

MINIMIZING BULLYING BEHAVIOR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS
THROUGH BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION AND INSTRUCTION

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & Pearson Achievement Solutions, Inc.

Field-Based Master's Program

Chicago, Illinois

May, 2008

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ABSTRACT

This action research project report examined all forms of bullying behaviors and ways to reduce those behaviors. The project included 63 students from both a high school health class and a 6th and 7th grade middle school homeroom. The research was conducted from September 17, 2007 through December 14, 2007.

In the specified locations, female to female bullying was the most noticeable problem at both the 6th grade level and the freshman level. The tools used to document evidence of bullying behaviors included an observation log, a parent survey, and a student survey. The observation log showed that the most common bullying behaviors overall, were name-calling and gossiping. The student survey showed that almost half of the kids had been bullied at some time, and were typically bullied once per quarter. The parent survey showed that half the parents thought bullying was a problem and one fifth of those parents complained to the school about bullying. These behaviors negatively affected the safety students felt at school as well as the classroom environment.

A variety of intervention strategies were used to both educate about and combat the bullying behaviors throughout the schools. In the first intervention, students defined both verbal and physical bullying behaviors, and then brainstormed everything that could be classified as bullying and created a concept map using verbal and physical bullying as the two main headings. In the next intervention, students determined hot spots for bullying activity and brainstormed ways to reduce bullying in these areas. In the third week, students role played bullying situations, taking turns as either the bully, victim, or bystander, and as a class gave ideas as to how to deal with the different situations. In the fourth week, students created anti-bullying posters, which they hung up around different bullying hot spots around the schools. In the next week, students filled out surveys of how their week went pertaining to incidents of bullying, whether observed or experienced. In the next week, students got in groups and wrote an anti-bullying rap song which they performed to the class throughout the week. In the next intervention, students read a story about a bully, a victim and a teacher's decision as to how to deal with it, and the students answered moral questions pertaining to the story. In the last two weeks, the students took a self-esteem test, which gave them an accurate reading about how they felt about themselves, and they wrote a PMI summary of everything they had learned from this study.

The students reported that they had felt more comfortable dealing with bullying situations and the results show that the amount of bullying had decreased from 147 instances in the pre-doc, to 101 in the post doc, a decrease of 31%. The amount of verbal bullying, especially name-calling and gossiping decreased the most, 39% and 21% respectively. Through the interventions the participants increased their awareness of bullying and readiness to handle bullying situations. It was concluded that the interventions were successful in creating a safer environment and a more positive classroom climate. The results maintained our initial purpose of the research and interventions.

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

Bullying is becoming a pervasive problem in schools. Bullying is mainly broken down into two main categories, direct or indirect. Some examples of direct bullying include, pushing, kicking, fighting and some include the use of a weapon. Some examples of indirect bullying include teasing, name-calling, exclusion, rumors and/or gossip and most recently cyber bullying through means of the Internet. These types of behaviors create a poor academic environment, which ultimately effects the achievement of many students who are victimized. The teacher researchers identified bullying as a problem in their school and documented evidence of bullying through the use of parent and student surveys along with observational logs in order to determine the extent of bullying in the three teacher researcher classes in two sites.

Immediate Context of the Problem

Three teacher researchers conducted this action research project. Two of the teachers at Site A taught sixth grade and special education and the other teacher at Site B taught high school. This section details information at each site, as can be seen in the subsections below: Site A and Site B. All information in this section was obtained from the appropriate Illinois School Report Card, 2005.

The total enrollment of students was 303 at Site A and 982 for the district. Out of the 303 students enrolled at Site A, 144 (48%) of them were female while the remaining 159 (52%) were male. The elementary building at Site A had a primarily Caucasian

student body according to the information shown in Table 1 below. The percent of Caucasian students at the school was 79.2 compared to 74.0% for the district.

Table 1

Ethnicity at Site A by percentage

	<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>African-American</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>	<u>Asian/ Pacific Islander</u>	<u>Multi-racial</u>
School	79.2	0.3	16.4	1.3	2.8
District	74.0	2.0	19.5	0.9	3.2

The low-income rates at the Site A were 63.7 % for the school compared to 66.4% for the district. The chronic truancy rate at Site A was 1.9%, which was somewhat higher than the district rate of 1.0%. Site A had a mobility rate of 19.2% compared to the state's rate of 16.1%. The attendance rate at Site A and the district are similar at 94.2% and 94.9%, respectively.

Administrators in the district are paid an average salary of \$102,135 compared to the state average of \$97,051. The average teacher salary at Site A was \$52,806 with an average 18.5 years of experience. The starting salary of teachers in the district was \$29,970. Salary increases were based on both years of experience and the amount of education past a bachelor's degree. The level of education varies among the teachers with 75% (n=45) having a master's degree and above. Only 1.7% of the faculty in the district was Hispanic with 98.3% of the staff being Caucasian. The percentage of females on staff in the district was considerably higher than that of males at 79.9% and 20.3%, respectively. The ratios of students to the teachers at the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade levels were very similar at approximately 19:1.

The average class sizes, the ethnicity of teacher population and the staff-to-student ratios are the exact same between the middle school and the district because the middle school was the only middle school in the district, which meant that no other schools were included when the averages were calculated.

The average class size for the 6th grade was 19.5 students. The average class size for the 7th grade was 14.8 students, and the average class size for the 8th grade was 17.5 students. The student-to-teacher ration is 18.4 students per teacher. The student-to-certified staff is 14.7 students to certified staff. The student-to-administrator ratio is 228.4 students per administrator.

The core subjects taught on a daily basis include mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies, with each of these subjects receiving 49 minutes per day. Family living, key boarding, along with physical education/health classes were also taught for 49 minutes per day, Monday thru Friday. Band was also offered on a daily basis as an elective and also lasted for 49 minutes per day.

Testing took place at the middle school level and was measured by the Illinois Standard Achievement Test (ISAT). The school's overall ISAT scores increased from 60.7% to 74.8% while the district increased its score from 71.2% to 75.2% from the 2004-05 school year to the 2005-06 school year. Overall, the school scored 74.8%, an increase of 14.1% from 2005, while the district scored 76.8%, an increase of 4% from 2005 (Building Principal, personal communication, December 12, 2006).

The school had one principal and two office secretaries. There were 19 full-time teachers on staff. There were four student aids on part-time staff and one full-time librarian. The maintenance staff was compromised of one head custodian and two

assistants. The cooking staff consisted of one director of food services and seven kitchen personnel. The school had one full-time counselor and two nurses who split time among the three district schools.

The school's motto was "Become the one you dream you can be!" This motto has shaped the school into a very positive atmosphere. In fact, in 1997 it was recognized as one of the 17 leading middle schools in the state of Illinois. Many schools from the northwestern region of Illinois have visited the middle school and have commented on the friendly and positive students and staff members. The sport's programs, in particular, basketball and wrestling, have had a solid history of success. In fact, the wrestling program was ranked among the top 10 teams in the state during the decade of the 1990s, placing 3rd in 1996 and 2nd in the year 2000. Student Excellence Achieves Leadership also known as the SEAL's program, and the Natural Helpers are a couple of groups that work in and throughout the school and the community. The students involved in the programs have helped set up dance decorations and worked concessions at the dances or sporting events. The school had the second lowest tax rate in the northwestern part of the state at a rate of \$1.25 per assessed value (Building Principal, personal communication, December 12, 2006).

The school was dedicated in the spring of 1976. The brick, air-conditioned building was designed as a seventh and eighth grade attendance center. Two large wall-less pods housed the four-core subject areas until the summer of 1986 when the pods were divided into four-walled classrooms. The sixth grade class was included in the fall of 1994. The school building housed 19 classrooms, one band room, one gymnasium, one learning center with a computer laboratory, two separate computer laboratories, one

cafeteria, and offices for the administration, counselor, and nurse. The school had approximately 160 computers that were placed into the three main laboratories, one computer classroom and the remainder spread throughout individual classrooms. Each classroom had a television, VCR, and a telephone. Everyone had access to digital cameras, overheads, projectors, a laminator, and two copy machines. Six classrooms had smart boards and more are expected in the next few years. In 1997, a complete video studio was added to the technology department. In the summer of 2005, new carpeting was installed. This school sits on 33 acres with a nature center, six baseball diamonds, and a 400-meter all weather track (Building Principal, personal communication, December 12, 2006).

Before we started our research on bullying, we hypothesized some reasons as to why bullying had become so profuse at Site A. Bullying at Site A could be due to some of the following reasons: low income homes, single parent homes, parenting skills, or possibly just nature. The first two deal strictly with home life. The third could branch off from home life or parenting, while the fourth possibly deals with genetics.

There are a large number of low-income homes in the area and the majority of those low-income families have kids that attend Site A. Low-income families could cause bullying in two ways. Students may choose to pick on students because they are in fact low income and may not have the resources to afford to take care of themselves as well as some of the other kids, as a result making them a target. On the other hand, one could argue that low-income kids may instead make other kids out to be targets as a way to keep him or herself from harassment or bullying; hence, they become the aggressor. Low

socioeconomic status is a major indicator for bullying experiences (Brown, Birch, & Kancheria, 2005).

Our next possible reason for bullying at Site A is the amount of single-parents families in the area. The single-parent families may be one of, if not the major cause for the large number of low-income families in the area. As a result, we might assume that the single-parent families could cause bullying similar to the low-income families. There may be additional causes of bullying from single-parent homes however. One may be that the child at home is constantly pushed around and “bullied” by their parent or guardian and may mimic that behavior towards others in the school setting. This type of parenting is typically classified as Authoritarian type of parenting. Divorce or separation, child abuse, harsh home environment, and Authoritarian parenting style are all factors that lead to bullying (Brown et al., 2005) The other may be that the child bullies the parent at home and he or she is used to telling their parent or guardian what to do and or they are used to getting their own way. Through our experiences students maintain this same behavior at school and bully others.

Finally, it may be possible that aggressive behavior, which can lead to bullying, is a genetic trait. Genetics are responsible for intelligence levels and various types of behavior in animals. The MAO-A gene is a gene being studied that maybe the cause of varying levels of aggression. One type of this gene is the MAOA-L gene. Studies showed that people with this gene have a stronger response in the amygdale, the part of the brain that signals fear. This suggests that people with this gene may be more likely to be more aggressive when they feel threatened (Adams, 2006).

Site B

The population in the district school was 1,170 while the high school population at Site B was 398. The ethnicity of the student body, as seen in Table 1 below was mainly Caucasian at 93.6%.

Table 1

Ethnicity of Students by Percentage

<u>Caucasian</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>	<u>Pacific Islander</u>	<u>African American</u>
93.6	2.5	0.9	0.6

The graduation rate of Site B was 91.4%, which was 4% higher than the state's. One hundred percent of the females graduated, which was 11% higher than the states while only 81.3% of the males graduated which was 4% lower than the state. The limited English proficiency rate of the district was 0.0%, which is quite low, compared to 6.6% listed by the state. The percentage of the total student body with low-income rates in the district is 17.5. This was 22.5% lower than the state's, which is a considerable difference. Approximately 95.5% of the students attended school regularly, with only 0.5% of the students having a chronic truancy issue. Site B had a graduation rate of 99.5% with a .5% dropout rate.

Administrators in the district earned an average salary of \$89,791, which is considerably lower than the \$97,051 of the states. The average salary of the teachers in Site B was \$48,962. The starting salary of teachers in Site B was \$24,300. Salary increases were based on both the amount of education past the bachelor's degree and on years of experience. There were 29 teachers in site B. The average teacher had 17.6 years

of experience. There were 60 teachers (77.7%) with a master degree and 19 teachers (22.3%) with a bachelor's degree. The ethnicity of the teachers in Site B was 100% Caucasian, with 74.8 females and 25.2 males. The pupil-teacher ratio in Site B is approximately 20.2 with a class size of 25 students.

The curriculum of Site B is set on a core of history, English, mathematics, and science. Site B is on a block-8 schedule. This provides four periods of 85 minutes in length per day, and one homeroom of 35 minutes. With this schedule students were easily able to take the core subjects, which were set by state standards as well as choose elective courses of their own interest or career interests.

There are some interesting findings with the test scores at Site B. The overall performance on all standardized state tests reflects that Site B's students exceeded the state standards by 16.4%. Site B exceeded the state (ISAT) by 18.5% and the (PSAE) by 10.2%.

By gender, the boys and girls were very close in achievement in reading, math, and science, the core testing subjects. This occurred in the groups that exceeded the state and those that were below.

Site B's administrative staff was comprised of one Superintendent with a Ph. D. who was in charge of the entire district. There were four buildings in the district. Each building had one principal. Site B had three full-time secretaries, an accountant, and a bookkeeper. There were 28 full-time teachers. There are three part-time teachers/aids who did substituting duty, library duty, in-school suspensions, etc. Six full time-maintenance men that worked both the school and the grounds. There were seven full-time cooks including the head cook and a nutritionist for the state Wellness Program.

There was one computer technologist, which serviced the whole district. There was one full-time librarian.

In the extracurricular areas, Site B had one half-time athletic director to run all of the 12 sports. Fourteen full-time coaches were hired and each one coached more than one sport. Seven volunteer coaches also helped. Site B had one full-time cheerleading advisor who also coached the pom pon squad. There was one full-time band director and one full-time choir director. There was also one full-time Quiz Bowl coach and one Student Council director.

Site B was well known for a well-rounded educational system from the classroom to the extracurricular activities offered. There was a good staff that works hard to challenge the students to achieve much and become college bound. It is common knowledge that for a small community and school, Site B offers more extracurricular activities than most schools its size. These range from academic to music to athletics. Site B's National Honor Society and Quiz Bowl academic programs have been well known all over the state. Site B's band and choir have also been honored. The sports program was the most recognized in the Site B district. Football maybe the most recognized, but all of the other sports, girls and boys, are just as strong. Site B's cheers and pom pon squad were also a recognized activity at Site B. The pom pon squad has won state for the last five years.

Site B's school was built in 1957. Although aging, its constant upkeep made it look and feel semi-modern. The newest addition was a new auditorium, band area, cafeteria, and swim pool, which were dedicated in 1970. The maintenance staff worked year round to keep it clean and well kept inside and out. The classrooms were equipped

with the best of equipment from the students' desks to computers and smart boards. There's a large three-acre physical education area, which is also used for football practice. A football field and bleachers were added in 1980. A new indoor/outdoor track was built in 2004. Also, a softball field was built in 1997.

I believe the bullying problem is cultured from several different areas or situations. One factor may be the attitude of the community natives and the influence of parents. Children learn aggressiveness by observing aggressive (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). This would entail children observing their parent's behavior. The clannishness or unwillingness to accept new comers or outsiders, leads to clicks in the students. It is likely that pressure to obtain peer acceptance and status might be associated with an increase in teasing and bullying to demonstrate superiority over other students (Espelage & Holt, 2001). The fact that Site B had a large percentage of high achievers and good athletes may also lead to clicks, attitude, and bullying. There is nothing in our literature that suggests this is true however. There are more low-income families moving into the community because of the downsizing of industries, as mentioned before. More broken home students are coming into the district. Bullying stems from different factors, including influences from the school environment, even back to one's home environment (Adams, 2006).

