavior instead. Aggressive behavior will be perceived as undesirable with undesirable consequences. In sum, ecological interventions target the foundation of support for aggressive behaviors. By removing the reinforcements to aggressive behavior, individual behaviors will change because they will no longer be ideal in achieving social goals (i.e., high social status and group membership).

The Need for Intervention with Social Aggression.

As noted earlier, interventions have not been successful at intervening with social aggression. The previous focus on more overt forms of aggression has ignored the harmful effects of social aggression. As a result boys benefit more from intervention than girls since they are more likely to use overt forms of aggression over social aggression. Despite gender differences, though, social aggression has undesirable effects for boys and girls as well as victims and perpetrators that are separate from overt aggression and more traditional views of bullying. With increased risk for internalizing and externalizing disorders and overall social mal-adjustment, intervention and prevention should take the forefront; however, more recent research has indicated that perhaps social aggression is developmentally normal and may even be necessary for future adjustment and growth (Xie et. al., 2002b). Given these two opposing views, deciding whether or not intervention is necessary becomes more difficult.

One possible reason for the conflicting findings surrounding negative outcomes of social aggression might be the type of analyses used. When taken as a group, negative effects might not be as apparent as individual analysis. Social aggression might be efficacious for some children (Hawley, 2003; Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukiainen, 1996), while disadvantageous for others (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995; Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Owens et. al., 2000c; Paquette & Underwood, 1999). When adolescent girls were interviewed, the dangerous effects of social aggression became more apparent (Owens et. al., 2000c). Girls described feeling overwhelming loneliness and sadness. Some girls expressed a desire to leave school or even more drastic, commit suicide. While social aggression might offer socially adept youngsters a leg up in the social hierarchy, should their success come at the expense of other children? Research indicates that children can achieve popularity and be well-liked among their peers by just being pro-social (Hawley, 2003; Salmivalli et. al., 1996); so the question remains would it be better to encourage children to use social aggression, or would it be better to teach children how to reach their goals in more pro-social ways? Clearly, most people would prefer that the social environment of young children be inviting and advantageous for all children, not just a few.

Statement of Purpose and Rationale for Study

While many interventions targeted at reducing bullying behavior have been implemented world-wide, interventions specifically targeting social aggression have been less well-documented. This is not to say that reducing more physical forms of aggression is not important, but just that physical aggression is not the only form bullying can take.

As illustrated above, social aggression is a common occurrence in childhood and can have detrimental and crippling effects on individuals. If the goal of intervention is to promote a healthier, more positive school climate, then all types of bullying should be addressed and attempts made to reduce or prevent their occurrence.

Furthermore, many interventions have failed to target the social ecology of children and thus have not directly addressed the complex interrelationships involved in maintaining social aggression and bullying behavior. Whole-school approaches have been the exception. Whole-school approaches most closely resemble the tenets of social-ecological theory, attempting to intervene at multiple levels within the school. Intervening with entire classrooms so that bystanders, bullies, and victims are included is important in order to address peer group norms supporting socially aggressive behavior. By changing peer group norms, it is possible to change individual behavior leading to a decrease in aggressive behaviors for the group.

In addition, teachers and school staff should be alerted to the extent of the bullying problem in their school. Many teachers might not view social aggression as harmful, or they may see it as a normal part of development. If interventions are to be successful then teachers need to be educated alongside students so that the school community is aware of the harmful effects of social aggression. Encouraging teachers to participate in the intervention also helps prepare them for the inevitable time when researchers leave the school and the intervention is over. If teachers are included in the intervention they will be better able to help support and maintain change. They are on

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the frontline of defense for stopping bullying behavior and are critical sources of support for students.

Unfortunately, due to a limited amount of resources, this study was unable to implement an intervention at the whole-school level, but instead focused on the fourth grade. Fourth-grade teachers were also included as a critical part of the intervention. Teachers were present when the intervention was delivered, and they also received additional training so they were prepared to help maintain intervention gains after researchers left. It was believed that with classroom-wide intervention and maintenance, the classroom could act as a microcosm that would mirror whole-school effects.

Specifically, the goal of the intervention was to educate fourth-graders about all types of bullying behavior (overt and social) and to help them learn how to intervene. At the end of the intervention the students were asked to write a code of conduct indicating how they would not tolerate bullying and how they would act in prosocial ways to provide support to one another. The code of conduct hopefully reflected the group's new normative beliefs and thus served to help classmates maintain positive changes after the intervention was over.

The purpose of this study was to (a) determine if a program that uses a whole-class approach was effective at reducing social aggression and to (b) determine if the program's whole-class approach was effective at changing the bystander role children assume when bullying occurs.

Research Questions

Research question #1: Was a program that uses a whole-class intervention approach effective at reducing social aggression?

Research question #2: If the intervention was efficacious at reducing social aggression, was it efficacious for both boys and girls?

Research question #3: Was a program that uses a whole-class intervention approach effective at changing the bystander role children assume when they encounter bullying by enabling students to take on more positive, victim supportive roles?

Hypotheses

Hypothesis #1: *There will be a significant main effect for gender as measured by the individual average social aggression scale score on the SEQ-peer report. Specifically, it is hypothesized that girls' individual average social aggression scale scores will be higher at pre-treatment than boys' individual average social aggression scale scores at pre-treatment.*

Hypothesis #2: *There will be a significant main effect across time in mean scores on social aggression as measured by the individual average social aggression scale score on the SEQ- peer report.*

Hypothesis #3: *There will not be an interaction effect between classroom and time.*

Hypothesis #4: *There will be an interaction effect between gender and time. Girls will experience a larger treatment effect than boys due to the prediction that they will report higher levels of social aggression at pre-treatment.*

Hypothesis #5: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the individual prosocial behavior scale score as measured by the SEQ – peer report. It is predicted that prosocial behavior will increase from pre-treatment to post-treatment.*

Hypothesis #6: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average defender scale score on the PRQ- self report. The average defender scale score will increase across time.*

Hypothesis #7: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average outsider scale score on the PRQ- self report.   The average outsider scale score will increase across time.*

Hypothesis #8: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average bully scale score on the PRQ- self report.   The average bully scale score will decrease across time.*

Hypothesis #9: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average assistant scale score on the PRQ- self report. The average assistant scale score will decrease across time.*

Hypothesis #10: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average reinforcer scale score on the PRQ- self report.   The average reinforcer scale score will decrease across time.*

CHAPTER 3

PILOT STUDIES

Overview

This study is designed to assess the efficacy of a classroom-based intervention targeting peer aggression. The study followed a repeated measures design and had two phases. The first phase was the pilot phase. Two pilot studies were conducted during the pilot phase and prior to the intervention phase. One pilot tested the psychometric quality of measures that had been developed or revised by the principal investigators. The second pilot study piloted the intervention and tested the adequacy of the treatment manual. The second phase was the intervention phase. During the intervention phase, pre-treatment data were collected. Multiple questionnaires were administered asking students questions about roles in bullying, amount and type of bullying, and classroom norms regarding bullying. During this phase, the six-session intervention was administered to students. After the intervention, post-treatment data were collected.

Approval by Human Subjects Committee

This study was in compliance with all ethical standards of research as outlined by the American Psychological Association and the University of Texas at Austin. Approval for the study was given from the Departmental Review Committee in the Department of Educational Psychology and by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Texas at Austin on September 19, 2005. Approval expired following post-data collection on May 22, 2006.

Pilot Study I: Measurement

Participants

Child Participants

For the measures pilot, 25 fourth-grade students' parents gave consent for participation in the study. Of the 25 students, 11 were boys and 14 were girls. Participating students represented all four fourth grade classes at the participating elementary school.

Participant School

The participants for the measures pilot were drawn from the fourth grade classes at a Central Texas elementary school. The elementary school is located within the city limits of a mid-size city (EISD, 2003-2005, Fast Facts about EISD). The community the school serves is populated by educated professionals ranging from middle class to upper middle class. The measures pilot school is located in a school district that has six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school that together serve approximately 7,000 students. Ethnic distribution of students is as follows: 88% Caucasian, 6.3 Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.1% Hispanic, .4% African American, and .2% Native American. The measures pilot elementary is a National Blue Ribbon School and has achieved exemplary status (EISD, 2003, Eanes Elementary School).

Instrumentation

The Social Experiences Questionnaire- Peer Report (SEQ –peer report)

To account for the amount of social aggression occurring in the classroom, a revised version of Crick and Grotpeter's Social Experiences Questionnaire – peer nomination (1995) was used (See Chapter 2, Measurement of Bullying, peer nomination, p. 41 for a detailed description of the SEQ – peer nomination and its psychometric properties). The original peer nomination measure included three scales: Overt Aggression (3 items), Relational Aggression (5 items), and Prosocial Behavior (4 items).

For the current study, SEQ – peer nomination (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995) was changed from a peer nomination measure to a peer rating measure. As discussed earlier peer nomination measures have some limitations. Namely, not all children receive a score, and it can be difficult to track change since peer nomination does not indicate the degree to which children engage in aggressive behavior. Since this study is examining time 1 and time 2 differences, it was helpful to have a score for each participant as well as determine the degree to which each child engaged in the aggressive behaviors. Therefore, the SEQ – peer nomination measure was changed from a peer nomination measure to a peer rating form where participants were asked to rate fellow classmates on aggressive and prosocial behaviors. The SEQ – peer nomination was easily modified to a peer rating instrument. The statements remained the same, but instead of nominating three children who engaged in each behavior, children rated how often each classmate engaged in the stated behavior using a 3-point likert scale including *yes, no, and sometimes*.

In addition, in order to account for the larger construct of social aggression two items from Paquette and Underwood's (1999) RSEQ – self-repot, were used (See Chapter 2, Measurement of Bullying, self-report, p. 46 for a detailed description of the RSEQ-self-report and its psychometric properties). These two items measured indirect aggression with item content reflecting eye rolling and making faces. The resulting measure, reflecting both changes (i.e., peer rating and indirect items), was called the SEQ-peer report. The SEQ- peer report had fourteen items that represented three scales: Social Aggression (7 items), Overt Aggression (3 items), and Prosocial Behavior (4 items). For the current study only the Social Aggression scale and the Prosocial Behavior scale were used. The Overt Aggression scale was part of the larger study (See Appendix A for the SEQ – peer report used in this study).

The Participant Role Questionnaire (PRQ)- Self Report

To account for the bystander role children assume when bullying occurs, the PRQ self-report questionnaire was used (Salmivalli et. al., 2005). The PRQ is a 15 item questionnaire where children are asked to think about situations in which someone is being bullied. They then decide how often they behave in the different ways described by circling *never, sometimes, or often.* The 15 item questionnaire has 5 scales representing the different roles children can assume in bullying situations: bully, assistant, reinforcer, defender, and outsider. Internal consistency was calculated for these fives scales using Cronbach´s alpha resulting in moderate reliability for each scale: Bully scale α =..68, Assistant scale α = .65, Reinforcer scale α = .67, defender scale α =.79, and for the Outsider scale α = .60 (Salmivalli et. al., 2005).

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For this study, the PRQ was revised by changing the format from statements representing the different bullying behaviors to specific vignettes. It was determined that the original PRQ reflected very overt forms of bullying and relied on a traditional view of bullying situations (i.e., helps the bully by catching the victim). Since social aggression is of particular interest in this study it was important to reflect socially aggressive behaviors in the measures used. Moreover, the participants in this study were fourth grade students and it was felt that vignettes might help provide a context for the different behaviors that would be easier for children to understand. Therefore, five different vignettes were written that included characters behaving in the five different roles (e.g., bully, assistant, reinforcer, etc…). After each vignette the children were asked to think about how often they would act like the different characters in the vignette by circling *never, sometimes, or often*.

The revised PRQ included the same subscales from the original measure representing the five different participant roles children can assume in bullying situations: Bully (3 items), Reinforcer (3 items), Outsider (3 items), Assistant (3 items), and Defender (3 items). To help preserve the psychometric properties of the original measure, the same types of behaviors were reflected in the vignettes. For example, one original item read: "comes around to watch the situation". In the vignette, this same behavior was reflected and the subsequent question read, "How often would you be: like Christi and come around and watch the situation." (See Appendix B for the PRQ- self report used in this study)

Additional Measure Included as Part of the Larger Study

In addition to the above listed measures, the Normative Beliefs About Aggression Scale (NOBAGS Huesmann & Guerra, 1997) was given to children. This measure was part of the larger research project and was not used for the current study.

Procedure

Recruitment

Recruitment of the elementary school. The measures pilot school was recruited for this study in the spring of 2005 by contacting the curriculum specialist at the administrative level of the school district. Researchers contacted this professional by email to inform her about the project and ask her if she felt the elementary schools in the school district would be interested. She responded that she felt that principals would be interested and agreed to forward an information packet created by researchers to send to principals and counselors of elementary schools on behalf of the research team. Interested schools then contacted her to denote their interest. She then passed on the contact information to researchers, who initiated further communication. After meeting with the counselor or the principal from the two interested schools, the schools signed a letter of intent denoting their interest. Of the two interested schools, one school participated in the measures pilot while the other school agreed to become the intervention school. (See Chapter 4, Participants, p. 101, for information regarding the intervention school).

Recruitment of participants.   At the measures pilot school, information packets detailing the process of the study were handed out to parents as well as to principals, counselors, teachers, and any other necessary school staff. The information packet included details about data collection. Placed at the back of information packet was a consent form where there was a place for parents to sign their consent for their child's participation in the data collection. (See Appendix D for consent forms). The consent form had two places for the parent to sign: 1. Indicating they would allow their child to participate in data collection, or 2. They would not allow their child to participate by either filling out questionnaires or by being rated by their fellow peers. Parents had two weeks to return consents. Students who returned their consents were given a pencil for doing so. During the two week period, parents were given two opportunities to meet with researchers in order to address any concerns or questions they had about the questionnaires. Parents did not choose to attend these sessions. Parents were also given email and phone contact information for the principal investigator if they had questions and concerns. A few parents emailed and a few parents called to ask more about the peer rating form. All concerns were addressed and resulted in child participation.

Pilot Administration of Measures

Administration of the measures for the pilot school occurred during the third and fourth six week grading periods of the school year. By waiting until the third six week grading period, students had adequate time to get to know one another. Administration lasted two hours over a two day period, one hour each day. Graduate students from the University of Texas at Austin were recruited for administration of the measures. Before

the administration of the measures began, graduate student administrators were given a set of standardized instructions for each measure.

Confidentiality was ensured by explicitly stating who would know their answers and who would not. In addition, since one of the measures asked students to rate one another, it was important for each administrator to make it clear to students that their ratings were confidential and would not be shared with one another, with teachers, with parents, or with other relevant school personnel. Due to the sensitive nature of the peer reports, students were seated on benches of the cafeteria tables back to back so that their responses could not be seen by neighboring children. Children were also handed the SEQ – peer-report in random order by gender (each child had a different order) so that it would reduce the likelihood that students would be rating the same student at the same time. At the end of each day of data collection, students were again reminded that their responses would be kept confidential and that they too were responsible for maintaining confidentiality by refraining from discussing their responses with one another.

At the beginning of the first day of administration, students were handed a brief paragraph that was read out loud to them explaining the reason for data collection. Children were asked to sign at the bottom, providing their assent to participate (See Appendix D for copy of the assent). Children were encouraged to ask questions and voice concerns about their involvement. After assents were signed, the 25 students were then broken into three small groups by gender for administration.

Administrators stayed at the school following each day of data collection to help answer questions and address concerns the children had. Children were also asked

informal questions regarding their experience filling out the measures.   These steps were necessary in order to protect children from any negative attitudes or behaviors that might have arisen from filling out the measures, but were also necessary to help administrators understand how the measures were received and understood by the students.

For the first data collection session students were asked to fill out the NOBAGS and then the PRQ- self report. Both questionnaires were administered orally. For the second day of data collection, students completed the SEQ- peer report. Since there were 25 participants, each rater rated 24 students. Graduate student administrators read the instructions for the SEQ- peer report. Once instructions were delivered, graduate student administrators read through the fourteen items once to ensure understanding and then children completed the rest of the rating forms on their own. Administrators then walked around the room to answer questions as they arose.

While students were completing the SEQ- peer report, it became apparent that since students were rating peers that were in different fourth grade classrooms, they did not know some of the peers they were asked to rate. When this happened, administrators asked them to skip students they did not know at all.

<u>Results and Analyses for Pilot I: Measures</u>

<u>Descriptive Statistics</u>

<u>The Social Experiences Questionnaire- peer report (SEQ- peer report</u>. Social

Aggression scores were calculated by summing the seven items included in the Social

Aggression scale for each rater. Scores could range from 7 to 21. Then the mean of all

the sums (across raters) was calculated and used to determine each student's individual

Social Aggression scale score. Prosocial Behavior scores were calculated by summing

the four items for each rater. Scores could range from 4 to 12. Then the mean of all the

sums (across raters) was calculated and used to determine each student's individual

Prosocial Behavior scale score. The means and standard deviations for the two scales are

reported on Table 3.1.

Internal consistency was calculated using Chronbach's Alpha for both the Social

Aggression scale and the Prosocial Behavior scale (See Table 3.1). Since both the Social

Aggression scale and the Prosocial Behavior scale were from the SEQ-peer report, each

individual had multiple responses for each question. In order to calculate internal

consistency using Chronbach's Alpha, each respondent's responses for each question

were averaged. For example, respondent number one rated 17 participants so the mean of

their 17 responses was calculated for each question. Then the questions that comprised

each scale were compared to one another to test for internal consistency within each of

the two scales. Upon item analysis, item 1 was dropped from the Prosocial Behavior

scale because it did not seem to perform as well as the other items. When looking at the

item it appeared to measure popularity rather than prosocial behavior (how often do you

look up to or want to be like this person). Internal consistency for the new three item

scale is reported on Table 3.1. The alpha coefficients for both scales were high.

Table 3.1

Descriptive Statistics for the SEQ - Peer Report (n=25)

Variable	M	SD	α
Social Aggression	8.95	1.06	.93
Prosocial Behavior	6.74	.75	.96

The Participant Role Questionnaire (PRQ)-self-report. The PRQ has five scales.

A mean score was calculated for each individual for each of the five scales. For example,

for the Bully Scale, the three items were summed and then the mean was calculated

giving each child a mean scale score for bullying behavior. Table 3.2 illustrates the

means and standard deviations for each of the five scales.

Also presented on Table 3.2 the Coefficient Alpha for each of the five scales of

the PRQ is reported. Since the revised version of the PRQ significantly changed the

original measure, the revised measure can be assumed to be an exploratory version. As

can be seen from Table 3.2, internal consistency was low for all five scales.

Table 3.2

Descriptive Statistics for the PRQ-Self-Report (n=25)

Variable	M	SD	α
Bully	3.88	1.27	.077
Assistant	3.79	1.06	.255
Reinforcer	5.33	1.27	.442
Outsider	6.92	.83	-.782
Defender	7.17	1.40	.637

Correlational Analyses

Using Pearson's two-tailed correlation coefficient, correlations were calculated between the two scales to determine the relationship between social aggression and prosocial behavior as measured by the SEQ – peer report (See Table 3.3, p. 87 for correlation matrix). It was expected that the two would have a negative correlation since it is assumed that as individuals become more socially aggressive, they become less prosocial. Results supported this hypothesis. As predicted, there was a highly significant inverse relationship, indicating that as children were rated more prosocial, they were rated less socially aggressive.

Correlations between scales on the PRQ – self report were calculated using Pearson's two-tailed correlation coefficient (See Table 3.3, p. 87 for correlation matrix). It was predicted that Bully, Assistant, and Reinforcer would be positively correlated, while Defender would be negatively correlated with the three other scales. Correlations

between the Outsider scale and the other four scales were not calculated since the Alpha Coefficient indicated the relationships between items within the scale were both negatively and positively correlated with one another. Correlations with other scales would thus be difficult to interpret.

Findings demonstrated that the Bully scale was significantly correlated with the Reinforcer scale and the Assistant scale. Simply stated, children who reported that they more often would act like the bully in the vignette were also more likely to report that they would act like the assistant and/or the reinforcer. No other significant relationships were found between the scales which could be due to the measures poor reliability. It could also be that children often engage in multiple roles depending on the situation, so where in one situation they would behave like a defender, in another they might be the bully, assistant, or reinforcer.

Using Pearson's correlation coefficient, the relationships between the scales within the SEQ – peer report and the scales within the PRQ – self report were also calculated (see Table 3.3, p.87 for correlation matrix). It was expected that the Bully scale and the Social Aggression scale would be positively correlated, the Bully scale and the Prosocial Behavior scale would be negatively correlated, and the Defender scale and the Prosocial Behavior scale would be positively correlated. It was also expected that a weak positive relationship might exist between the Assistant and Reinforcer scales and the Social Aggression scale, and both would be negatively related to the Prosocial Behavior scale. Once again, the Outsider scale was not used for this analysis. As

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indicated on Table 3.3, no significant relationships existed between the subscales of the

SEQ – peer report and the subscales of the PRQ – self-report.

Table 3.3

Correlation Matrix for the SEQ – peer report and the PRQ – self report (n = 25).

Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Social						
2. Prosocial	-.85**					
3. Defender	.11	-.08				
4. Bully	-.06	-.03	-.14			
5. Assistant	.01	.03	-.12	.53**		
6. Reinforcer	-.50*	.33	.02	.43*	.38	

Note: * indicates significance at the .05 level, ** indicates significance at the .01level

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of piloting the measures was to determine: (a) That fourth grade students could understand each measure, (b) that the procedures for the measures were logical and best practice, and (c) that the items demonstrated sound psychometric properties. To address students' understanding of the measures, students were informally questioned after completing both the SEQ- peer report and the PRQ – self report. Students were asked if they understood the questions, if the vignettes on the PRQ- self report were realistic, and if they had any suggestions. For both measures, students reported that they were easy to understand with the exception of item 12 on the PRQ – self-report. Students stated that this question in particular was confusing. As such, the wording was changed prior to the intervention study. Students also advised that the wording on a few of the vignettes be changed to reflect a more accurate depiction of a real scenario. For example, instead of the most popular girl in class, female students advised that it be changed to a really pretty girl.

