

Understanding and Managing Bullying: The role of Parents/Caregivers and Whānau

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Overview

- What is bullying?
 - Prevalence?
 - Who does it effect?
 - Effects?
- What is helpful for prevention/reducing bullying?
 - Roles for parents, caregivers, whānau
 - Roles for police/justice + NetSafe
 - Roles for schools

Defining Bullying

- How we define Bullying affects how we understand the issues, effects, and responsibilities associated with it.
- Harassment vs Bullying?
 - Often conflated
 - Key differences

Harassment

Can be one-off

Does not require obvious power imbalance

Miss-labeled as bullying

Less likely to be associated with harm.

Higher Sensitivity (risk = False Positives)

Increased prevalence

Bullying

Repeated / Systematic (Olweus, 1993)

Requires power imbalance
(difficulty defending one's self)

Established research history

More likely to be associated with harm.

Lower sensitivity (risk = False Negatives)

Reduced prevalence

Forms of bullying/harassment

- Physical
- Verbal
- Social / Relational*
- Cyber*

(Craig, Pepler, & Blais, 2007; Miller, 2006)

Dimensions of bullying:

- Overt/Direct
- Covert/Indirect*

(Van der Wal, De Wit, & Hirasing, 2003)

Covert / Indirect Bullying/Harassment:

- Where the person(s) doing the bullying are hard to identify/know about:
 - (*Who* is spreading rumours?)
- Where the harassment itself is hard to identify/know about
 - (*Are/What* rumours are being spread about me?)
- Can result in social isolation/exclusion/overt harassment.
- Associated with more emotional distress, depression, anxiety than overt bullying in tweens/young teens.

Cyberbullying

Two most common forms of cyberbullying

- Sending mean, nasty, hurtful things to the target (including images)
- Spread rumours about the target

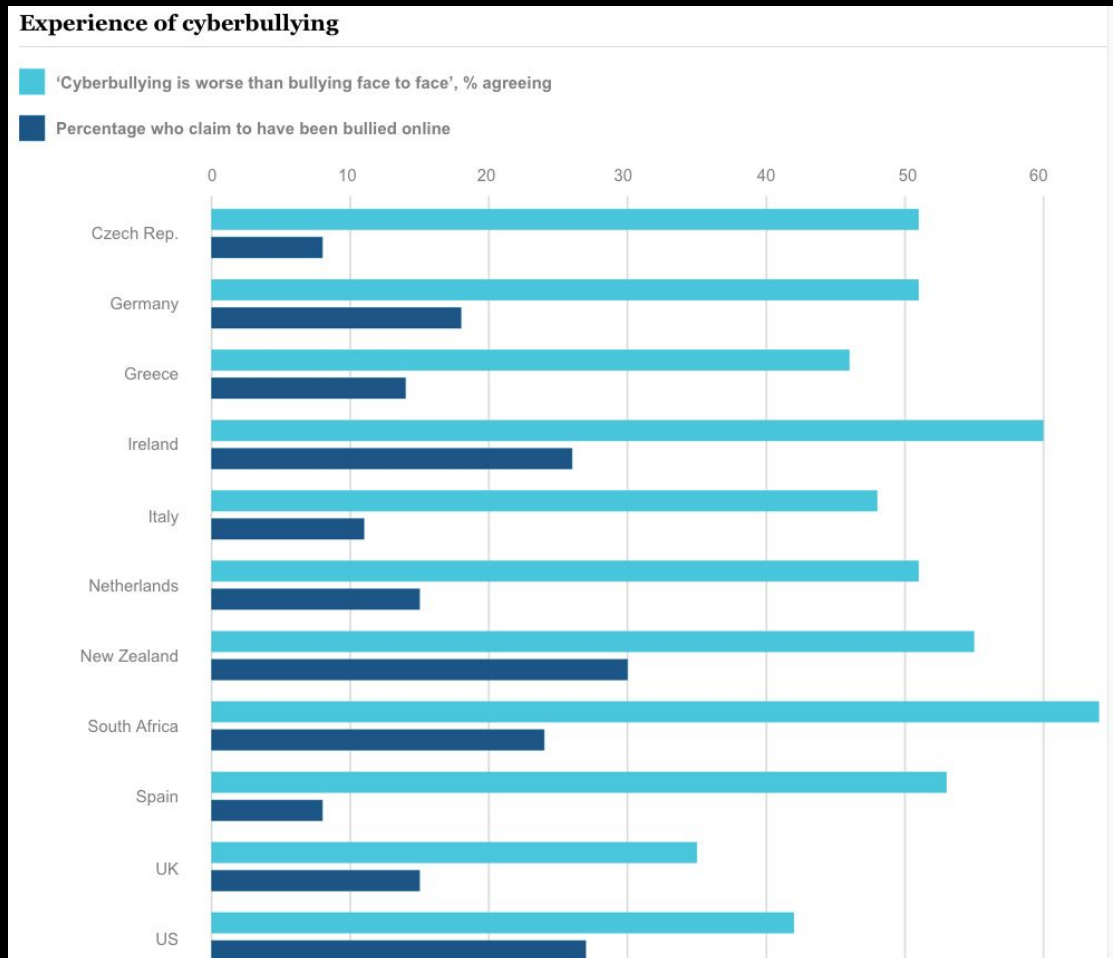
(Carson, 2014; Fenaughty, 2010; Harrison, 2013)

