

School Bullying:
A Review of the Research

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Introduction

School bullying is not a new phenomenon and has traditionally been thought of as a normal part of childhood or growing up. The common adage “boys will be boys” is an example of how aggressive behaviour exhibited by male children is minimized or rationalized as somehow natural. Additionally, some individuals actually believe that children bullied are subsequently toughened up and, as such, better prepared for the harsh realities of adulthood. Not only are these types of beliefs ill conceived, but “longitudinal research indicates that childhood bullying is associated with adult antisocial behaviour, such as criminality, and limits opportunities to attain socially desired objectives” (Farrington, 1993 in Craig et al., 1998, p. 7).

Social science research has contributed to a shift in public attitudes pertaining to peer harassment in schools, and communities are beginning to understand the detrimental effects that bullying can have on children. Moreover, research regarding the phenomenon of bullying has allowed us to better conceptualize this significant problem within its social context and apart from a categorical, dichotomous, or bully/victim dyadic pattern. That is, bullying involves multiple participants and some research indicates that many bullies are also victims of bullying as well. Thus, what results is a dynamic rather than static model of bullying that can involve a victim, bully, bully-victim, bystanders, and structural participants such as the school and family. A greater understanding of the roles and characteristics of bullying participants is important if effective anti-bullying policies are to be implemented. This understanding, coupled with the tragic incidents that have resulted from this form of aggression, has heightened public concern and national anti-bullying campaigns are now commonplace.

The Government of Canada launched its National Crime Prevention Strategy in 1994 in an attempt to help Canadians address the problems associated with crime and victimization. This National Strategy “endeavours to intervene early in the lives of our young people, addressing issues of

antisocial behaviour before they become more serious problems” (Canada, 2004). Additionally, since the launch of the national strategy “almost 100 projects have been funded that deal with the issue of bullying, along with a host of school-based projects” (Canada, 2004b).

The National Crime Prevention Strategy implemented a large number of anti-bullying projects as a part of their commitment to crime prevention through social development (CPSD). CPSD targets the causes of crime in an attempt to stop crime before it happens and bullying has been identified as one of those causes. Anti bullying initiatives rooted in CPSD can include targeted interventions aimed at high risk individuals, universal programs aimed at an entire school populace, or both. Another approach to bullying prevention is crime prevention through environmental design (CEPTED), whereby the school’s physical environment is altered in such a way that discourages bullying practices. However, due to the complex nature of causality underlying bullying behaviour there is no single all-encompassing anti-bullying program for every school. As such, many schools have found that a multidisciplinary approach to bullying prevention is most effective.

In the search for a preventative bullying program that works there have been many programs or approaches that have proven ineffective or performed poorly. These ineffective programs are not worthless, however, as they have enabled us to move towards seeking more effective solutions. Thus, being cognizant of what fails to prevent bullying allows us to become more adept at identifying what does work. A bullying prevention program’s success, however, is dependent upon the framework within which the program is operated, the school’s ethos, and the program’s overall sustainability and outcome evaluation.

Defining Bullying

One of the most difficult aspects of bullying prevention programming is the ability reach a consensus about the definition of bullying. A number of different definitions appear throughout the literature and although they differ in many respects they all share one thing in common: bullying, by nature, is a form of aggression. Hazler et al. (1992) in Xin Ma et al. (2001) noted that “bullying is a

form of aggression in which one student, physically or psychologically abuses a victim over a period of time” (p. 248). Randall (1997) stated that “bullying is the aggressive behavior arising from the deliberate intent to cause physical or psychological distress to others” (p. 4). Randall’s (1997) definition stresses intent, whereas Hazler et al. (1992) emphasizes repetition. What both of these definitions are lacking, however, is the verbal component of bullying. Besag (1989) gives a definition of bullying that encompasses all of the aforementioned elements in addition to the verbal element of bullying that often occurs and states:

Bullying is repeated attacks—physical, psychological, social or verbal—by those in a position of power, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification (p. 249).