To determine if procedures were logical and used best practice, principal investigators met to discuss the procedures used for administration and make adjustments as necessary prior to the intervention study. Two major changes were implemented both in regards to the SEQ – peer report. One was to change the process of putting names on the questionnaires. Before, sticky notes were affixed to each rating form, but they could easily fall off and measure preparation was a lengthy process. To correct this problem, names were printed at the top of each page instead so they could be cut off after administration. Second, when completing the SEQ – peer report, students had varying

rates of completion. Some students hurried through and finished quickly, but after examining their peer rating forms, it was consistently noted that they tended to respond similarly for each student rated. Other students did not complete the rating forms in the time allotted. It was clear from their responses that they were carefully considering their responses. It was thus decided that to help pace students, the questions would be read out loud for each child rated instead of just reading through the fourteen items once.

Finally, the psychometric properties were examined by looking at the Coefficient Alpha for each scale and the resulting correlations. The SEQ – peer report demonstrated sound reliability and remained unchanged. The PRQ – self report demonstrated poor reliability across scales. After looking through the data, there are three possible reasons the scales demonstrated poor reliability. One, the sample size was very small (N = 25). When the sample size is small it limits the power which in turn affects the precision of the alpha coefficient (Cicchetti, 2001). Two, after examining the items, the variance within each scale was restricted which can result in a correlation coefficient that is lower (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2002). Third, the measure is a new, exploratory measure as such the five scales have not been perfected. It could be that certain items need to be modified or dropped in order to increase the internal consistency of each scale. Since the sample size was small and the range restricted, though, items will be further examined in the intervention study.

The descriptive statistics were also examined for both measures and it was determined that the SEQ- peer report demonstrated limited variance. After examining students' responses, it seems that the majority of students chose either *no* or *sometimes*

thus limiting the variance of the final scores. For this reason, principal investigators

decided to change the likert scale to a five-point likert scale for the intervention study. It

was predicted that when given more choices, students' responses would vary to a greater

degree. As such, the new scale included: *always, almost always, sometimes, almost*

never, and never.

Pilot Study II: Intervention

Participants

Child Participants

For the intervention pilot, 62 2nd-4th grade students' parents gave consent for participation in the study. Of the 62 students, 32 were boys and 30 were girls. The consent rate was 100% and all students in grades 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade participated.

Participant School

The participants for the intervention pilot were from the two 2nd-4th grade classrooms at a Central Texas charter elementary school. The charter school is located to the east of a midsize city. The aim of the school is to provide experiential learning to students in a cooperative atmosphere. Students from second, third, and fourth grade are grouped together in two classes. Students are from various backgrounds, social-economic status, and ethnicity. Since the school is a charter school, the population is from a wide portion of the Central Texas area.

Participation of Teachers

For the intervention pilot, all teachers were required to participate. For the two participating classroom there were two teachers, resulting in four teachers who participated in the intervention.

Kids Supporting Kids: Classroom Intervention

The intervention used for this study, *Kids Supporting Kids*, was developed by Pamela McDonald Schaber and Daniel Hoard specifically for this research study (Schaber & Hoard, 2006). The intervention targets the entire classroom with the main idea that by intervening with all students, all roles in bullying (e.g., bully, victim, and bystander) will be targeted. It is thought that by targeting bystanders, support for bullying can eventually be reduced. Children who bully will have to modify their behavior because they will no longer be able to attain their social goals through socially aggressive means. The intervention is six sessions long with each session lasting around one hour.

To help meet the goals of the intervention, each session has a different focus. Session one helps children define bullying and learn which behaviors are considered physical bullying and which behaviors are considered social bullying. It is thought that by educating students about social aggression, it will help increase their awareness of the behavior. The second session helps children understand the negative effects of physical and social bullying and help them realize how important it is to stop these behaviors. By doing this, children can start to see how social aggression impacts everyone. The third session introduces the different roles involved in bullying and emphasizes the important role of the bystander. The fourth and fifth sessions are used to discuss more positive, prosocial ways bystanders can intervene with bullying. The Support Box is introduced at this time. The Support Box is a box where students can write down bullying incidents

that they witnessed but do not know how to intervene, or they can write down bullying acts where they did successfully use a defender strategy. For the last session, groups meet by classroom, and children are asked to create an anti-bullying policy for their classroom. All the children and the teacher sign the policy and pledge to uphold it. In addition, the last session demonstrates the problem solving approach to bullying in order to model for students and teachers how Support Box submissions can be handled in the future. (see *Kids Supporting Kids* Manual in Appendix E for more detailed descriptions).

Kids Supporting Kids: Teacher Intervention

The *Kids Supporting Kids* manual also includes a teacher intervention (see *Kids Supporting Kids* manual in Appendix E for more detailed descriptions). The teacher intervention includes: participation in the intervention, email check-in, and three teacher forums. The teacher intervention requires that teachers be present during the intervention so they can be exposed to what the children are learning, as well as to help maintain order. Teachers are also asked to complete a checklist during the intervention sessions. Each of the six sessions has a separate checklist denoting the important objectives to be covered during the session. Session checklists serve a dual purpose: 1. They help keep teachers focused on the session; and 2. They help ensure treatment fidelity since each facilitator needs to meet the check-list objectives for each group.

Email check-in is used to provide teachers an opportunity to converse with session facilitators. Facilitators email teachers each week to send them the checklist and to ask the teachers if they have any questions or concerns regarding the intervention.

Email check-in is also used to provide consultation to teachers in order to problem solve any bullying situations that might arise during the intervention period.

The three teacher forums are held throughout the intervention. Forums provide a face-to-face opportunity to solicit feedback and questions from the teachers. Facilitators are also able to provide consultation and brainstorm solutions with teachers. The first teacher forum takes place before session one and is used to prepare teachers for the intervention. Specifically, teachers are introduced to the Support Box and it is explained to them how bullying incidents will be reported for the remainder of the intervention as well as afterwards. The Support Box is to be placed in each classroom to provide a place where students can report minor bullying incidents they see as well as to report any positive actions they have taken to reduce bullying at their school. Teachers are asked to monitor the Support Box after the intervention is over so that they can share positive changes with students as well as brainstorm minor bullying incidents together.

The second teacher forum takes place after the third session and is used to review the first three sessions as well as to provide an opportunity for facilitators to address any questions or concerns. This meeting with the teachers is also necessary to discuss the upcoming student code of conduct as well as the Support Box. Teachers are given the opportunity to brainstorm any problems that they foresee as well as to brainstorm problems that arise during the sessions. The third teacher forum takes place after the intervention with the idea of discussing how the intervention went, problems that may arise or that the teachers think might occur, as well as to discuss any lingering questions about the Support Box and problem solving method.

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<center>Procedure</center>

Recruitment

Recruitment of the elementary school. The intervention pilot school was recruited by contacting their school psychologist. The school psychologist indicated she was interested in the intervention program and asked for a copy of the treatment manual. The school principal and the school psychologist reviewed the treatment manual and subsequently agreed to participate.

Recruitment of participants. For the intervention pilot school, information packets detailing the purpose of the intervention as well as an outline of the sessions were handed out to parents, principles, teachers, and any other necessary school staff. Passive consent forms were attached to the end of the information packet. Parents were asked to sign the consent form and return it to their child's school only if they did NOT want their child to participate. Parents were given email and phone contact information for the principal investigator if they had questions and concerns. A few parents emailed and a few parents called to ask more about the intervention. All concerns presented were addressed by the researcher and resulted in participation of their child in the study.

Pilot Administration of the Intervention

Intervention for the classroom. For administration of the intervention, the 62 students were divided into four groups. Group A (n = 13) contained girls from classroom 1. Group B contained boys from classroom 1 (n = 19). Group C (n = 16) contained girls from classroom 2 and Group D (n=14) contained boys from classroom 2. Each session was 50 minutes. The six sessions occurred over a three week period. For the sixth and

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final session groups A and B (classroom 1) met together, and groups C and D (classroom 2) met together.

Children were divided by sex because as mentioned previously, boys and girls experience bullying differently. While it is believed that both boys and girls experience physical and social aggression, the degree to which they are involved in each varies. Boys and girls therefore have different bullying styles that might manifest in different ways. By dividing students according to sex, it was hoped that intervention sessions would have more relevance for the groups.

When possible, two graduate students from the School Psychology Graduate Program facilitated the groups. One graduate student acted as the lead facilitator, and the other graduate student acted as the assistant facilitator. At times, only one graduate student was available so groups were facilitated by only the group leader. To help ensure treatment fidelity, the group leader for all four groups was always present to facilitate the groups.

Intervention for the teachers. All four teachers participated in the intervention. Teachers were very helpful and helped the group facilitators organize classroom seating arrangements to maximize cooperation, helped the formation of small groups, and helped brainstorm implementation of the support box.

Teachers also completed the checklists for each session. They were emailed the checklist before each session, so they had the opportunity to ask questions about the upcoming session and anything they did not understand. They were also handed a copy of the checklist at the beginning of each session. All six checklists for all four groups

were completing and indicated that group leaders met all their objectives for each of the four groups.

The teachers also participated in the first two teacher forums. The teachers declined to participate in the third teacher forum. While it is difficult to guess as to why the school declined, it is hypothesized that the teachers were just too busy with daily school planning. All feedback given to the facilitators throughout the intervention was that it was well received and the school was very positive about its implementation.

Summary and Conclusions

The *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention was specifically designed for this study, as such, it was important to pilot the intervention and test the adequacy of the treatment manual. Several conclusions were made after piloting the intervention. First and foremost, the students were asked at the end of each session what they liked best and what they liked least about the session. Then during the final session, they were asked informal questions regarding what they learned, what they would change, and what they wished had been discussed but was not. Student response to these questions was overwhelmingly positive. Students reported that they really enjoyed the opportunity to talk about bullying and share incidents that happened to them. They did not like the way bullying made them feel and felt that talking about it and learning intervention strategies was very helpful. Students were hopeful for the future and reflected that they could already see positive change in their classroom environments. When answering questions about what they would change, students replied that they wished the groups could continue, that they would not change a thing, and they wished they had more opportunity

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to role play. After discussing students' input, relatively few changes were made to the manual with the exception that the fourth session would allow children to role play instead of watch the facilitators so they could have more opportunity to practice intervention strategies.

Second, lead facilitators met after all six intervention sessions had been completed and made three notable changes to the manual based on informal observations facilitators had made throughout the intervention. One significant change was to change the language in the manual so that bullying was always referred to as a behavior rather than a role. It was felt that this change was necessary to protect students who were seen as bullies by their peers. By referring to bullying as a behavior it can be seen as something that can be more easily changed. It also helps students think of acts of bullying rather than people who bully to prevent finger pointing or hard feelings.

The second significant change, was to choose another activity for the second session. As written the activity involved too many transitions and was the least liked session by the students. The third change, was to eliminate prizes handed out for responses. Teachers complained that they did not positively reward participation in this way and did not want to encourage this behavior. Facilitators wanted to respect teachers' wishes. Even without this input from teachers, facilitators noted that students were eager to participate and share their stories. They did not need material rewards, but rather seemed to have emotional gains from sharing their stories and examples.

CHAPTER 4

METHODS

<u>Participants</u>

<u>Child Participants</u>

The final sample size for this study was 71 fourth grade students; 38 were boys and 33 were girls. Participants were recruited from all four fourth grade classrooms. A demographic description of the participants appears on Table 4.1. 72 of 77 fourth-grade students' parents gave consent for participation in data collection and the intervention. One student chose to drop out of the study after completion of the pre-intervention measures. Only 5 students' parents did not give consent for participation in either the data collection or the intervention, resulting in a 94% consent rate. All students in the fourth grade returned their consent forms.

Table 4.1

Participant Demographic Variables (n = 71)

Variable	Frequency (%)
Age	
9	38.9
10	61.1
Living Arrangement	
Both parents live with child	91.7
Child's parents are divorced	2.8
Child lives with mom	1.4
Child lives with father and step-mom	1.4
Joint Custody (child lives with both mom and dad)	2.8
Race/Ethnicity	
Caucasian/White	77.8
African American/Black	2.8
Asian or Pacific Islander	6.9
Native American	2.8
Other	8.3
Selected more than one option	1.4

Participant school. The participants for the intervention phase of this project were drawn from a Central Texas elementary school. The participating elementary school is located within the city limits of a mid-size city (EISD, 2003-2005, Fast Facts about EISD). The community that school serves is populated by educated professionals ranging from middle class to upper middle class. The intervention school is located in a school district that has six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school and serves approximately 7,000 students. Ethnic distribution of students is as follows: 88% Caucasian, 6.3 Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.1% Hispanic, .4% African American, and .2% Native American. The intervention elementary school is a National Blue Ribbon School and has achieved exemplary status for the last eight years (EISD, 2003, About BCE). It has four fourth grade classrooms (EISD, 2003, Classroom Pages).

Participation of Teachers

All teachers from all four classrooms were required to attend all six intervention sessions.

Instrumentation

Demographic Information Sheet

To determine basic information about each student, students were asked to fill out a form detailing demographic information (See Appendix B for demographics questionnaire). This form asked the students' age, ethnicity, and family structure (i.e., lives with both parents, divorced, step-family, etc...). Information from the demographic information sheet was used to determine if any significant treatment differences existed between groups.

The Social Experiences Questionnaire – Peer Report (SEQ - Peer Report)

To account for the amount of social aggression occurring in the classroom, the SEQ-peer report was used (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Paquette & Underwood, 1999). As stated in Chapter 3 (p.90), after piloting the SEQ-peer report, it was changed from a 3-point likert scale to a 5-point likert scale including: *always, almost always, sometimes, almost never, and never*. The SEQ-peer report still contained fourteen items that represented three scales: Social Aggression (7 items), Overt Aggression (3 items), and Prosocial Behavior (3 items). Another change from pilot, was that students only rated peers from their classroom. By limiting the number of students children rated, the measure could be completed more efficiently, students would be more likely to know the peer they were rating well, and students would have less children to rate overall. Classroom size varied so the students rated between 14-18 students each.

The Participant Role Questionnaire (PRQ)-Self-Report.

To account for the bystander role children assume when bullying occurs, the PRQ self-report questionnaire used in the pilot phase was administered (Salmivalli et. al., 2005). As stated in Chapter 3 (p.77), the PRQ – self report is a 15 item questionnaire where students are presented with vignettes and then asked to decide how often they would act like each of the characters in the vignette: *often, sometimes, or never*. There were 5 scales for this measure reflecting the different roles children assume in bullying situations: Bully (3 items), Reinforcer (3 items), Outsider (3 items), Assistant (3 items), and Defender (3 items).

<u>Additional Measure Included as Part of the Larger Study</u>

In addition to the above listed measures, the Normative Beliefs About Aggression

Scale (NOBAGS Huessmann & Guerra, 1997) was given to children. This measure is

part of the larger study and the data were not used for this study.

<div align="center"><u>Intervention</u></div>

The altered *Kids Supporting Kids* manual (Schaber & Hoard, 2006) was used for

the intervention study. The changes detailed in Chapter 3, Summary and Conclusions, p.

97, were instituted. The teacher manual was also utilized and remained unchanged from

pilot.

<div align="center"><u>Procedure</u></div>

<u>Recruitment</u>

<u>Recruitment of the elementary school.</u> The intervention school was recruited

simultaneously with the measures pilot school. For more information about recruitment

procedure, refer to Chapter 3, Procedure, Recruitment, p. 79. Once the school indicated

interest, the principal investigators contacted the principal and then gave a small

presentation to all faculty and staff outlining the research project and soliciting questions

and concerns. During the presentation, faculty and staff were asked to provide feedback

and the research team answered questions and concerns. Then in the fall of 2005,

researchers met with the fourth grade teachers only and discussed the timeline for data

collection and intervention implementation. At this time the researchers also discussed

with the teachers how consents and information packets would be distributed. Teachers

also used this opportunity to continue to have their questions and concerns answered.

Recruitment of participants. The first step in recruiting participants for the study was to give information packets to the four fourth grade teachers to hand out to their students. The information packets included details about data collection and the intervention. The packet also detailed the consent process. At the end of the packet, a consent form was attached for the parents to return. This packet was distributed in the winter of 2005. After distribution, researchers provided two opportunities for parents to meet with researchers and ask questions or voice concerns. Parents who attended the meetings were able to voice their concerns and decided to allow their child's participation. Parents were also given phone and email contact information. A few parents emailed researchers to ask about the measures, specifically. One parent decided that she did not want her child to participate after viewing the measures.

After the school's winter break, the researchers contacted the teachers to assess the rate of return. The rate of return was low so teachers agreed to hand out the information packets and provide a verbal explanation of why the school was participating in this study to parents during a mandatory meeting. After this meeting, 100% of consents were returned.

The consent form had four boxes for the parents to choose from: 1. Gave consent for their child to participate in the data collection, 2. denied consent for their child to participate in the data collection, 3. gave consent for their child to participate in the intervention, and 4. denied consent for their child to participate in the intervention (see Appendix D for consent). All children who returned consent were given a UT pencil for doing so.

<u>Administration of Pre-Intervention Measures</u>

Administration of measures occurred during the fifth six week grading period of the school year. By waiting till the fifth six week grading period, students had more than enough time to get to know one another well. Administration lasted for two hours over a two day period, one hour each day. Graduate students from the University of Texas at Austin were recruited for administration of the measures. Before administration of the measures, administrators were given a detailed packet outlining the standardized instructions for administration.

The same precautions taken in the pilot study were used in the pre-intervention administration of measures to ensure confidentiality. To see a more detailed accounting of these precautions refer to Chapter 3, Procedure, Pilot Administration of Measures, p. 80. In addition to the precautions taken in the pilot study, three additional precautions were included in pre-intervention administration; 1. Students used privacy screens to protect their answers since they were sitting at their desks; 2. Graduate student administrators alerted teachers to the possibility of students discussing their responses and to have teachers remind them of confidentiality if such an occurrence were to happen; 3. One graduate student administrator stayed after the measures were completed so that if students had any concerns they would have someone to talk to. Some students did come and talk with the researcher after completing the SEQ – peer report. In brief, their concerns were worrying about how other people rated them, worrying about how they have been a bully before, and worrying about how to handle friends who bully. In

all cases, students stated that their concerns were resolved after talking with the researcher.

On the first day of administration, the assent was handed out (following the same procedures as outlined in the Chapter 3, Procedure, Pilot Administration of Measures, p. 80), the demographics questionnaire was completed, and the NOBAS and PRQ self-report were also completed. Administration occurred by classroom. When possible, two administrators were present. Before administration began, the class was divided into two groups, boys on one side and girls on the other. Assents were then signed and then one group was handed the NOBAGS and demographic questionnaire while the other group was handed the PRQ – self report. At this time, the group with the NOBAGS and demographic questionnaires was instructed to complete the questionnaires. They were instructed to raise their hands if they needed assistance and a researcher or their teacher would come by to assist them. Teachers were only asked to provide assistance in the case where only one administrator was present. Teachers were asked only to help with questions about understanding not help them complete the questionnaire. Teachers were also asked to respect the confidentiality of the responses.

While the first group completed their questionnaires, the second group completed the PRQ- self report. Each item of the PRQ – self report was read out loud. Students were encouraged to raise their hands if they had questions and administration was paused until questions could be addressed. After the PRQ - self report was completed by the second group, the first group was given the PRQ- self report and the second group was

given the NOBAGS and demographic questionnaire. The same procedures were observed.

For the second day of data collection, the SEQ – peer report was completed and any absent students were given the assent form so that they could be given the opportunity to provide their consent for participation. All absent students chose to participate in the second day of data collection. Each SEQ- peer report packet was in random order by gender so that girls rated girls first and boys rated boys first. The administrator then read the instructions (for the only time) for completion. Then each of the 14 items was read out loud for each number of students the children were rating. For example, if the class had 19 students, then the administrators read all 14 items 18 times.

For students who were absent the first day of data collection, a researcher spoke with their teachers to determine an optimal time to complete the measures. Data were successfully collected from all absent students.

Administration of the Intervention

Intervention for the classroom. Two and half weeks after pre-treatment data were collected, the six intervention sessions began (See Appendix E, *Kids Supporting Kids:* classroom intervention for more detailed description). Each group session lasted approximately 60 minutes and lasted over a three week period (approximately two sessions a week). For each of the six sessions, two graduate students from the School Psychology Program implemented the intervention following the *Kids Supporting Kids* treatment manual. One graduate student facilitator was the lead facilitator while the other graduate student facilitator was the assistant. For each session, one of the administrators

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and the teacher completed the session checklist to ensure that the facilitator was following the treatment protocol and covering all stated objectives. Two checklists were completed for each group to help minimize differences between groups and to make doubly sure all objectives were covered.

Classrooms were divided into two groups (two classrooms per group) and then divided by sex so there was a total of four groups. Group A (n=17) contained girls from classroom 1 and classroom 2. Group B (n =17) contained boys from classroom 1 and classroom 2. Group C (n =16) contained girls from classroom 3 and classroom 4. Group D (n=21) contained boys from classroom 3 and classroom 4. For each intervention session teachers were asked to indicate on their checklist any students who were absent from that session. For the four different groups most students (80.4%) attended all 6 intervention sessions. Fifteen point five percent missed one session and four point two percent missed two sessions. There were not any students who missed more than 2 sessions. The students who did not participate in the intervention because their parents did not give consent, went to the computer lab with another class, or went to another grade's classroom depending on the day.