Local Context of the Problem: Site A

The total enrollment of students was 303 at Site A and 982 for the district. Out of the 303 students enrolled at Site A, 144 (48%) of them were female while the remaining 159 (52%) were male. The elementary building at Site A had a primarily Caucasian student body. The population in the district school was 1,170 while the high school

population at Site B was 398. The ethnicity of the student body was mainly Caucasian at 93.6%.

The middle school is located 30 miles east of the Mississippi River and approximately 115 miles West of Chicago in the northwestern section of Illinois. The information that follows describes the demographics of the rural community and has been taken from the United States Census Bureau, 2002.

The latest census showed the community had 6,293 people 25 years of age and older. The educational achievement of this age group showed 4,565 (72.5%) have a high school degree or higher. Out of this subgroup, 372 (5.9%) have received a bachelor's degree or higher (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *Profile of selected social characteristics: 2002*).

The targeted community consists of 4,560 male and 5,020 female residents for a total population of 9,580. The median age is 36.1 years old. The following table shows the age distribution of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *Profile of general demographic characteristics: 2002*).

Table 1

Age Distribution

<u>n</u>	<u>under9</u>	<u>10-19</u>	<u>20-34</u>	<u>35-54</u>	<u>55-64</u>	<u>65-84</u>	<u>84+</u>
9,580	1,396	1,301	1,950	2,543	865	1,365	160

The population depicted by one race is 98.1% and by two or more races is 1.9%. Less than 10% of the total community is a race other than Caucasian. The following table shows the breakdown of the population that consists of only one race, which only

includes 9,396 people out of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *Profile of general demographic characteristics: 2002*).

Table 2

Ethnic Background of the Population

<u>n</u>	<u>Caucasian Asian</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>African American</u>	<u>American Indian/ Alaskan Native</u>
9,396	8,793 25	451	84	43

The targeted rural community is made up of 2,523 families. The average income per family is \$41,803 with an average per capita income of \$16,524. The majority of families, 664 (26.3% of total number of families), have an income of \$35,000 - \$49,999 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *Profile of selected economic characteristics: 2002*).

The targeted community has many religious affiliations and numerous churches. There are three Baptist churches, two Lutheran churches, one Catholic, one Methodist, and a host of other denominational places of worship.

The average household size from the 9,580 people living in the community is 2.43 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *Profile of general demographic characteristic: 2002*). Out of the 7,373 people over 16 years old that can be in the work force, 4,732 (64.2%) are employed leaving 2,641 (35.8%) not in the work force (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *Profile of selected economic characteristics : 2002*). The median household income is \$34,442 whole the per capita income is \$16,524 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *Profile of selected economic characteristics: 2002*). The occupational breakdown of the community work force (n = 4,437) is displayed in Table 3. Although most of the land surrounding the targeted community is farmland, less than one percent of the work force is involved in

agriculture. The main employers are found in the production, transportation, and material moving occupations (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *Profile of selected economic characteristics: 2002*).

Table 3

Occupations of Work Force by Percentages (n = 4,437)

<u>*MPRO</u>	<u>SO</u>	<u>SOO</u>	<u>FFFO</u>	<u>CEMO</u>	<u>PTMMO</u>
17.6	19	22.2	0.4	7.9	33

*MPRO=Management, Professional, and Related Occupations; SO=Service Occupations; SOO=Sales and Office Occupations, FFFO=Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations; CEMO=Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance Occupations; PTMMO=Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations

There are a total of 4,098 housing units available with 5% of the units (n = 203) being vacant. (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d., *General housing characteristics: 2002*). A comparison between 2004 and 2005 crime offenses that took place in the community is shown in Table 4. The two areas that show an increase in the crime rate are aggravated assault and battery at 32% (n = 38) and theft 72% (n = 88). This is a concern for the community and the safety of the citizens (Targeted Community Police Department, n.d.).

Table 4

Crime Rates for the Community by Number of Offenses

	<u>*M DRA</u>	<u>CSA</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>AA/B</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>T</u>	<u>MVT</u>	<u>A</u>	
2004	0	17	4	116	120	122	7	4	
2005	0	11	10	154	87	210	10	5	59

*M=Murder; CSA=Criminal Sexual Assault; R=Robbery; AA/B=Aggravated Assault/Battery; B=Burglary; T=Theft; MVT=Motor Vehicle Theft; A=Arson; DRA=Drug Related Arrests

In 1837, this city began when its founding fathers settled along the Rock River. Many community and volunteer groups exist to help residents when needed. Area residents have access to quality schools, modern medical facilities, entertainment possibilities, and a variety of dining venues enhanced by numerous hotels, restaurants and businesses. The city is in the process of replacing existing streetlights and resurfacing all main roads. There are recreational activities ranging from fishing, boating, hiking and biking on the Hennepin Canal. Festivals, fairs and other events are held throughout the year. In 1999, this community was the recipient of the Governors Hometown Award, which recognized the efforts of various groups and organizations within this community.

There are four separate public elementary school districts supported by this community. The targeted school district is an elementary school district that has recently shifted to grade centers. At the beginning of 2002-2003 school year the district opened three grade centers, one primary school (k-2), one elementary school (3-5) and one middle school (6-8). Population changes and financial setback prompted this shift. There are no other feeder schools that would bring students to the middle school and only one parochial school in the community. The schools share one superintendent but each school in the district has their own administrative staff.

The targeted school district's philosophy of education reads as follows (District Education Philosophy, n.d.).

The district...shall provide the opportunity:

- For every child to develop his or her talents to the limits of her or her abilities.

- To develop in each child the basic transferable skills- the skills to perceive and to solve problems; to understand, communicate, and to deal with people as individuals and in groups, and to organize and make use of information and resources.
- To motivate each child to discover the joys of learning and thereby become a lifelong learner.
- To expand the horizons of each child beyond his own home and community and enabling him or her to appreciate the beauty and cultures of the world.
- To encourage each child to develop an awareness of his or her own worth and individuality, as well as an understanding and acceptance of all other individuals.
- To teach each child to distinguish between what he or she knows and what he or she only believes, how to discover that which he or she does not know, and how to use the knowledge he or she acquires.

The targeted middle school has developed a vision statement that reflects the districts philosophy and reinforces the purpose of the middle school. The vision statement also defines the role of teachers at the targeted school and reads as follows (Vision Statement of Target School, n.d.).

...we are committed to the pursuit of excellence. It is our goal to address the varying needs of our young adolescents academically, socially, emotionally and physically and in so doing, provide the highest quality educational experience to all. It is also our goal to establish and maintain a positive, non-threatening environment, which focuses on the development of higher-level cognitive skills, positive attitudes and cooperative spirit. It is our belief that with the cooperation of parents, community, students and our staff our goals can be achieved. We understand the power of unity and teamwork. Therefore, it is from this conviction that we join together to establish education as a priority.

...the teachers ... are instrumental in assisting students in the preparation for the unfolding journeys of their lives. Working in partnership with the students' families, the teachers help the students to develop intellectually, spiritually, morally, socially and physically so that they will be better equipped for what lies ahead. The students are challenged to develop their minds, their characters and their bodies to the fullest. While being concerned with what they learn, we are also concerned with how they learn, how they think and feel, and with what type of individuals they are becoming. While mindful of the need for appropriate emphasis on programs and processes, the focus is *on the children: helping them believe in themselves and in each other, and in assisting them in making and taking their places in the world.*

The last year a referendum was passed in the targeted school district was 1956 and property taxes have only slightly increased since then (Building principal, personal communication, January 4, 2007). The targeted district's tax base is compared to average Illinois schools in Table 5. Note the obvious difference between local property taxes at the average Illinois school (56.6%) and the targeted district level (15.1%). Due to this dramatic difference, the targeted district receives approximately 40% more general state aid than the average Illinois school.

Table 5

Revenue by Source 2005-2006

	<u>District %</u>	<u>State%</u>
Local Property Taxes	15.1	56.6
Other Local Funding	5.2	5.4
General State Aid	59.7	17.9
Other State Funding	6.1	12.1
Federal Funding	13.8	8.0
Total	--	--

The targeted district has 215 computers that are split among the laboratories and individual classrooms. The five computer laboratories and three learning centers can accommodate any full class and can be reserved for use by any teacher. One faculty member teaches computer and typing skills to students in the sixth grade. The district has recently received a grant and purchased one classroom set of hand held computers and keyboards which will be accessible to any teacher in the targeted building (Targeted district technology coordinator, personal communication January 4, 2007). Six classroom sets of hand held computers have been in use the last couple of years in the other buildings in the targeted school district. The district is also in the process of installing

more Smart boards, not only in the targeted school, but also throughout the targeted district.

Site B

Site B is located in northwestern Illinois. There are two major highways, which run through it. There are two reasonably sized cities located approximately 14 miles on either side of the town, one to the west and one to the east. It became a settlement in 1855, because of its close proximity to the Mississippi River. Site B was incorporated in 1857 and began to grow into a town. This was aided by a railroad that was built through town as well as a by a vote, by the county citizens to move the county seat to Site B. Site B was mainly an agricultural community, but the first industry a carriage plant was built in 1877.

The community ethnicity was mainly English until the late 1800s when a very large group of Dutch brought their families from a neighboring community due to family fights.

Today Site B has become a small city with a population of 4,447. This is an increase of only 84 people from the 4,363 of the 1990 census.

Table 1

Ethnicity

<u>Total Population</u>	<u>German</u>	<u>Dutch</u>	<u>Irish</u>	<u>Other</u>
4,447	1,314	1,021	446	1,666

Table 2

Age Distribution

<u>Eighteen years and older</u>	<u>65 years and over</u>	<u>Under five years old</u>
3,496	928	227

The median household income in 1999 was \$40,313. There were 244 people below poverty level at 6.1%. This was 6.3% lower than the U.S. figures of 12.4%. Of the 2,967 of Site B's population over 25 years of age 2,484% are high school graduates.

Site B had four schools. There are two elementary schools, one junior high, and one high school. There are 12 churches, 1 Catholic and 11 Protestant. For medical attention Site B has three clinics, two dentists, one hospital, and two retirement homes. For recreation, Site B has many offerings. There were four fully developed parks which all have picnic areas, walking paths, plat ground equipment, and tennis courts. One has a lake for boating and fishing as well as a camping area. There were two golf courses open to the public.

Employment in Site B was white collar by the 1970 census. This changed on the 1990 census, which then showed it as a blue-collar community. This change took place due to the closing of one major industry and drastic downsizing of two others. Table 3 below shows the employment opportunities in Site B, while Table 4 shows the number of people in each working class in Site B.

Table 3

Employment

<u>County Government</u>	<u>Medical Services</u>	<u>Factory</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Transportation</u>
548	350	112	87	87

Table 4

Working Class

<u>Blue Collar</u>	<u>White Collar</u>	<u>Clerical</u>	<u>Other</u>
727	657	294	314

The median age was 40.6 years old. The median household income was \$40,313, and the median house value was \$76,600.

Site B has a six-person police force. The crime rate is that of a small community. The number is small, any amount of crime is too much, but most in Site B is petty. The majority of crimes were thefts with 34 occurring in 2004, which is 72% of all crimes committed.

Table 6

Crime Rate

<u>Thefts</u>	<u>Burglaries</u>	<u>Assault</u>	<u>Robberies</u>	<u>Auto Theft</u>	<u>Rapes</u>	<u>Murders</u>
34	7	3	2	1	0	0

Site B has improved the quality of living, employment opportunities, and, financial status in a number of ways in 2006. One of the main highways, which actually merge for three of its four mile stretch, has been resurfaced with new gutters and storm sewers added. Two new parks have been added for more recreation. One has a baseball field for the little league while the other is for citizens to sit and relax. The largest improvement is the development of a twenty-one acre industrial park on one of the major highways. This is in hopes of attracting more industries to the community. Two new industries have already bought land and are ready to build.

The targeted district's tax base is compared to average Illinois schools in Table 5. Note the obvious difference between local property taxes at the average Illinois school (56.6%) and the targeted district level (48.8%). Due to this dramatic difference, the targeted district receives approximately 17% more general state aid than the average Illinois school.

Table 7

Revenue by Source 2005-2006

	<u>District %</u>	<u>State %</u>
Local Property Taxes	48.8	56.6
Other Local Funding	7.2	5.4
General State Aid	34.3	17.9
Other State Funding	6.3	12.1
Federal Funding	3.4	8.0

Site B has two elementary schools and one junior high school. The high school houses four different grade levels from 9th to 12th grades. The building is a three-story building built in 1952. A full time computer technologist was added to the staff in 1994. By 1996 all of the rooms from classrooms to offices, and the cafeteria had computers installed. Site B has two full computer laboratories. Smart boards have been installed since 2003

The schools mission statement is: "We are dedicated to leading and inspiring each individual student to develop the skills, knowledge, attitude, and values necessary to become an effective member of the global society". The motto of Ste B is: "Forming the Future Today".

There is one superintendent who supervises the whole district. Each of the four schools in the district has a principal.

There are several things, which are relevant to the problem of bullying. As mentioned before, one factor being the attitude of the community natives as well as the parents. Another could be because it is a county seat and once supported an upper income population so there tends to be a trend toward strong cliques. Besides the cliques, there is an attitude that my child is better than yours and can do nothing wrong, it was your or your child's fault.

The large number of high achievers and good athletes leads to more cliques, more attitudes, and more bullying.

A discussion with the chief of police led to an interesting point. In the last 10 years, the Police Chief has seen more and more upper class families, white-collar families moving out of town. After graduation more upper class students are leaving town. The closing and downsizing of industries in neighboring communities are causing lower income families to move in. This has created new targets to be bullied.

National Context of the Problem

After reviewing literature on the problem of bullying it has become evident that it is a definite problem in the educational system today. Studies of American students have found nearly 80 to 90% of adolescents report some form of victimization from a bully at school and 10 to 15% of middle school students' have been described as bullies (Espelage & Asidao, 2001). In a study by Hazler and colleagues (1992), 90% of the American students surveyed believed that bullying caused them problems such as loss of friendships, feeling of isolation, and academic difficulties (Espelage & Asidao, 2001). Bullying has been around since the days of the one room schoolhouse. However, due to the increase in cases of homicide and suicide in our schools much more national attention

is being directed towards this problem (Dake, Price, & Trlljohann, 2003). Bullies are more likely to be involved if self-destructive or anti-social behavior, such as vandalism, stealing, fighting, and carrying weapons (Brown, Birch, & Dancheria, 2005).