Bullying is about power through aggression and, as such, bullies may acquire power by victimizing others physically, emotionally, or socially. However, the most insidious aspect of the bullying phenomenon is its cyclical nature. That is, as bullies gain more power over their victims their victims grow increasingly defenseless, which unintentionally elicits further victimization.

Prevalence, Implications, and Continuity

In Canada, “15% of children reported bullying others more than twice a term; while 9% of children reported bullying others on a weekly basis” (Charach, Pepler, & Ziegler, 1995 in Craig *et al.*, 1998). Additionally, Charach et al. (1995) conducted a survey in Toronto Ontario of students age 4 to 14 in 22 different classrooms and found that one-third of them were involved in bullying as either victims or offenders. A national study conducted in the United States found that “13% of sixth graders reported being a victim of bullying at least once a week, and 10% reported being responsible for bullying someone” (Nansel et al., 2001 in Orpinas, 2003, p. 431). In a study of kindergarten children, approximately half of the children reported experiencing some form of victimization (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1997 in Orpinas *et al.*, 2003, p. 431). Given these statistics, and due to the delirious effects bullying can have on children, there is little doubt that bullying in schools is a significant problem that must be addressed.

The claim that bullying can affect the health and wellbeing of victims dates back to the 19th century. Public debate was initiated, regarding the harmful effects of bullying in English public schools, following the publication of *Tom Brown's School Days (1968)* (Rigby, 2003, p. 583). However, it wasn't until Norwegian scholar Dan Olewus conducted a series of studies in the 1970's, regarding bullying in Scandinavian schools, that any real recognition was given to the devastating effects caused by bullying. Since then many studies have uncovered the delirious short-term and long-term consequences that bullying can have on students.

Children who are repeatedly bullied in school “may experience such short-term problems as physical and psychological distress, difficulty in concentrating, and school phobia” (Bernstein & Watson, 1997 in Crothers & Levinson 2004, p. 496). Additionally, “children who are involved with bullying and victimization are at risk for developing” such long term problems “...as criminality, school drop out, unemployment, depression, anxiety, and generalized levels of reduced attainment and competence in adulthood” (Olweus, 1989 in Craig et al., 1998, p. 27). Moreover, Farrington (1993) notes that the problems associated with bullying and victimization are not only continual, but are often transmitted across generations. This is because, as Farrington (1991) in Xin Ma et al. (2001) explains, “former bullies are also likely to bully or abuse their spouses or children, which creates the cycle of domestic violence and encourages new generations of aggressive children” (p. 252). Finally, the prevalence, implications, and continuity of bullying result in monetary costs that are much too high. That is, “these children generate costs because they are involved in multiple systems such as mental health, juvenile justice, special education, and social services” (Craig et al., 1998, p. 27). Thus, the development of effective bullying prevention and intervention programs is pertinent.

Key Participants: Characteristics and Role Dynamics

The bully

School bullies are known to be aggressive not only in the school context but in other relationships as well. Additionally, bullies tend to be:

...from families in which parents: are authoritarian (preferring physical means of discipline); are often hostile and rejecting; are inconsistent in their parenting (being both rejecting and permissive); are poor social problem-solvers; and emphasize striking back at minor provocation (Batsche & Knoff, 1994 in Xin Ma, 2001).