Other forms

- Threats (safety, secrecy), Videos (of them, about them), “Tagging” people (hot/not, gay, most likely to get pregnant, etc)

What we do know:

- Cross national studies:
 - NZ performs poorly (Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Arora, 2012; YouGov, 2015)



School Bullying

- TIMMS study (2011)
- Approximately 4,000 students
- Year 6 students (9 years old)
 - NZ ranked *appallingly*
 - 68% reported bullying
 - 31% “weekly”!!
 - (bottom of OECD)
- Year 10 students (14 years old)
 - Better (mid pack)
 - 45% reported bullying
- Did not include cyberbullying



Exhibit 6.11: Students Bullied at School

Reported by Students

Students were scored according to their responses to how often they were bullied. **Almost Never** had a score on the scale of at least 10.1, which was significantly higher than the other three behaviors “a few times a year,” on average. Students were also asked how often they bullied others. **Almost Never** was experiencing each of three of the six behaviors “once or twice a month” or more often.

Country	Almost Never	
	Percent of Students	Average Achievement
Armenia	80 (0.8)	459 (3.5)
Azerbaijan	75 (1.5)	483 (6.0)
Sweden	68 (1.0)	509 (2.1)
Georgia	66 (1.2)	464 (3.0)
Kazakhstan	64 (1.7)	503 (4.2)
Ireland	64 (1.3)	539 (2.7)
Croatia	61 (1.1)	497 (2.3)
Finland	61 (1.2)	549 (2.5)
Poland	61 (0.9)	487 (2.4)
Denmark	60 (1.1)	544 (2.4)
Serbia	57 (1.2)	523 (3.4)
Northern Ireland	57 (1.3)	571 (3.4)
Austria	53 (1.3)	513 (3.0)
Norway	53 (1.8)	502 (3.1)
Korea, Rep. of	53 (1.2)	608 (2.2)
Chinese Taipei	53 (1.3)	597 (2.1)
United States	51 (0.7)	549 (2.1)
Italy	51 (1.2)	514 (3.1)
Slovenia	50 (1.3)	520 (2.5)
Japan	50 (1.2)	588 (2.1)
Hong Kong SAR	50 (1.2)	608 (3.1)
Portugal	49 (1.4)	536 (4.0)
Germany	48 (1.2)	537 (2.7)
Lithuania	48 (1.3)	543 (3.0)
Romania	47 (1.8)	504 (5.9)
Slovak Republic	46 (1.1)	517 (3.4)
Czech Republic	46 (1.2)	519 (2.8)
Netherlands	46 (1.2)	543 (1.7)
Russian Federation	45 (1.4)	549 (4.3)
England	45 (1.3)	549 (4.2)
Spain	44 (1.3)	488 (3.1)
Yemen	42 (2.1)	260 (6.8)
Malta	42 (0.7)	507 (1.7)
Iran, Islamic Rep. of	41 (1.7)	431 (5.0)
Hungary	40 (1.1)	521 (5.6)
Singapore	39 (0.9)	618 (3.3)
Saudi Arabia	39 (1.7)	422 (5.6)
Tunisia	39 (1.4)	377 (4.8)
Belgium (Flemish)	39 (1.1)	556 (2.6)
Chile	38 (1.1)	478 (2.4)
Australia	38 (1.1)	525 (2.9)
Turkey	37 (0.9)	494 (3.8)
Kuwait	37 (1.5)	362 (3.4)
Morocco	35 (1.9)	354 (6.7)
United Arab Emirates	34 (0.8)	454 (2.8)
New Zealand	32 (1.0)	499 (3.4)
Bahrain	31 (1.1)	460 (3.9)
Oman	31 (1.2)	399 (3.3)
Qatar	30 (1.1)	441 (5.4)
Thailand	17 (1.2)	476 (5.9)
International Avg.	48 (0.2)	501 (0.5)

Negative Associations

- USEM < eHarassment < Bullying < Cyberbullying
- Even one-off eHarassment is associated with significant negative outcomes for some young people and is a good “canary in the mine”.
- eHarassment AND bullying in school is associated with the worst outcomes.

Why is Cyberbullying Associated with Increased Distress?