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Evidence of the Problem

The purpose of this research was to decrease the frequency of bullying behaviors among 6th, 7th, and 9th grade students. There were a total of 33 females and 30 males in the three grades who participated in this research. Out of the 63 participants, there were 14 sixth grade students (8 males & 6 females), 16 seventh grade students (9 males & 7 females), and 33 ninth grade students (13 males & 20 females). Evidence was documented by the use of three research tools, which included an Anonymous Parent Survey, Student Survey, and a Teacher Observational Log. The documentation was recorded during a two-week period from September 17, 2007 through September 28, 2007.

Student Survey

The purpose of this tool was to identify when and where students experienced bullying, what type of bullying they experienced first hand, and how often they experienced being bullied. The survey was administered during the week of September 10, 2007. The 6th and 7th grade students completed it during homeroom period, or final period, while the 9th grade students completed theirs during 3rd period Health Class. Out of the possible 67 participants, 63 completed the survey (94%). Following are the five multiple-choice questions used for the student survey along with the analyzed responses of the student population. The first two questions resulted in one answer per survey (yes or no) while the third, fourth, and fifth questions resulted in multiple answers per survey. The survey can be found in Appendix A.

The first question on the survey asked students if they had ever been bullied. Responses indicated the 46% (n=29) had been bullied (Figure 1).

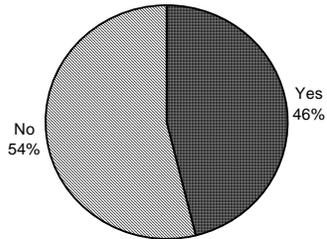


Figure 1: Have you ever been bullied? (n=63)

The second question asked students if they had ever taken part in any bullying. Responses indicated that 35% (n=22) had taken part in bullying (Figure 2).

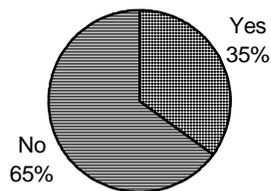


Figure 2: Have you ever taken part in any bullying? (n=63)

The third question asked students how often they had been bullied. The possible answers to question 3 were daily, more than once a week, once a week, more than once a month, once a month, once a quarter, once a year, and never. Response indicated that

52% (n=34) had never been bullied while the remaining 44% (n=29) said they had been bullied, either daily, weekly, monthly or just sometime throughout the year (Figure 3).

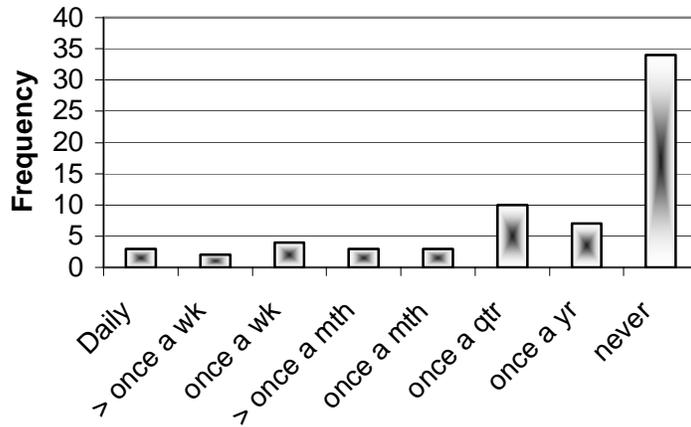


Figure 3: How often have you been bullied? (n=66)

The fourth question asked where does bullying mainly occur. The possible answers for question 4 were classroom, hallway, cafeteria, P.E., Internet, bus, bathroom, and never. Responses indicated that 28% (n=24) answered never while 27% (n=23) answered hallway and 15% (n=13) answered that bullying occurred outside of the school, either on the Internet or on the bus (Figure 4).

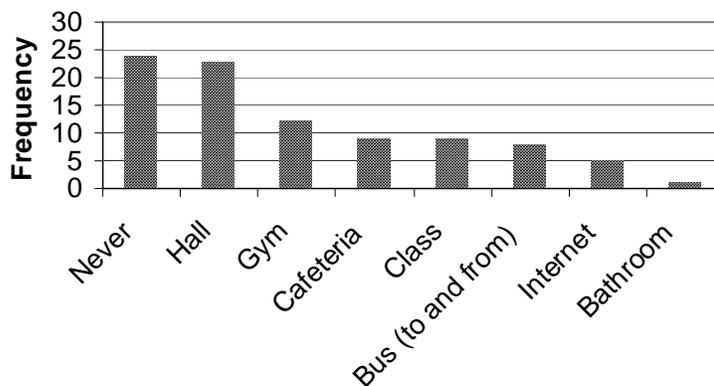


Figure 4: Where does bullying mainly occur? (n=85)

The fifth question asked which types of bullying have you experienced. The responses were divided in to two sections. One section included types of verbal bullying, while the other included types of physical bullying. The verbal bullying section included jokes, teasing, threats, insults, and online activity. The physical bullying included pushing/shoving, small thefts (less than a dollar value), great thefts (anything more than a dollar), fighting, and assault with a weapon.

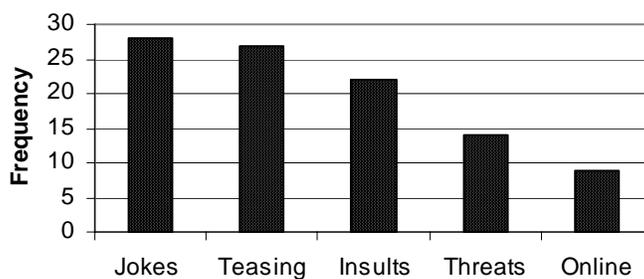


Figure 5: Which types of bullying have you experienced? (n=100)

Response indicated that verbal bullying was twice as prevalent as physical bullying. Out of the 63 students there were 100 incidents of verbal bullying reported. The results indicated that out of the different types of verbal bullying, 28% (n=28) answered jokes, 27% (n=27) answered teasing, and only 9% (n=9) answered online (Figure 5).

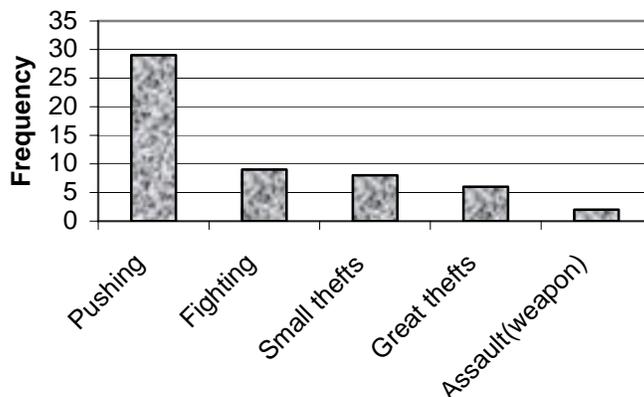


Figure 6: Which types of bullying have you experienced? (n=54)

Out of the 63 students, there were 54 incidents of physical bullying reported. The results indicated that out of the different types of physical bullying, 54% (n=29) answered pushing/shoving, 17% (n=9) answered fighting, and a 5% (n=3) and answered assault with a weapon (Figure 6).

Anonymous Parent Survey

The purpose of this tool was to identify parental perception of their child's experiences with bullying. The survey was administered to 30 parents of the 6th grade students and 33 parents of the 9th grade students, totaling 63 parents. The surveys were sent home and returned by the students via manila envelopes during the week of September 10-14, 2007. All 63 surveys were completed and returned to the teacher researchers by September 14, 2007. Of these 63 surveys, 33 were from the parents of the female population, while 30 were from parents of the male population. Following are five multiple-choice questions used for the anonymous parent survey along with analyzed responses of the student population. Questions 1, 3 and 5 resulted in one answer per survey (yes or no) while questions 2 and 4 resulted in multiple answers per survey. The survey can be found in Appendix B.

The first question on the survey asked do you feel that there is a bullying problem in your child's school. Responses indicated that 46% (n=29) answered yes while 54% (n=34) answered no (Figure 7).

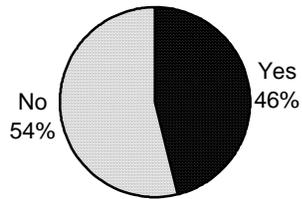


Figure 7: Do you feel bullying is a problem at the school? (n=63)

The second question asked when has your child discussed that the majority of bullying incidents occur, which resulted in multiple responses on a select number of surveys, for a total of 85 responses. The possible answers to question 2 included the following: classroom, hallway, cafeteria, P.E., Internet, bathroom, buses, and never. Responses indicated that 40% (n=34) feel they have never been bullied, 21% (n=18) answered hallways, 24% (n=20) answered P.E. or buses, while less than 1% (n=1) answered the Internet (Figure 8).

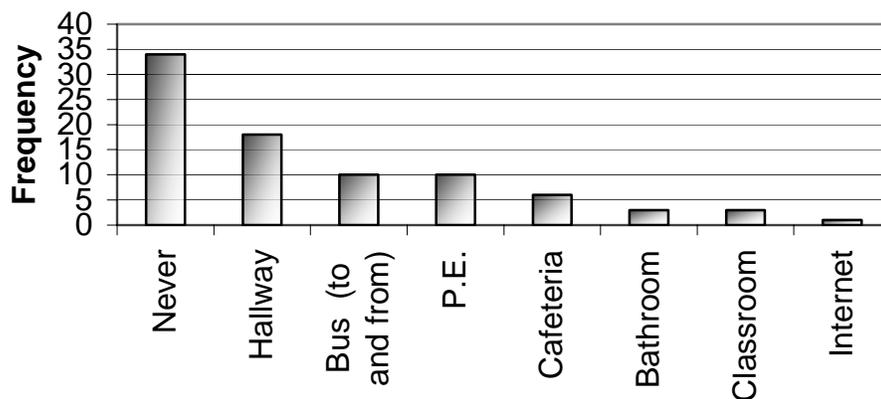


Figure 8: When has your child discussed the majority of bullying incidents occur? (n=85)

The third question asked does your child ever complain about being bullied. Responses indicated that 19% (n=12) they had complained about being bullied and 81% (n=51) had not (Figure 9).

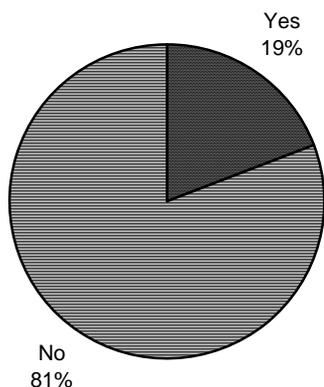


Figure 9: Does your child ever complain about being bullied? (n=63)

The fourth question asked if your child is being bullied, how often do they say bullying is occurring, and resulted in one response per survey. The possible answers to question 4 included daily, more than once a week, once a week, more than once a month, once a month, once a quarter, once a year, and never. Responses indicated that 75% (n=47) of the participants said they never have been bullied, 10% (n=6) said they have been bullied more than once a week, while 2% (n=1) answered either once a month, once a quarter, or once a year (Figure 10).

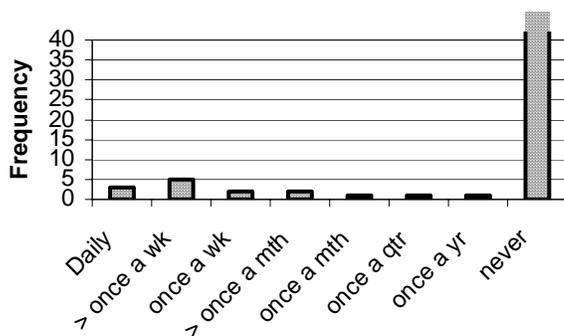


Figure 10: If your child is being bullied, how often do they say bullying is occurring? (n=63)

The fifth question on the survey asked have you notified school personnel about bullying. Responses indicated that 21% (n=13) said that they had notified school personnel while 79% (n=50) responded that they had not (Figure 11).

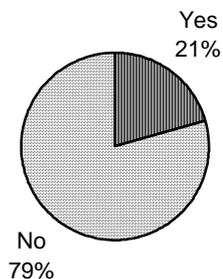


Figure 11: Have you notified school personnel about bullying? (n=63)

Teacher Observation Log

The purpose of this tool was to identify the frequency of bullying among 14 sixth-grade students (8 males & 6 females), 16 seventh-grade students (9 males & 7 females), and 33 ninth-grade students (13 males & 20 females). The checklist was completed daily between September 17, 2007 and September 28, 2007. The teacher researchers recorded

data on the teacher observation log during a study hall for the 6th and 7th grade students and during Health class for the 9th grade students resulting in two weekly logs per teacher researchers for a total of six observational logs. The checklist documented the frequency of malicious teasing, name-calling, exclusion, physical aggression, and gossiping/spreading rumors. The checklist can be found in Appendix C.

The completion of the six teacher observational logs resulted in the total of 63 observable bullying occurrences with their respective places. The two most observable bullying occurrences were name-calling and rumor/gossip, which resulted in 33% (n=49) and 29% (n=43) respectively. Physical aggression was observed the least often resulting in 10% (n=14) of the observable bullying occurrences. Following are the analyzed results from the teacher observation logs (Figure 12).

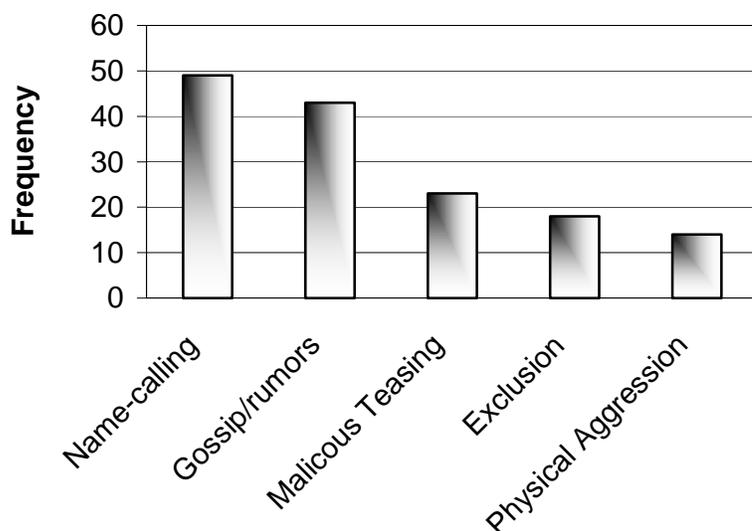


Figure 12: Teacher Observation Log-Behaviors (n=147)

Summary

Based on the data collected from the student's survey, parent survey, and observational log the following was learned about bullying Site A and Site B

respectively. Of the 63 students surveyed 46% (n=29) reported that they have been bullied at some time (Figure 1) while 35% (n=22) reported that they have taken part in some form of bullying (Figure 2). The most likely places for someone to report bullying ever taken place, is if the bullying had occurred in the hallway, on a bus or in P.E class (Figure 8). The most common type of bullying reported was verbal bullying such as teasing, joking, or insults and physical bullying in the form of pushing and shoving (Figures 5&6).