Bullies are disproportionately male and can be characterized as “hyperactive, disruptive, and impulsive” (Canada, 2004b). This being said, however, research has shown that bullies are “...a more heterogeneous group than has been thought earlier” and that “...they do not always lack social and cognitive skills but may have a well-developed theory of mind” (Sutton, Smith, & Swettenham, 1999 in Salmivalli, 2001, p. 399). For example, those bullies who employ circumlocutory strategies of aggression often have high levels of social intelligence (Kaukiainen et al., 1999 in Salmivalli, 2001, p. 399). Additionally, successful bullies often have sound social cognition and mind skills that allow them to manipulate and organize victims, inflict suffering in subtle ways, and avoid being detected (Sutton et al., 1999 in Xin Ma, 2001, p. 252). Even if bullies exhibit high levels of intelligence and social cognition, however, they “have little empathy for their victims and show little or no remorse for bullying” (Canada, 2004b). This is somewhat surprising because, as Craig et al. (1998) notes, “children who are bullied become aggressive as a consequence of their own experiences of being victimized” (p. 25). Thus, many bullies may be previous bullying victims yet still lack the ability to empathize with their victims or feel remorse for their wrongdoing. This is perhaps because “bullies in school are often victims at home” and, as a result, exhibit a level of empathy consistent with their day-to-day social realities (Xin Ma et al., 2001, p. 255).

The victim and the bully/victim

Olweus (1978) classified victims into two groups: the passive and the provocative. The passive victim is anxious, insecure, cautious, sensitive and defenseless and the provocative victim is quick-tempered, hyperactive, anxious, and defensive. Passive victims are lonely and abandoned without friends in school (Olweus, 1978). Additionally, passive male victims are physically weak and psychologically sensitive (Olweus, 1978). Some researchers have found that victims are less intelligent than non-victims (Perry *et al* 1988; Roland, 1989 cited in Xin Ma, 2001) and others have suggested that bullying victims lack emotional regulation skills (Cicchetti *et al.* 1995 cited in Xin Ma, 2001, p. 254).

Provocative victims represent a small proportion of the victim group and are commonly referred to as bully/victims by some researchers. These victims “have clear elements of both ‘pure’ victims and ‘pure’ bullies in their makeup” (Olweus, 2001, p. 12). That is, provocative victims are similar to passive victims in that they are depressive, socially anxious, exhibit low self-esteem, and feel disliked by their peers. Conversely, however, these victims also show similarities to bullies as they can be dominant, aggressive, engage in antisocial behaviour, and have problems with hyperactivity and impulsivity.

In general, Champion (1997) in Xin Ma *et al.* (2001) found that “children who lack support in interpersonal relationships are likely to be bullied” (p. 254). Additionally, unlike bullies whose undesirable behaviour is manifested externally through aggression, victims tend to internalize problems such as anxiety or depression. This is disconcerting because the “problematic behaviour of victims is...more diverse than bullies and may not be easily identified” (Craig *et al.*, 1998, p. 25). Thus, because depression or anxiety exhibited by victims is not as observable as the aggressive behaviour displayed by bullies, victims may require “more intensive intervention” than their aggressors (Craig *et al.*, 1998, p. 25). Additionally, intensive intervention may be required most by provocative victims because “children who are both bullies and victims are seen as especially prone to mental illness” (Rigby, 2003, p. 1).

The bystander

Although there has been considerable interest among researchers pertaining to the roles of bystanders in peer harassment dynamics, bystanders are still the most overlooked group in the bullying phenomenon. Often examined in the social context of peer processes, Salmivalli (1999) in Xin Ma et al. (2001) believes that “studying bystanders...is important...because bullying is a group phenomenon that is largely enabled and sustained by peers in school” (p. 256). In this view “acts of bullying are seen as typically sustained by a connection with a group rather than by individual motives such as personal malevolence” (Rigby, 2003, p. 4). Aforementioned scholar Dan Olewus, in his studies of bullying in Scandinavia, proposed the term “mobbing” to suggest that children are bullied by mobs (Olewus, 2001, p. 3). However, as Pepler and Craig (1995) in Rigby (2003) point out, “bullying is [more commonly] carried out by one or two people with the passive support of others” (p. 4).