The students who missed an intervention session were noted. Make-up sessions were considered by the research team and it was agreed that the interactions of the group were essential for treatment success. Following a more systemic, bystander approach, it was more important that the group work together to change group norms and group behavior rather than individual change; however, it was important to address dosage effects to ensure that absenteeism did not impact any treatment gains.

Intervention for the teachers. For teachers, two of the trained graduate students that implemented the classroom intervention also interacted with the teachers. Teacher participation included: participation in the intervention, email check-in, and three teacher forums. Teachers were emailed the checklists beforehand so they would have one for their records. They were also given the checklist before each session that they then returned to the facilitators. Email check-in occurred weekly when the checklists were sent. Teachers were asked if they had any questions or concerns at this time. Consultation was also offered.

Teachers also met with the facilitators for the three teacher forums (for more detailed description see Appendix E). During the forums, teachers shared their observations with facilitators commenting that they really appreciated how much the children were learning and sharing anecdotal information about students who had successfully used one of the intervention strategies in a bullying situation.

Administration of Post-Intervention Measures

After the intervention was implemented and the students implemented their no-bullying policy, measures were again administered following the same procedures as indicated for pre-treatment. Post-intervention data collection occurred two weeks after the last intervention session to give students time to integrate the problem solving approach, the Support Box, and their new no-bullying policy.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND ANALYSES

<u>Preliminary Analyses</u>

<u>Descriptive Statistics</u>

For both the SEQ- peer report and the PRQ self-report descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the average mean for all six scales represented by the two measures. Standard deviations and Alpha Coefficients were also reported. Means and standard deviations were assessed to determine the quality of the data as well as the variance of the data represented within each scale. Alpha coefficients were calculated to determine the internal consistency of each scale. High Alpha coefficients are indicative of a scale that is internally consistent and reliable. A repeated measures ANOVA was also performed to determine if there were any significant differences between treatment groups.

Social Experiences Questionnaire- peer report (SEQ- peer report). Social Aggression scores were calculated by summing the total peer-rated social aggression items. Scores could range from 7 to 35. Then the mean of those sums was calculated and used to determine each student's individual Social Aggression scale score. Prosocial Behavior scores were calculated by summing the total peer-rated Prosocial Behavior items. Based on the information from the pilot study, only three of the four Prosocial items were included in the analysis. Scores could range from 3 to 15. The mean of those sums was then calculated to determine each student's individual Prosocial Behavior scale

score. The means and standard deviations for the two scales are reported on Table 5.1 for both pre and post assessment.

Internal consistency was calculated for both the Social Aggression scale and the Prosocial Behavior scale using Chronbach's Alpha for pre and post assessment. The Alpha coefficients were calculated using the same techniques utilized in the pilot study (see Chapter 3, Descriptive Statistics, p.82). As can be seen on Table 5.1, internal consistency was high for both scales across time indicating that both scales are reliable.

Table 5.1

Descriptive Statistics for the SEQ- Peer Report

Variable	Pre-Assessment[a]			Post-Assessment[b]		
	M	SD	α	M	SD	α
Social Aggression	10.62	2.33	.98	10.19	2.07	.97
Prosocial Behavior	10.24	1.70	.97	10.00	1.50	.95

[a] $\underline{n} = 72$. [b] $\underline{n} = 71$.

Participant Role Questionnaire (PRQ)-self-report. The PRQ- self report has five scales. A mean score was calculated for each individual for each of the five scales. Scores could range from 3 to 9. Table 5.2 illustrates the group means and standard deviations for each of the five scales in pre and post assessment.

Internal consistency was assessed for each of the five scales. The Defender scale performed well in both pre and post assessment thus all three items were retained for analysis. The Bully scale, the Reinforcer scale, the Assistant scale, and the Outsider scale had low reliabilities. One poorly performing item from each scale was dropped to improve the internal consistency (See Table 5.2 for coefficient alphas on the two item scales). For the Bully, Reinforcer, and Assistant scales, the internal consistency improved after dropping one item from each scale. The Outsider scale was dropped and was not used for analysis since it still demonstrated inconsistent reliability.

Table 5.2

Descriptive Statistics for the PRQ-Self-Report

Variable	Pre-Assessment[a]			Post-Assessment[b]		
	M	SD	α	M	SD	α
Bully	3.03	.96	.53	2.79	.91	.47
Assistant	2.26	.63	.82	2.23	.57	.74
Reinforcer	2.50	.77	.56	2.62	.85	.51
Outsider	4.25	.92	.22	4.40	1.13	.72
Defender	7.26	1.60	.77	7.21	1.57	.80

[a]n = 72. [b]n = 71.

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<u>Testing for Outliers</u>

Mean scores for the six variables: Social Aggression, Prosocial Behavior, Defender, Bully, Reinforcer, and Assistant were converted to standard scores to determine if any outliers were present that might falsely inflate or deflate results. If any score was greater or less than 3 standard points higher or lower than the mean, then it was removed from the analyses to determine if results changed. Only one score for the Social Aggression scale met criteria for an outlier; however, when the analyses were run without this score it did not significantly impact the results so it was included in the analyses presented below.

<u>Correlational Analyses</u>

Correlational analyses were performed using Pearson's two-tailed correlation coefficient to determine each scales relationship to the other. Correlations between scales allow the researcher to assess the quality of the data prior to hypothesis testing. For instance, if two scales were highly positively correlated with each other it could be an indication that they are measuring the same construct and should be analyzed as one construct rather than two. Correlations were calculated between the Social Aggression and Prosocial Behavior scales to determine the relationship between the two as measured by the SEQ – peer report. It was expected that there would be a highly significant inverse relationship between the two. As can be seen on the correlation matrices on Tables 5.3 and 5.4, Social Aggression and Prosocial Behavior had a significant inverse relationship duplicating the results found from the pilot study.

Pearson's two-tailed correlation coefficient was also used to assess the relationship between the scales on the PRQ- self report. A correlation matrix demonstrating the findings can be found on Table 5.3 for pre-intervention assessment and Table 5.4 for post-intervention assessment. It was expected that a relationship between the Bully scale and the Reinforcer scale and the Bully scale and the Assistant scale would be present as indicated in the pilot results. It was also expected that since the sample size for the intervention was larger than the sample size for pilot, significant inverse relationships would exist between the Bully and Defender scales, the Defender and Assistant scales, and the Defender and Reinforcer scales.

Results indicated that the Bully scale was moderately positively correlated with both the Reinforcer and Assistant scales in both pre and post assessment. In addition, unlike in the pilot results, the Reinforcer scale and the Assistant scale were also moderately correlated with one another for Time 1 and Time 2. Furthermore, the Defender scale demonstrated a moderate inverse relationship with Bully, Reinforcer, and Assistant. In other words, all pro-bullying behaviors were positively related to one another and negatively related to anti-bullying action.

Lastly, Pearson's two-tailed correlation coefficient was used to calculate the relationship between scales on both the PRQ-self report and the SEQ- peer report. Results are located in the correlation matrices on both Tables 5.3 and 5.4. As can be seen from the tables, the pre-assessment results demonstrate that Social Aggression had a weak but significantly positive relationship with the Assistant scale. Prosocial Behavior had a weak but significant inverse relationship with Assistant and a weak but significant

positive relationship with Defender. The only result that remained significant in post-intervention assessment was the relationship between Prosocial Behavior and Assistant, which demonstrated a weak but significant negative relationship.

Table 5.3

Correlation Matrix for the SEQ- peer report and the PRQ – self report: Pre-Intervention (n = 72)

Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Social						
2. Prosocial	-.66**					
3. Defender	-.09	.27*				
4. Bully	.23	-.06	-.32**			
5. Assistant	.26*	-.27*	-.35**	.43**		
6. Reinforcer	.24	-.21	-.41**	.46**	.57**	

Note: * indicates significance at the .05 level, ** indicates significance at the .01 level

Table 5.4

Correlation Matrix for the SEQ- peer report and the PRQ – self report: Post-Intervention (n = 71)

Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Social						
2. Prosocial	-.56**					
3. Defender	-.01	.11				
4. Bully	.01	.00	-.49**			
5. Assistant	.11	-.26*	-.41**	.46**		
6. Reinforcer	.10	-.08	-.49**	.52**	.51**	

Note: *indicates significance at the .05 level, ** indicates significance at the .01 level

Differences Between Treatment Groups

　　　　To examine if there were any significant differences on the variables of interest (social aggression, prosocial behavior, defender behavior, bully behavior, assistant behavior, and reinforcer behavior), between treatment groups at pre-test a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The only significant difference between the four intervention groups at pre-test was for prosocial behavior ($F = 5.012$, $p = .003$). When examining the means for the four intervention groups it is clear that at pre-test, girls' ($m = 11.062$ and 11.017) Prosocial Behavior mean scores were higher than boys' Prosocial Behavior mean scores ($m = 9.48$ and 9.71). This finding is consistent with previous literature that girls are generally rated as more prosocial than boys (Zimmer-Gimbeck et. al., 2005). For the remaining variables of interest (social aggression, bully behavior, defender behavior, assistant behavior, and reinforcer behavior) no significant differences were found (See Table 5.5. for results).

Table 5.5

Results of the one way ANOVA for significant differences between intervention groups at

pre-test (n = 72)

Variable	SS	df	MS	F	p
Social	30.90	3	10.298	1.97	.126
Prosocial	37.27	3	12.42	5.01	.003**
Defender	11.16	3	3.72	1.48	.228
Bully	3.57	3	1.19	1.30	.283
Assistant	.472	3	.16	.39	.761
Reinforcer	5.36	3	1.79	2.23	.093

Note: *indicates significance at the .05 level, ** indicates significance at the .01 level

<u>Main Analyses</u>

<u>Hypothesis #1:</u> *There will be a significant main effect for gender as measured by the individual average social aggression scale score on the SEQ-peer report. Specifically, it is hypothesized that girls' individual average social aggression scale scores will be higher at pre-treatment than boys' individual average social aggression scale scores at pre-treatment.*

Hypothesis one was tested using an independent samples t-test to determine if there were significant differences between boys' and girls' mean scores on the Social Aggression scale as measured by the SEQ – peer report. The results of the independent samples t-test, $t = 1.07$, $p > .01$, indicated that no significant differences existed between boys and girls at pre-test. Contrary to the predicted outcome, boys and girls were perceived by peers to engage in socially aggressive behaviors in equal amounts.

<u>Hypothesis #2</u>: *There will be a significant main effect across time in mean scores on social aggression as measured by the individual average social aggression scale score on the SEQ- peer report.*

<u>Hypothesis #3:</u> *There will not be an interaction effect between classroom and time.*

<u>Hypothesis #4:</u> *There will be an interaction effect between gender and time. Girls will experience a larger treatment effect than boys due to the prediction that they will report higher levels of social aggression at pre-treatment.*

To assess the effectiveness of the treatment at reducing peer perceived socially aggressive behaviors a repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the

between-participants factors of gender and classroom, and the within-participants factor of time (e.g., pre and post assessment) on the subscale of Social Aggression from the SEQ – peer report was performed. Results, presented on Table 5.6, demonstrate support for hypothesis two. The significant main effect indicates that the treatment was successful at reducing peer perceived socially aggressive behaviors; however, this effect was qualified by interaction effects (see plot in Figure 5.1 for a graphic representation of results).

The repeated measures ANOVA also tested for interaction effects between time and gender and time and classroom. Results are depicted on Table 5.6. The interaction between gender and time was significant indicating that the treatment had differential effects depending on gender which as indicated above, qualifies the main effect of time. After examining the plot (shown in Figure 5.1), it is clear that boys showed a greater decrease in socially aggressive behaviors over time. In other words, contrary to hypothesis 4, the intervention seemed to benefit boys but not girls.

To support the graphic evidence that boys' social aggression mean scores declined over time, a dependent samples t-test was performed. Results indicate that pre and post test means for social aggression were significantly different for boys, $t = 2.821$, $p < .01$, but not significantly different for girls, $t = .684$, $p > .05$. These results support the supposition made from the plot in Figure 5.1, boys seemed to benefit from the intervention while girls did not.

Contrary to hypothesis 3, the interaction between classroom and time was also significant. Dependent samples t-tests were performed to examine if classrooms

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responded differently to the intervention. For classroom 1 ($t = 3.058$, $p < .01$) and classroom 2 ($t = 3.389$, $p < .01$) social aggression mean scores significantly declined from pre-test to post test. Classroom 2 ($t = .513$, $p > .05$) and classroom 4 ($t = -.987$, $p > .05$) social aggression mean scores did not significantly decrease from pre-test to post-test. To examine if these differences could be attributed to significant differences at pre or post-test, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed with the dependent variable as the social aggression mean score and the independent variable as classroom. Results suggest that at pre-test there was a significant difference between classrooms ($F = 6.603$, $p < .01$). Post-hoc comparisons using Bonferroni's correction indicated that classroom 2 had a significantly lower mean than classrooms 1, 3, and 4 at pre-test. Results for post-test differences for social aggression mean scores and classrooms demonstrated that there were significant differences between classrooms at post-test ($F = 6.283$, $p < .01$). Post-hoc comparisons using Bonferroni's correction indicated that classroom 2 still had a significantly different social aggressive mean score at post-test.

It could be that classroom 2's social aggression mean score did not significantly change from pre-test to post-test because it was already so much lower than the other three classrooms. As can be seen in Figure 5.2, at post-test, classroom 2's social aggression mean score was still quite a bit lower than classroom 1 and 3's which had significantly decreased from pre-test scores. For classroom 4, Figure 5.2 might shed light on why significant pre/post differences were not found for social aggression mean scores. Classroom 4's mean score increased rather than decreased, although not to a significant degree.

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Practical significance was also assessed by calculating effect size using Partial Eta squared (η^2). Scruggs and Mastropieri (1998) argued that in addition to statistical significance, effect size should be calculated to determine the relevance of the statistically significant result. If the result has a low effect size but has statistical significance, the result will most likely have unnoticeable practical effects (i.e., unobservable changes in behavior). When the effect size is large, however, the statistical results can be assumed to have observable effects in an everyday context. According to Cohen (1977), the size of the effect can be determined by the following parameters: $\eta^2 >$ .138 can be considered a large effect, $\eta^2 > .059$ a medium effect, and $\eta^2 > .01$ a small effect. For this study, the main effect demonstrating the effectiveness of the intervention at decreasing social aggression qualified as a large effect (see Table 5.6 for results), the time x gender interaction a small effect, and the time x classroom a large effect.

Table 5.6

Results of repeated measures ANOVA for Social Aggression scale from SEQ-peer report (n = 71)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Time	6.875	1	6.875	10.987	.002	.149
Time x Gender	3.818	1	3.818	6.102	.016	.088
Time x Classroom	12.701	3	4.234	6.766	.000	.244
Time x Gender x Classroom	2.532	3	.844	1.349	.267	.060
Error (time)	39.418	63	.626			
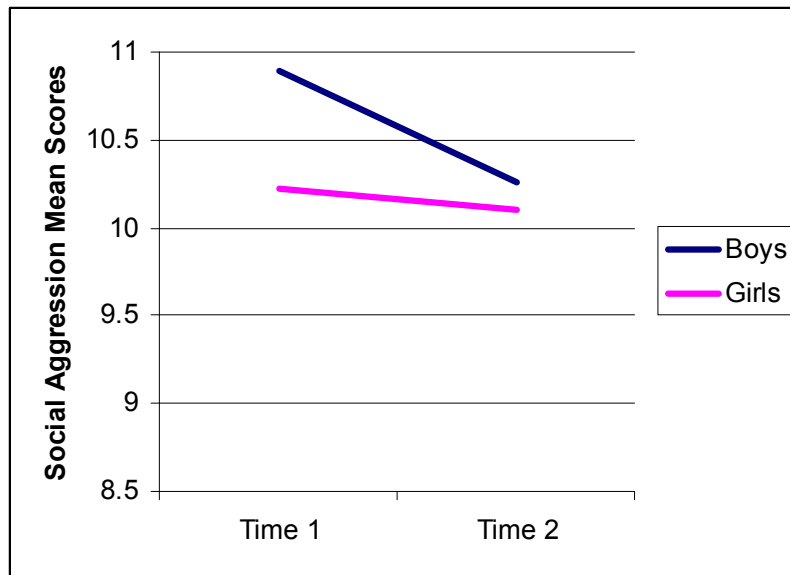
Figure 5.1. Intervention effects for boys and girls from Time 1 to Time 2
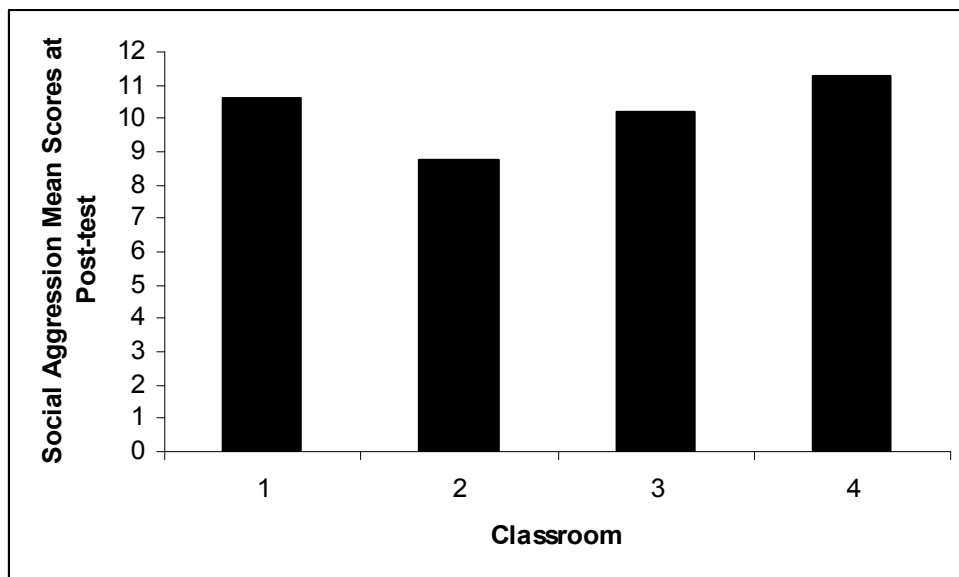
Figure 5.2. Post-test Social Aggression mean scores by classroom

Hypothesis #5: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the individual prosocial behavior scale score as measured by the SEQ – peer report. It is predicted that prosocial behavior will increase from pre-treatment to post-treatment.*

To assess the effectiveness of the treatment at increasing the incidence of peer perceived prosocial behaviors a repeated measures ANOVA with the between-participants factors of gender and classroom, and the within-participants factor of time on the subscale of Prosocial Behavior from the SEQ-peer report was performed. Results, presented on Table 5.7, did not support the hypothesis. Prosocial behaviors decreased rather than increased from time one to time two.

The interaction between time and gender was also significant. To better understand this interaction, a post hoc independent samples t-test was performed. There was a significant difference between boys' and girls' prosocial behavior means at pre-test, $t = -4.221$, $p < .01$, which indicated that prior to the intervention girls were rated as significantly more prosocial than boys (m = 11.03 for girls, and m = 9.53 for boys). After the intervention, girls' prosocial mean decreased (m= 10.63), more than boys' prosocial mean which had only a very slight decrease (m=9.46).

The interaction between time and classroom was not significant, but the interaction between time, classroom, and gender was significant. To understand the relationship between these three variables it is helpful to examine Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4. As can be seen from the plots depicted, the slopes of the two classrooms in Figure 5.3 are parallel. In other words, boys' and girls' prosocial behavior decreased at the same rate. The slopes in figure 5.4, though, do not decrease at the same rate; instead, the

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means are approaching one another. It appears then that for two of the classrooms, boys and girls changed similarly, while boys and girls in the other two classrooms did not.

To provide statistical evidence for the assumptions made from Figures 5.3 and 5.4, a repeated measures ANOVA was performed with the between participants factor of gender and the within participant factor of time for each of the four classrooms. If the assumptions are correct, then it would be expected that classrooms 1 and 4 would have a significant gender x time interaction, meaning that boys and girls changed differently over time. It would then be expected that no gender x time interaction would exist for classrooms 2 and 3 since boys and girls seemed to respond similarly to the intervention as represented by their parallel decreases. Results indicate that classroom 1 ($F = 11.687$, $p = .005$) did indeed have a significant time x gender interaction while classroom 4 ($F = 3.413$, $p = .082$) gender x time interaction approached significance. Classroom 2 ($F = .192$, $p = .667$) and classroom 3 ($F = .000$, $p = .988$) did not have significant gender x time interactions.

To further understand this three way interaction, the main effect of time for each classroom was examined. To determine if each classroom significantly changed from pre-test to post-test a repeated measures ANOVA was performed with the within participant factor of time for each of the four classrooms. For Classrooms 1 ($F = 2.142$, $p = .165$), 2 ($F = 3.885$, $p = .064$), and 4 ($F = .023$, $p = .880$), there was no significant main effect for time. For Classroom 3, there was a significant main effect for time ($F = 6.062$, $p = .025$). As mentioned above, classroom 3 did not have a significant gender interaction, indicating that both boys' and girls' prosocial behavior significantly

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decreased from time 1 to time 2. This main effect could also explain why the three way interaction time x gender x classroom was present.

Effect size was also calculated. The main effect size of prosocial behavior decreasing over time qualified as a medium effect. The interaction effect size for time x gender qualified as a medium effect, and the interaction effect size for time x gender x classroom qualified as a large effect size.