Of the 63 parents surveyed 46% (n=29) felt that bullying is a problem at their child's school (Figure 7). The parents confirmed that their children had the most problems in the hallway, P.E., and on the bus. When asked if their child has complained about bullying 81% (n=51) said no, while 19% (n=12) said yes (Figure 9). Out of the parents, 75% (n=47) reported that their child had never been bullied, while 10% (n=6) said their child is bullied more than once a week (Figure 10). When asked if they had reported a problem to school personnel 21% (n=13) responded yes, while 79% (n=50) responded no (Figure 11).

Upon completion of the two-week observational log, it was concluded that the two most observable bullying behaviors were name-calling and rumor/gossip at 78% (n=49) and 68% (n=43) respectively. The least observed bullying behavior was physical aggression at 22% (n=14).

Reflection

We were somewhat surprised by the information received from the student survey. We surmised that a majority of the students surveyed would report being bullied as opposed to the 46% (n=29) that said they had. We also thought that the 35% (n=22)

that reported taking part in some form of bullying also seemed quite low. Even though the statistics are lower than we thought, as teachers we realize that there still is a problem in the two schools that needs to be addressed. This a large group of students that need help when it comes to bullying and hopefully our interventions will be successful in assisting these students.

We were not surprised that the hot spots for bullying behavior were the schools hallways, P.E. class, and buses. We realize that this is due in part to the lack of supervision and understand what is needed to improve these situations. However, due to the lack of money and personnel these problems are going to be hard to solve.

Verbal bullying was twice as prevalent as physical bullying and this was also not a surprising discovery. It made us realize that our interventions should concentrate on how to relate and deal with people in general. Students need to be educated as to what bullying is. Many do not even realize they are bullying and hopefully will change when they are informed. Due to the fact that pushing was the most reported type of physical bullying we knew our intervention needed to have some sort of conflict resolution component.

We are concerned about the increase in cyber bullying and feel frustrated by the fact that we have very little chance to change this type of behavior outside of school without complete support of the parents. After reviewing the parent surveys we came to an ultimate conclusion; most of the students do not confide in their parents when they are having problems in school. Many parents are left in the dark when it comes to their child being bullied. Our intervention needs to address that it is absolutely essential to let someone you trust know you are having a problem at school. Hopefully, this will open

communication at home or they will talk to someone at school they trust who will then relay the information to that students' parents. The survey shows that most parents have never reported that their child has had a problem to school personnel. Somehow we need to create a safe environment where parents feel comfortable coming in to talk and students feel protected from the abuse of others.

CHAPTER 2

School bullies have almost always been stereotyped as an outcast or someone who cannot conform. However, research is beginning to challenge this notion. Kids respected by their teachers and popular among their peers are increasingly displaying bullying behaviors (Orecklin & Winters, 2000). These behaviors are negative and ill-intentioned and repeatedly directed, without provocation, towards a student who cannot defend himself or herself (Smith, Pepler, & Rigby, 2004). Some of the aggressive behaviors that can cause another student psychological or physical harm range from teasing and name-calling to verbal threats and pushing. Students who display these types of bullying behaviors are impulsive, depressed, and have a high level of anger (Bosworth, Espelage, & Simon, 1999). The typical bully is motivated by the positive and negative attention from teachers and peers, the need to dominate and have power over another, have little empathy towards victims, and usually grow up in a family environment that is hostile (Espelage & Asidaao, 2001). Girls bully indirectly using exclusion and spreading rumors while boys are much more direct using both verbal and physical harassment (O'Hanlon, 2002). Still the most disturbing trend discovered by research is that the most socially connected and popular students with positive self-esteem are increasingly displaying bullying behaviors (Smith, et al., 2004). In fact, a survey in Los Angeles involving 2000

sixth grade students discovered that bullies were consistently the most respected and well liked students in the school (Svoboda, 2004).

Bullying cannot take place unless there is an imbalance of physical and mental strength between the harasser and those being harassed (Dake, Price, & Trlljohann, 2003). Bullies are impulsive, cannot talk out a disagreement or use other nonviolent strategies, and are usually depressed (Bosworth, et al., 1999). Aggressiveness can be learned by observing aggressive behavior. Kids raised in aggressive cultures believe those who are weaker deserve to be harassed; therefore, aggressive responses are more frequent (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). This type of aggressive behavior increases when students transition from elementary school to middle school because they are trying to define their place in a new social structure (Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 2000). Dr. Olweus believes bullying behavior begins in preschool and peaks at the middle school level (Starr, 2005). Whether the cause comes from the home environment or school environment the problem is increasing. One out of ten middle school and one out of five elementary school students have reported being bullied (Brown, et al., 2005). In fact, over 150,000 students miss school in this country each day because they do not want to deal with bullying (Orecklin & Winters, 2000). There are many reasons why bullying will continue. If a student earns approval by putting someone down it is self-reinforcing and he or she will probably do it again (Svoboda, 2004). Some students, about 20%, are too afraid to help the victim because of reprisals (Taber & Ayd, 2002). Also, there are still many students that believe bullying is just for fun and toughens up a weak person (Brown, et al., 2005). I do not think the young man who was harassed for being gay and

hung himself or the young woman who quit school after continuously being made fun of because of her race would agree (O'Hanlon, 2002).

Research has shown the main influences that determine if a student participates in bullying behavior come from their peers, parents, and school personnel. Being shamed in front of their peers is the biggest fear kids have in middle school and high school (Schroeder, 2007). Adolescents are strongly influenced by the behavior of their peers and tend to affiliate with students most like them. Many students demonstrate superiority over other students through name-calling or ridiculing because of the pressure to obtain peer acceptance and status. Research is beginning to show many peers may unknowingly promote bullying by not intervening or just affiliating with the bully (Espelage & Holt, 2001). Peer harassment, both verbally and physically, is more prevalent among boys than girls and fuels many aggressive and antisocial behaviors (Erickson, 2005). Students who spend most of their day with their peers, without adult involvement, are more likely to engage in bullying behavior. There is a direct correlation between peers who fight, destroy property, participate in gang activities, and demonstrating bullying behavior (Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 2000). Victims of peer aggression because they internalize their problems are at a high risk for depression and anxiety (Kupersmidt & Stephen, 1999). Combine this with easier access to guns and there is a definite potential for severe and immediate consequences (Bosworth, et al., 1999).

Factors that can cause someone to become a bully range from divorce and low socioeconomic status to authoritarian parenting and child abuse (Brown, et al., 2005). The development of bullying behaviors in young men and women is, in many cases, related to parenting styles. Parents are role models, if they use aggressive means to

achieve a goal so will their child (Espelage, Bosworth, & Simon, 1999). Child rearing techniques like exposure to marital conflict, physical abuse, permissiveness for aggression, and inconsistent discipline are linked to bullying behaviors. On the other hand overprotective parenting and intrusive parental psychological control are linked to peer victimization (Unnever, 2005). Literature has shown that often parents are not included when discussing their child's conduct at school. Whether their child is a victim or bully many parents feel helpless and powerless when dealing with the problem. Sadly, some parents think far too much fuss is made of bullying and it is a normal part of growing up (Rocks & O'Moore, 2001). Overprotective parents need to at times back off and teach their child defenses to keep from being a victim, on the other hand, uninvolved parents need to take a more active and positive role to keep their child from becoming a bully at their school (Thompson & Cohen, 2005).

Administrators and teachers need to take a proactive role when dealing with the problem of bullying in their schools. Thousands of children are reluctant to request aid from school staff even though they are being emotionally and physically abused. They fear reprisals and that the school cannot protect them. The majority of students, two out of three, feel that teachers do not handle bullying problems adequately. The reason for this is that many teachers lack the necessary training to intervene appropriately and worry they will worsen the problem if they deal with it inappropriately (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). Administrators are often caught between a rock and a hard place. When dealing with upset parents and students they find themselves playing judge and jury. On one hand they need to convince upset parents that a certain amount of teasing is normal and their child needs to develop psychological defenses to bullying. On the other hand

they need to be able to quickly identify destructive bullying behavior and deal with it aggressively (Thompson, & Cohen, 2005). Parents need to realize that bullying can be done in subtle ways and teachers cannot see everything that students do (Packman, Lepkowski, Overton, & Smaby, 2005). Administrators, teachers, and parents must work together when dealing with bullying or even students who initially defended the victims may eventually view bullying as acceptable if we as responsible adults fail to say otherwise (Starr, 2005).

An ever-increasing weapon used for the purpose of bullying is the Internet (Silver-Greenberg, 2005). Cyber bullying is a repeated electronic form of aggressive and intentional behavior done against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself (Goodman, 2005). This type of bullying is difficult for schools to deal with because it can occur entirely off campus. It is sometimes done anonymously, and it is so widespread that 20% to 40% of middle and high school students report that they have been a victim of this form of bullying (Stover, 2006). Text messages, use of mobile phone cameras, cell phones, email messages, chat rooms, and even web pages are used to communicate messages meant to bully others. These messages are sent with remarkable speed to the intended victim (Goodman, 2005).

Sometimes bullying can be less direct than pushing or punching, such as exclusion from a group or non-selection for activities (Bosworth, et al., 1999). Spreading rumors, more prevalent in females, is an indirect act of bullying that about 5% to 10% of students have participated in (Peskin, Tortolero, & Markham, 2006). Direct bullying involves open attacks on a victim (Bosworth, et al., 1999). A form of bullying that is thought to be the most dangerous occurs between friends. It is characterized by cruel jokes and verbal

and physical harassment (Rosevear & Logan, 2007). This name-calling has debilitating consequences and is a link to prejudice (Whatchler, 2005).

Victims sometimes become bullies themselves and become impulsive and reactive. These victims retaliate against their tormentors with exaggerated hostility. These populations, classified as aggressive victims, make up 10% to 20% of the total number of the total victim group (Unnever, 2005). These aggressive victims are impulsive and exhibit high levels of dominant and antisocial behavior. Aggressive victims have social patterns that closely match those of pure bullies (2005).

Bystanders are considered to be participants of bullying too, even if they just walk by an incident. Bystanders who just pass by and do nothing to help the victim might be encouraging to the bully (Lodge & Frydenberg, 2001). By standing by and watching, they end up hurting the victim more than the bully themselves. These bystanders not only reinforce the bullying behavior, but can also suffer from a loss of self-esteem and self-confidence (Coloroso, 2005).

Bullying affects not only the victims, but affects the bullies themselves. Research conducted outside of the U.S. indicates that bullies are at risk for becoming criminals early in life (Espelage, et al., 2000). Bullying also contributes to violence and mental problems later in life (Wilson, 2006). The victims of bullying often show more misconduct, depression, anxiety, and psychiatric problems (Dake, et al., 2003). Decreases in appetite, lower grades, feeling of isolation, and avoidance of school are results of being bullied. The resentment over what happened to the victim at school is usually released at home where the victim feels safe to express it (Dunning, 2004). Bed-wetting, depression, and thoughts of suicide are also the effects of bullying (Brown, et al., 2005).

Verbal harassment during middle school increases the risk of high school use of alcohol by three times (Erikson, 2005). Studies also show that students who kill their classmates have one thing in common. They all were victims of being bullied at school (Unnever & Cornell, 2004).

Bullying also affects the general climate of the school and the community in general. If this problem is ignored, fighting, truancy, and learning problems could result for all students (Starr, 2005). Teachers also feel the effects because the environment is not favorable to learning. The educational process is disrupted. The community suffers because school property and home values decrease (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004). In a climate of bullying, even board meetings can be affected. School board members either are bullied, or they become bullies. Police have to attend the meetings to assure the peace. This is a terrible waste of community resources (Caruso Jr. & Nicholas, 2006).

Bullying is a learned behavior. Bullies see others doing it, so they do it too, but there is some research that would suggest a genetic or physical reason for bullying. The MAO-L gene causes a stronger response in a part of the brain that signals fear. Fear may cause an increase in aggression. Teens also do not have a fully developed prefrontal cortex. This part of the brain is responsible for self-control and judgment. Bad decision-making, such as aggressive behavior, could be a result of this (Adams, 2006).

Bullying has been an issue in schools for a long time; however, due to an increase in school shootings and suicide, this problem is receiving substantially more attention in the media (Dake, et al., 2003). The media has caused kids to fear violence from their peers. It has also portrayed the bullies as being bigger than life. Sometimes the media has even presented the bully as a hero (Cross, 2001).

There is some state bullying laws in effect. It is unclear if the laws are effective, and state legislatures argue that the law's requirements might be too costly and become a burden for the school district (Dessoiff, 2004). One law in Arizona made it mandatory to report to the police any behavior that resulted in physical harm to a child. This law is considered to be too harsh by at least one school administrator (Lenckus, 2004). Schools are turned into "law enforcement agencies" as anti-bullying policies increases bullying among students (Kalman, 2006). Schools fear that if they intervene in bullying that takes place away from the school, that they might be a target of a lawsuit with parents (Stover, 2006).

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

A good place to start is to recognize the fact that bullying is a serious problem (Adams, 2001). In the schoolroom setting bullying could be defined in the student handbook, on hallway posters, in a first day student/faculty assembly. It could be defined thoroughly enough in a discussion with students, faculty, staff, and parents that everyone will understand what will or will not be tolerated (Thompson & Cohen, 2005).

Once bullying has been defined, the next step maybe to inform the parents about bullying and what it actually is. Parents are their child's role models. The parents can demonstrate through their actions the coping skills necessary to gain something without bullying. These same parents can be instrumental in teaching their child how to cope or solve the problem of victimization (Rocks & O'Moore, 2001).

Since school is a large part of their child's life the parents should be involved with their child's education at all levels and participate in both social and educational activities within the school (Rocks & O'Moore, 2001). They also need to talk to their child to keep up with their emotional level. By having frequent conversations with their child they can find out how they are treated at school by classmates and teachers. Schools that implement anti-bullying programs, and all schools should, should also involve the parent. The schools could give parents advice and preventive measures that can be used to keep their child from being a bully or being a victim (Wiseman, 2002). These programs should also state firm limits to the parents as to the acceptable and unacceptable behaviors within the schools policy. Parents can be encouraged to model anti-bullying behavior, use positive parenting skills, enhance self-esteem in their

children, and help develop empathy/tolerance in their children (Rocks & O'Moore, 2001). It is important in all information given to parents about bullying/violence that they become aware that their own behavior is a critical factor in bullying among children (2001). The advice that adults give to children about dealing with bullying should be sensible, realistic and appropriate. It has to be based on real experiences rather than untried theories (Mellor, 1993). Parents should also learn that the more they become emotionally involved or react in a negative way the more they may inflate the problem or prevent their child's social development.

It can be frustrating for administrators or teachers to have to tell a parent that a certain amount of teasing, being picked on, etc. is a part of growing up. Children need to learn positive life long skills to keep an act of bullying from becoming a threat to their academics or mental health. Parents should teach their child social and coping skills to deal with those forms of bullying (Rocks & O'Moore, 2001). A few ways that parents can teach these social skills are: If your child confides in you that he/she is being bullied, actively listen to them and let them explore ways they would like to handle the situation (Dunning, 2004). Teach your child that names do not have to hurt them. If they complain about being called a name the parent can tell the child it is not true (Kalman, 2006, November). Teach your child to ignore the insults. This can be done with role-playing. The child may be taught that the person teasing them may actually like them, but is too shy to tell them, so they are just trying to get their attention. The child should be taught exit strategies, both physical and verbal.