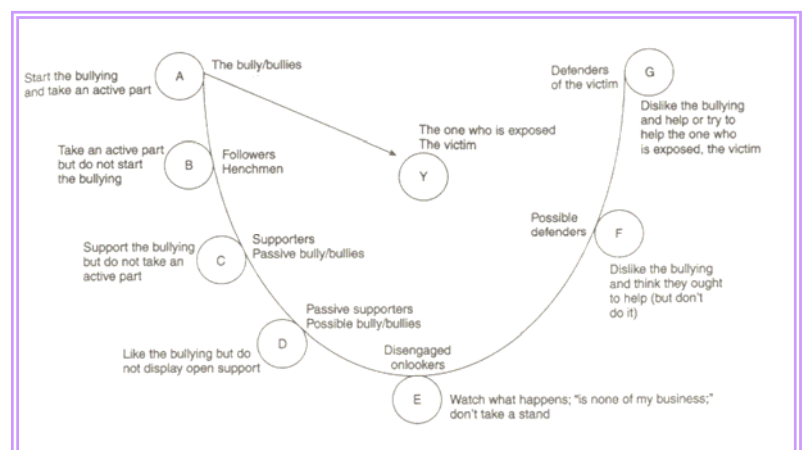
The passive support of bystanders can take on many different forms and may be referred to as the “bullying circle” (Figure 1, as proposed by Olewus, 1991, p. 15). The bullying circle creates a situation whereby personal accountability or feelings of guilt are diffused amongst the many people participating so that no one person feels that

they are responsible for the bullying that occurs (Salmivalli, 2001, p. 400).

Additionally, although “children are reasonably aware of their participant roles in bullying...they tend to underestimate the results of their [part]...in active bullying”

(Salmivalli et al., 1996 in Xin Ma et al., 2001, p. 256). The particular participant role that a bystander assumes is thought to be “determined by both individual behavioural dispositions and personality traits and other group members’ expectancies” (Salmivalli, 2001, p. 402).

Bullying Circle (Figure 1)



The negative consequences that arise from one's role as a bystander are more subtle than those costs experienced by victims, but are by no means inconsequential. Those who witness bullying, and have done nothing to intervene, often feel a sense of powerlessness, have diminished self-respect, and reduced self-confidence. For this reason, and due to the fact that "85% of bullying episodes occur in the context of a peer group", it is important that bullying prevention programs go beyond targeted interventions aimed at victims and bullies and consider the participatory role of bystanders.

Structural participants: family & school

Craig et al. (1998) found that family demographics and family socialization processes have an indirect effect on bullying and victimization. That is, low socioeconomic status, unemployment, and being young parents was related to negative parenting practices and externalizing behaviour problems in children. Hostile interactions between parents and their children, as well as inconsistent parenting practices may act as a catalyst in perpetuating aggressive behaviour and bullying. For example, "Olewus (1980, 1993) concluded that families of boys who bullied were often described as lacking in warmth, used physical violence within the family, and failed to monitor children's activities outside of the school" (Espelage & Swearer, 2003, p. 376). Additionally, "families of victims have been found to be cohesive yet enmeshed and might include an overcontrolling mother" (Bowers et al., 1994 in Espelage & Swearer, 2003, p. 376). In addition to familial factors that can perpetuate aggressive bullying behaviours by children there are also a couple of significant school factors that contribute to bullying dynamics.

The two primary school factors that are important to consider in relation to bullying are the school's ethos or climate and the attitudes of teachers. Baker (1998) in Espelage & Swearer (2003) states that "the social climate of the school will influence students' engagement in aggressive behaviours" (p. 377). Additionally, "schools with less bullying are characterized by positive disciplinary actions, strong parental involvement, and high academic standards" (Xin, 2002 in Espelage & Swearer, 2003, p. 377). A second important school factor is that of teacher attitudes.

Teachers may foster bullying by failing to intervene in bullying behaviours when necessary or by failing to promote respectful interactions between students as apart of their curriculum. Citing a variety of sources, Espelage and Swearer (2003) explain that studies show that teachers (a) tend to report lower prevalence rates of bullying than students (b) do not always correctly identify bullies, and (c) typically do not feel confident in their abilities to deal with bullying (p. 378). As such, it is important that bullying prevention programs first consider the potential need for a comprehensive training period with teachers to ensure that the programs implementation will be effectively supported.