Table 5.7

Results of repeated measures ANOVA for Prosocial Behavior scale from SEQ-peer report (n = 71)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Time	1.590	1	1.590	8.590	.005	.120
Time x Gender	1.213	1	1.213	6.552	.013	.094
Time x Classroom	.377	3	.126	.679	.568	.031
Time x Gender x Classroom	1.905	3	.635	3.431	.022	.140
Error (time)	11.659	63	.185			
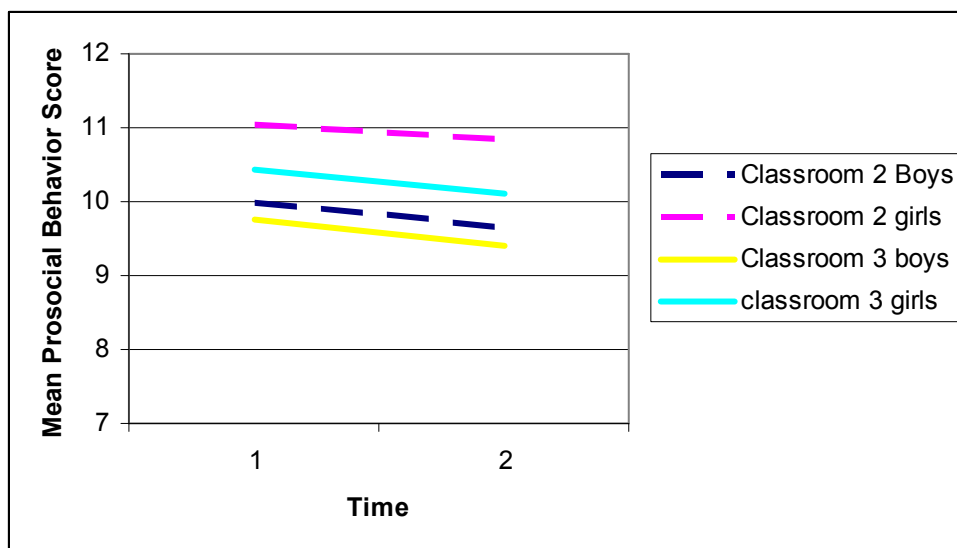
Figure 5.3. Intervention effects for boys and girls by classroom on Prosocial Behavior
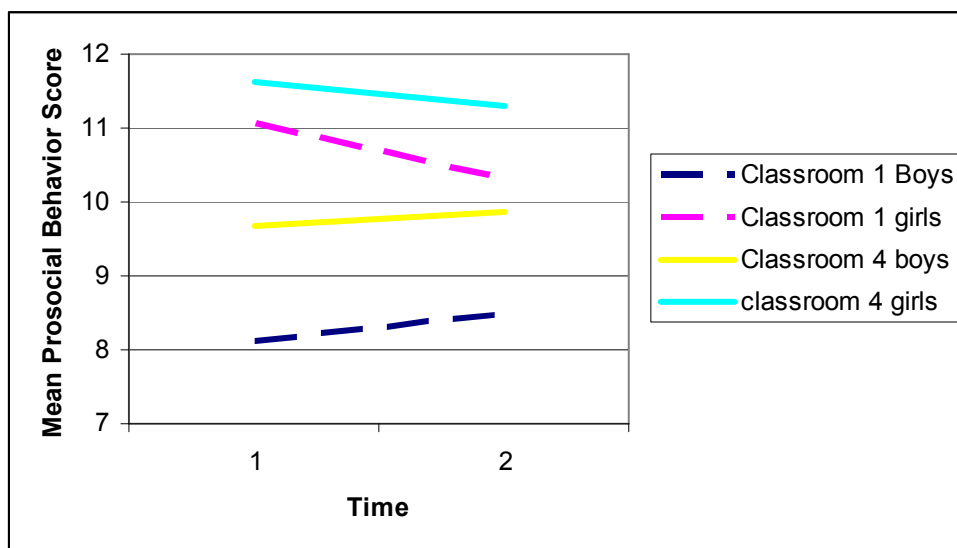
Figure 5.4. Intervention effects for boys and girls by classroom on Prosocial Behavior

Hypothesis #6: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average defender scale score on the PRQ- self report. The average defender scale score will increase across time.*

To assess whether the intervention increased the likelihood that children would act as defenders in a bullying situation, a repeated measures ANOVA with the between-participants factors of gender and classroom, and the within participants factor of time on the subscale of Defender from the PRQ – self report was performed. Results, presented on Table 5.8, did not achieve statistical significance; therefore, there was no support for the hypothesis. The interactions of time x gender, time x classroom, and time x gender x classroom were also not statistically significant.

Table 5.8

Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA for Defender scale on the PRQ – self report (n=71)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Time	.099	1	.099	.170	.681	.003
Time x Gender	1.412	1	1.412	2.424	.124	.037
Time x Classroom	4.523	3	1.508	2.588	.061	.110
Time x Gender x Classroom	2.056	3	.685	1.176	.326	.053
Error (time)	36.701	63	.583			

Hypothesis #7: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average outsider scale score on the PRQ- self report.   The average outsider scale score will increase across time.*

This hypothesis could not be tested since the psychometric properties of the outsider scale were not reliably internally consistent.

Hypothesis #8: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average bully scale score on the PRQ- self report.   The average bully scale score will decrease across time.*

To determine if the intervention was effective at reducing self-reported bullying behavior, a repeated measures ANOVA with the between-participants factors of gender and classroom, and the within participants factor of time, on the subscale of Bully from the PRQ- self report was performed. Results, presented on Table 5.9, indicated support for the hypothesis. A plot of the results (depicted in Figure 5.5) was examined to determine the direction of change which showed that the intervention decreased bullying behavior. There were no interaction effects. The effect size for the main effect of the change in bullying behavior over time was medium.

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Table 5.9

Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA for Bully scale on the PRQ – self report (n = 71)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Time	2.353	1	2.353	4.906	.030	.072
Time x Gender	.174	1	.174	.362	.550	.006
Time x Classroom	.316	3	.105	.219	.883	.010
Time x Gender x Classroom	.734	3	.245	.510	.677	.024
Error (time)	30.211	63	.480	.480		
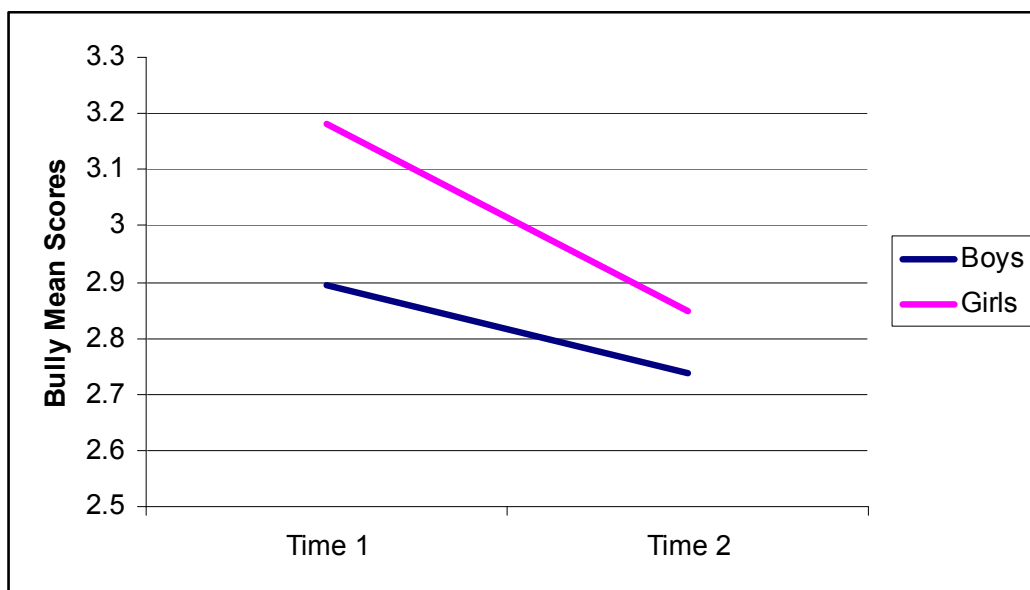
Figure 5.5. Intervention effects for Bully behavior

Hypothesis #9: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average assistant scale score on the PRQ- self report. The average assistant scale score will decrease across time.*

To assess whether the intervention was effective at decreasing how often students assisted the bully, a repeated measures ANOVA with the between-participants factors of gender and classroom, and the within participants factor of time, on the subscale of Assistant from the PRQ- self report was performed. Results, depicted on Table 5.10 indicated that there was not a statistically significant change; therefore, there did not appear to be any change on how often students said they would assist the bully from pre-test to post-test. There were also no interaction effects between time x gender, time x classroom, and time x gender x classroom.

Table 5.10

Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA for Assistant scale on the PRQ – self report (n=71)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Time	.133	1	.133	.777	.381	.012
Time x Gender	.020	1	.020	.120	.731	.002
Time x Classroom	.490	3	.163	.954	.420	.043
Time x Gender x Classroom	.119	3	.040	.232	.874	.011
Error (time)	10.791	63	.171			

Hypothesis #10: *There will be a significant main effect across time as measured by the average reinforcer scale score on the PRQ- self report.   The average reinforcer scale score will decrease across time.*

To determine if the intervention was effective at reducing how often students reported that they would reinforce bullying behavior, a repeated measures ANOVA with the between-participants factors of gender and classroom, and the within participants factor of time, on the subscale of Reinforcer from the PRQ- self report was performed. Results depicted on Table 5.11 demonstrated that there was no statistical evidence for change. In other words, students' self ratings did not significantly change from pre-test to post-test. There were also no interaction effects between time and gender, time and classroom, and time, gender, and classroom.

Table 5.11

Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA for Reinforcer scale on the PRQ – self report (n = 71)

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Time	.419	1	.419	.960	.331	.015
Time x Gender	.051	1	.051	.117	.733	.002
Time x Classroom	.338	3	.113	.258	.855	.012
Time x Gender x Classroom	1.046	3	.349	.799	.499	.037
Error (time)	27.496	63	.436			

Social Validity of the Intervention

To assess social validity of the intervention, students participating in the intervention were asked questions by the facilitators at the end of each session about what they liked best about each session and what they liked least. The students in the intervention study replied that they really appreciated the opportunity to talk about bullying and share the incidents that had happened to them. The students really seemed to find the experience to be cathartic and eagerly shared their emotions regarding situations in which they were the victim or the bully. Students also reported that they loved role playing possible defender behaviors. They reported that they did not like sitting for so long (primarily for sessions more lecture oriented) and that they wished they could have more role plays.

When asked how they felt the intervention impacted them, students replied that they felt *Kids Supporting Kids* was really helpful. They learned that bullying included social and physical bullying, what to do in bullying situations to help stop the behavior, and that acting as a bystander contributes to bullying too. Students reported that their classroom felt safer, that more students were intervening by acting as the defender, and that less bullying was occurring because students knew others were keeping an eye out. One student wrote the following when asked to define what a bully is after the six intervention sessions had taken place: "Bullying- I never see it anymore, ever since *Kids Supporting Kids,* kids are scared to bully others." Another student wrote: "People have been standing up for each other and more people have been becoming defenders! We have sort of long way to go but we are off to a good start.

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Before and after the six intervention sessions, students were asked to write down what they thought a bully was. What behaviors did they think constituted bullying? Before the intervention, the majority of definitions listed behaviors or described behaviors that only referred to overt or physical forms of bullying. Only 30% of responses contained behaviors that could be defined as social aggression, such as gossiping and excluding. After the intervention, 63% of responses included socially aggressive behaviors or stated that bullying consisted of both physical and social bullying behaviors.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of a classroom-based intervention (*Kids Supporting Kids)* in reducing social aggression among fourth grade children. It was also hoped that the intervention would impact the participant roles that children assume in bullying interactions so they would be more likely to assume victim-supportive roles (i.e., defender) and less likely to assume bully-supportive roles (i.e., bully, assistant, reinforcer). Although many interventions have been developed to reduce levels of bullying, this is the first known intervention to target and measure reduction of social aggression among children in school settings.

It was hypothesized that: 1. Children's peer-rated social aggression scores as measured by the Social Experiences Questionnaire- peer report (SEQ-peer report) would decrease from pre-test to post-test; 2. Children's peer-rated prosocial behavior scores as measured by the SEQ-peer report would increase from pre-test to post-test, 3. Children's self-reported defender behavior as measured by the PRQ- self report would increase from pre-test to post-test; 4. Children's self-reported bully, reinforcer, and assistant behaviors would decrease from pre-test to post-test. It was further assumed that gender differences would be apparent in children's social aggression scores with girls' social aggression scores being higher at pre-test than boys and girls' social aggression scores decreasing to a greater degree than boy's social aggression scores after the intervention.

The key findings from this study were that social aggression scores for boys decreased from pre-test to post-test while girls did not evidence significant change.

Additionally, self-reported bullying behavior for both boys and girls significantly decreased from pre-test to post-test. These results demonstrate promising support for the efficacy of the *Kids Supporting Kids Intervention.* Contrary to the hypotheses, some unexpected findings of this study were girls' social aggression scores did not change, that prosocial behavior decreased from pre-test to post-test, and that participant role behaviors evidenced no change. Lastly, this study demonstrated the usefulness of peer ratings for assessing social aggression in the classroom.

This chapter will discuss the major findings relative to the purposes and hypotheses of the study. Study strengths and weaknesses will be noted, and implications of the research findings will be suggested. Future directions for research will also be proposed.

<u>Assessing the efficacy of the intervention</u>

In general, the results from this study demonstrated promising support for the effectiveness of the intervention in reducing social aggression among fourth grade children. Socially aggressive behaviors were measured using the SEQ- peer report which asked peers to rate their fellow classmates on how often they think each classmate was socially aggressive. Post-intervention data indicated that boys rated their peers' socially aggressive behaviors as significantly lower after the intervention while girls' social aggression scores did not change significantly.

Research on social aggression and gender has been decidedly murky, and in general has made it difficult to draw any conclusions about gender differences in the frequency of socially aggressive behaviors and in response to intervention. This study

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found that although there were no differences in social aggression at pre-intervention, there were significant differences after intervention. Thus, boys and girls responded differently to the intervention. The finding that there were no differences at pre-treatment is consistent with some previous studies, which have found that boys and girls use socially aggressive behaviors to an equal degree before the age of 11 (Osterman et. al., 1994; Tapper & Boulton, 2004). It is not until middle school that gender differences begin to emerge. Other studies have found that girls are consistently more socially aggressive than boys (Crick et. al., 2002). One reason why this study may have found different results than Crick's previous studies is that Crick examines gender differences using the means of children who scored one standard deviation above the mean for social aggression rather than the social aggression means of all the children. It could be that gender differences are more apparent when examining the extremes of aggressive behavior.

Previous literature, however, provides less guidance in explaining the finding that girls and boys responded differently to the intervention. The one explanation previous research has offered is that boys respond more favorably to interventions because they use overt aggression while girls use social aggression (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003). This study, however found that prior to intervention, boys and girls used social aggression in equal amounts.

An alternative explanation could be that boys and girls respond differently to interventions due to gender differences in social behavior rather than gender differences in type of aggression preferred. Research on friendship patterns of boys and girls has

shown that girls interact in tighter social groups whereas boys prefer a looser social structure (Bjorkqvist, et. al., 1992; Lagerspetz, et. al., 1988; Galen & Underwood, 1997). It could be that because girls have a main goal of close group membership that they find socially aggressive behaviors more effective at achieving this sense of closeness (i.e., through exclusion of out groups and relationship manipulation). Furthermore, they may be too fearful of sacrificing group closeness to interfere with group proceedings by intervening on the victim's behalf. Boys on the other hand might be less invested in the use of socially aggressive behaviors because they do not have the same goal of closeness. In addition, previous research has shown that boys are more likely to intervene in a bullying situation than girls (Hawkins, Peplar, & Craig, 2001). It is then possible, that after students were educated about the negative consequences of social aggression during the intervention, boys were then more likely than girls to find other effective strategies to achieve their friendship goals.

In future studies, it will be important to determine if girls need more social support from their peer groups to start using effective intervention strategies. Future research should also continue to examine gender differences in response to interventions targeting social aggression. Are the results from this study a product of this particular population? Or do boys and girls typically respond differently to bullying interventions regardless of the type of aggression targeted? It would also be helpful to examine the processes at work that are underlying change in aggressive behavior.

In addition to decreasing peer-reported social aggression, the intervention also reduced self-reported bullying behavior in boys and girls. Bullying behavior was

measured by the PRQ-self report in which students were provided with vignettes that reflected children bullying others. Consistent with the goals of the intervention to reduce social aggression, bullying as depicted in the vignettes, included name-calling, social exclusion, and indirect aggression. After each vignette, statements were made asking how often students would act like the different characters in the vignettes. At post-intervention, students rated themselves as less likely to behave like the bully in the vignette providing further evidence for the efficacy of this intervention in reducing social aggression.

In sum, the key statistical findings of this study suggest promising support for the ability of the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention to reduce peer-reported and self-reported bullying behaviors. Informal observations of the social validity of the intervention provided further support for the efficacy of the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention. To informally assess social validity, teachers and students were asked to generate feedback after every session and at the end of the intervention. Students reported to facilitators that they thought bullying was happening less often, and that students were more aware of bullying behaviors. In general, they perceived their classroom to be safer and friendlier, and they thought that students were beginning to treat each other better. Several students shared stories and examples of how they had started changing their behavior when they saw bullying and how they were more likely to defend the victim. Teachers also reported positive changes. In fact, teachers stated that the positive changes were most evident when they went on a three night science trip as a class. In previous years when students had gone on the science trip, students fought and did not get along. Teachers stated that

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this was the first year that everything went smoothly; they perceived that the intervention helped students get along better and work out their own problems.

An unexpected study finding was that prosocial behavior, like peer-rated social aggression and self-reported bullying behavior, also decreased from pre-test to post-test, albeit differently for boys and girls depending on their classroom. In other words, there was a three-way statistical interaction between classroom, gender, and time. In two of four classrooms, girls' level of prosocial behavior decreased, while boys' level of prosocial behavior increased. For the other two classrooms, both boys' and girls' level of prosocial behavior declined at post-test. A consistent result for all four classrooms was that girls' peer-rated level of prosocial behavior decreased. In addition, boys' level of prosocial behavior from two of the classrooms decreased. It should be noted that even though the majority of students' level of prosocial behavior declined, peers were still rating one another as behaving in prosocial ways the majority of the time.

One possible explanation for these results is methodological constraints due to the general nature of the prosocial scale used and the time the post-intervention data was collected. The items used to measure prosocial behavior were not specifically related to the defender behaviors (does this person do nice things for other classmates, does this person give help to classmates who need it, and does this person try to cheer up other classmates who are upset or sad about something) that were the focus of the intervention. The items that represented the prosocial scale reflected behaviors that students might use outside of the bullying context. Since the intervention was not specifically designed to increase more general prosocial behaviors, it should not necessarily be expected that

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these behaviors would increase from pre-test to post-test. Regarding the timing of the data collection, post-intervention measures were completed after students had returned from a trip during which they spent three days and nights with one another. Post-intervention prosocial peer ratings may have been affected by the changed behavioral context.

Alternatively, the intervention may have influenced student's conceptions of social aggression and prosocial behavior in a manner that influenced their ratings of peer prosocial behavior. Prior to the intervention, the majority of students did not include socially aggressive behaviors in their bullying definitions, but after the intervention the majority of students did include socially aggressive behaviors. It could be that the intervention increased their awareness of socially aggressive behaviors and how harmful these behaviors could be. Students, specifically girls, shared in their groups their painful feelings surrounding social aggression incidents. It is then possible that girls started to reflect on their friends' behaviors toward one another and might have started to see them as less prosocial than before. This effect might have been larger for girls because they are more distressed in general by social aggression than boys (Galen & Underwood, 1997). In future research, it will be important to examine further the impact of this intervention on prosocial behavior. It may be necessary to add content to the intervention that specifically addresses prosocial behaviors so that more consistent treatment results can be attained. Future research should also consider a measure that more specifically addresses prosocial behavior as it relates to bullying. More exacting measurement might

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shed more light on how children's prosocial behavior changes after bullying interventions.

Hypotheses regarding participant role behavior were not supported by the results. Students did not show a significant change in defender behavior, assistant behavior, and reinforcer behavior. Methodological limitations of the PRQ-self-report may have restricted the range of scores such that the detection of significant treatment effects in defender, assistant, and reinforcer behavior was constrained. At pre-test students were already rating themselves at extreme positive ends of the rating scale indicating they perceived themselves to behave with peers in a socially desirable way. Because of the students' high self-ratings there was little room for statistical improvement. This finding is not surprising since research has demonstrated that students will often rate themselves based on how they would like to think they would act rather than how they would actually behave (Hawkins, Peplar, & Craig, 2001). Furthermore, the PRQ- self report (with the exception of the defender scale) demonstrated poor internal consistency. It could be that if more reliable and consistent scales were developed for the PRQ, then change in participant roles would have been detected.

Another possible explanation for the lack of hypothesized change in the PRQ is that the scales did not delineate between active and passive participant role behaviors. For the Assistant and Reinforcer scales, students were more likely to admit to passive behaviors such as walking away with a friend who was bullying. They were less likely to endorse active participant behaviors. For example, they rarely said they would participate by laughing, chanting, or calling names. It could be that passive behaviors are

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more common, that participants wished to appear socially desirable, or that students were less likely to endorse more offensive behaviors.

Results of this study indicate that the PRQ requires additional development and psychometric validation prior to subsequent use in research.   In the future, to decrease social desirability, a peer-report format may be a more desirable format over self-report, or it may be helpful to add a social desirability scale to the PRQ. Additional scales might be necessary to improve internal consistency so that items within a scale represent one main idea. For instance, it might be helpful to separate active and passive items into two separate scales for the assistant and reinforcer scales. For the outsider scale further pilot will be needed to determine how best to depict outsiders in the vignette so that they are recognizable and clearly understood since this scale could not be interpreted due to poor reliability.