Parental involvement can only go so far, the teachers are the ones that deal first hand with bullying instances, so it is just as important, if not more important that

teachers learn how to deal with bullying. Since many colleges do not offer any training on how to handle discipline, let alone bullying, teacher's training would definitely be a necessary part of any school born anti-bullying program. Also, in the school setting the teacher spends more time with the student than any other staff member. Teachers need more effective and continuous training on dealing with difficult students and bullying situations. In-service training alone is not the answer, but combining it with follow-up consultation has shown to be affective in producing significant changes in bullying behavior (Newman, et al., 2004). Continuous training and education has also been shown to be effective in dealing with difficult students (2004).

The schools that kept teachers knowledgeable on intervention strategies, provided support, and informed teachers on the problem students had fewer bullying problems (2004). These training sessions also need to provide instruction for teachers to teach students roles of friendship with emotional and social competence. This obviously could prevent the entire bullying problem.

A good relationship between teachers and students is another large factor in reducing bullying. When teachers are better trained to gain this rapport with students they will gain more confidants in themselves to intervene during a bullying situation and not worry about making the situation worse for the victim because they feel secure about what to do (Newman, et al., 2004). On the same note, teachers need to intervene in bullying situations in order to gain the trust and improve their relationships with students. Teachers and other adults have to think before they act just as they expect students to. The way that adults react and conduct communications with students,

fellow teachers, other adults, or parents will be picked up on by children/students very quickly (Espelage, et al., 2000).

Teaching the students responsibility may be one of the first things that could be done. In an assembly, or better yet, a series of assemblies the students could be taught the problems that can arise or grow by the lack of reporting the action or watching it occur with no assistants (Coloroso, 2005). In this assembly or assemblies students could be taught how to intervene without becoming a victim. Role playing activities are a good place to start with this.

Communication and problem solving skills along with positive thinking may help students avoid the act of bullying (Lodge & Frydenberg, 2001). Changing school policies or atmosphere along with teaching pro-social skills has helped many school districts lower their bullying rates (Espelage & Asidao, 2001).

As students learn more coping skills and social skills they can learn ways to prevent them from becoming a victim or learn different strategies to protect them if a bully tries to target them. Again role-playing lessons can be used to help them learn the different tactics used by bullies. In the classroom setting with different scenarios set forth students can brain storm different non-aggressive ways to deal with them. This will defiantly need guidance from the teacher. If students find themselves using more aggressive responses in these situations; teachers can then remind them of the possible consequences of their aggression, such as fighting back (Espelage, et al., 2000).

From the student's perspective, students feel that support groups, individual counseling, or peer mediation would be helpful for students who bully (Espelage & Asidao, 2001). Counseling can be very effective if performed properly. In bullying

instances an outside facilitator may be used. If this facilitator is neutral to the issue they can generally calm the bully and the situation (Caruso & Nicholas, 2006).

In order to be successful, it is important that counselors, working with students who bully their peers, must be knowledgeable about the environmental factors that may be contributing to bullying behavior so that prevention and intervention programs can be implemented (Espelage, et al., 2000). Secondly, counselors need to pay particular attention to peer group interactions and efforts aimed at decreasing bullying behavior, which are likely to benefit from comprehensive group norms (Espelage, et al., 2000). Finally, guidance counselors need to include the rejected, most at risk students into these groups (Thompson & Cohen, 2005).

Besides counselors, Karstadt and Woods (1999) think that even school nurses could be involved by talking to small groups of students. These small groups should be mixed with victims and identified bullies to discuss self-esteem building and other preventions to the problem (The bully as a victim, 2005).

There is a need to raise the level of bully awareness among whole school communities. This includes all pupils, teachers, parents and non-teaching staff (Rocks & O' Moore, 2001). Once awareness has risen, a successful bullying program needs to be implemented. A successful bullying program restructures the learning environment to create a social climate characterized by supportive adult involvement, positive adult role models, firm limits, and consistent, non-corporal sanctions for bullying behavior (Starr, 2005). It is imperative for teacher's to make their class and schools a safe environment, because this allows students to feel more comfortable and confident and as a result student learning and personal comfort increases (Newman-Carlson & Horne, 2004).

Galloway (1994) concluded that freedom from fear of bullying is not enough to ensure successful learning, but it is a necessary condition for effective learning (Bosworth, et al., 1999).

One program showed a 50% decrease in bullying after 8 months of being implemented. It is based on the creation of a school environment based on the following criteria: positive interest and participation from the adults, firm limits of intolerable behavior, steady application of non-punitive, nonphysical sanctions for improper behavior or infringement of rules, and adults who act as positive role models (Packman, et al., 2005).

Sometimes the school environment gets extended with the help of technology and computers, by means of email and myspace.com and so forth. So schools that use a great deal of technology can also request on-line service providers to report activity that violates the firms' "terms of use" rules. The on-line providers can remove inappropriate material or even block misbehaving users (Stover, 2006).

Part of a positive school environment is feeling comfortable, not only with going to school everyday, but comfortable being able to talk to peers and staff knowing that what was said will not be exposed or violated in anyway. Students often fail to report being bullied (Unnever, 2005). In order to reduce bullying, students need to be able to report bullying and feel safe about it (Adams, 2006). To accomplish this, it is important that all staff handle bully reports in the same manner; taking swift action and being consistent each time an incident occurs or is reported.

From the parent's perspective it is necessary for them to teach their child to speak up if another child is being bullied (Nudo, 2004). Also, parents should empower their

child to talk to their teacher or the school principal about the bullying and specifically the bullies who are bullying them (Dunning, 2004).

There are two main forms of reporting bullying behavior: Self-Report and Peer Nomination. One study surveyed 386 middle school students to see which was a more effective means of bully reporting: Self-Report vs. Peer Nomination (Cole, Cornell, & Sheras, 2006). The School Climate Survey (anonymous) was the self-report questionnaire used (2006). The study concluded that peer nomination is more accurate and reliable than students self-report. So when reporting bullies, it is more reliable; hence, more beneficial to use peer nomination means (2006). In the peer nomination survey, students can identify bullies by matching their names with general descriptions (2006).

Not all surveys and questionnaires are full-proof. The problem with using questionnaires to find out about bullying in schools tend to make them too long and difficult to analyze (Mellor, 1993). They also use questions that are ambiguous and leading, which antagonize parents, teachers and students (1993). When conducting a questionnaire survey investigating bullying keep it short, collect only the information really needed, and include questions that have clear meanings (1993).

Once schools have a consistent means of reporting bullying incidents, a school policy is the next stepping-stone for reducing bullying behavior. Anti-bullying programs are being implemented in school systems across the United States because of this national epidemic (Orecklin & Winters, 2000). In order for a school to develop a successful anti-bullying program, not only should school officials seek consultants to help develop it to best suit that particular school, but school administrators, teachers, students, and parents should also work together (Adams, 2006). Intervention programs should be started in

early grades and stay on going through high school (Lodge & Frydenberg, 2001). The single most effective thing that any school can do is to develop a policy to which everybody is committed. One way of getting commitment is to work with pupils, teachers and others to find out about the extent of bullying (Mellor, 1993).

Another aspect of effective anti-bullying efforts usually addresses the problems at many levels (Packman, et al., 2005). Schools need to incorporate several key components commonly found in violence prevention programs such as teaching anger management and promoting nonviolent approaches to conflict (Bosworth, et al., 1999). Aggleton et al. (2000), thinks that a no blame approach could work to solve the problem. A whole school anti-bullying policy in which those students indentified as the bully is given the responsibility for solving the problem rather than being blamed for it (The bully as a victim, 2005). Schools need to design programs to educate students about the harmful effects of teasing and harassment and give them the skills to manage, and potentially change, the pressure to hurt their classmates in order to “fit in” (Espelage & Holt, 2001).

School policies can be further established using tactics and methods to strengthen their purpose. Some methods that were found to be successful were providing better supervision in hallways and recess, establishing classroom rules against bullying, requiring talks between bullies and victims, and inviting talks with parents of involved students (Dake, et al., 2003). The introduction of random seating at lunch can greatly reduce the number of bullying incidents (Roou, 2004). Teachers can organize classroom grouping so that shy students can get to know other students and make friends (Thompson & Cohen, 2005). The key components of the bullying intervention program

are increased adult supervision in all areas of the school, increased consequences for bullying behavior, and clear message that bullying will not be tolerated (Starr, 2005).

Whatever method schools use to find out about bullying, there is one step which should always be taken: make sure that the information collected from pupils, parents, or teachers is fed back to them and discussed with them (1993).

School-based interventions are more successful when they are built around the understanding of children's perceptions of and attitudes toward bullying school and other environment (Brown, et al., 2005). Olweus (1994) found that a school-wide bullying intervention reduced antisocial activities such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy, as well as bullying (Bosworth, et al., 1999).

Another policy that is very common is the zero-tolerance approach. Zero-tolerance disciplinary guidelines are being implemented by administrators across the nation. The basic message is everyone needs to get involved, especially other students who passively watch, before this problem will be solved (Orecklin & Winters, 2000). Zero tolerance is and has been very popular; however, when it is used alone it shows little evidence of increasing school safety (Packman, et al., 2005).

Due to today's abundance of technology and computer usage, other policies may be created to monitor and reduce cyber-bullying. School administrators should closely monitor use of school computers (Stover, 2006). Boston Public schools ban their students from accessing personal e-mail accounts from the school servers (Silver – Greenberg, 2005). Some schools have ridged restrictions on Internet access while some schools have students read a legal document and sign a form to insure appropriate behavior while using the schools technological resources (2005).

School policies are not solely built on the reliability of the staff to regulate and enforce, but they also are reliant on the strength of students and the student body as a whole. “Peer group power” is an important way to aid in stopping bullying (Packman, et al., 2005). A student-initiated solution is the best way to stop bullying (Roou, 2004). If students are incorporated in the anti-bullying plan, than it is more likely the program will achieve more effective results (Packman, et al., 2005). Also, students preferred strategies that didn’t involve teaching staff but only involved non-teaching staff (Crothers, Kolbert, & Barker, 2006).

One method to decrease bullying in school settings was the use of peer intervention. The rationale is that a group should be considered in the prevention process because usually bullying involves a group. This approach encourages the outsiders or bystanders to take a more active role in resolving the bullying incident they are witnessing (Dake, et al., 2003). It is important to encourage students to not just be a bystander and to encourage students who hang out with bullies, to set a goal to not take a part in it (Adams, 2006). Teach students to not applaud the antagonizers by giving them attention. This can create a change in school norms and social expectations (Svoboda, 2004). The bystander can even move away from the premises where the bullying is occurring (Coloroso, 2005).

One student driven approach that had some success followed the three A’s of the student driven intervention (Packman, et al., 2005).

- Awareness: Developing support amongst faculty and administration (2005).
- Avenues: Smaller groups are easy for victims or bullies to express thoughts or feelings(2005).

- Assimilation: Keep the program on-going process, rotating student positions year after year (2005).

Other than student driven intervention programs there is a wide-range of other anti-bullying programs. One example is a curriculum based preventative program. There are three steps in curriculum based preventative and intervention programs that have been shown to have some positive impact (Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, & Voeten, 2005). The first step is awareness, which is basically discussing bullying with entire class and let it be known of the problem. Start class with themes as to what bullying is and how it feels to be the victim. Next discuss the group mechanisms involved and point out how people behave differently in a group dynamic (2005). The second step is to encourage self-reflection (2005). The final step is to commit to anti-bullying behaviors, in other words, promote by helping students create ways in which they could act as individuals or in a group to try to end bullying. One way to do this is by role-playing (2005).

Another program that could be used is a Conflict Management Programs that include the following: self-monitoring, perspective taking, social-problem solving skills, role-playing on video and then discussed, analyzed, and negotiated, an anti-gang curriculum, alternative community involvement, an anti-bias/anti-hate curriculum that focuses on developing skills of understanding critical thinking and perspective taking, and finally, an anti-drug and alcohol curriculum that focuses on self-esteem and self-worth (Lake, 2004).

Another program that has had some success is Youth Auxiliaries (YA's). Youth Auxiliaries perform skits and dramas modeling bullying situations and displays different responsive behavior and the possible outcomes (Cossa, 2006).

Federal programs are being set up to assist schools in helping identify potential bullies and aid their victims. Millions of federal dollars are being used to create curriculums that tackle the bullying issue as early as kindergarten (Orecklin & Winters, 2000). Despite the fact that high profile campaigns at national, local or school level are useful ways of initiating action, on their own doing nothing to help (Mellor, 1993). So it is important to have a combination nation, state and local working together in unison.

Prevention and intervention programs will be effective only if we learn more about how bullying occurs within a middle school environment where students are vying for power and status within peer groups (Espelage & Asidao, 2001). The underlying foundation for any anti-bullying intervention program; however, should recognize a significant association between anger and bullying while others might highlight anger as an important focus of prevention and intervention programs (Bosworth, et al., 1999).

As stated in Roberts and Morotti, the needs of the bully (not just the victims) should also be addressed in effective anti-bullying efforts (Packman, et al., 2005). Suggestions to decrease bullying behavior include, involving the bully in extra-curricular activities, providing them with positive attention, sending them away, establishing a reward system for good behavior, and administering consequences for negative behavior (Espelage & Asidao, 2001).

About 25% of bullies who typically get physical tend to have a criminal record by 30 years of age (Nudo, 2004). So it is important to inform parents and students about the results of their actions. The school board attorney may also be used. They may speak to the entire board about the legality of certain behaviors (Caruso & Nicholas, 2006). Maybe the schools should put more pressure on lawmakers to amend laws dealing with

bullying (Lenckus, 2004). Many states have made it mandatory for schools to monitor and respond to bullying behavior (Wilson, 2006). In Delaware, it is required that bullying incidents on school grounds must be reported to the Delaware Department of Education within five days (Dessoff, 2004). A law in Connecticut requires that schools keep records of bullying incidents and make them available to the public (2004). In summation, students need to be taught that they have rights. When these rights are infringed upon they should do something, within legal limits, about it.

Research conducted outside of the U.S. suggested that students who bully were themselves at an increased risk of being physically abusive and of having a criminal record as adults (Espelage, et al., 2000). Many countries outside of the United States have documented the serious consequences associated with bullying and have, in some cases, implemented national campaigns to protect children from peer harassment (Espelage & Asidao, 2001).

Project Objective and Processing Statements

As a result of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program during the period of August 27, through December 14, 2007, the students of Teachers Researchers A, B, and C will demonstrate a reduction of bullying behaviors in their respective classrooms.