Strategies to Prevent Bullying in Schools

Crime prevention through social development (CPSD)

CPSD seeks to address criminogenic individuals, or in this case those individuals involved in bullying, by addressing individual, familial, and social conditions. Policies and programs under this model seek to address the underlying causes or conditions that lead children to, or put them at risk for, becoming bullies and victims. As previously mentioned there are many factors that contribute to bullying dynamics including; the individual characteristics of bullies and victims, the group dynamics associated with bystander roles, familial factors, the school's climate, teacher attitudes, as well as those things yet to be discussed like the school's physical characteristics. Thus, the prevention of bullying under a CPSD model may attempt to thwart bullying by addressing the familial dynamics of victims and bullies, by attempting to alter the school's ethos, by targeting specific individuals or groups, or by implementing programs to prevent bullying from occurring in the first place. Therefore, CPSD focuses not only on the bully and victim but also on the family, the school and teachers, as well as peers and bystanders.

The influence that family characteristics and parenting practices have on bullying and victimization requires that these things be addressed if peer harassment is to be prevented. Craig et al. (1998) make a number of recommendations to prevent bullying through family interventions. First, parents need to be educated about bullying and victimization problems, informed of the signs of

bullying and victimization, and taught about how to effectively communicate with their children about difficulties they might be experiencing. Second, parents need to be informed about the relationship between ineffective parenting styles and aggression exhibited by children. Third, resources should be allocated to high risk families, such as those with low income or unemployment status. Finally, parents must be encouraged to get involved with their child's school, communicate with other parents and the school's administration, and to contribute in creating a school environment where bullying is not tolerated.

There are a number of things that schools can do to create an environment whereby bullying is reduced and discouraged. Batsche and Knoff (1994) in Xin Ma (2001) recommend and summarize anti-bullying program strategies as: (a) promoting facts, not myths, about bullying; (b) dispelling beliefs about aggressive behaviours; (c) conducting a school-wide assessment of bullying; (d) developing a student code of conduct; (e) providing counseling services for both bullies and victims; (f) involving parents in the intervention process; (g) implementing intervention strategies specific to aggressive children; and (h) establishing a system of accountability and evaluation. A school-based intervention program containing all of the strategies proposed by Batsche and Knoff (1994) called FAST Track (Families and Schools Together) was evaluated by Dodge (1993) in Sherman et al. (1998). One year after FAST Track was initiated, evaluations showed positive effects on parental involvement, child social cognitive skills, and reduced problematic behaviour. However, FAST Track's success at reducing bullying or conduct disorder is accompanied by a budget of over one million dollars per year for each of the four program sites in which it was implemented. The requirement for such an immense budget is due to the fact that researchers "recommend comprehensive, multi-year, multi-component approaches over more traditional single-intervention ones" (Weissberg et al., 1994 in Sherman et al., 1998, p. 168). Thus, universal prevention programs designed to prevent bullying by training all students, the entire school staff, and that modify the schools environment are preferred over targeted prevention programs designed for a subgroup of

students. This idea is also supported by meta-analysis results showing that programs that use multiple interventions are more adept at reducing undesirable behaviour than those using a single intervention or targeted strategy (Sherman et al, 1998, p. 125-172).