One final noteworthy finding of this study was the successful adaptation of the Social Experiences Questionnaire from a peer nomination to peer rating format that broadened the measurement of indirect aggression in its relational aggression scale. While peer ratings have been used in several former studies (Bjorqkvist, 1992; Kaukiainen et. al., 1999; Lagerspetz et. al., 1988; Osterman et. al., 1994; Salmivalli et. al., 2005), this study was the first to adapt the SEQ to a peer report format. This change was useful since peer report allows researchers to assess change over time and is reportedly a more sensitive measure of peer behavior than peer nominations (Underwood, 2003). Accordingly, children usually are not reliable self-reporters of socially aggressive behavior (Crothers & Levinson, 2004). They tend to underestimate the degree to which

they actually socially aggress. For all of these reasons, it was important to find a reliable and valid peer-report measure of social aggression.

Both the pilot and the intervention studies demonstrated that the SEQ was reliable when used as a peer report measure and proved sensitive to change over time. Both of these findings will be useful in future studies that wish to obtain a reliable and sensitive report of socially aggressive behavior in the classroom. Results also indicated that the new Social Aggression scale had excellent internal consistency. Item analysis indicated that all items contributed to the construct of social aggression and formed a consistent and reliable scale. These results not only replicated Underwood and Paquette's (1999) results which demonstrated that the indirect items were valuable additions to the scale, but also demonstrated that the value of adding the indirect items remained unchanged when the measure was in peer report format.

<u>Limitations of the current study</u>

While this study has the potential to provide rewarding results, it does present several limitations. The first limitation is that the intervention followed a whole-classroom approach rather than a whole school approach. In this study, only the fourth grade received the intervention. Research indicates that school-wide prevention strategies are the most efficacious at controlling bullying behavior (Greene, 2004; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003; Sutton & Keogh, 2000).

In addition, it would have been helpful to follow intervention effects over a longer time period. Follow up measurement would have helped shed light on whether or not treatment effects continued after researchers left. Peer ratings could have reflected an

initial drop in socially aggressive behaviors that might not maintain itself over time. As the intervention message fades, it is possible that children will once again start to become more accepting of socially aggressive behavior. One common reason interventions fail is because the interventions come to a halt once researchers leave (Wilson, Lipsey, Derzon, 2003). In future studies, it will be important to assess the long-term effectiveness of the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention, and the degree to which the school continued to follow intervention protocol (i.e., code of conduct and Support Box).

Furthermore, since this study did not include a control group, it is difficult to ascertain if the decline in aggressive behaviors was actually due to the intervention or some other unknown factor. Control groups, when matched to the intervention group, can help determine if social aggression would have declined regardless of the presence of the intervention. In order to provide further support for the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention, it will be necessary to use a more rigorous treatment design that includes random assignment and a control group.

Another possible limitation is that the intervention only addressed the school system. While it is possible that indirect effects will ripple through students' ecology, it would have been ideal if the intervention had intervened in additional levels of children's ecology. Vernberg and Gamm (2003) argued that if all systems in a child's life are not addressed, then the systems left out of the intervention could undermine the participating systems. For example, it is possible that positive effects experienced by this intervention could be displaced by the family. Families are critical in helping their children develop social behaviors. Families can influence bullying behavior in their children through

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inconsistent parenting (Perry, Hodges, & Egan, 2001; Rodkin & Hodges, 2003; Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986; Stevens et. al., 2002), social modeling (Ahmed & Braithwaite, 2004; Baldry & Farrington, 2000; Eddy et. al., 2000; Griffin & Gross, 2003; Loeber & Dishion, 1984), or overall family conflict (Carney & Merrel, 2001; Duncun, 2004). Future interventions for social aggression may wish to include an intervention targeted at children's families to help parents learn how to promote prosocial behaviors and support positive behavior changes in their children.

Future studies should also further explore a way to better evaluate participant role behavior and its change over time. A limitation of this study was the measurement used to assess participant role behavior. The PRQ-self report was neither reliable nor controlled for socially desirable responding. For future studies, it will be important to develop a more consistent, reliable, and effective means of assessing participant role behavior.

Researchers recommend that multiple methods of assessment be used to measure a behavior as complex as bullying (Wolke, et. al., 2000). In the current study self-report and peer-report methods were used to obtain information about the efficacy of the intervention. Obtaining teacher report and independent observational data would have provided further evidence of the success of the intervention. Independent observational data would also have helped to further determine the social validity of the intervention. Was student behavior actually different from pre-test to post-test? Were the effects shown in the statistical analysis and through informal report, observable by a trained and independent eye?

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Lastly, the success of this intervention could have been dependent on the school in which it was administered. The school used for this study had a student population that was primarily Caucasian, middle to upper class, and living in intact families. Teachers were enthusiastic participants in the intervention, and the school was well resourced. It could be that the same intervention would not have been as effective in a school with a different environment or population. For instance a school that is more ethnically diverse or that has a mostly low socio-economic student population might not have the same results. The efficacy of this intervention will need to be confirmed in a similar school environment to test its reliability as well as tested in different school environments to ascertain its generalizability.

Implications of Research Findings

As indicated by the results from this study, the intervention demonstrated promise in its ability to positively impact the expression of social aggression in the classroom as measured by a decline of peer-rated socially aggressive behaviors. The social implications of a successful intervention for social aggression are manifold. Social aggression is detrimental to the well-being of students and can have lasting long-term effects. Research on the negative effects of social aggression has indicated that both victims and perpetrators alike experience loneliness and depression (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Underwood, 2003). In addition, victims are more likely to have a low self-concept (Paquette & Underwood, 1999), social anxiety and avoidance (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996), and fear and paranoia (Owens et. al., 2000a; Owens et. al., 2000c). A successful intervention can help immunize students from these effects and hopefully over time will

also encourage youngsters to interact in more pro-social ways, helping to build character as they grow. Fostering positive interactions between children will most likely help improve overall school climate and should help to make the school a positive learning environment for all children.

Despite the promising support for finding a successful intervention for social aggression in general, and the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention in particular, there is still a great deal of future research to consider. As mentioned throughout the previous paragraphs the conclusions drawn from this study and the limitations of this study provide several indicators for future directions for social aggression and intervention research. In summary, the four main areas where more research is needed are: 1. Future studies will be needed to further examine the efficacy of the intervention and provide a stronger research foundation to indicate that the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention is an evidence-based intervention; 2. The underlying mechanisms of behavior change should be examined to determine the specific change agents responsible for reduction in social aggression; 3. Gender differences in the propagation of social aggression and gender differences in response to intervention need to be further explored and understood; and 4. Further research is needed to develop a psychometrically sound participant roles questionnaire that examines both overt and social aggression, and an instrument should be created to specifically measure prosocial behavior as it pertains to bullying.

In order to establish the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention as an evidence-based intervention for bullying (i.e., overt and social aggression), it will be important to provide further empirical and theoretical evidence, test intervention effectiveness using a more

rigorous treatment design (i.e., randomized control), use multimethod and multisource measurement that is reliable and valid, continue to refine the treatment manual, demonstrate long-term treatment outcomes, and replicate in different populations (Lewis-Snyder, Stoiber, Kratochwill, 2002). As to the first point, providing further empirical and theoretical evidence, this study has offered a promising beginning.

Two theoretical models were used in this study, the Social Ecological Model of Bullying and the Theory of Reasoned Action. Since the whole-class approach used in this study demonstrated support for the reduction of social aggression, the tenets of the social-ecological model were upheld. Research has demonstrated that by intervening in multiple systems (i.e., the individual, the classroom), treatments will have a better chance at success (Smith & Ananiadou, 2003), particularly when bystanders are the main intervention focus (Carney & Merril, 2001; Green, 2004). As the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention demonstrated, when the school and the students were working toward a common goal of no tolerance for bullying behavior, bullying behavior decreased and students started reporting positive environmental changes. Children were hopefully beginning to learn that while social aggression might have once helped them to meet their goals, it would not continue to be tolerated by their peer group or by their school. When children no longer have support for their socially aggressive behavior, their goals will then become unattainable unless they reform their strategies.

Despite the aforementioned promising beginnings, further support for the Social Ecological Model of Bullying should be obtained by adding additional components to the intervention. For instance, it will be important to study the effectiveness of the

intervention when implemented school-wide. In order for this to happen, the intervention

will need to be modified and tested with age groups other than fourth grade. Intervention

pilot results suggested promising support for the use of the intervention in younger grades

such as second and third grade, but more research will be needed to demonstrate its

effectiveness for these grades as well as younger and older grades. Furthermore, the

generlizability of the intervention should be examined to determine which schools would

most benefit from the use of this intervention. While the school used for this study

benefited from the intervention, other schools that are more heterogeneous or that have

higher initial levels of social aggression might respond differently.

It will also be important to add intervention components, such as enlisting parent

collaboration. As mentioned previously, it is often necessary to intervene in the multiple

systems involved in a child's life in order to prevent undermining from uninvolved

systems. To take this one step further, Vernberg and Gamm (2003) also suggest enlisting

the support of the local community and local businesses so that a community wide

prevention program is in place. Deciding how to do this and then testing its effectiveness

could be an important area of future research.

The second theory, the Theory for Reasoned Action, was not directly assessed by

the current study. The Theory for Reasoned Action (Meyer et. al., 2004) states that the

decision about whether or not to engage in a behavior is influenced by a person's attitude

toward that behavior and their perception of subjective norms. Future studies are needed

to examine if these processes are responsible for the mechanisms of change influencing

the reduction in socially aggressive behavior. As children learn the negative effects of

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social aggression and then how to intervene, do the subjective norms of the classroom begin to change, thus individual's attitude toward engaging in socially aggressive behavior changes. Or does their attitude have to change first and then the subjective norms of the classroom will follow?

Furthermore, adding integrity checks while the intervention is taking place, could help to clarify how and if the stated objectives in the treatment manual are truly being learned after each session. This can be done by asking children questions after each intervention session aimed at measuring individual understanding of the objectives covered. Did students truly understand the main lessons from the session? It might also be helpful to measure the relationship alliance between the students and the facilitator of the intervention. Does the children's perception of the facilitator affect their ability to learn about social aggression and then change their behavior? Do children share the facilitator's expectancy for change?

Another future research direction that should be pursued in order to establish firm support for the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention as an evidenced-based intervention, will be to determine if treatment effects are replicated using a more rigorous design and multimethod, multisource measurement. For the current study, certain restraints prevented the use of a control group or a randomized design. The next step will be to implement this study on a larger scale using multiple, matched schools with one acting as a control, to determine if treatment effects are replicated, and if they are, then determining if the intervention was responsible for the change in socially aggressive behavior and bullying behavior. In this same study, results would be further strengthened

if social aggression and bullying behavior were measured using different types of measurement (i.e., self, peer, teacher, and independent observer); however, measures need to be chosen with sound psychometric properties. In order to meet these criteria, some of the measures used in this study will need further study.

In short, much work still needs to be done to solidify the usefulness of the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention at reducing social aggression and bullying behavior; however, the initial results from this study indicate that further study will be a worthwhile pursuit. Since this intervention was the first known intervention to examine the effectiveness of a classroom-based intervention at reducing social aggression in particular, its impact on the research community and its usefulness to schools is great. This study has served as a launching point for future social aggression intervention research, and has provided school communities a glance of the benefits intervening with social aggression can incur. There has been some debate as to whether or not it is worthwhile to intervene with social aggression. Researchers have posited that social aggression is a normative behavior and a necessary social development tool (Xie et. al., 2002b). Results from this study demonstrate preliminary evidence that the converse is true: Students do find socially aggressive behaviors harmful as evidenced by students' often painful re-counting of social aggression victimization. Accordingly, students reported that the intervention was very helpful to them and worthwhile and they felt that their school was safer and friendlier as a result.

As the *Kids Supporting Kids* intervention is further refined and supported, its usefulness to schools as a tool for impacting social aggression cannot be denied.

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Bullying in general and social aggression in particular are becoming an increasing

concern for school administrators, teachers, parents, and the legislative community. As

concern regarding aggressive behavior increases, interventions that are effective at

reducing bullying behavior and that have social validity will be in high demand.

APPENDIX A: Social Experiences Questionnaire – Peer Report
(Revised from Crick & Grotpeter, 1996; Paquette & Underwood, 1999)

Answer the questions by circling **always** if you think the question is true of that person all the time. Circle **almost always** if you think that question is true of the person a lot, but not all the time. Circle **sometimes** if you think that question is true about that person about half the time. Circle **almost never** if you think that question is true of the person every now and then, but usually not. Circle **never** if the question is something you have never seen that person do or would never be true of that person. When answering the questions, think about that person's behavior in the LAST TWO WEEKS.

Participant Number _____

Questions

1. Do you look up to or want to be like this person?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

2. Does this person hit or push others at school?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

3. Does this person do nice things for other classmates?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

4. Does this person get even by keeping classmates they are mad at out of their group of friends?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

5. Does this person give help to classmates who need it?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

6. Does this person tell classmates they won't be their friend unless a classmate does something they want them to do?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

7. Does this person ignore classmates or stop talking to classmates when they are mad at a classmate?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

8. Does this person try to cheer up other classmates who are upset or sad about something?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

9. Does this person start physical fights with others?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

10. Does this person try to exclude or keep other classmates from being in their group when doing things?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

11. Does this person yell or call other classmates mean names?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

12. Does this person make mean faces at other classmates to hurt their feelings?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

13. Does this person try to make another person not like a classmate by spreading rumors about that classmate or talking behind that classmate's back?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

14. Does this person roll their eyes at other classmates or snub their nose at classmates?

☐ Always   ☐ Almost Always   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Almost Never   ☐ Never

Subscales for the SEQ- Peer Report:

Overt Aggression: Items #2, 9, 11
Social Aggression: Items #4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14
Prosocial Behavior: Items #1, 3, 5, 8 (#1 was not used for analysis)

Appendix B:
Demographic Information Sheet

1. How old are you?

    1.   8 years old
    2.   9 years old
    3.   10 years old
    4.   11 years old
    5.   12 years old

2. I am a:

a.   boy
b.   girl

3. What is your race/ethnicity?

a.   Caucasian/White
b.   African-American/Black
c.   Hispanic or Mexican-American
d.   Asian or Pacific Islander
e.   Native American
f.   Other _____

4. What is your family like?

a.   Both parents live with you
b.   Your parents are divorced
c.   You live with your mom
d.   You live with your dad
e.   You live with your mom and step-dad
f.   You live with your dad and step-mom
g.   You do not live with your parents instead you live with _____

Appendix C: Participant Roles Questionnaire – Self-Report
Revised from Salmivalli (2005)

Participant Number _____

Read the following stories and then answer the questions that follow each story.

There is a boy in your class named Victor. He acts weird sometimes and no one plays with him very much. One day he gets on the bus and drops all his books. Some of the kids on the bus laugh at him. Other kids ignore what is going on and try to stay out of it. One boy, Keith starts calling Victor names like "freak" and "weirdo." Soon other kids join in and start calling Victor names too. Then John gets up and tells everyone to stop calling Victor names.

In this situation how often would you be:

1. One of the kids that laughed.

   ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

2. One of the kids who ignored what was going on and tried to stay outside the situation.

   ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

3. Like John and try to make the others stop calling Victor names.

   ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

4. One of the kids who joined in and started calling Victor names too.

   ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

5. Like Keith and start calling Victor names.

   ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

A really popular boy in class, Jeff, is having a party and everyone wants to go. Jeff is mad at another boy in class, Luke, and decides that Luke will be the only boy not invited to the party. Luke is understandably upset and talks to his friends, Patrick and Brady, begging them not to go either. Brady doesn't want to get involved so he tells Luke that he really feels bad for him, but is going to go to the party. Patrick tells Luke that he thinks Jeff is being mean and he will stay home with Luke and hang out with him on the night of the party.

In this situation how often would you be:

6. Like Jeff you don't want someone at your party that you are mad at.

   ☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

7. Like Brady and try not to take sides with anyone.

   ☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

8. Like Patrick you try to comfort Luke by staying with him.

   ☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

Lamar comes into the boys' school bathroom where a bunch of boys are standing and joking around with each other. One of the boys, Stan, says, "Hey look it's that geek Lamar. Let's leave." Logan joins in and says, "Yeah, let's get out of here where we won't be bothered." Jeremy, another boy in the bathroom tells the group of guys, "Stop being such jerks."

In this situation how often would you be:

9. Like Stan and tell others to leave when someone comes up you don't like.

   ☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

10. Like Logan and support Stan.

    ☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

11. Like Jeremy and tell the others to stop being mean.

    ☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

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12. How often does something like that happen around you?

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

It is recess time and Seth, Joe, and Craig are hanging out on the playground. They see Mark sitting by himself on the jungle gym. Mark acts kind of strange sometimes and no one really plays with him. Seth and Joe walk up to him and Seth says, "Hey, weirdo. I see your not playing with anyone again today." Joe encourages Seth and says, "Yeah! No one will play with you because you're a freak." Craig comes over and starts laughing, "You guys are so funny!" David hears what is going on and rushes over to see what's happening.

How often would you be:

13. Like Joe and encourage Seth.

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

14. Like Craig and just laugh with your friends.

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

15. Like David and come around to watch the situation.

☐ Never ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

Participant Roles Questionnaire – Self-Report
Revised from Salmivalli (2005)

Participant Number _____

Read the following stories and then answer the questions that follow each story.

There is a girl in your class named Vicky. She acts weird sometimes and no one plays with her very much. One day she gets on the bus and drops all her books. Some of the kids on the bus laugh at her. Other kids ignore what is going on and try to stay out of it. One girl, Kelly starts calling Vicky names like "freak" and "weirdo." Soon other kids join in and start calling Vicky names too. Then Julie gets up and tells everyone to stop calling Vicky names.

In this situation how often would you be:

1. One of the kids that laughed.

    ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

2. One of the kids who ignored what was going on and tried to stay outside the situation.

    ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

3. Like Julie and try to make the others stop calling Vicky names.

    ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

4. One of the kids who joined in and started calling Vicky names too.

    ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

5. Like Kelly and start calling Vicky names.

    ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

One of the really pretty girls in class, Jenny, is having a party and everyone wants to go. Jenny is mad at another girl in class, Lisa, and decides that Lisa will be the only girl not invited to the party. Lisa is understandably upset and talks to her friends, Padma and Becky, begging them not to go either. Becky doesn't want to get involved so she tells Lisa that she really feels bad for her, but is going to go to the party. Padma tells Lisa that she thinks Jenny is being mean and she will stay home with Lisa and hang out with her on the night of the party.

In this situation how often would you be:

6. Like Jenny you don't want someone at your party that you are mad at.

☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

7. Like Becky and try not to take sides with anyone.

☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Often

8. Like Padma you try to comfort Lisa by staying with her.

☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

Lacy walks over to where a bunch of girls are standing and talking. One of the girls, Samantha rolls her eyes and turns her back to Lacy. Then Lacy's friend Lindsay rolls her eyes and turns her back too. They then both start to walk away. Johanna sees the other girls rolling their eyes and leaving and says, "Stop being so mean."

In this situation how often would you be:

9.   Like Samantha and tell others to leave when someone comes up you don't like.

☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

10.   Like Lindsay and support Samantha.
☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

11. Like Johanna and tell the others to stop being mean.

☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

12. How often does something like that happen around you?

☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

It is recess time and Sally, Jessica, and Kayla are hanging out on the playground. They see Leslie sitting by herself on the swings. Leslie acts kind of strange sometimes and no one really plays with her. Sally and Jessica walk up to her and Sally says, "Hey, weirdo." I see your not playing with anyone again today." Jessica encourages Sally and says, "Yeah! No one will play with you because you're a freak." Kayla comes over and starts laughing, "You guys are so funny!" Christie hears what is going on and rushes over to see what's happening.

How often would you be:

13. Like Jessica and encourage Sally.

    ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

14. Like Kayla and just laugh with your friends.

    ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

15. Like Christie and come around to watch the situation.

    ☐ Never   ☐ Sometimes ☐ Often

Subscales for the PRQ- Self Report

Outsider Scale: #2, #7, #12
Assistant Scale: #4, 10, 13
Defender Scale: # 3, 8, 11
Bully Scale: #5, 6, 9
Reinforcer Scale: #1, 14, 15

Appendix D: Consent Forms
Informed Consent for Child Participants – Intervention Version

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

The University of Texas at Austin

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. You also have the right to contact The Principal Investigator (the person in charge of this research), Pamela Schaber, or his/her representative so that he/she can describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and if you have any questions please contact the Principal Investigator. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Title of Research Study: Peer Aggression: Theoretical and Practical Implications

Principal Investigators: **Principal Investigator(s):**

Pamela McDonald Schaber, M.A.
Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology, School Psychology Program at the University of Texas at Austin
Phone Number: 512-577-4499

Shanna Reeves
Graduate Student in the Department of Educational Psychology, School Psychology Program at the University of Texas at Austin

Sarah Ricord-Griesemer
Graduate Student in the Department of Educational Psychology, School Psychology Program at the University of Texas at Austin

Dan Hoard, M.A.
Graduate Student in Department of Educational Psychology, School Psychology Program at the University of Texas at Austin

Faculty Sponsor: Cindy Carlson, Ph.D.

Funding source: This research study is not currently funded.

What is the purpose of this study?

We are asking your permission to include your child in this study so that we can gain a better understanding of how we can decrease the amount children engage in peer aggression. Examples of peer aggression include threatening, physically harming, gossiping, spreading rumors behind someone's back, purposefully excluding a particular child, and so forth. To accomplish this task, we will be evaluating an anti-bullying intervention at your child's school to determine how effective it is at reducing the amount of peer aggression experienced by children.