The following tasks were completed prior to implementing the interventions. These tasks helped prepare the teacher researchers for their study:

- Discuss appropriate behaviors in the classroom while participating in cooperative activities.
- Adapt the webquest program to fit the needs for direct instruction in our classrooms.
- Design a template for a newsletter concerning bullying behavior.
- Organize nine different activities, using the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program as a guide, to be taught during the intervention stage of our research project.

Project Action Plan

The following is the list of tasks that needed to be completed each week during the three phases of the study.

Pre-week: Beginning August 27, 2007

- Administer and collect parental consent forms.

Pre-documentation

Week 1: Beginning September 3, 2007

- Administer and collect student and parent surveys putting them in a locked file cabinet.

Week 2: Beginning September 10, 2007

- Fine tune lesson plans and check on supplies.
- Assess responses from parent survey.

Week 3: Beginning September 17, 2007

- Begin completing teacher observation log.

Week 4: Beginning September 24, 2007

- Finish teacher observation log by the end of week.
- Assess the results of the student surveys.

Intervention

Week 5: October 5, 2007

- Discuss appropriate behaviors needed while participating in cooperative activities.
- Define what bullying is and discuss the different types of bullying that exists.
- Reflect in their bullying journal.

Week 6: October 12, 2007

- Teach lessons on listening skills and body language.
- Discuss ‘hot spots’ for bullying behavior and have students break into groups and have students fill out a worksheet that has ideas to make those spots safer.
- Reflect in their bullying journal.

Week 7: October 19, 2007

- Role play various bullying situations and discuss appropriate behavior to solve the problem.
- Reflect in their bullying journal.

Week 8: October 26, 2007

- Teach lesson on anger management and tolerance.
- Students create a poster that illustrates a type of bullying and then they create an anti- (circle w/ line through it) symbol to exhibit a non-tolerance for bullying.
- Reflect in their bullying journal.

Week 9: November 2, 2007

- Students fill-out a survey that discusses how their week has gone and how many times another student has helped or harmed them that week.
- Teach lesson on making/keeping friends and accepting change.
- Reflect in their bullying journal.

Week 10: November 9, 2007

- Students will create an anti-bullying rap song and perform it in front of the class.
- Implement role-playing activities that will reinforce the previous lessons taught.
- Reflect in their bullying journal.

Week 11: November 16, 2007

- Students will read a bullying testimonial and how the person in the story dealt with the situation, they will then reflect on what they would have done – differently/same?
- Have students reflect on what they have learned from the various lessons verbally.
- Reflect in their bullying journal.

Week 12: November 21, 2007

- Have students take a self-esteem test to find out more about themselves and how they feel about themselves, then discuss results as a class.
- Reflect in their bullying journal.

Week 13: November 30, 2007

- Brainstorm all of the activities that take place over the 10-week antibullying intervention program, then have students complete a PMI explaining the activities they liked, disliked, or things they found interesting.
- Write last entry in their bullying journal

Post-documentation

Week 14: Beginning December 3, 2007

- Begin completing teacher observation log.

Week 15: Beginning December 10, 2007

- Finish teacher observation log by end of week.
- Compile final results from teacher observation log.

Methods of Assessment

The only tool used for post-documentation is the teacher observation log. Its purpose was to chart the frequency of various bullying behaviors by the students in Teacher Researchers A and B's homerooms and Teacher Researcher C's health class. Teacher Researchers A and B observed 6th graders at Site A and Teacher Researcher C observed freshmen from Site B. Pre-documentation was done from September 10, 2007 through September 21, 2007 and post-documentation was completed from December 3, 2007 through December 14, 2007. Daily logs on each individual student were kept during pre-documentation and post-documentation. The collapsed data will be analyzed to detect any change from pre-documentation to post-documentation.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to decrease the frequency of bullying behaviors among 6th, 7th and 9th grade students. There were a total of 33 females and 30 males in the three grades that participated in this research. Out of the 63 participants, there were 14 sixth grade students (8 males and 6 females), 16 seventh grade students (9 males and 7 females), and 33 ninth grade students (13 males and 20 females). The types of bullying behaviors being documented were malicious teasing, name-calling, exclusion, physical aggression, and gossiping or spreading rumors. During the nine weeks of intervention, various activities were originated from the teacher researchers, while other strategies were discovered via the Internet. Some of the activities used included participants creating anti-bullying posters, role-playing, writing anti-bullying rap songs, and discussion. This action research project began August 27, 2007 and culminated on December 14, 2007.

Historical Description of the Intervention

During the weeks of September 17 and September 24, 2007 we began documenting observable bullying behaviors in the three predetermined settings, a sixth grade study hall, a seventh grade study hall, and a 9th grade health class. Due to the lack of interaction between students in the two study halls, not much bullying behavior was being noticed in the first few days. The 9th grade health class was also not exhibiting much of the targeted behaviors. As a group, the teacher researchers decided to allow more cooperative activity and would occasionally walk outside the room and listen as well as peek into the room over five to ten minute periods. The teacher researchers

discovered that these changes did foster many more bullying behaviors. Name-calling, teasing, and exclusion were the most observed behaviors during the two-week observational period. It was also alarming how the student's behavior deteriorated when the instructor was out of the room for just a short period of time. It reinforced what teacher researchers already thought, which was that most bullying behavior takes place in more unstructured and unsupervised settings. To see a copy of the observational log see Appendix C.

During the week of October 1, 2007 the teacher researchers began the intervention strategy. We had group discussions on what bullying is and the types of bullying the participants had experienced and or witnessed at their schools. Based on those discussions the students created a concept map that labeled bullying and categorized the different types of bullying as accurately as possible. The boys tended to define bullying in physical terms whereas girls defined bullying in more verbal terms. The students as well as the teacher researchers were surprised at all the different forms of bullying and were surprised to learn that the types of bullying considered as verbal equaled the types that were considered physical. All around, there were some attention-grabbing discussions with almost all students willing to share experiences they had. It was startling to discover that many of the students were bullying and didn't even realize it. A couple of discouraging aspects were that some of the students made fun of other students during the discussions and that most of the boys didn't feel bullying was a problem at their school. On the other hand, the objective of making the students more aware of bullying and better able to recognize bullying behaviors, we feel was accomplished.

During the week of October 8, 2007, we discussed the “hot spots” for bullying in our respective schools. These spots could be before, during, or after school. Once the teacher researchers and students narrowed the choices down to the four most active bullying areas, the class was then divided into four even numbered groups with each group assigned to a “hot spot.” Each group filled out a worksheet expressing their ideas on how to make their particular “hot spot” safer for all students. To see a copy of the “hot spot” worksheet see Appendix D. We felt this lesson was very informative and very insightful as to how the students felt about bullying. For the most part, the groups worked well together and some came up with some exceptional ideas; however, some students did not contribute and were disruptive during the cooperative activity. It also would have been nice to have had more time so we could have discussed in detail how to implement the student’s solutions to reduce bullying in “hot spots.” It was fascinating to find out what spots the kids thought were prime areas for bullying behaviors, for example bathrooms and in the cafeteria.

During the week of October 15, 2007 the teacher researchers broke their classes up into small groups and did some role-playing. Each group was given a different scenario involving some form of bullying. After fifteen minutes of preparation the groups performed their skits. The students were asked to demonstrate both the positive and negative reactions to a variety of bullying situations with an emphasis on the numerous possible actions that bullies, victims and bystanders could take. One skit may have a couple of students pretend to be chatting online and speak out loud what they are typing. Then the audience could play the victim, in this case, the person being talked about via the computer. Then the teacher researchers would discuss out loud with the class and role

players, what are the possible actions that could take place. During these short skits, it was interesting to note that the students were more adept at playing the role of the bully as opposed to displaying the social skills necessary to avert these situations. When a skit was completed the participants discussed what they saw and gave suggestions on how the situation could have been handled differently or expressed how they liked the way it was already handled. For the most part, students embraced the role-playing and the discussions were productive; conversely, some did not take it seriously and others were too shy to contribute. One of the most valuable aspects that the teacher researchers gained from this activity was that in some groups the usually passive students came out of their “shell,” took the part of the bully, and were very convincing. The teacher researchers also found out through the discussions that cyber bullying is not as big an issue with our students as was previously thought.

During the week of October 22, 2007, we decided to make anti-bullying posters. First we brainstormed about what would be appropriate to put on the posters and where throughout the school would be some good spots to display them. The students then broke up into groups of two to create their posters. Most of the students really enjoyed this activity and each contributed by either coming up with an idea for what the poster would display, or they drew and or colored the poster. One negative from doing the posters was the amount of horseplay. Generally, when students get the markers they get into this play around mode and as a result some posters really showed this and could not be hung up. It was fun to watch some of the students get on a computer and create their poster without any assistance. The students were allowed to hang their posters throughout the school. The participants also came up with some unique places to hang them. One of

our favorite spots was hanging them from the ceiling down the hallway. This really brought attention to the rest of the school body, in fact, to some people it must have really hit home, because some of the posters were ripped. So another negative was that we had to take down a couple of the posters early due to vandalism. To see some examples of the anti-bullying posters see Appendix E.

During the week of October 29, 2007, students completed a survey intended to reveal how the student's relationships were going at school and provide information about incidence of bullying. The survey had 39 questions that all started with the following: "Another student at my school..." The ending of the question varied from something positive like "helped me," to something negative like "tried to hurt me." The student could either answer the question by marking never, once, or by writing a number to represent how many times it happened in the last week. This survey provided a lot of significant data that really gave the teacher researchers a better insight and understanding as to how the school body functioned. Another plus was that the survey was brief so the students did not take very long to complete it while at the same time it really encouraged the students to participate in a very open and honest manner. Of course the teacher researchers had the occasional student who completed the survey exceptionally quick. This gave the teacher researchers the impression that the student was perhaps marking the same answer throughout just to get it finished; nevertheless, most took their time. After reviewing the surveys we came to a disturbing realization, and that was, there are a far greater number of "loners" in our schools or at least many students with no friends at all. On a brighter note, this activity also prompted some excellent discussions on how to treat

people the way you want to be treated and not to prejudge someone else before you get to know them. To see an example of the survey see Appendix F.

During the week of November 5, 2007, the participants composed anti-bullying poems and rap songs. The teacher researchers split the students into groups of two and told them the objective was to write an anti-bullying poem or rap. Most of the groups attempted to write a rap song. The students were exceptionally self-motivated and extraordinarily creative when composing these songs. The lyrics to some were very true, to the point and really stuck with the students who made them as well as the students who listened to them being performed. It was also great to see that students who seemed normally reserved, open up and say what they wanted to say, or perhaps couldn't say otherwise. The only real problem for doing this activity was that there just was not enough time to finish the project in one sitting and had to ask the students to take it and work on it outside the classroom. The teacher researchers then had to have the students perform or read their poem/song on another date and time. Interesting enough, many of the groups wanted to perform their song not only in front of one class, but in front of other classes with complete choreography as well. It was disappointing knowing the students had the enthusiasm to spread the anti-bullying message and that there just did wasn't enough time for them to do it. To see examples of some songs see Appendix G.

During the week of November 12, 2007, the teacher researchers had the students read story about a young person who had been bullied on the way to and from school on the bus. They then had to answer questions about their own life that related to the story. To the surprise of the teacher researchers the students were very direct with their responses. It was engaging to observe them compare their responses with other students

in the class. Some of the students became very emotional when a question hit a little to close to home. There still was the problem of certain students, usually the more aggressive or outspoken ones, who thought the lesson was stupid and their answers tended to be shallow and guarded. To see an example of the story and the questions see Appendix H.

During the week of November 19, 2007, the teacher researchers took their classes into a computer lab and had the students complete an on-line self-esteem test. The purpose of this test was to evaluate one's self worth and self-actualization. The test consisted of ten questions and only took about 10 –15 minutes to complete. A positive aspect of this activity was the print out afterwards. It not only included the student's self-esteem score, it also provided each student with a paragraph explaining what each score meant. To the surprise of the teacher researchers, many of the students agreed entirely with what their paragraph told them about themselves. It was also unexpected that almost all the students were more than willing to share their score, what the score meant despite being low or high. One of the problems with this lesson was the usual computer or two that froze up while taking the test or while the results were being analyzed and a response was being prepared. The other problem was the one or two students who are uncomfortable using the computers so instead they decide to not follow directions or purposely disrupt. To see an example of quiz and print out analysis from quiz, see Appendices I and J.

During the week of November 26, 2007, we discussed all of the anti-bullying activities the students had participated in the last ten weeks. The students really opened up and were sincere about what they enjoyed and what they thought was a waste of time.

After the discussion the teacher researchers had the students write a PMI reflection about the bullying unit. It was not a surprise to find out that the students enjoyed the activities that they could work together on or because they were allowed to show their “other” creative side. Some of the favorites included creating the anti-bullying posters, composing the anti-bullying rap, and the role-playing activity. In contrast, some of the things they didn’t like included the activities in which they had to write for a while, read, or fill out a quiz, test, or survey. The teacher researchers all felt their classes had become closer and more open about how they dealt with each other. Students learned how to communicate and face problems at school as opposed to hide behind them or try to forget them. Whether this knowledge and power will transfer to other facets of the student’s life is hard to say. Each teacher researcher had a few students that ignored everything that was trying to be taught; however, we also had some very passive students who became empowered and capable through participation in the activities during this project. Hopefully, after doing this project, students not only believe in themselves, but also stand up for themselves, and even stand up for others when they are in a bullying situation.

During the weeks of December 3 and December 10, 2007, the teacher researchers began observing bullying behavior again using the teacher observation log. We observed the same students in the same settings as the first two weeks of the project. We recorded the frequency of the five targeted bullying behaviors in the previously mentioned 6th grade homeroom, 7th grade homeroom, and 9th grade health class.

When we, the teacher researchers, began to gather ideas for our research project it was based on the belief that bullying has become a major problem in our schools. However, during the observational logs we did not see many of the predetermined

bullying behaviors being exhibited in the three settings. We felt this was due to the fact that the types of settings being observed were too structured. To get a more accurate account of a school's bullying problem more unstructured settings needed to be observed i.e. hallways, lunch, bus stops, or P.E. class. We are satisfied that the students are aware of what bullying is, but we are frustrated with the fact that they still do not see that their personal actions are considered bullying.

During the nine-week intervention period, we, the teacher researchers, observed many different kinds of behaviors. Some of the behaviors observed were good, some were bad, and some were bizarre yet interesting. We enjoyed the fact that most students wanted to participate in the activities and were very enthused to continue each week. The discussions, for the most part, were outstanding and the students were very open and honest with their thoughts and opinions, more so than was expected. Their ideas to make the school a safer place were not only insightful, but were original and beneficial if implemented properly. In fact, the students came up with more ideas than the teacher researchers had originally thought of before the discussions. The students particularly enjoyed the activities that involved singing, acting, or drawing. These small group activities promoted a great deal of positive interaction between the higher and lower level students and seemed to empower the more passive students allowing them to show off a different side.

We, the teacher researchers, did notice some discouraging trends during the intervention period. Certain students did not want to participate and thought the activities were stupid. Some of the discussions did seem repetitious and the boys not only dominated the discussions but also appeared to not take bullying as seriously as the girls.