The recommendation of researchers that school-based prevention programs be multi-faceted, longer in duration, and broader in scope presents a challenge. That is, “more complex programs are more likely to be watered down or ‘reinvented’ by school staff” (Sherman et al., 1998, p. 169). This reinvention or watered down effect is likely the result of staff or teachers “who may feel that the program is one additional burden on their already busy schedules, and that programs are not tailored to the needs of their particular school and students” (Orpinas & Staniszewski, 2003, p. 433). Thus, a successful anti-bullying program must not only be adequately funded, but teachers and school administrators must be effectively motivated and trained in successfully implementing and evaluating bullying prevention programs. Additionally, “multi-year prevention efforts...rather than single year programs” need to be supported (Sherman et al., 1998, p. 180). Multi-year prevention efforts will help to motivate teachers, school administrators, families, and the community to dedicate their efforts to the program’s agenda because a message is conveyed that the program “is here to stay”. Moreover, anti-bullying prevention programs that span from the elementary school years through to high school (Sherman et al., 1998, p. 180) and that adopt a “whole-school approach [have] been suggested in many studies as the most effective way to combat bullying” (Xin Ma, 2001, p. 259).

In a review conducted by Clarke and Kiselica (1997), which focused on a whole-school social development intervention approach to bullying prevention, they made several recommendations including: (a) a philosophical shift regarding bullying among school personnel; (b) educating students, teachers, administrators and parents about bullying; (c) implementing consistent school policies; (d) maintaining close adult supervision of children at school; (e) starting interventions early (i.e. kindergarten onward); and (f) supportive training and counseling. These components are similar to, if not the same as, most of the recommendations found in the literature regarding effective anti-bullying

programs. Therefore, what we are left with is the notion that preventing school bullying through social development is not a simple or neatly categorized endeavor, but rather a complex multi-faceted one that requires the collaborative dedication of multiple stakeholders. Thus, although the aforesaid beliefs that underlie the axiom of “boys will be boys” are poorly devised, it would seem that traditional ideologies that propose “it takes a village to raise a child” are substantiated.

Crime prevention through environmental design (CEPTED): rewards and risk

Another way to prevent bullying is to alter the school’s physical environment in order to reduce the likelihood that peer harassment behaviours will occur. The underlying ideas of CEPTED were adopted from the concept of “defensible space” (Newman, 1972 in Lab, 2004, p. 35). Defensible space is one in which bullying is inhibited “by creating a physical expression of a social fabric which defends itself” (Newman, 1972 in Lab, 2004, p. 35) and where “an area can influence the behaviour” of individuals (Lab, 2004, p. 35). CEPTED approaches to prevention assume that bullies will be influenced by the costs and benefits associated with their aggressive behaviour. Thus, bullying should be reduced if the costs of doing so outweigh the benefits.

Sherman et al. (1998) looked at several environmental change strategies that could be implemented by schools in an attempt to prevent bullying. One such change is to regroup students by changing the school schedule. Staggering recess, lunch, and other between class times will minimize the number of bullies and victims present in a particular area at any one time. Sampson (2002) notes that this will allow supervisors to more easily spot bullying behaviours (p. 22). Additionally, Sampson (2002) recommends reducing the amount of time students spend less supervised; increasing supervision in those areas where bullying is expected; posting classroom signs prohibiting bullying and listing the consequences for it; developing activities in less-supervised areas; and setting up a “bully box” in a neutral area that enables students to drop notes in the box alerting school officials about problem bullies or potential threats (p. 21-23). All of these recommendations are consistent with the intermediate goals of CEPTED: access control, surveillance, activity support, and motivation

reinforcement (Kushmuk & Whittemore, 1981 in Lab, 2004, p. 37). For example, reducing the amount of time students spend less supervised and increasing supervision in those areas where bullying is likely to occur provides both access control and increased surveillance. Access control, or “the ability to regulate who comes and goes from an area”, is achieved by staggering classes thereby determining what students will be in hallway areas at particular times (Kushmuk & Whittemore, 1981 in Lab, 2004, p. 37). Additionally, this increases surveillance by reducing the number of students traveling in communal areas. Developing activities in less supervised areas is an example of activity support because it “enhance[s] interaction between [students] and other legitimate users in the [school]” (Kushmuk & Whittemore, 1981 in Lab, 2004, p. 37) and limits opportunities for bullying to occur (Sampson, 2002, p. 21). Finally, motivational reinforcement may be achieved by posting signs prohibiting bullying and by setting up a bully box as it “enhance[s] feelings of territoriality and social cohesion” (Kushmuk & Whittemore, 1981 in Lab, 2004, p. 37). That is, bystanders who witness bullying and choose not to intervene, for fear of retaliation or calling attention to themselves, are able to get involved confidentially by using the bully box to voice concerns they may have. Additionally, posting signs throughout the school displaying the school’s policy on bullying may help to create common beliefs regarding the undesirability of bullying and consequently increase social cohesiveness amongst the student body. Implementing these CEPTED initiatives, coupled with a multi-faceted social development approach to bullying prevention, are likely the best way to achieve success in maintaining a bully-free school.