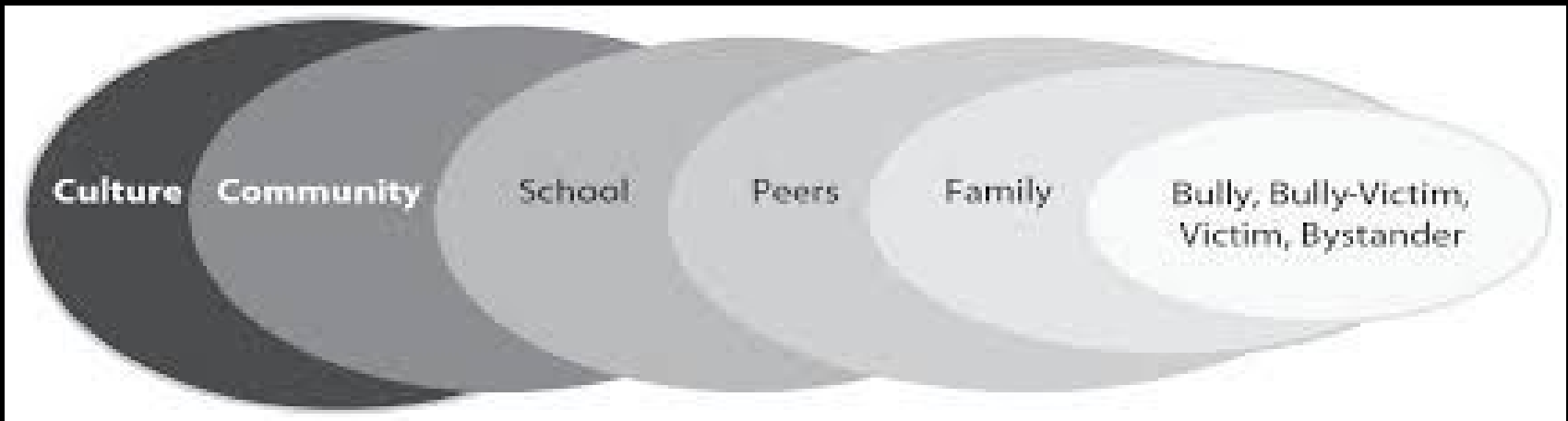
- 24/7 nature
- Enduring / “re-victimisation”
- Effective vector for rumour spreading/covert bullying.
 - Rich bullying content possible
 - Multiple channels
- Another venue for bullying
 - Emphasises the negative intent
 - Increased powerlessness?
 - Adults [perceived] as largely ineffective

Summary

- Bullying in secondary school is rare (6% per year)
- Bystanders are more common
- (e)Harassment is more common
- Not all students who are bullied/harassed experience negative outcomes
- The more times/channels a young person is targeted, the more likely they are to experience negative outcomes.

Socio-Ecological Model

Espelage and Swearer adapted Bronfenbrenner



Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

- Foster an open, caring relationship :-)
- Listen to how things are for your child
- Do what you can to prevent/manage it
 - Range of actions
- Do not presume that it will be horrific
- Do not presume that it won't be either

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

Prevention:

- Consider how children/young people are valued/accorded status in your family.
 - External measures/objectives - competitive (e.g., sports team, prizes, beauty, etc.) vs internal pro-social characteristics (e.g., perseverance, kindness, caring, curiosity, friendliness, empathy, etc.)

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

Prevention:

- Intervene in Family Violence; including sibling violence < reduce bullying production.

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

Prevention:

- Intervene when you are aware of peer-aggression in peer groups

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

Prevention:

- Talk about sexuality with children and young people
 - Multiple times!
 - Talk about sexual harassment, and eventually what is required in their peer group to be sexually attr/active/in relationship (sexting?)
 - Discuss how you will manage if things go wrong.

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

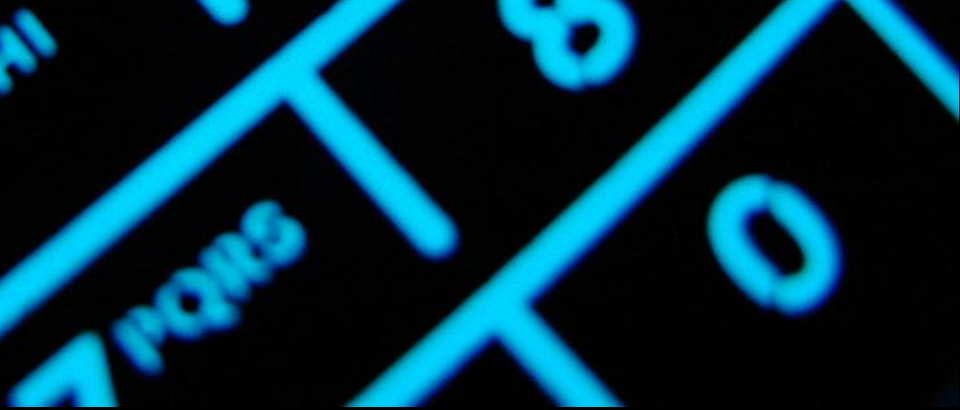
Prevention/Management:

- Foster an open relationship with your child
 - Depending on age, co-construct rules of conduct to help them be safe and enjoy the world
 - Discuss penalties
 - FAIL (First Attempt In Learning) is OK!
 - Make clear that your primary goal is to support them; And should something happen that is against the rules that has harmed them that you can be relied on to respond empathically.