Time constraints, student illnesses, technical difficulties, and school related activities limited the effectiveness of many of the intervention activities.

We, the teacher researchers, thought it was interesting that many of the students who did not want to participate in the intervention activities were the same students who exhibited most of the bullying behaviors on our observational logs. The most common bullying behaviors were name-calling and malicious teasing. We noticed that the boys defined bullying in physical terms while girls considered bullying to be more verbal. We realized rather quickly that the students worked better and were more motivated during small group cooperative activities. When a student worked on his/her own it seemed to be a waste of time. We learned from our discussion after the self-esteem activity that this is an area that needs to be addressed more in our schools. We also learned that cyber-bullying, according to the students, is not as big a problem as was previously thought by the teacher researchers. During our anti-bullying poster activity, we were surprised to notice that the posters in the bathrooms, which was identified as one of the main “hot spots” for bullying, were left alone while some posters in the hallway were ripped or torn down.

On a more global perspective, the teacher researchers concluded that lack of education and unwillingness to learn led to the type of bullying behaviors being observed. The students who knew more and were comfortable participating did not display these bullying behaviors, but instead were the victims. We noticed the interest level of our students increased as the time went on, students who were not interested in the beginning wanted to participate, and students began to recognize bullying behaviors throughout the school. They even recognized some bullying behaviors by some of their teachers.

Through the assessment of the self-esteem test, the teacher researchers noticed a direct correlation between low self-esteem and the presence of bullying behavior. Overall, we feel the awareness of bullying behavior in our schools increased as instruction progressed.

I, teacher researcher A, have had an eye opening experience as a result of this action research project. I am a young teacher who may have been a little naïve as to the amount of bullying that occurs in the school setting or at least in our school. When I was young however, I was no stranger to incidence of bullying but I feel I just have repressed those thoughts because they were just not as significant to me as the good times I had in school. I feel now I am more capable to spot incidence of bullying, as before I had a narrow perspective as to what bullying is. I also feel I am more able to deal with incidence of bullying while at the same time I know when it is best for students to work out situations on their own. Bullying, unfortunately, will never be brought to a complete end, but the more educated students and faculty are about this topic the more we'll be able to limit incidences and overall make students feel safer and more comfortable while they are at school. The next step may be to educate parents on what do with their child when they are the victim or the aggressor.

I, teacher researcher B, feel that there are situations students have to learn how to handle or cope with for themselves; thus, allowing, them to stand on their own two feet. On the other hand, when dealing with bullying if students try to handle things on their own and nothing changes, the end result and or long term effects could be detrimental to their overall health and well-being. With that said, it is important that our students understand and are aware of bullying tactics. As teachers we have the tough job of

knowing when to step in and intervene or when to stand aside and let our students work things out for themselves. While doing the research and working with my students, I have become more aware of the problem of bullying and its causes. I realized quickly that my attempts to educate students about bullying are like putting band-aids on a very large wound. In the beginning of the intervention it was frustrating to see any of my students were not willing to apply the skills taught through the lessons. As a result of classroom discussions, it became very evident that bullying is a problem of our society and needs to be addressed on a larger scale. Through many of the activities I was able to get a view of the home life situations of many of my students as well as descriptions of parental behaviors that were rather disturbing. The physical behavior that many students witness daily comes from their own homes. I have learned that no matter what tools I provide my students with or how many discussions I have with them regarding appropriate behavior, it's hard to compete with what they are learning at home. As teachers we have no choice but to continue educating our students about bullying and not look the other way. My personal goal as a teacher is to make my classroom as safe environment as possible. To accomplish this goal, I need to concentrate on being more watchful and aware of the interpersonal relationships of the students, as well as my relationship with them. I must continue to show more empathy towards my students and encourage positive interactions between them.

I, teacher researcher C of Site B, found this anti-bullying program very interesting. I had worries at the beginning of the program as to how receptive a group of freshmen would be to such a program. I knew that bullying peaked in the middle school years. What I learned was that they, the students, in Site B were very receptive. I actually

feel that these students learned a lot. I learned that many kids didn't want the label of "bully" or to hurt other people. Once they were taught the definition of bullying, the many different kinds of bullying, and how it can cause life long mental scars, most were ashamed at the actions they had taken against other people at some time in the past. Since I have had other courses and research on bullying I don't believe I have changed much personally, but now that I know the impact this intervention program has had on these students, I will implement it every semester for the rest of my teaching career.

During first two weeks, we, the teacher researchers, started our pre-documentation research titled Minimizing Bullying Behavior Through Behavioral Intervention and Instruction. The pre-documentation was conducted through the use of a Teacher Observation Log.

This observation log was obtained from Brandau, L., Lyons, T., O'Donnell, S., and Propheter, T. (2006). *Bullying Prevention: Teacher Observation Log*.

Unpublished master's thesis: Saint Xavier University of Chicago, Illinois.

This observation log was kept daily for the full two-week period. Teacher researchers A and B used the log for their own respective Homerooms (grades 6th and 7th) at site A. The log was used for 9th grade Health Class at site B by teacher researcher C. On this Observation Log our students were listed on the far left side in a column. Across the top, in row one, were five forms of bullying that could be observed throughout the classes. The behaviors included malicious teasing, name-calling, exclusion, physical, and rumor/gossip. Whenever an one these behaviors was observed, the teacher researchers would write a tally mark in the correct column, by behavior, and correct row, by student.

During week three, the teacher researchers helped make a concept map about bullying. This project started as a discussion in which bullying was defined. After the students had a concrete definition they brainstormed different types of bullying, some of which were on the teacher observation logs including teasing, name-calling, exclusion and physical. After a lengthy discussion the students began to create concept map in which they labeled the different types of bullying under the two main headings of verbal and physical. Both the discussion and the concept maps helped widen student's awareness of how wide spread bullying is as well as the potential dangers of bullying. As the students continued with their concept maps ideas started forming as to what could be done to prevent bullying and how to intervene in bullying situations. As we, the teacher researchers listened to the discussion; we gathered ideas that would help us prepare more lessons for our intervention program.

During week four, the students were given a worksheet entitled "Making School Areas Safer." The students were allowed to form their own groups of four to brainstorm particular locations that were considered "hot spots" at the school. The most often spots identified were the cafeteria, during lunch, and the restrooms. Then the groups were assigned a different "hot spot" and were in charge with coming up with new and innovative ways to reduce bullying in these "hot spots" using four different criteria. The first criterion was making the area safer involving only student support. Some common solutions from the students were to defend the victims and to talk to the bully and see if they couldn't persuade the bully otherwise. The second criteria included making the areas safer involving teachers and staff. Some solutions to this included give out more detentions and be consistent, and patrol areas more as opposed to sitting inside the class

all the time. The third criteria included the students and the teachers/staff. The solutions included the teachers teaching more self-respect and help doing activities that help build students self-esteem. The final criteria involved making changes to that area. The main result from this question was simply to set up and reinforce stricter policies. These worksheets were analyzed during the next class period. A discussion of these ideas and solutions followed and as a result we, the teacher researcher, have changed the way we teach and are concentrating more on raising student's self-esteem and self-respect.

During week five, we, the teacher researchers divided the class into groups of three to five students and gave them different skits in which they would have to role play different bullying situations. Each skit was to be approximately five to seven minutes in length. The groups drew numbers to decide which bullying situations they were to perform. The skits ranged from bullying students into doing homework or making students give up some of their food at lunch, to kids starting rumors and gossiping about them via the Internet, specifically my space, email or MSN chat rooms. Then the class provided solutions to deal with or avoid these situations altogether. The students came up with some very good and legit ways to help minimize the problems. Some of the suggestions included letting teachers know about the situations to sitting somewhere else at lunch and so forth. Both the skits and the solutions provided were interesting and very educational even to us, the teacher researchers. It was interesting to see the shy more passive students not only come out of their "shells" and give their input, but even more it was fascinating that when it came to the role-playing that these were the students who often wanted to play the opposite role as the bully. On the last day of the week, the students wrote a PMI and a majority of the students noted in their reflection that they

learned a great deal about coping skills, social skills, actions that they could take, and ways to stop bully non-violently.

During week six, we started the week by getting the students into groups of two and explained to them they that needed to design an anti-bullying poster. We gave them some suggestions like writing the word bullying in the middle of the page and putting a big circle with a line through it like an anti-smoking campaign; however, we did allow them the freedom to make any poster that they wanted as long as it was based on anti-bullying. There were no limits to the size of the posters, the colors, patterns or anything of that sort; however, we did inform them that whatever they created had to be school appropriate. The kids easily created their posters during the week of time that was allotted to them. Some of the more artistic students really took this assignment to the extremes, taking them home and making them as nice as possible. The teacher researcher obtained permission from the administration to allow the students to hang the posters all throughout the buildings of both sites A and B. We especially encourage the students to post their works in the hot spots depicted by the students during week 4. Again those spots included hallways, bathrooms, rooms and even the ceilings. For the most part the posters went unscathed, the only one vandalized as at site A, which overall wasn't as bad as it could have been.

During week seven, we, the teacher researchers, gave our students a worksheet titled, "My Week at School Looked Like this..." Then there was a beginning statement that read, "another student in my school ..." and there were 39 phrases that were used to complete the rest of the statement. Some of the phrases include things like, "helped me" or "called me a name I didn't like" or even "bullied me." After the phrase was completed,

for example, “another student in my school talked bad about people I thought were their friends,” the students would then check a box that said never, once, or blank number of times, which allowed them to write the number of times an incidence occurred. The students were allowed to fill out this survey alone, with a teacher, a parent(s), sibling, or a trusted adult. The results were analyzed by the teacher researchers and then were discussed anonymously with the class. We discussed some good aspects that were apparent from the survey, as well discussed some of the negative aspects that stood out from the survey. We even discussed some unexpected things that the survey brought to the teacher researchers attention. Overall, this activity was one of more valuable activities that were done throughout the research project because it provided a great deal of information and insight about the participants and the school body as a whole.

During the first day of week eight, we, the teacher researchers, allowed the students to pick a friend or group no larger than three students to create an anti-bullying rap song or poem. The songs were anywhere from three-five verses and could not be longer than three minutes. The songs were then performed throughout the week. This activity really got the students thinking about the different forms of bullying, and really hit home with many of the students. This activity really was the peak of the intervention program.

During week nine, we, the teacher researchers, gave the students an article/worksheet that included a story about a bullying situation. Specifically, the article dealt with a student who was shy and had been getting picked on the way to and from school. The bus driver knew about the problem but ceased to do anything about it. The principal tried to stop it but could not get a grip of the problem either. The teacher knew another student on the bus that was a black belt and talked to the student telling him to

address the bullying problem on the bus and what would happen if it didn't stop. The students were then asked to answer some questions about this situation. Some of the questions included "Does this sound familiar?" and "Was it a good idea or a bad idea to get the black belt to warn the other kids about their actions?"

During week ten, we, the teacher researchers, had the students take a 15-20 minute online self-esteem test from the website:

[www.http://discoveryhealth.queendom.com/questions/self_esteem_abridged_1.html](http://discoveryhealth.queendom.com/questions/self_esteem_abridged_1.html)

The kids filled in the last part of a statement using five possibilities, ranging from strongly disagree, to strongly agree. Some examples of the statements included "most people around me seem to be better off than I am" or "I like myself and accept myself the way I am." After they completed the statements, they submitted their quiz and the Internet would analyze their responses and give them a self-esteem score. The score was then explained in an encouraging manor, explaining to students, what they need to concentrate on to increase their self-esteem. After the students reflected on what the test told them, they were very shocked as to how accurate the tests were and from a teacher's perspective it was nice to hear how high the scores were. For those that were not all that high, the teacher researchers discussed other ways to increase self-esteem, social skills and coping skills.

During week eleven, we, the teacher researchers, broke the class into groups of two-three and had them do a large PMI on all of the activities that we had them do throughout this intervention program. Overall, the students had a lot of great things to say about the program. They felt like they really had a better understanding of physical and verbal bullying. They had learned techniques and strategies that made them felt more

comfortable in bullying situations, whether they were the victim or a spectator. Some indicated that they realized in the past they were the bully, and wanted to undo some of the wrong they had done to others. They students really enjoyed the rap song and the role-playing strategies. The main negative was that the program lasted so long and they just wanted some days to work on something else.

During the last weeks of the intervention, we, the teacher researchers concluded by post-documenting the same behaviors from the Teacher Observation Log from weeks one and two of our Anti-Bullying Program. This log was used in the same classes, with the same students, with the same behaviors throughout the whole intervention as was used in the pre-documentation.

During post-documentation observations, researchers noted that name-calling (n=30; 48%) and rumor/gossip (n=34; 54%) were the most frequently observed behaviors. The behaviors that were observed the least were physical bullying (n=14; 22%) and exclusion (n=18; 28%). The summary of these findings can be found in Figure 14 below.

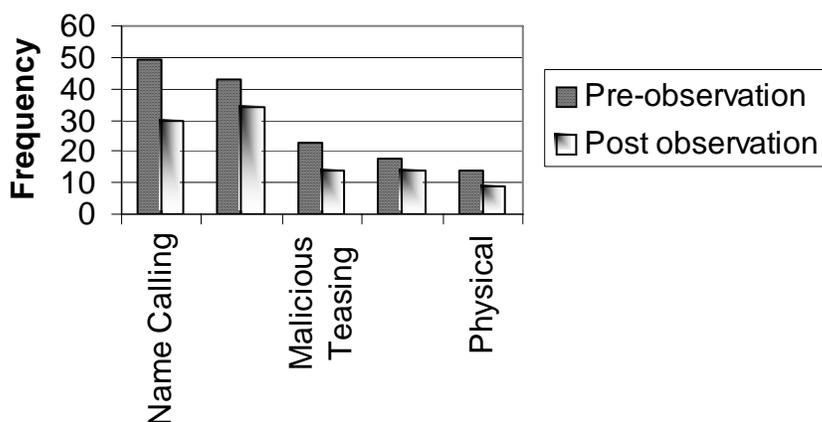


Figure 13: Changes in Bullying Behaviors

As summarized in Figure 14 above, researchers observed from pre- to post documentation that all bullying behaviors decreased. Name calling decreased by 30% (n=19) while malicious teasing and rumor/gossip both decreased by 14% (n=9).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on our findings we concluded that all bullying behaviors being observed decreased from our pre-documentation period to our post-documentation period. The most notable changes reflected in the post-documentation were a 30% (n=19) decrease in name-calling and a 14% (n=9) in malicious teasing. We feel that through the completion of our nine weeks of intervention the students being observed have a heightened awareness of what constitutes bullying and the different types of bullying behaviors that exist. We observed in both pre and post-documentation that most observed bullying behaviors involved verbal abuse rather than physical. This might be contribute to the fact that more females were being observed than males or that the controlled setting being observed, two homerooms/study halls and a health course, were a deterrent to any physical interaction. Another variable that could have contributed to more bullying behaviors being observed in pre-documentation was the time of year the students being observed. During pre-documentation, it was early in the school year, which at this time is generally a period when students compete for recognition among their peer group and also test the boundaries of their respective teachers. Both of these factors might contribute to an increase in observable bullying behaviors during pre-documentation. We also concluded that the time of year in which post-documentation occurred was as much a factor in decreasing the observable bullying behaviors as the various intervention activities in which the students participated. The two-week post-observation logs were

completed just before Christmas break. By this time students had a better understanding of what the teacher would tolerate, what their positions were among their peers, and were looking forward to Christmas break. No matter what variables contributed to the overall decrease in bullying behaviors, we felt our goal of increasing the awareness of bullying behavior in our respective classes was accomplished.