What will be done if your child takes part in this research study?

This consent asks your permission for two related but separate aspects of this study. The first is participation in the anti-bullying intervention at the elementary school. EISD and the school itself have agreed to this program, but in order for your child to participate you must agree in writing.

Secondly, if you choose to allow your child to participate, your child will be asked to fill out four different questionnaires. Thus, we ask your permission for this activity as well**.** These questionnaires will be given over two sessions that should last approximately one hour each. The two sessions will occur on different days. Again, we will try to ensure that your child does not miss important lessons or activities during these testing sessions.

The questionnaires that your child fills out will help us understand how much peer aggression your child's peers are engaging in, what your children's beliefs are about aggression, and what role they assume in bullying situations. Questionnaires will vary in format. Some will be self-report where children are asked questions about their own behavior. Others will be peer-rating forms where children are asked if their classmates engage in a variety of different behaviors for each of their classmates.

What are the possible discomforts and risks?

One possible risk of this study is that children may talk about their ratings of other children with one another. Their discussions could be harmful to the child in question. For example, Jenny may talk to Sue about her ratings of Janet. Janet could overhear and may become hurt that Jenny and Sue are talking about her. To help discourage children from talking to one another about their ratings, children will be asked to keep their answers confidential and not to talk about them. Teachers will also be asked to pay special attention

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to what children are talking about after the rating forms have been filled out so the teacher can put an end to the discussion.

If you wish to discuss the information above or any other risks your child may experience, you may ask questions now or call the Principal Investigator listed on the front page of this form.

What are the possible benefits to your child or to others?

By collecting data about how the children interact with one another, researchers are able to determine if the intervention has been successful at reducing the amount of bullying behavior occurring at your child's school.

If you choose to take part in this study, will it cost you anything?

This study will be of no cost to you or your child.

Will your child receive compensation for his/her participation in this study?

 If children return this form, they will receive a UT pencil as a reward.

What if you are injured because of the study?

It is not expected that children will be placed at any physical risk due to this study, but if injury does occur, no medical treatment will be provided or available in case of injury as a result of participation in this study; however, your child will have access to the school nurse if he/she happens to receive an injury while participating.

If you do not want your child to take part in this study, what other options are available to you?

Participation in the data collection process of this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to refuse to be in the study, and your refusal will not influence current or future relationships with The University of Texas at Austin or with Eanes Independent School District.

How can you withdraw from this research study and who should I call if I have questions?

If you wish to stop your child's participation in this research study for any reason, you should contact: Pamela Schaber at (512)-577-4499.   You are free to withdraw your consent and your child's participation in this research study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits for which you or your child may be entitled. Throughout the study, the researchers will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

In addition, if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Lisa I. Leiden, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, 512/471-8871.

How will your child's privacy and the confidentiality of your child's research records be protected?

As part of the data collection process, children's names will need to be placed on each rating form the child fills out so that the child can identify which classmate he/she is rating. To ensure confidentiality and privacy, after the children have finished rating their classmates and turned in their forms, the names on each form will be removed and will be replaced with a number so that your child as well as his/her classmates cannot be identified. Once this process has occurred, there should be no information on any of the data forms that would link responses to a specific child. For further assurance, records will be stored at the University of Texas at Austin in a locked filing cabinet.

Authorized persons from The University of Texas at Austin and the Institutional Review Board have the legal right to review your research records and will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. If the research project is sponsored then the sponsor will also have the legal right to review your research records. Otherwise, your research records will not be released without your consent unless required by law or a court order.

If the results of this research are published or presented at scientific meetings, your identity will not be disclosed.

Will the researchers benefit from your participation in this *study [beyond publishing or presenting the results]***?**

This study is being conducted as partial fulfillment of the principal investigator's Ph.D. degree requirements. Beyond fulfilling the requirements for her degree, she should not benefit from your child's participation in this study.

Signatures:

PLEASE RETURN ONE COPY OF THIS PORTION TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

χ **I give my permission for my child, _____, to participate in the program to teach children about anti-bullying.**
 ___ YES
 ___ NO

χ **I give my permission for my child, _____,to participate in the data collection activities that follow the school program on anti-bullying.**

 ___ YES
 ___ NO

Parent's Signature	Date

Pamela Schaber, M.A.	Date

NOTE: TWO COPIES OF THIS LETTER ARE PROVIDED; ONE IS TO KEEP FOR

YOUR RECORDS

Parental Consent Form for the Participation of Minors: Measures Pilot Version

CONSENT FORM
Peer Aggression: Theoretical and Applied Implications

Your child is invited to participate in a study of peer aggression in schools. My name is Pamela Schaber and I am a doctoral student in the department of Educational Psychology at The University of Texas at Austin. This study is part of a requirement for my Ph.D. degree. I am asking for permission for your child to participate as I am hoping to have at least 60 fourth grade participants for this part of the study.

We are asking parents to allow graduate student researchers to collect information from their children regarding how they think their classmates interact with others, and how they interact with their classmates. This information will be collected in two data collection sessions. Each data collection session will take approximately an hour during your child's school day.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with your child will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. His or her responses will not be linked to his or her name or your name in any written or verbal report of this research project.

Your decision to allow your child to participate will not affect your or his or her present or future relationship with The University of Texas at Austin or Eanes Independent School District. If you have any questions about the study, please ask me. If you have any questions later, call me at 512-577-4499. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's participation in this study, call Professor Lisa Leiden, Chair of the University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Research Participants at 232-4383.

You may keep the copy of this consent form.

You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided and have decided to allow him or her to participate in the study. If you later decide that you wish to withdraw your permission for your child to participate in the study, simply tell me. You may discontinue his or her participation at any time.

PLEASE RETURN ONE COPY OF THIS PORTION TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER BY FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18.

☐ **YES** I give my permission for my child, _____, to participate in this research study and to complete the questionnaires.

☐ **NO** I do not give my permission for my child, _____, to continue any further with this research project.

Parent's Signature	Date

Pamela Schaber, M.A.	Date

Informed Consent for Child Participants: Intervention Pilot Version

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

The University of Texas at Austin

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study. This form provides you with information about the study. You also have the right to contact The Principal Investigator (the person in charge of this research), Pamela Schaber, so that she can describe this study to you and answer all of your questions. Please read the information below and if you have any questions please contact the Principal Investigator. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Title of Research Study: Peer Aggression: Theoretical and Practical Implications

Principal Investigators:
Principal Investigator(s):

Pamela McDonald Schaber, M.A.

Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology, School Psychology Program at the University of Texas at Austin
Phone Number: 512-577-4499

Shanna Reeves

Graduate Student in the Department of Educational Psychology, School Psychology Program at the University of Texas at Austin

Sarah Ricord-Griesemer

Graduate Student in the Department of Educational Psychology, School Psychology Program at the University of Texas at Austin

Dan Hoard, M.A.
Graduate Student in Department of Educational Psychology, School Psychology Program at the University of Texas at Austin

Faculty Sponsor: Cindy Carlson, Ph.D.

Funding source: This research study is not currently funded.

What is the purpose of this study?

We are asking your permission to include your child in this study so that we can gain a better understanding of how we can decrease the amount children engage in peer aggression. Examples of peer aggression include threatening, physically harming, gossiping, spreading rumors behind someone's back, purposefully excluding a particular child, and so forth. To accomplish this task, we will be implementing an anti-bullying intervention at your child's school. Our main goal is to understand how children react to our intervention program and to ask them questions about how useful they find the information we give them.

What will be done if your child takes part in this research study?

If you choose to allow your child to participate, he/she will be asked to engage in six one hour intervention sessions. There will be two intervention groups, one for boys and one for girls. We have chosen to separate boys and girls because they both bully in different ways. Over the course of the six intervention sessions, children will learn about the different types of bullying, engage in role plays, and participate in active problem solving.

What are the possible discomforts and risks?

One possible risk to participating is that while talking about bullying, children could be reminded of incidents in which they were bullied, stirring up painful memories. The group facilitators will all be advanced school psychology doctoral students who will make sure to offer students a private opportunity to talk with them if such an event occurs.

If you wish to discuss the information above or any other risks your child may experience, you may call the Principal Investigator listed on the front page of this form.

What are the possible benefits to your child or to others?

By participating in the intervention children will learn valuable information regarding bullying behavior and how to make their school a safer place. They will also be aiding in the development of a program targeting bullying behavior that could benefit multiple children in other schools and contexts as well.

If you choose to take part in this study, will it cost you anything?

This study will be of no cost to you or your child.

Will your child receive compensation for his/her participation in this study?

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There is some opportunity to earn rewards (i.e., stickers and such) throughout participation in the   intervention, however, your child will not be compensated for his/her participation.

What if you are injured because of the study?

It is not expected that children will be placed at any physical risk due to this study, but if injury does occur, no medical treatment will be provided or available in case of injury as a result of participation in this study; however, your child will have access to the school nurse if he/she happens to receive an injury while participating.

If you do not want your child to take part in this study, what other options are available to you?
Participation in the study is entirely voluntary. You are free to refuse to be in the study, and your refusal will not influence current or future relationships with The University of Texas at Austin or with the Austin Discovery School.

How can you withdraw from this research study and who should I call if I have questions?

If you wish to stop your child's participation in this research study for any reason, you should contact: Pamela Schaber at (512)-577-4499.   You are free to withdraw your consent and your child's participation in this research study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits for which you or your child may be entitled. Throughout the study, the researchers will notify you of new information that may become available and that might affect your decision to remain in the study.

In addition, if you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Lisa I. Leiden, Ph.D., Chair, The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, 512/471-8871.

Will the researchers benefit from your participation in this _study [beyond publishing or presenting the results]_?

This study is being conducted as partial fulfillment of the principal investigator's Ph.D. degree requirements. Beyond fulfilling the requirements for her degree, she should not benefit from your child's participation in this study.

Signatures:

IF YOU **DO NOT** WANT YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE RETURN ONE COPY OF THIS PORTION TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

BE SURE TO RETURN BY FRIDAY, **FEBRUARY 10TH TO ENSURE THAT YOUR CHILD IS **NOT** INVOLVED IN THE INTERVENTION

□ **NO** I do not give my permission for my child, _____, to participate in the Kids Supporting Kids Intervention Program.

Parent's Signature	Date

Pamela Schaber, M.A.	Date

IF YOU WANT YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE, NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUIRED, PLEASE JUST KEEP THIS FORM FOR YOUR RECORDS.

ASSENT FORM

Peer Aggression: Theoretical and Practical Applications

I agree to be in a study about how my classmates interact with one another. This study was explained to my (mother/father/parents/guardian) and (she/he/they) said that I could be in it. The only people who will know about what I say and do in the study will be the people in charge of the study.

In this study, I will be asked questions about how my classmates act around each other and what kind of behaviors they use when they talk/play/interact with other children in their class. I will be asked questions about each child in my class. I will also be asked questions about myself. I understand that I will need to keep the answers I put down to myself and agree not to share my answers with other people. My answers will only be shared with the people in charge of the study.

Writing my name on this page means that the page was read (by me/to me) and that I agree to be in the study. I know what will happen to me. If I decide to quit the study, all I have to do is tell the person in charge.

_____   _____
Child's Signature   Date

_____   _____
Signature of Researcher   Date

Kids Supporting Kids:

A curriculum-based classroom intervention for social
and physical aggression

Pamela McDonald Schaber, M.A., and Daniel Hoard, M.A.

Table of Contents

Introduction

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

This manual is designed to intervene and prevent bullying behaviors in a classroom context. Bullying is characterized as the repeated victimization of an individual through exposure to negative actions on the part of one or more other individuals (Olweus, 1991). Negative actions can take multiple forms including physical aggression, name calling, spreading rumors, social exclusion, and other behaviors designed to harm social relationships. Historically, bullying interventions have focused on bullies or victims of aggression in isolation rather than the context in which the behavior occurs. Recent research on bullying behavior has highlighted the complex social relationships involved in the maintenance of aggressive behaviors. To better understand these complex interrelationships, it is helpful to consider Swearer and Espelage's (2004) social-ecological framework of bullying (i.e. aggression). Swearer and Espelage developed their social-ecological framework of bullying in order to explain the complex relationships that exist between individuals, families, peers, schools, communities, and cultures. They specifically labeled each context of the child's life as it directly relates to bullying behavior. They started with the individual labeled as either a bully, bully-victim, victim, or bystander. Then they moved outward to the systems in which the individual directly functions: the school, the family, and the peer group. Next they included the broader systems that the family, the school, and the peer group are imbedded in: the community and the culture.

Many previous interventions have not considered the social ecology of classrooms and thus have not directly addressed the complex interrelationships involved in maintaining social aggression and aggressive behavior. Specifically, classroom intervention strategies should pay particular attention to the bystander (Carney and Merrell, 2001; Greene, 2004) and classroom attitudes regarding aggressive behavior. Given that some bullies are socially powerful and have high status, it can be difficult to persuade them to change their behavior. Therefore, the focus of the intervention should also include the classroom environment so that bullies will receive less support or status for their bullying behavior (Vaillancourt, Hymel, and McDougall, 2003). Research has shown that bullies often repeat their behaviors within classrooms that have pro-bullying attitudes (Henry et. al., 2000). In order to successfully intervene with these pro-bullying behaviors and attitudes, bystanders would benefit from becoming aware of how their actions support bullying behavior. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that bystanders do know how to intervene in prosocial ways but often choose not to because it is often easier to use aggressive behaviors or to not intervene at all (Hawkins, Peplar, and Craig, 2001). Interventions can capitalize on their existing prosocial skills and help them find ways to achieve success with prosocial behavior that does not implicitly or explicitly support bullies (Vaillancourt et. al., 2003). By helping bystanders switch their alliance with the bully and start intervening on behalf of the victim, support for bullying will be diminished (Rodkin and Hodges, 2003).

In addition to upholding the tenets of the social-ecological model of bullying, a review of the research indicates that the following nine principles are also important components of school-

based bullying interventions: 1. The intervention is founded on a theoretical perspective (Stevens et. al., 2001), 2. The intervention actively works to explain facts and dispel myths (Newman-Carlson and Horne, 2004), 3. Before the intervention, bullying behavior is assessed at a school-wide level, 4. Students develop a code of conduct (Greene, 2004), 5. Programs recognize the social context of bullying and interventions target the peer culture (Greene, 2004; Salmivalli, 2005; Stevens et. al., 2001; Valillancourt et.al., 2003), 6. The intervention employs systemic approaches (Stevens et.al., 2001), 7. Strategies are implemented that work for all types of aggression (Smith and Ananiadou, 2003), 8. Students learn to identify bullying behavior in each other (Greene, 2004), and 9. Students are held accountable for their actions and there is a school-wide plan for how to handle bullying situations (Greene, 2004; Stevens et. al., 2001).

In conclusion, it is expected that school-based interventions that include all children, victims, bystanders, and bullies alike, will help create environments where the school actively promotes intolerant attitudes toward bullying. In addition, the inclusion of teachers in the intervention should better inform teachers about how to manage socially and overtly aggressive behaviors in their classrooms. Teaching the entire class how to effectively intervene with peer aggression will help students and teachers maintain positive changes and will contribute to a positive learning environment.

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

The development of this program was informed using the social-ecological model of bullying and the nine principles for successful interventions. The goal of this program is to alter classroom ecologies that may condone, if not encourage, multiple forms of bullying. Specifically, students will learn how to use prosocial behaviors more effectively to help promote a classroom climate that is less tolerant of bullying behavior. By withdrawing their tacit or explicit support of bullying, bystanders will be promoting a more tolerant classroom. A concurrent teacher program will provide education of bullying behaviors and assist in creating a teacher facilitated classroom environment that is intolerant of bullying. In combination, the resulting multi-component program intends to alter attitudes and behaviors in order to promote tolerance toward others and prosocial behavior in the fourth grade classroom ecology.

PEOPLE IN THE PROGRAM

The facilitators for this program will be advanced school psychology doctoral students from the University of Texas. The intervention will include fourth grade students and their teachers. The intervention will take place in students' classrooms at their school during the school day. Fourth grade was chosen as the focus for this treatment manual because research suggests that the developmental trajectory of aggression indicates that as children age, they become more aggressive (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992; Eron, & Slaby, 1994; Underwood, 2003). It is thought that aggressive behaviors rapidly increase in pre-adolescence usually during the transition between elementary school and middle school. Because of this rapid escalation in pre-adolescence, it is hypothesized that early intervention will decrease the normal escalation of aggressive behavior by a marked degree.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

The Kids Supporting Kids curriculum approaches classroom interventions from a systemic standpoint. Here, the facilitators' main goals are to educate children and their teachers about the different types of bullying behaviors and the different roles assumed in bullying. Specifically, facilitators will be working with the entire classroom to develop successful strategies for intervening and preventing bullying behaviors. By the last session, children and teachers will work collaboratively to write a classroom code that reflects their collective responsibility to intervene when bullying occurs and promote prosocial behavior. The curriculum is designed to be six weeks long, with each meeting lasting one hour.

CURRICULUM

Session 1 – Defining Bullying

- Discuss different ideas about bullying, helping dispel myths
- Introduce the different types of bullying
- Have children think of real life examples
- Discuss what children are hoping to gain from the program and how they view bullying in their school currently

Session 2 – The Consequences of Bullying

- Review last week
- Start hearing students' experiences of bullying in their school
- Discuss the consequences of bullying for the bully, victim, and for fourth grade boys and girls
- Start helping students take the perspective others

Session 3 – The Different Roles of Bullying: Bully, Victim, Bystander

- The students learn what a bystander is and the different roles involved with bullying
- Students learn how to identify different bystander roles in bullying scenarios
- Students learn about the Bully Box
- Students are encouraged to become aware of their own behavior related to bullying

Session 4 – How to Change the Bully Environment

- Students think about how they want their class to change and actions they can take to change the bully environment
- Facilitators help students become aware of attitudes that might keep the bully environment the same
- Facilitators role play students ideas
- Students brainstorm ideas about how bystanders in particular could behave differently in bullying scenarios creating a more positive outcome for everyone

Session 5 – Practicing How to Make a Difference

- Students role play bystander interventions

Session 6 – Moving Towards a Bully Free 4th Grade

- Students will review previous five sessions
- Students will write a code of conduct and sign it
- Students will practice problem solving bullying situations as a class
- Everyone will say goodbye

The following sessions are designed specifically for the teachers to provide a forum for discussion as well as to help enable teachers to enforce and promote classroom behavior change.

Check-ins

- Keep in touch with teachers
- Answer questions that teachers might have
- Provide consultation to the teachers for bullying incidents
- Encourage teacher involvement and maintain an ongoing dialogue between facilitators and teachers.

First Teacher Forum (before intervention)

- Introduce the intervention
- Give teachers an overview of the next six weeks
- Introduce the intervention checklists
- Introduce the Bully Box to teachers and prepare them for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Solicit feedback and questions
- Informally assess teacher attitudes toward bullying

Second Teacher Forum (after third intervention session)

- Review first three student sessions
- Continue to prepare teachers for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Answer any questions teachers may have
- Solicit Feedback

Third Teacher Forum (after intervention)

- Review student intervention
- Answer any questions teachers may have
- Finish preparing teachers for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Brainstorm problems
- Say goodbye

Part I

Session Instructions

This section provides detailed guidelines on how to conduct the Kids Supporting Kids curriculum. Each session lesson includes the goals for the session, necessary materials, an outline, and specific instructions as to how to use the activities in the session. Facilitators will review the sessions prior to administration for each meeting. Each session is accompanied by a checklist that lists the objectives to be covered each group meeting. This checklist should be completed by the observing classroom teacher during each session (checklists can be found in the appendix).

Defining Bullying

Goals

- Provide an education on the different forms of bullying
- Dispel myths surrounding previously held beliefs about bullying
- Promote awareness of bullying behavior

Materials Required

- Large Paper Easel
- Package of Markers
- 4" X 4" paper squares (two for each child in the class)
- Pencils (enough for everyone)

Session Outline

- Warm up
- Activity: Bullying in your school
- Closing/Homework

Homework

- Try to be aware of bullying in your school (physical and social).

Warm Up (15 minutes)

Introduce yourself as well as the other facilitator. As you introduce yourself mention how you became interested in bullying and describe an incident in which you were involved in bullying. Be sure that in this incident you were involved as a bystander.

Once introductions have been made, discuss confidentiality and expectations (6wk program, for one hour a week). Next, define the purpose for the group and explain the goals of the program. Make sure to emphasize that when children are sharing stories about bullying that they are NOT to use names in order to help protect involved parties from being teased during or after the group. Also for the children whose teacher is in the room, assure them that everything said in this group will not get them in trouble with their teacher (what is said in the group stays in the group). They should all feel like they can speak freely without having to worry about consequences. Discuss group rules: 1. one person talking at a time, 2. respectfully considering all ideas, (i.e. no laughing at others, etc…). Acknowledge that we understand how different this might be from their normal day and we want them to have fun, but also tell them that we have a lot to cover and we need to stay on topic and stay focused. Ask them if they can think of any other rules that might be important to them. FACILITATOR NOTE: if one student in particular is continuously disruptive and cannot follow the rules, refer the problem to the teacher.

Introduce the warm-up activity by discussing as a group what everyone thinks bullying is. As the group responds, the facilitators should organize responses on the paper easel. Be sure to divide the sheet into two columns (but DON'T put headings on the columns). Have one column represent physical/overt aggression responses and the other represent social aggression responses. Be prepared to help guide students in making the list. Make sure to include the following behaviors:

- Physical/Overt Aggression
    o Hitting/kicking
    o Pushing
    o Calling people names to their face
    o Threats
    o Teasing
    o Throwing something at someone
- Social Aggression
    o Eye rolling
    o Ignoring someone
    o Excluding someone from your group
    o Spreading rumors
    o Make mean faces
    o Making people do what you want by threatening to not be their friend

After the group is done and everyone has had an opportunity to respond, label the columns and then explain the different types of aggression (physical and social). Be sure to talk about how all kids experience bullying. At this point talk about how all kids have probably been a victim or a bully at one time. Share an example in your life if necessary. Normalize the experience while at the same time recognizing that even though everyone has been a bully it doesn't mean it is the best way to help kids meet their goals and get what they want. Can they think of examples of how bullying can help kids get what they want? Next, explain that the reason we want to do these groups to help kids understand why bullying occurs and how they can stop it.