School Bullying Prevention Program Evaluation

In order to ensure that a bullying prevention program is effective in achieving its aim it is important to monitor the ongoing performance of the program, to ensure the program is sustainable, and to evaluate the program’s subsequent outcome. Ensuring that an anti-bullying program is operating in accordance with its action plan and is properly implemented requires monitoring the program’s ongoing performance. This is imperative because a program may be deemed ineffective or found to

have no programmatic impact “when in fact the intervention can and would work in other settings or if it was properly implemented” (Lab, 2004, p. 28). Only by rigorously monitoring the programs development can implementation errors be reduced and, if warranted, later excluded as causal factors in the program’s ineffectiveness. Additionally, because “educators often spend the first year developing policies and procedures...and training...staff” there is “often only [a] modest decline in bullying activities” during this initial preparatory period (Xin Ma, 2001, p. 259). Thus, monitoring the ongoing performance of a program assists evaluators in determining to what degree change in a school’s social environment is the result of prevention program methodology. Lab (2004) refers to this practice as “process evaluation”, which looks at “how well the intervention was implemented, whether it was maintained at the level needed for success (based on the underlying theory), [and] how well the experimental group accepted the intervention...” (p. 29). Additionally, process evaluation allows an assessment of the program’s sustainability to be conducted.

It is detrimentally important to ensure that any prevention program implemented is able to be sustained for a predetermined and extended period of time. This is important because, as previously discussed, long-term intervention programs seem to have more success than short-term ones in preventing bullying. Eslea and Smith (1998) in Woods and Wolke (2003) purported that in order for intervention programs to be effective, maintaining the program’s momentum is the essential core component. Additionally, a review of factors that may be related to the success or failure of school interventions found recurring issues concerned the allocation of time and the availability of resources (Cowie, 1998 in Woods & Wolke, 2003, p. 397). There is little spare time available to teachers to manage intervention services and organize necessary supervision. Adequate training is often not available and furthermore, the financial and resource requirements that need to be maintained over time are frequently underestimated. All of these issues must be sufficiently addressed prior to prevention program commencement in order to ensure program sustainability will be achieved. Moreover, if a program is sustained and implemented as planned, an outcome evaluation

must be conducted to assess the program's effectiveness. That is, is a school's anti-bullying program achieving what it is suppose to?

A comprehensive evaluation of bullying prevention programs was conducted by Denise Gottfredson in Sherman et al. (1998). This overview of bullying prevention initiatives resulted in several key recommendations including the following:

School-based prevention [programs] require (and provide the substantial financial investment to enable) rigorous evaluation of the long-term multi-component models recommended..., insisting that studies of the effectiveness of strategies aimed at altering school and classroom environments be conducted using schools or classrooms as the unit of analysis, and testing the generalizeability of effects across different types of communities (p. 169).

The recommendation that bullying prevention programs be tested for generalizability is important, but difficult. This is because each school is comprised of a variety of unique characteristics, whereby a successful anti-bullying program in one school may fail to achieve similar results in another school. The only way to know for sure if a prevention program is generalizable is to implement the program in multiple environments that are demographically comparable and conduct a comparative analysis. Nonetheless, there will always be "unique social, physical, and situational factors in settings that will affect the ability of a prevention program to have an impact" (Ekblom, 2002 in Lab, 2004, p. 29).