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

Management:

- Make clear that you will not ban them from technology (key part of adolescent development)
- Congratulate them for sharing this with you!
- Depending on age share decision making about what to do following bullying
 - Powerlessness already an issue - be guided by them
 - Be open to how they are experiencing the issue
 - Collect evidence



Predictors of phone harassment resolution

↓ *Ignoring:

OR = .48

↑ *Adult help seeking
self efficacy:

OR = 1.41

Predictors of internet harassment resolution



*Adult help seeking
self efficacy:

OR = 1.63



*Other adult support:

OR = .26

Adult help seeking
self efficacy: 

Adult
  Support

Adult help seeking
self efficacy: 

- **We need to upskill as adults!**
- **We need to learn about bullying.**
- **We need to Learn about digital technologies.**

○ **Ask child to teach you** Adult

  Support

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

Prevention:

- Ask your school/board of trustees to explain how they are responding to the *Bullying prevention and response: A guide for schools* produced by the Ministry of Education?
 - Ask to review the school's Bullying policies.
 - Ask if the school is doing *PB4L* or *Kia Kaha*
- ALL SCHOOLS are legally obliged to provide a “safe and supportive learning environment”, quote “NAG - 5” if need be.

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

Management - Get Support!

- School-based bullying
 - Contact the person who your child has the most trust in at the school &
 - Contact the person who is in charge of discipline at the school (usually a Deputy Principal)
 - Explore how the school is going to address the issue with reference to *Bullying prevention and response: A guide for schools:*
<http://goo.gl/ROLz6p>

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

Management - Get Support!

- External Agencies - Especially when involving out-of-school issues.
 - Ring these with/before your child
 - *Youthline*
 - *NetSafe*
 - *Rape Prevention Education*
 - *Police*
 - Harmful Digital Communication Act (2015)

Harmful Digital Communications Act

A digital communication should not:

1. disclose sensitive personal facts about an individual.
2. be threatening, intimidating, or menacing.
3. be grossly offensive to a reasonable person in the position of the affected individual.
4. be indecent or obscene.
5. be used to harass an individual.
6. make a false allegation.
7. contain a matter that is published in breach of confidence.
8. incite or encourage anyone to send a message to an individual for the purpose of causing harm to the individual.
9. incite or encourage an individual to commit suicide.
10. denigrate an individual by reason of his or her colour, race, ethnic or national origins, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

Roles for Parents, Caregivers, Whānau

- Vote for political parties that prioritise social and emotional learning vs a narrow curricular focus on literacy and numeracy!
 - We get what we wish for!
 - Social/emotional league tables??

Positive Effects of Bullying on *Some* Families - Harcourt, Green & Bowden (2015)

- Children developed greater understanding of how their family would support them
- Child closer to family “my daughter realised that we were really in her corner, and she started to open up to us again” .
- Sibling relationships improved (support, protect, reassure etc.)
- Strengthen family relationships overall: “if anything we pulled together to get [our son] through this tough time...you could say it drew us close to fight a common enemy.”

Positive Effects of Bullying on Families - Harcourt, Green & Bowden (2015)

- Opportunity to respond to challenge and develop resiliency in children “we were worried for a while there, but she still sings in the shower.
- Even stronger connection to the school after positive resolution.

Roles for Schools

- Work through the Detering Bullying Guidelines
- Implement “whole school approaches” as indicated in the guidelines
- Ensure that LGBTIQ+ and students with disabilities are supported
- Get excited and engaged in involving young people as agents of change in this
 - Share power with students
 - Sticks n’ Stones Otago: <http://www.sticksnstones.co.nz/our-project/>

People at school ALWAYS take action following awareness of bullying

- Only 35.6% of students reported that teachers always take action (n = 8,416) following bullying.
- Of those bullied at school weekly, 20% said teachers always took action following being alerted to bullying.
- Of those bullied at school weekly 11% said fellow students always took action following the bullying

Conclusions

- Bullying + Cyberbullying are prevalent, undesirable, yet an opportunity to develop stronger relationships with your children.
- Developing and maintaining a warm, open relationship with your child is critical to support them.
- You have power to support your schools to respond appropriately to bullying and to prevent bullying.

Ngā mihi nui | Thank you very much

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