Activity: Examples of Bullying in your school (25 minutes)

After discussing the different types of bullying, hand out the paper squares and pencils to each student. Introduce the activity by explaining that we really want to know what happens at their school as we are interested in what their experiences have been. Explain that we want kids to come up with an example of bullying that they can think of. Let them know that we will be using their examples later on. Be sure to assure them that when examples are read to the classroom we will change the example or combine examples so that incidents are not easily recognizable to everyone. Next, explain that on one sheet of paper they should write an example of physical aggression and on the other they should write an example of social aggression. Encourage them to write down something that really happened rather than making something up. Make sure to remind them to use fake names and again assure them that we will alter responses so that they are still realistic but not recognizable. (Only allow approximately five minutes for them to jot down responses, encourage them to write the first thing they think of rather than take a long time thinking of something. If they can't think of anything, that is okay). When they are done, have them hand the squares into a facilitator. Tell the children that you are going to use their examples later in the program and thank them as well.

After you have collected the sheets, start a discussion with the children by asking them how hard it was to think of an example. Was it easier to think of an example involving physical example? Or social aggression? Do they think one or both is a problem at their school? Would they like it to be different? How would it be different? (Here you want to see what the children's ideas might be about what the next five weeks are going to be like. Is there anything in particular they are hoping to gain from the program?) If it were different could they imagine what that would be like? Try to encourage everyone to participate. FACILITATOR NOTE: some of these ideas might be included in the code of conduct in the end. Make sure to write them down so that they can be revisited later.

Closing (10 minutes)

In closing, ask the children what they have learned today, if anything. What did they like the best about the session? The least? Summarize the different definitions of bullying as well as the main ideas from the discussion following the activity.

Homework

Ask the children to try and be aware of bullying behavior this week. Can they find incidents of physical bullying and social bullying? Let the kids know that next week we will talk as a group about what they noticed. The goal of this homework is to help increase their awareness.

Consequences of Bullying

Goals

- To review session 1.
- To have kids generate ideas about the consequences of bullying for bullies, victims and fourth grade boys/girls.
- To help kids start to take the perspective of others.

Materials Required

- Large Paper Easel
- 5 Packages of Markers
- 12 large sheets of butcher paper (appropriately labeled)
- Prizes
- 2 slips of paper per student with the homework prompt written on each slip (in bold below) (to hand to teacher at end of lesson)
- Role play (use student examples from previous session)

Session Outline

- Warm up
- Activity: Brainstorming the Consequences of Bullying
- Closing/Homework

Homework

- Try to be aware of bullying and start thinking about what it's like to be the bully and victim.

Warm Up

Ask students what they remember from the previous session. Facilitators expand upon their answers and fill in anything they missed from the objectives of session 1.

Review Homework (5 minutes for warm up and review)

Review the homework from the last session. Ask for volunteers to share incidents they witnessed without using real names. Have prizes ready to hand out for kids who give examples. Facilitators should attempt to have examples shared of both physical and social bullying.

Activity: Brainstorming the Consequences of Bullying (40 minutes)

Have the students break into four groups with approximately 4-5 students per group. Each group will be provided with three pieces of butcher paper and markers. Facilitators will introduce the lesson by explaining to students that the day's topic is consequences of bullying and how bullying makes children feel. The facilitator will read two bullying scenarios to the

class, one physical and one social, (have a scenario created beforehand that represents actual realities that the students have discussed). Students will be instructed to start with the paper labeled "victims". This paper will be marked with three questions: How do the victims feel?, After being bullied, how do you think the victims might act or respond? Right after? What if this happened a lot?, and How would others in the class treat the victims? Ask kids to think of the answers to these questions by referring to the victims in the examples. Facilitators will float between groups providing assistance by ensuring the task is understood, scaffolding, and keeping students on task.

After approximately 10 minutes, or when students have completed the task, discuss as a large group student responses with facilitators writing ideas on the easel. Facilitators will add any important missing ideas.
- Victims Feel?
    - Sad
    - Lonely
    - Isolated
    - Bad about themselves
    - Like no one likes them
    - Angry
    - Frustrated
    - Worried
    - Scared
- Victim immediate Responses?
    - Fight back
    - Retaliate
    - Cry
    - Tell someone
    - Run away
- Victim long term responses
    - Becoming increasingly isolated and hanging out by themselves
    - Becoming depressed (really sad for a long time)
    - Thinking of quitting school or not wanting to go anymore
    - Picking on other kids weaker than themselves
    - Thinking of ways to get back
    - Losing their friends
    - Becoming really anxious and worried (afraid all of the time)
- Classmates response
    - Avoid that person
    - Think that person is a loser/or is different
    - Think that person deserves to be treated that way
    - Make fun of that person too or join in bullying that person
    - Laugh at the victim or make fun of him/her
    - Not include them in games or activities

Students will get back into their groups and work on the second paper, labeled "bullies". This paper will have the same three questions directed at bullies: How does the bully feel? What are

some behaviors that might be caused by bullying?, and How do others in the class treat kids who bully other children?

After approximately 10 minutes, or when students are done, discuss as a large group student responses with facilitators writing ideas on the easel. Facilitators will add any important missing ideas.

- Bully feels:
  - o Powerful
  - o Like everyone likes him/her
  - o Lonely
  - o That bullying is the only way to get what they want
  - o They may feel stuck in their "role"
  - o May feel bad about themselves (be sure to dispel myth here that ALL bullies have low self-esteem)
- Behaviors caused by bullying
  - o Might start bullying all the time
  - o Might start to become more violent
  - o Might start to have school problems (getting in trouble, grades getting worse)
- How others view them
  - o Physical example: might see them as "bad," other kids might not want to hang out with the bully, might be afraid of the bully because worried that they might become the victim.
  - o Social example: other kids view the bully as popular, but might not like the bully, might be secretly afraid of the bully (that they could become the victim), might feel like they have to do what the bully says.

Students will get back into their groups and work on the third paper, labeled "fourth grade girls (boys)". Groups will respond to questions regarding the specific consequences that children of their gender feel as a result of the existence of bullying at their school. Specifically, students will be providing answers to the question, "Has bullying changed now that you are in the fourth grade? How is it different from last year? Second Grade? What makes it hard to be a fourth grade boy/girl?" After approximately 5 minutes, or when students are done, discuss as a large group student responses with facilitators writing ideas on the easel. FACILITATOR NOTE: some of these ideas might be included in the code of conduct in the end. Make sure to write them down so that they can be revisited later.

Closing (5 minutes)

In closing, ask the children what they have learned today, if anything. What did they like the best about the session? The least? Summarize discussion by talking about how bullying affects everyone. Re-emphasize that bullying doesn't just have consequences for the victim.

Homework

Ask the children to again try and be aware of bullying behavior this week. **What happened? What would it be like to be the bully? The victim?** Students should try and be aware of what's it like to be each of the children involved in any incidents. If they personally are

involved, they should think about what it would be like to be the other people in the incident. The goal of this homework is to help increase their awareness of bullying and the perspectives of others. Let children know that their teacher will ask them to write down their ideas at two different times before our next meeting. Be sure to tell them that everyone will need to contribute a written idea so they want to make sure they keep their eyes out. Let them know that the best ideas will be read out loud during our next session!

Different Roles in Bullying: Bully, Victim, Bystander

Session 3

Goals

- To introduce the concept of bystander
- To define bystander and the different types of bystander behavior
- To help students learn how to identify the different roles in bullying
- To introduce the Bully Box.
- To help students become aware of their own behavior and roles in bullying

Materials Required

- Large paper easel
- Package of markers
- 5 student examples of bullying from session 1
- Bully Box
- Prizes

Session Outline

- Warm Up/ Review homework
- Introduce and Define bystander role
- Define different types of bystanders
- Name that role exercise
- Closing

Homework

- Pay attention to the role you take in bullying. Start putting bullying incidents in the Bully Box.

Warm Up

Ask students what they remember from the previous session. Facilitators expand upon their answers and fill in anything they missed from the objectives of session 2.

Review Homework (5 minutes for warm up and review)

Review the homework from the last session. Ask for volunteers to share their experiences. What was it like to put themselves in the bully's shoes, the victim's shoes, or others involved? Have prizes ready to hand out. Also look at the students' written responses before the session and pick out a few that really stand out to read out loud to the students.

Activity 1: Defining the bully, the victim, and the bystander (20 minutes)

For this activity, the facilitator will mostly be lecturing to the students. While explaining the different roles, be sure to write on the easel the different behaviors included for each role so that kids have a visual to follow along with. The lecture should include the following: "After our last two meetings, it seems like everyone here knows what a bully is. A bully is someone who harms other through a lot of different ways in order to get what they want. Remember we

talked about pushing/hitting, calling names, spreading rumors, etc… A victim is someone who is targeted and/or harmed by bullying. The victim might be the person who gets hit/pushed, who is called names, or who the rumor is about. There is also another role in bullying, that kids might know less about, called the bystander. Bystanders are kids who are not the bully or the victim, but they are present when the bullying occurs. Facilitator should remind students of the story that was shared in session 1, noting that the role the facilitator assumed during the incident was bystander. Facilitators should explain that there are several different types of bystanders. For example, they might see someone getting hit or pushed and then not do anything or walk away, or they see a kid getting teased and do nothing. It might seem like they are not involved, but this type of behavior is called an outsider bystander. Even when kids don't do anything they are supporting bullying. How do you think this type of response supports bullying? How does this behavior encourage the bully? Be sure to discuss with the kids how bullies might perceive non-action as acceptance or how they know they can get away with their behavior. What might this mean for how they would like their fourth grade to be? Take this opportunity to brainstorm about behaviors kids might want to stop so their ideas can later be included in the student code of conduct.

Another example is bystanders may hear a rumor that they didn't start but then they gossip about the new rumor, helping to spread it around the school, or they may help catch a victim that is running away from the bully. This type of bystander is called an assistant bystander. How do you think assistants help the bully? How does assisting the bully encourage his/her behavior?

The third example is when bystanders may laugh when someone gets called a name, or they may egg on the bully when he/she is hitting another kid. This is because when kids laugh or clap at something the bully does they are reinforcing the bully. What are some other ways kids can reward bullies? What do you think the bully thinks when kids react like this to his/her behavior?

Bystanders can also be the kid who tries to stop the bullying or who tries to help the victim. This type of bystander is called the Defender. How do you think defenders influence bullies? Do you think they encourage or discourage the bully? How could assistants, outsiders, and reinforcers become defenders? Why would they want to? What are the risks? We will be spending the next two session talking about defenders.

Activity 2: Identifying the different roles (10 minutes)

Next tell children that you are going to be reading some of the examples of bullying that they wrote down the first session. You want to use their examples so that the group is always talking about interactions that really occur at their school. Have five examples picked out beforehand making sure to get a good representation of the different bystander roles. You may have to add to the examples. Read the different examples one by one, stopping after each to ask the kids to identify the role for each child in the example. Make sure to reward kids for participating (FACILITATOR NOTE: when rewarding kids, make sure all the kids have a chance to get a reward throughout the entire intervention, this may mean calling on kids for participation that are less likely to raise their hands or respond). Once students have identified the appropriate role ask them how the individual influenced or contributed to the bullying.

Closing (5 minutes)

In closing, ask the children what they have learned today, if anything. What did they like the best about the session? The least? Summarize discussion by going over the chart created on the easel defining the different roles.

Homework (10 minutes)

Ask the children to again be aware of bullying happening around them, but this time to think what role they are playing. Are they an outsider? An assistant? A defender? A reinforcer? A victim? A bully? Encourage them to start to self-evaluate their behavior and their role in bullying at their school. Remind them of the expanded definition of bullying and all the behaviors it includes. It is not just taking lunch money, etc… In addition, introduce the Bully Box. Explain to students that you are going to be leaving a Bully Box in each of their classrooms. They will be asked by their teachers to write down bully episodes that they see and put them in the box. Their teachers will ask all of them to write something down twice a week just like we had them do last week. Be sure to encourage them to write down an episode where they were the bystander, and they didn't know what they could do differently to be a defender. Let them know that we can brainstorm ideas in the next session. We will of course leave out names so that their responses are confidential. Also make sure to explain that incidents involving physical harm or serious threats to another student (give examples) should be reported immediately to a teacher or counselor and NOT put in the bully box.

How to Change the Bully Environment

<div align="right">Session 4</div>

Goals

- Have students think about how their class can be different and how they can change the bully environment
- Have them come up with ideas about specific behaviors
- To continue to address beliefs or ideas that bullying is acceptable or that nothing can be done
- Provide a chance for the facilitators to model the appropriate bystander interventions using students' ideas

Materials Required

- Large paper easel
- Package of markers
- Incidents from Bully Box (look in box and divide up incidents among the groups)
- Two bullying scenarios including bystander roles (facilitators should make some up in case there are not any scenarios in the Bully Box)
- 4" X 4" slips of paper (two for each student in the group)
- Pencils for each student
- Bully Box
- Prizes

Session Outline

- Warm Up / Review Homework
- Brainstorming Session
- Facilitator Role Play
- Closing

Homework

- Come up with specific situations that would be especially difficult to take positive action.

Warm Up

Review session 2 and 3 going back over the consequences of bullying and the different roles involved in bullying. Then tell the students: "Now that you know the consequences of being a bully/victim/bystander and the challenges and pressures of being a 4th grade boy/girl, we are going to talk about how things can change and hopefully be better/easier, but first we would like to hear your ideas. At our first meeting you mentioned (refer to answers to questions in first session closing). Now that you know more, do you have more ideas?" Write down students' ideas on the large easel. FACILITATOR NOTE: some of these ideas might be included in the code of conduct in the end. Make sure to write them down so that they can be revisited later.

Review Homework (Warm up and review should take 5 minutes)

Review the homework from the last session. Have the children bring to mind the different roles they found themselves in over the course of the week. As they are thinking about how they contribute to bullying, read out loud an incident from the bully box (or a made up incident that combines a bunch of examples so that they are not recognizable). After reading the incident, have the students identify the different roles in the example, labeling the specific bystander roles. Give prizes for responses. Ask why they answered the way they did. What clued them in? What behaviors did they notice? Explain that today we are going to be talking about how bystanders can respond in bullying situations.

Activity 1: Facilitator Role Play (35 minutes)

Have facilitators role play a bullying incident that demonstrates both physical and social aggression and that includes bystanders, but choose an example where the bystander was inactive. Have the kids identify the different roles in the example. Ask the students if the kids in the example should have acted differently. Try to help them focus on the bystander. Use the prizes here to help make this activity fun and to reward students for participating. If they have ideas about the victim and bully, great! But make sure to get plenty of bystander interventions as this will be the focus of the session. If necessary remind them how the bystanders keep bullying fueled and by stopping support, they can change their environment. Bystanders have the power to create change. Then facilitators can role play their ideas, changing the outcome of the bullying. After role play discuss with students how each involved player might feel differently after the "intervention." How did the example student behavior help or hurt their ideas about a better 4th grade environment? If they think the behaviors should have been different ask them if they have ideas about how the students in the example could have acted differently. Write these down on the easel as well. If they do not think the behaviors should have been different, lead a discussion on how the example behaviors were harmful by revisiting the consequences of bullying. Really emphasize how the students are in control. They are the ones that can make the decision to improve their 4th grade class. Remember the points they made about how they would like the 4th grade to change. Encourage them to think about how the example behaviors keep them stuck. Then re-ask how could the student's behavior have been different? Write down their ideas.

-Example Behaviors
   o Stay calm.
   o Tell a teacher or counselor.
   o Tell involved parties in a firm voice to stop.
   o Stand by the victim.
   o If don't know what to do, put incident in Bully Box
   o Walk away
   o Get a friend to help you stand up to bully, letting bully know behavior will not be tolerated

Facilitators might need to help them come up with appropriate behaviors. Facilitators should make sure there are a range of positive behaviors listed and help steer students in positive intervention directions. Be sure not to give them answers but help scaffold the discussion so

that they are able to generate a list of alternative behaviors that would be realistic and helpful. At this point, review their ideas and talk about how realistic they are. Can these behaviors really be done? Go through each idea and discuss what would happen if they really were to do this. Facilitators should share that depending on the situation or who is involved, one choice might be more appropriate than the other. Help them identify appropriate situations for each choice. If there are ideas on the list that are really unrealistic or inappropriate make sure to give positive recognition for supplying the idea and encourage them to think of a more appropriate response using similar ideas.

Closing

Turn the easel to the intervention ideas they came up with. Hand out paper and pencil to each student and ask them to write down a bullying incident that they think is particularly challenging. Can they think of a situation in which they would not know what to do differently? Or can they think of a situation in which they would not really want to intervene even though they know they should? Be sure to empathize with them, letting them know that we know there will be times that it will be hard for them to take action, like when it is their best friend that is being the bully. Write it down and hand it in. Remind them again that we really want to know what it is like for them at their school and so really want their ideas to use in future sessions. Their responses are confidential and be sure to thank them.

Homework (closing and homework: 10 minutes)

Remind them that their teachers will continue to ask them to put bullying incidents that occur in the Bully Box. Also encourage them to write down scenarios they might think of over the course of the week that would be challenging or hard for them to act and put those in the Bully Box as well.

Practicing How to Make a Difference

Session 5

Goals

- Give students the opportunity to practice their bystander interventions from the previous session
- Talk about the reality of trying their bystander interventions when not in session
- Continue to encourage and support change
- Continue to encourage Bully Box additions

Materials Required

- Large Paper Easel
- Package of Markers
- 20 Bullying scenarios (from Bully box and created by facilitator teams)
- Prizes
- Pens
- Paper

Session Outline

- Warm Up
- Write a play – small group
- Large group discussion
- Closing

Homework

- Practice interventions throughout the week. Continue to submit incidents to the Bully Box.

Warm Up

Review the previous session and the important role of the bystander in intervening with bullying. Revisit the intervention ideas listed on the easel. Leave the easel open to intervention ideas for the activity.

Review Homework (Five minutes)

Review the homework from the last session. Hand out prizes as necessary. Thank them for their Bully Box contributions and let them know that their ideas are included today.

Activity: Role Play in Small Groups (35 minutes)

Break students up into four small groups. Give each group two bullying scenario, one physical and one social. Review the different types of aggression with the students. (Try to use bully box ideas as much as possible). Once groups are formed, have them separate as much as possible in the classroom. Each group will be given a different scenario. Next instruct the group to brainstorm what bystanders can do in response. Once they have come up with ideas, have them write them down. To help make this more fun, encourage students to write a "play" using their ideas. Facilitators should float around the room facilitating the process. It will be important to keep students on task and to help them problem solve any difficulties (such as

whose idea will be used. Be sure to remind them that all ideas can be included). After each group has had an opportunity to write their play (with the various responses so that their play might have multiple different endings) facilitators can visit each group and have the students act out their "play". Facilitator should be the victim. Once each group has had an opportunity to role play their ideas with the facilitator, reconvene in a large group. Have each group read out loud their scenario and then inform the group of their solution. Be sure to congratulate and provide positive reinforcement for their creative ideas. After each group has shared, lead a discussion about the process. Was it hard to come up with ideas? What would make it hard to take action? Can they picture themselves doing this in real life? At the end provide a brief recap of their ideas congratulating them as a group. (Facilitator Note: if the role playing looks like it isn't going to take very long, be ready to provide more scenarios allowing students the chance/opportunity to play different roles. Make sure to leave 10-15 minutes for discussion)

Closing (Closing and Homework 10 minutes)

Summarize all the important techniques students have learned today. Remind them that trying new behaviors might be really difficult at first, but with practice, they can get really good at it and will start to see change in their classroom. Make sure to take this opportunity to talk to students about how they are not alone. One bystander can make a lot of change, but a group of bystanders can make even more change and can help students feel supported. If as a group they decide to NOT tolerate bullying, then as a group they can fight it. Ask them if they can think of some ideas to include in their student code of conduct.

Homework

Encourage students to continue to try and practice bystander interventions whenever they see bullying. Remind them also to use the Bully Box. All incidents in the Bully Box will get discussed. Also let them know that next week's session will be different as we won't be meeting in our boy/girl groups but as classrooms instead. Both facilitators should say goodbye to the half of the group that they won't be seeing the next week.

Moving Toward a Bully Free 4th Grade

Session 6

Goals

- To review the previous five sessions
- To have the students come up with a Code of Conduct
- To practice problem solving future bullying problems
- To say goodbye and congratulate them for their hard work

Materials Required

- Large Paper Easel
- Package of Markers
- Several sheets of Butcher Paper
- Large Poster Board
- Bully Box
- Prizes

Session Outline

- Warm Up / Review Homework
- Review
- Code of Conduct
- Problem Solving Session
- Closing and Goodbye

Warm Up

Introduce both facilitators again. Review last week's session and all of the great bystander and bully interventions the students came up with. Share with the class the ideas of both groups. Highlight how similar they are. Even though they haven't been together as a class, they have been working on the same things and coming up with similar ideas.

Review Homework (Five minutes or less)

Review the homework from the last session. Did anyone try anything different that they would like to share? How did it go? Did anybody have any problems? Thank them for Bully Box submissions. Let them know that we are going to be talking about the Bully Box later on in the session.