In order for a bullying prevention program to be properly evaluated the program needs to have set forth measurable goals, objectives, and benchmarks. Outcome evaluations of bullying prevention programs, however, do not necessarily need to employ an experimental design. Experimental design methodologies require randomization, standardization, and/or acquiring control groups, which may be nearly impossible to achieve given the dynamics of the school setting. Thus, there needs to be a "recognition that the problem, the theory, and the context should determine the appropriate methodology for understanding what works" (Lab, 2004, p. 30). This recognition is especially important given the fact that those anti-bullying programs found to be successful subscribe to a complex multi-dimensional model. Thus, the need for innovative outcome evaluation techniques may be required and should be adequately predetermined in the planning stages of a prevention program.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that bullying in schools adversely affects many Canadian children and, as such, requires the development of effective intervention and prevention programs. Bullying is prevalent in Canadian schools and research has demonstrated that children involved in bullying and victimization may suffer long-term consequences such as criminality and depression. Thankfully, due to increased public concern regarding the devastating consequences bullying can have on children, many national anti-bullying campaigns and preventative measures have been initiated.

Anti-bullying preventative measures deemed successful are clearly defined, rooted in sound theory, recognize that the bullying phenomenon is dynamic rather than static, and acknowledge that there are a multitude of participants that can be involved in bullying. Thus, programs that attempt to neatly categorize bullying participants as either aggressors or victims fail to recognize that many of those children bullied are in turn bullying others. Moreover, those children who witness bullying as bystanders many also require intervention program modules that address issues of diminished self-respect and self-confidence. Furthermore, anti-bullying programs which focus solely on those contributing factors in the school environment fail to recognize that individual characteristics and family socialization processes have a direct impact on bullying and victimization. Therefore, it is important to adopt preventative measures that address, not only school conditions, but individual, familial and social conditions as well.

In Canada, the national strategy to prevent bullying in schools is rooted in a model of crime prevention through social development (CPSD). This approach to bullying prevention encompasses a multitude of strategies in targeting the underlying causal conditions of bullying. Furthermore, CPSD recognizes that single factor or targeted interventions tend to underestimate the complexity of those conditions which contribute to the manifestation of undesirable behaviour. This recognition is the result of social science research and comprehensive meta-analysis that indicate that multiple

simultaneous interventions are more adept at reducing bullying than single intervention strategies.

Therefore, researchers recommend that anti-bullying initiatives be multi-faceted and sustainable for long periods of time.

In addition to social development models of prevention, altering the physical environment of the school may be a nice accompaniment to other preventative measures. Crime prevention through environmental design (CEPTED) proposes that by creating a “defensible space” the costs of bullying will outweigh the benefits and, as a result, aggressive behaviour will be diminished (Newman, 1972 in Lab, 2004, p. 35). Increasing school surveillance, regulating when and where students will congregate in communal areas, increasing the legitimate interaction of students through activity development, and increasing social cohesion through motivational reinforcement are all examples of CEPTED. CEPTED initiatives alone may be of little value in diminishing school bullying, but when accompanied by other social development programs may prove successful.

Determining the success or failure of CPSD and CEPTED initiatives is detrimentally important and requires both process and outcome evaluations. A process evaluation assesses the program’s methodology, implementation, and sustainability and an outcome evaluation assesses the degree to which a program achieves its aim. Both methods of evaluation must be conducted and should be a core component of a program’s design. This is so important that some might even suggest that any prevention program not sufficiently evaluated is essentially worthless.

In the end, an assessment of the literature and research regarding bullying and its prevention revealed that bullying is by nature a complex issue. Those individuals who desire a quick and easy solution to the bullying problem found in schools will undoubtedly be left disappointed. However, even though there are no easy answers, there are things that can be done and that have proven to be effective. Bullying is not a school problem it is a social one. It is a problem that can be effectively managed, but that requires the collective cooperation of parents, school officials, and the larger community.