If a research study like this were to be repeated, the teacher researchers would not recommend using a teacher observation log as a documentation tool in the manner that we did. We feel that the observations were slightly inaccurate because of the time frame in which the observations were being logged. Observing two homerooms/study halls and a health class were not the appropriate settings to get an accurate account of the bullying incidents in our respective schools. If we had the opportunity to do this study over we would pick more unstructured settings to observe the various types of bullying behaviors. Setting such as the lunchroom, P.E. class, and passing periods in the hallways problem would have given us a more accurate account of the bullying problems that exist. On the other hand, the intervention strategies would have been much more difficult to implement in these settings.

Another change we considered was to have the students fill out the same anonymous student survey after the interventions as they were did in the beginning of the study. We feel this would have given us more data to analyze and evaluate which would have given us a more accurate account as to whether our interventions had any positive affect on our students when it came to dealing with bullying at school.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Anonymous Student Survey

Student Survey

What gender are you? Check one

Male Female

Read the following statements, and please check one:

1.) Have you ever been bullied?

Yes No

2.) Have you ever taken part in any bullying?

Yes No

3.) How often have you been bullied?

Daily
More than once a week
Once a week
More than once a month
Once a month
Once a quarter
Once a year
Never

4.) Where does the bullying mainly occur?

Classroom Internet
Hallway Bus/to and from school
Cafeteria Bathroom
P.E. Never

5.) Which types of bullying have you experienced? *Check all that apply*

<u>Verbal</u>	<u>Physical</u>
Online <input type="checkbox"/>	Pushing/shoving <input type="checkbox"/>
Jokes <input type="checkbox"/>	Small thefts (objects of minimal value) <input type="checkbox"/>
Teasing <input type="checkbox"/>	Great thefts (example: money, cell phones) <input type="checkbox"/>
Threats <input type="checkbox"/>	Aggressive behavior/fighting <input type="checkbox"/>
Insults <input type="checkbox"/>	Assault with a weapon <input type="checkbox"/>

Other types of bullying that you have experienced, please specify:

Appendix B: Anonymous Parent Survey

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian

I am currently enrolled in a graduate program through Saint Xavier University that requires me to complete an action research project in my classroom. The purpose of this survey is to get a better idea how often bullying occurs, where bullying occurs the most, which types of bullying behaviors are the most common, and how we can create a more secure and bully-free environment for your child. Filling out this survey is completely voluntary. If you choose to complete the survey for this study, the results will remain entirely anonymous; therefore, please do not write your name or your child's name on the survey. Simply fill out the parent survey and have your child return it to the appropriate teacher researcher. Your participation would be greatly appreciated! Please return by Friday, August 31, 2007.

Parent Survey

Read the following statements, and please check all that apply:

1.) Do you feel that there is a bullying problem in your child's school?

Yes No

2.) Where has your child mentioned that the majority of bullying incidents occur?

Classroom <input type="checkbox"/>	Internet <input type="checkbox"/>
Hallway <input type="checkbox"/>	Bus / to and from school <input type="checkbox"/>
Cafeteria <input type="checkbox"/>	Bathroom <input type="checkbox"/>
P.E. <input type="checkbox"/>	Never <input type="checkbox"/>

3.) Does your child ever complain about being bullied?

Yes No

4.) If your child is being bullied, how often do they say bullying is occurring?

Daily
 More than once a week
 Once a week
 More than once a month
 Once a month
 Once a quarter
 Once a year
 Never

5.) Have you notified school personnel about bullying? For example, a principal or teacher?

Yes No

Please share any additional comments you have about your child and or bullying:

Appendix D: Bullying "Hot Spots"

Worksheet: Making School Areas Safer

Names of Group Members:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

"Hot Spot" for Bullying: _____

Ideas To Make This Area Safer:

Ideas that involve students:

1. _____
2. _____

Ideas that involve teachers and staff:

1. _____
2. _____

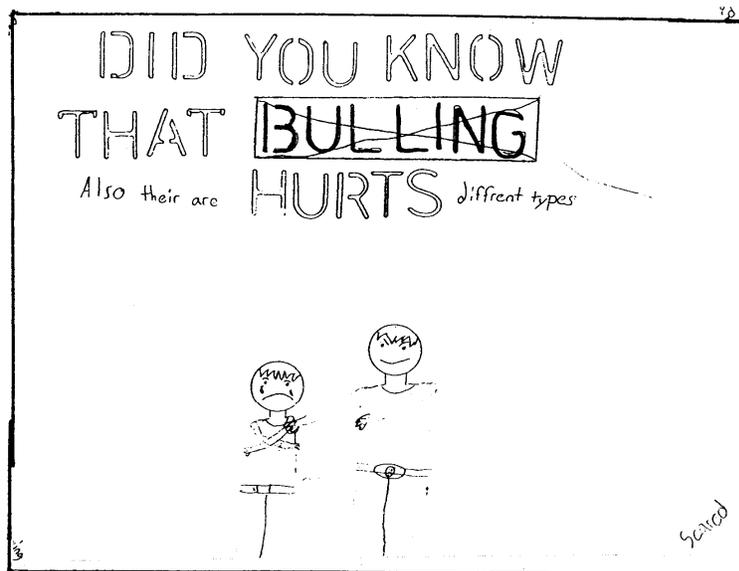
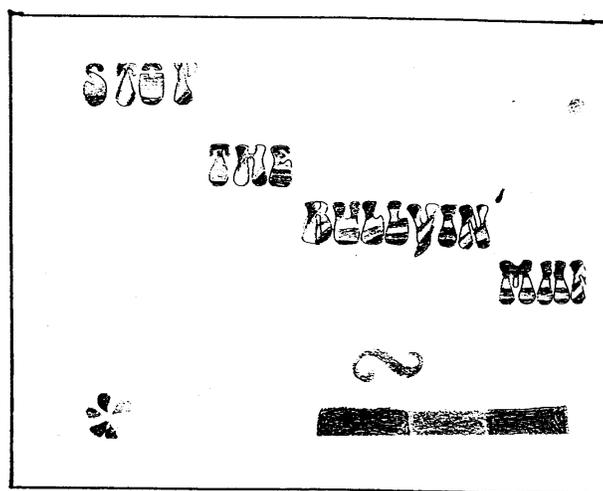
Ideas that involve students AND teachers/staff:

1. _____
2. _____

Ideas that involve changes to the area:

1. _____
2. _____

Appendix E: Anti-bullying Posters



Appendix F: My Week at School

Instructions: This worksheet is to be completed by a student on their own or with assistance from a trusted, teacher, parent, older sibling or adult. This questionnaire is intended to reveal how your child's relationships are going at school and provide information about any incidence of bullying. Please discuss these results with your child, teacher or parent.

My week at school looked like this...			
Date:		Student Name:	
ANOTHER STUDENT IN MY SCHOOL	NEVER	ONCE	THIS MANY TIMES
1. Helped me			
2. Called me a name I didn't like			
3. Offered to play with me during recess			
4. Told me to do something not kind, to someone else			
5. Asked me to give them money			
6. Pushed me down			
7. Was kind towards me			
8. Tried to scare me			
9. Said mean things about me to other students			
10. Told me they were not my friend any more			
11. Talked nicely to me			
12. Took something away from me			
13. Tried to hurt me			
14. Shared something with me			
15. Smiled at me			
16. Made fun of my clothes			
17. Told me a funny joke			
18. The class laughed at an answer I gave out loud			
19. Told me a lie			

Appendix G: Anti-bullying Rap/Poem

Anti-bullying Rap

V1 – Physical Bullying

Push, punch, pull hair, and shove.
 Which one to do man, how bout none de above. man...
 Acting tough brings you trouble, and fighting someone, makes it double.

You find yourself in the office, maybe someday in a jail.
 So why fail, make friends.
 Find your enemies and make amends.

Wants the point? Why physically harm another?
 If the Hulkster were here he'd say, "that's not cool brother."

So, Mr. H., do I have to be a friend, to him, "no", and what about her yo?
 "Again I say no" just keep hands to yourself and mind your own biz bro.

Physical bullying man, that just ain't sweet.
So twist your wrist, and stomp your feet, and break it down to the anti-bullying beat.

V2 – Verbal Bullying

Verse numero uno, dealt with too tough Tony, yeah you know.
 The bully that walks around like a kettle full of steam, the only reason being he or she has low self-esteem.

Let me introduce you-to a whole new crew, of bullies whose main objective is to basically talk poo.
 They talk smack to you, behind your back, yeah it's true. Even to your friends, man who knew?. Sometimes they get lippy, face-to-face, sometimes they yap on-line, it doesn't matter the place.
 It's simple, it's sad, an ugly disgrace, they make fun of people's appearance, their finances their race.

People like this man, feel bad about themselves, true; they want to put their misery all on you; but they'll get what's coming, they always do.

Verbal bullying – it's flat-out lame, so if someone calls you a name, reply with something mello, reply with with something tame. Tell them kids to

Twist their wrist, and stomp their feet, tell them to break it down to the antibullying beat!

Appendix H: Bullying Story

How Do You Spell Relief? It's not r-o-l-a-i-d-s!

In my life I have seen many bullying situations. From children to teens and even adults I have seen some of the worst cases of mental and emotional abuse go on. As a teenager I feared confrontation and hated to see these bullies work against helpless and timid people. When I was younger I wished I knew martial arts and had the courage and fortitude to stand up to these mean and angry people.

Should I stand up to these big, mean intimidators? No not me. There is always a chance that they would turn their attention my way. I couldn't risk that, or could I?

Several years ago one of my little skinny blond students, while riding the bus, would get picked on. She was a good student but a little shy. She may not have been a bruiser in sparring class but she always managed to hold her own but these were not the skills needed on the school bus. The verbal taunts and abuse would leave her in tears both on her way to school and on the way home. This fifth grader was growing more afraid of the bus ride each day. The bus driver couldn't or wouldn't address this issue. The principal attempted to help but was ineffective. The bullies were warned of punishment but just ignored the threat. Does this sound familiar?

Many schools, families and children live this same fear and situation on a daily basis. It has been going on for decades in every country in the world. I decided as this time that a solution was in order and I was lucky enough to have the answer.

In the television commercial the way to spell relief is Roloids. On the school bus relief was spelled t-r-a-n. I found out that one of my Black Belts named Bang Lee Tran was an eight grader on the very same bus. He was an average size boy with a pleasant disposition and a heart of gold. I asked if he would speak to the group that was the problem. We practiced what to say, what the responses might be and how to deal with those too. Within a few days all the kids that picked on Barbie had found new manners.

There were no threats of violence, detention or telling the driver or principal. There was just one strong willed and confident boy who was willing make a stand for someone that needed help. We must teach our children that it is their responsibility and their duty to stand up for what they think is right, protect the innocent and let people know that this behavior is not acceptable. Now is the time.

How do you spell relief? It's not R-O-L-A-I-D-S!

Paragraph 3:

Does this sound familiar? Have you ever felt a time where you were helpless?

Explain. *No*

Was there a time you felt the staff really wasn't helping? Explain.

Yes, when I had a problem with somebody and they would say just say a wux from the

Would you jump in and help someone else? Have you? Explain.

Yes, I have help someone they where getting picked on and I jumped in and helped them



Appendix I: Self-Esteem Quiz

Discovery Health Tools

Self Esteem Test - Abridged

10 questions, 3-7 min

1. Most people around me seem to be better off than I am.

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree

2. I like being myself and accept myself the way I am.

Almost never
Rarely
Sometimes
Quite often
Most of the time

3. Being myself is a guarantee that people will dislike me.

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree

4. I am afraid of being rejected by my friends.

Almost never
Rarely
Sometimes
Quite often
Most of the time

5. If I don't do as well as others, it means that I am an inferior person.

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree

6. I could disappear from the surface of the earth, and nobody would notice.

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Somewhat agree
Agree
Strongly agree

▼ HEALTH TOOLS

Animated Body Atlas

Calculators

Clinical Trials

E-cards

For Cancer

For Heart

For Lungs

Find a Doctor

Memory Booster

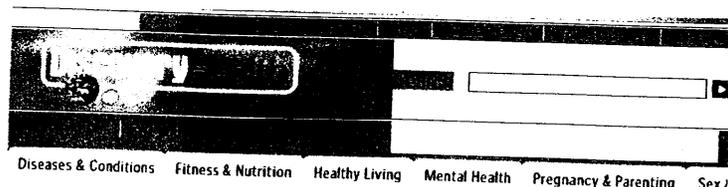
Personality Tests

Play Our Puzzles

Conversations

http://discoveryhealth.queendom.com/questions/self_esteem_abridged_1.html

Appendix J: Self-Esteem Analysis



Discovery Health Tools

- Animated Body Atlas
- Calculators
- Clinical Trials
- E-cards
- For Cancer
- For Heart
- For Lungs
- Find a Doctor
- Memory Booster
- Play Our Puzzles
- Conversations

About Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is essential to our ability to function in a healthy way. Without the foundation of a solid sense of self-worth, we are unable to take the risks and make the decisions necessary to lead a fulfilling, productive life. A low self-esteem corrodes our love lives, careers, family bonds, and, most importantly, our internal sense of well-being. A high self-esteem, on the other hand, brings the high level of confidence, problem-solving abilities, and assertiveness needed to achieve what Maslow called "self-actualization"- a continuous desire to fulfill potentials, to be all that you can be. People who have positive self-esteem have healthier, stronger relationships with others. A strong sense of self-worth actually creates a type of self-fulfilling prophecy: the more you like yourself, the more you begin to act in likable ways; the more you believe you are able to achieve something, the more likely it is that you will. And the good news is that we can all take steps to improve our self-esteem. After all, there's nothing more important than the relationship you have with yourself!

Results of your Self-Esteem Test

Self-Esteem Index

Your score = **88**

What does your score mean?

According to this test, you have very high self-esteem. You recognize your inner value and it shows in your personal life, relationships and career/school success. You exude confidence, which is very attractive, and believe enough in yourself to pursue things whole-heartedly. Such a healthy self-esteem allows you to "be yourself", handle stress effectively and maintain an overall sense of well-being. You should value and nurture this quality; it will get you far in life. Way to go!

http://discoveryhealth.queendom.com/cgi-bin/tests/short_test.cgi