Activity 1: Review (10 minutes)

Lead a discussion with the class about everything they have learned from this process. For example, ask them if they remember session 1 when we talked about the different kinds of bullying. Do this for every session and have the students try to remember what occurred and what the main ideas were for each session. This will also be an opportunity for the two half groups to exchange ideas and realize how similar their experiences were. Specifically, facilitators should remind students about the ideas they came up with regarding how they

would like their fourth grade class to be different. Ideas from both groups should be shared (refer to easel). Talk about how everyone seems to want the same basic things.

Activity 2: Student Code of Conduct (15 minutes)

Introduce the student code of conduct. Inform children that they are going to use everything they have learned about how to change bullying behavior and attitudes to write a code of conduct for their class. Be sure to explain what a code of conduct is. How it is a written rule that they all vow to follow and uphold to the best of their ability. Let them know that their code of conduct will be hung up in the classroom for everyone to see. They will all get a chance to sign it demonstrating their pledge to follow the code. Let them know that the reason to have a classroom code that they all sign rather than individual contracts is that they all are going to work together to change their classroom and uphold their code of conduct. Remind them that they are not alone and that several bystanders working together will create more change and support than one bystander working alone. Tape several pieces of butcher paper to the board and start generating ideas for what the code of conduct should include. Facilitators may need to help scaffold ideas. Then on a piece of large poster board write the final agreed upon code and have the students sign.

Activity 3: Problem Solving Solutions Together (15-20 minutes)

After everyone has signed the poster board let students know that one way they are going to uphold their code is to document or report when students break the agreed upon code (or when students bully). Let them know that the Bully Box is going to stay in their classroom for them to continue to have a safe and confidential way to report bullying incidents (especially those difficult incidents in which they weren't able to intervene). Every week, teachers are going to check the Bully Box and will alert the class to any incidents in the box. The teacher will read the incidents out loud and then the class and the teacher will problem solve a solution together. Let students know that the class will have the opportunity to practice this.

Read out loud an incident from the Bully Box (try to pick one that has bystanders if possible). Then lead a group discussion about how that bullying incident could have turned out differently. What could have been done? Can they think of a bystander intervention that would have worked? Also at this time let kids know that if they see severe forms of bullying such as kids beating up another student, or someone who keeps getting picked on, they should let the teacher know who those students are. Remind them that the bully box is confidential and is appropriate for minor bully slips, but severe incidents where someone is getting harmed should be reported immediately to the teacher.

Closing (5-10 minutes)

At this time, wrap up everything and thank the kids for participating. Also use this time to solicit feedback from the students. Is there anything that they found particularly helpful? Anything they wish was different? Anything they wish we had spent more time on? Anything they still have questions about? Etc… Be sure to write down their ideas on the easel for later use by the team. Let them know that they have worked really hard over the course of the past six weeks. We know it is going to be hard to uphold their code of conduct and there are going to be mistakes, but we also know that they can work together as a class to make some positive changes and to improve their 4^(th) grade class. Say goodbye to the class being sure to let them

know how much fun you have had (or something positive and truthful) and how hard it is to say goodbye. Remind them that they may be seeing you when we collect questionnaires.

Part II

Teacher Program

The following program is designed specifically for teachers to provide a forum for discussion as well as to help enable teachers to enforce and promote classroom behavior change.

Email Check-ins

Goals
- Answer questions that teachers may have.
- Give teachers the opportunity to provide ongoing feedback.
- Provide teachers consultation on how to handle bullying issues that occur during the intervention.
- Encourage teacher involvement and maintain an ongoing dialogue between facilitators and teachers.

Check in Instructions

Try to swing by the teachers' classroom once a week to accomplish the tasks listed below. Try to make sure you swing by during the teachers' free period or before or after the intervention. Make sure not to bother the teacher when he/she is busy. Also be sure to encourage teachers to email you if they have any questions or feedback.

- o Give them the checklist for next week's session (make sure to give them the checklist either at the end of the previous week's session or at least two days before the next session.)
- o Ask teachers to review the checklist at their convenience (and email any questions or concerns)
- o Ask teachers if they have any questions about next session or if they anticipate any problems
- o Ask teachers if they have questions from last session
- o Ask for feedback regarding last session (what did they think?)
- o Also ask teachers if they have any consultation needs, specifically, if they are encountering bullying situations in their classroom that they would like to brainstorm. Be sure to let them know that you will be available by email if further consultation questions should arise.
- o Take this opportunity to ask teachers if there are any noted changes in the classroom after the last session such as increased bullying, questions that students have raised, etc…

First Teacher Forum

Goals
- Introduce the intervention
- Give teachers an overview of the next six weeks
- Introduce the intervention checklists
- Introduce the Bully Box to teachers and prepare them for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Solicit feedback and questions
- Informally assess teacher attitudes toward bullying

Materials Required
- Coffee and Bagels
- First Session Checklist (enough copies for each teacher)
- Handout outlining sessions

Session Outline
- Check in
- Introduce the intervention and checklist
- Solicit Feedback

Check In

Re-introduce yourself as necessary. You may have not been working with all of the teachers so make sure you know everyone's name.

Introduce the Intervention

Take this opportunity to introduce the intervention. Give teachers the handout that outlines the six sessions. Explain to the teachers what our goals are and briefly discuss the bystander approach. Next discuss with them their views and attitudes toward bullying. Do they think it is a problem? What behaviors do they notice the most in their classrooms? Ask if they have heard of social aggression? Explain if necessary. Take this opportunity to informally and discreetly assess the teachers' attitudes toward bullying.

Solicit Feedback

At this time, open up the discussion to the teachers. What do they think about our objectives? Do they buy into the need for intervention? Do they see these problems in their classroom? If teachers are expressing negative attitudes or beliefs that bullying doesn't happen at their school or that it is just a normal part of growing up, take the time to educate them further on the negative effects of bullying. Assure them that they are not alone by explaining that many people don't think bullying is a serious problem. When discussing this make sure to take a one down approach and do not launch into expert mode! Offer to have a follow-up email or phone conversation about the implications of classroom bullying. Make sure to be continuously evaluating their degree of participation and interest in the conversation. You want to make

sure you are maintaining an alliance with them by listening to and being respectful of what they have to say.

Be sure to write down any ideas teachers have for things that could be done differently. Teachers know their classroom the best so their insight could be really helpful.

Introduce the first session checklist and let teachers know that we will be asking them to fill these out during each session. Explain to them how we need these checklists to make sure we are all doing the same things in the different sessions. We need their help so they can help us make sure the students are all getting the main ideas. This way you can be assured that the boys and girls are learning the same things. Hand them out and give teachers the opportunity to review. Ask for questions and feedback. Is the checklist clear? Also talk to them about their concerns about discipline and keeping the children on task and in control. Let them know that you do not plan on interfering with how they manage their classroom and would appreciate their help in maintaining order.

Introduce Bully Box and Intervention

Explain to teachers what to anticipate. Introduce the Bully Box and how we are going to be placing the box in each of their classrooms after the third session. Talk to teachers about how they feel about taking five minutes of class time twice a week to have children jot down some ideas for us to put in the Bully Box. It would be really helpful if the teachers could provide brief class time to do this so that all kids have the opportunity. Let them know that another reason we want to do this is that we are going to be asking them to write down bullying incidents that occur in their school so we want to make sure to reduce any stigma by making sure all kids participate. Ask for their feedback and if this is feasible. Do they have any suggestions? Ask them what they think of this. Is this going to be a problem? Do they have any concerns? Then explain to them how we are hoping to leave the Bully Box in their classroom after we have left. Let them know that in the sixth session we will be asking students and teachers to generate a code of conduct for their classrooms. We will want everyone to sign it with the understanding that by doing so everyone in the class is held accountable. Then explain that the second half of the last session we will be modeling a problem solving session about a Bully Box submission. Explain to them that we are hoping that they will be able to continue to do this after we have gone. It may be helpful to go into detail about our reasoning behind the Bully Box (ecological focus, classroom level intervention, etc…). Ask them if this is a reasonable request. Can they picture themselves having time to do this? Do they think students will use it? Do they think it will be helpful? Let them know that their feedback is very important and that we want to take this opportunity to brainstorm with them solutions to any anticipated difficulties. Also let them know that we will be meeting again after the intervention is over to talk about what it is going to be like when we are gone. We will have another opportunity to brainstorm ideas then. Let them know that we will be dropping by periodically to get the ideas out of the Bully Box and to give them their checklists.

Closing

Summarize the main points of the discussion and let the teachers know that as they think of questions to email you and you would be happy to respond. Also let them know that if they would like more information about bullying, you would be happy to provide them with some materials. Say goodbye. Be sure to remind teachers of your continued availability through email and remind them you will be giving them the next checklist soon.

Second Teacher Forum

Goals
- Review first three student sessions
- Continue to prepare teachers for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Answer any questions teachers may have
- Solicit Feedback

Materials Required
- Bully Box
- Coffee and Bagels

Session Outline
- Check in
- Review
- Solicit Feedback

Check In

Re-introduce yourself as necessary. Take this opportunity to thank teachers for emailing their questions and concerns. Take this opportunity to ask teachers if your swing by time is okay with them. Make sure you are not intruding or if there is a preferred method of interacting.

Review

Take this opportunity to review the past three sessions. Have a discussion about the different types of bullying, the consequences of bullying, and the different roles involved. Ask them if they have any questions? Take this opportunity to share with teachers what we have been trying to accomplish. Let them know what our objectives were and the main points we were trying to get across such as 1. Increasing student awareness of bullying at their school, 2. Identifying what students want to change or how they would like their fourth grade class to be different, 3. Helping students understand that bullying is not just a bully/victim problem, instead it is a classroom problem that everyone contributes to even unwittingly, 4. Setting the stage for helping students understand that the bystander is the person who can create change. If they work together they can help make their classroom a better place. Our goal is to start to change any pro-bullying attitudes that exist in the classroom.

Solicit Feedback

At this time, open up the discussion to the teachers. What do they think about our objectives? What do they think about what we have been teaching the students? Have they observed any changes in their classrooms? Be sure to write down any ideas teachers have for things that could be done differently. Teachers know their classroom the best so their insight could be really helpful.

Closing

Summarize the main points of the discussion and let the teachers know that as they think of questions to email you and you would be happy to respond. Also let them know that if they would like more information about bullying, you would be happy to provide them with some materials. Say goodbye. Be sure to remind teachers of your continued availability through email and remind them you will be giving them the next checklist soon.

Third Teacher Forum

Goals
- Say goodbye.
- Get feedback about the intervention.
- Anticipate future concerns and problems.
- Remind teachers about Bully Box procedures.
- Brainstorm any concerns.
- Impart to teachers how important their role is and their role in helping to make lasting change.

Materials Required
- Coffee and Bagels

Session Outline
- Check in
- Review
- Solicit Feedback
- Say Goodbye

Check In

Again thank teachers for emails. Address any questions that have gone unanswered or inquire if they have any additional concerns questions regarding email replies. Thank them for taking the time to respond to your emails. Also thank teachers for filling out checklists. They did such a great job and it was so helpful! Let them know that you are available for consultation for the next few months. (TBD)

Review

Review the last three sessions briefly. Remind teachers about the intervention strategies students came up with.

Solicit Feedback

Ask teachers what they thought about the students' ideas. How realistic do THEY think they are? Have they been seeing any changes? Do they have any examples where they saw students behaving differently? What is their hope for the future? Do they think this intervention has been helpful overall? Do they have any ideas or comments they would like to share? Let them know how important feedback is. There is a possibility that the intervention will be implemented school wide so any feedback will be critical for this process.

Part III

Session Checklists

Contents

Checklist for Session 1

☐ When introducing self, facilitator shared a bullying story in which he/she was involved, specifically in the bystander role.

● Facilitator discussed confidentiality and group expectations.

    ☐ A. Facilitator explicitly stated that children are NOT to use names of involved parties when discussing bullying incidents that happen at their school.
    ☐ B. Facilitator explained that what happens in this group stays in the group, gives a specific example.
    ☐ C. Facilitator explained that their will be no consequences for talking about bullying. (e.g. the teacher will not later punish a student for admitting that he/she bullies).
    ☐ D. Facilitator went over group rules.
    ☐ E. Facilitator told students that the group will meet six times for one hour.

☐ Facilitator outlined the purpose for the program by explaining to students that the group meetings are to discuss bullying and help them learn intervention strategies.

● Facilitator listed specific goals of the program:

    ☐ A. Learn about the different types of bullying.
    ☐ B. Learn how to identify bullying.
         C. Learn about the different roles in bullying (who are the players).
    ☐ D. Think about what group would want their classroom to be like, or how they would want it be different.
    ☐ E. Learn different strategies for intervention.
    ☐ F. Develop a classroom code of conduct.

☐ Facilitator introduced warm-up activity by asking what students think bullying is and then wrote student ideas on the easel dividing them into social and physical aggression.

☐ Facilitator conveyed that bullying is a goal directed behavior.

☐ Facilitator introduced activity and handed out paper so students could write down examples of bullying in their school.

☐ Facilitator led a discussion about bullying asking students what they think their school is like and how they would like it to be different.

☐ Facilitator closed the session by asking students what they learned.

☐ Facilitator summarized the different types of bullying behavior.

☐ Facilitator assigned homework (asked students to be aware of bullying in the upcoming week.

Checklist for Session 2

☐ Facilitator began warm-up by asking students to review previous session. Facilitator filled in any missing information.

☐ Facilitator reviewed homework by asking students if they would share examples and handed out rewards as necessary.

☐ Facilitator introduced activity for the day and broke students into small groups

    ☐ A. Facilitator asked students to answer questions about the "bully".
    ☐ B. Facilitator asked students to answer questions about the "victim".
    ☐ C. Facilitator asked students to answer questions about "4th grade boys (girls)".
    ☐ D. Facilitator floated from group to group during small group activity.
    ☐ E. Facilitator led a discussion after each category (i.e. bully, victim, etc…)

☐ Facilitator closed the session by asking students what they learned.

☐ Facilitator summarized by explaining how bullying affects everyone (not just the victim).

☐ Facilitator assigned homework (asked students to be aware of bullying in the upcoming week and think about what it would be like to be the other people in the incident).

Checklist for Session 3

☐   Facilitator began warm-up by asking students to review previous session. Facilitator filled in any missing information.

☐   Facilitator reviewed homework by asking students if they would share examples of what it was like to think about being in another person's shoes.

☐   Facilitator defined the different roles (bully, victim, bystander) and wrote on the easel characteristics of each.

☐ Facilitator defined the different types of bystanders.

    ☐   A. Facilitator defined and provided an example of the outsider bystander.

    ☐   B. Facilitator defined and provided an example of the reinforcer bystander.

    ☐   C. Facilitator defined and provided an example of the assistant bystander.

    ☐   D. Facilitator defined and provided an example of the defender bystander.

    ☐   E. After providing a definition and example for each type of bystander, the facilitator asked students for more examples and asked them to think about how each bystander role contributes to bullying.

☐ Facilitator read examples of bullying and asked students to identify the players.

☐ Facilitator asked students how that specific bystander behavior contributed to or influenced the bullying.

☐ Facilitator closed the session by asking students what they learned.

☐ Facilitator summarized the different roles by reviewing the chart.

☐ Facilitator assigned homework by asking students to think about their own behavior in bullying, which role do they play?

☐ Facilitator reminded students about different types of bullying (social and physical)

☐ Facilitator introduced the Bully Box.

Checklist for Session 4

☐ Facilitator began warm-up by asking students to review previous sessions. Facilitator filled in any missing information.

☐ Facilitator asked students if they had any more ideas about how they would like their classroom to be different. Ideas were written down on the easel.

☐ Facilitator reviewed homework and asked students to think about the different roles they assumed in the past week. Then the facilitator read an example from the Bully Box and asked students to identify the roles and how each role contributed to the bullying. Facilitator handed out rewards as necessary.

☐ Facilitator asked students how the children in the warm up example could have behaved differently.

☐ Facilitator(s) role played a bullying incident that included bystanders.

☐ Facilitator helped students brainstorm intervention strategies that would be appropriate for this situation.

☐ Facilitators wrote down student ideas about different bystander behavior on the easel making sure the following positive intervention strategies were addressed:

   ☐ A. Stay calm.
   ☐ B. Tell a teacher or counselor.
   ☐ C. Tell involved parties in a firm voice to stop.
   ☐ D. Stand by the victim.
   ☐ E. If don't know what to do, put incident in Bully Box
   ☐ F. Walk away
   ☐ G. Get a friend to help you stand up to bully, letting bully know behavior will not be tolerated

☐ Facilitator reviewed each idea and asked students how realistic each behavior would be.

☐ Facilitator helped students identify the different situations intervention strategies would be appropriate.

☐ Facilitator(s) role played solutions.

☐ Facilitator asked students how the different bystander behaviors might help or hurt their ideas about a better 4th grade.

☐ The facilitator discussed how bystanders have the power to create change Facilitator discussed with students how the players might feel differently after the intervention.

☐ Facilitator closed the session by handing out paper to students and asked them to think of a challenging bullying situation (i.e. a situation in which they might not know what to do, or they know they should act, but couldn't/wouldn't) letting students know their ideas will be used in future sessions.

☐ Facilitator reminded students about confidentiality

☐ Facilitator assigned homework by asking students to put bullying incidents that occur between sessions in the Bully Box.

☐ Facilitator also encouraged students to write down any challenging situations they might think of and put them in the Bully Box.

Checklist for Session 5

☐ Facilitator began warm-up by asking students to review the important role of the bystander in intervening with bullying and revisited the intervention ideas on the easel. Facilitator filled in any missing information.

☐ Facilitator reviewed homework and thanked students for Bully Box contributions, letting them know their examples would be included in today's session.

☐ Facilitator broke students into small groups and gave them two bullying scenarios (one social, one physical).

☐ Facilitator asked students to write down a "play" where they act out the scenario and different bystander behaviors.

● For Role Play:

    ☐ A. Facilitator asked students to role play their "play."
    ☐ B. Facilitator played the role of the victim for each group.
    ☐ C. Facilitator participated in each group's "play."

☐ Facilitator(s) floated around the room helping each small group.

☐ Facilitator asked students to reconvene in large group.

☐ Facilitator asked students from each group to share their solutions with the large group.

☐ Facilitator provided positive reinforcement for ideas.

☐ Facilitator led a discussion about the process of coming up with ideas asking if it was difficult and if it was realistic.

☐ Facilitator closed the session by summarizing what they learned that day (different intervention strategies).

☐ Facilitator reminded students how hard it is to try new behaviors.

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☐ Facilitator reminded students they are not alone and can act together.

☐ Facilitator assigned homework by asking students to try intervention strategies when they see bullying.

☐ Facilitator also encouraged students to write down any challenging situations they might encounter and put them in the Bully Box.

☐ Facilitator informed group that next week's meeting would be different as groups will meet in their normal class (e.g. Ms. Smith's fourth grade class).

☐ Facilitators said goodbye to the half of the group they will not be seeing (e.g. Ms. Jones's class).

Checklist for Session 6

☐ Facilitators introduced themselves.

☐ Facilitator reviewed bystander interventions from both groups.

☐ Facilitator pointed out to students how similar their ideas were and how even though they have been apart, they have been working on the same things.

☐ Facilitator reviewed homework from the last session by asking students if they tried different intervention strategies.

☐ Facilitator thanked students for Bully Box submissions.

● Reviewed previous sessions:

☐ A. Definitions of bullying and different types.
☐ B. Consequences of bullying for bully, victim, and class.
☐ C. Different roles in bullying.
☐ D. Intervention strategies (did this in warm up so brief)
☐ E. Ideas for how students want their fourth grade class to be different.

☐ Facilitator introduced the code of conduct and explained what it is (written rules everyone will follow).

☐ Facilitator talked to students about the differences between an individual contract and a group contract.

☐ Facilitator discussed how the class is going to work together to create change.

☐ Facilitator encouraged students to think about what they wanted to include on their code of conduct, being sure to scaffold responses as necessary.

☐ Facilitator wrote ideas on the easel.

☐ Facilitator wrote the final code of conduct on a poster board.

☐ All students signed the code of conduct.

☐ Facilitators told students that the Bully Box will remain in their classroom and explained how it is going to be used.

☐ Facilitators informed students about what kind of incidents should be reported immediately and what kind of incidents are appropriate for the Bully Box, being sure to remind students of confidentiality.

☐ Facilitator read aloud an incident from the Bully Box.

☐ Facilitator led a group problem solving discussion on what the people involved in the incident could have done differently.

☐ Facilitator closed the session by summarizing what they learned during the groups.

☐ Facilitator asked for feedback about what was helpful, what could be different, questions, etc...

☐ Facilitator wrote down ideas on the easel.

☐ Facilitator acknowledged how hard students have been working.

☐ Facilitator emphasized how hard it is going to be to uphold the code of conduct and how everyone can work together to change.

☐ Facilitators said goodbye and gave appreciations.

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Vita

Pamela McDonald Schaber was born in Dallas, TX on February 18, 1976, the daughter of Jack and Rebecca McDonald. Pamela graduated from Southern Methodist University, with honors in December of 1998, with a B.S. in Sociology. In January of 1999, she began working as a milieu therapist at Children's Medical Center in Dallas. After a year of experience in the mental health field, she decided to begin her graduate education. In August of 2000, Pamela entered the Human Development and Family Sciences Program at the University of Texas at Austin. She completed her thesis, titled: Synchronous Maternal Behavior in a Play Interaction: How it Relates to Child-Oriented Emotions, and graduated in August of 2002 with her M.A. Also during this time she married her husband, Timothy Schaber. Then in the fall of 2002, Pamela entered the School Psychology Doctoral Training Program at the University of Texas at Austin. At the University of Texas, Pamela has pursued research interests in social aggression and therapeutic assessment.

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