



August 8, 2018

# How Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Can Help Prevent Bullying



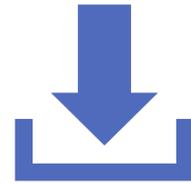
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# Presenters



**Tracy Waasdorp**



**Catherine  
Bradshaw**

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING AND BULLYING PREVENTION

August 8, 2018

# What does the research say about bullying?

Tracy Evian Waasdorp, PhD

*Johns Hopkins School of Public Health &  
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia*

# Definition of Bullying

- *When someone is “exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons. Bullying often occurs in situations where there is a power or status difference.”*

# Bullying

- Bullying 3 defining features:
  - ▣ Intentional
  - ▣ Repeated
  - ▣ Power differential (e.g., Olweus, 1993)
- Approximately half of all students have been bullied at some point during their time at school (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2008).
  - ▣ Between 30% to 40% of school-aged youth moderate or frequent involvement (Bradshaw et al., 2007; Nansel et al., 2001; Zhang et al., 2016; Waasdorp et al., 2017)

# Research on Bullying

- Seen as early as preschool
  - ▣ Overt in early years, more covert over time (Coyne & Ostrov, 2018)
- Unstructured school contexts
  - ▣ Playground, lunchroom, hallways, school buses
- Very complex, systemic problem
- Robust predictor of negative short and long term effects (e.g., Bogart et al., 2014; Wolke et al., 2013; Kim, et al., 2011).
- Creates a climate of fear
  - ▣ For all students, not just for the victims (e.g., Waasdorp et al., 2011)
  - ▣ Norms regarding bullying even impact bystander responses (e.g., Lindstrom Johnson et al., 2013; Peets et al., 2015)

# Roles in Bullying

- Bully
- Victim
- Bully/Victims
- Bystanders
  - ▣ Passive Bystander Behaviors
    - Avoid or refuse to intervene
      - Can be seen as permission to bully
  - ▣ Active Bystander Behaviors
    - Assist or reinforce the bully
      - Ex: Laughing
    - Stop the bully/comfort the victim

# Subtypes of Bullying

## □ Overt

- Hitting, kicking, pushing
- Verbal taunts, name calling, put-downs
- Threatening others
- Distinct beginning and end
- Boys tend to display anger in this manner

# Subtypes of Bullying (cont)

- Relational/Social
  - Manipulation of social relationships and/or social standing
  - Characteristics
    - Telling lies & starting false rumors
    - Excluding others
    - Threatening to withdraw friendship
  - Both boys and girls use this form
    - Girls tend to display anger in this manner over overt forms
  - May be difficult to identify,
    - Not usually as disruptive to the teacher

# A New Medium for Bullying

- Cyberbullying
  - ▣ Use of the internet, cell phones, or other technology to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person.
    - Repeated over time?
  - ▣ Most youth do not report to adults
    - Fear of losing access and freedom using the technology
  - ▣ Easier for bullies to underestimate the harm they are causing the victim
  - ▣ Small proportion of youth experience only cyberbullying
    - Often experience in-person forms simultaneously
    - Of victims, most risk for internalizing and externalizing symptoms

# At Risk for Bullying

- “Being different”
  - ▣ Being overweight or obese
  - ▣ LGBT
  - ▣ Having cognitive impairment or physical disabilities
  - ▣ Health problems (e.g. Asthma)
- Those with depressive symptoms, anxiety, ADHD
  - ▣ Poor emotion regulation skills, impulsivity
- Children who bully others (bully-victims)
- Children with poor friendship quality are more likely to be victimized.

# Identifying Victims

- More likely to report
  - Psychosocial problems
    - Worried about going to school
    - Wanting to avoid taking the bus or eating in the cafeteria
  - Psychosomatic symptoms
    - Repeated health complaints
      - sore throats, headaches, nausea, poor appetite
    - Sleep troubles
- Higher likelihood of making up illnesses to stay home during school days

# Is Bullying on the Rise?

- Finkelhor (2013)
  - ▣ Summarized bullying trends from five U.S. national surveys,
  - ▣ Bullying has declined since the 1990s, with a less steep decline since 2007
- Indicators of School Crime and Safety (Zhang et al., 2016)
  - ▣ In 2013, 22% of youth ages 12-18 had been bullied, down from 28% in 2012.
- Waasdorp, Pas, Zablotsky, & Bradshaw (2017)
  - ▣ Examined prevalence between 2005 and 2014 (4<sup>th</sup>- 12<sup>th</sup> graders)
  - ▣ Decrease in bullying and victimization,
    - for in-person forms (i.e., physical, verbal, relational) and cyberbullying
  - ▣ Increase in the perceptions that adults do enough to stop bullying and students' feelings of safety

# How do we prevent bullying?

Catherine Bradshaw, PhD

*University of Virginia &*

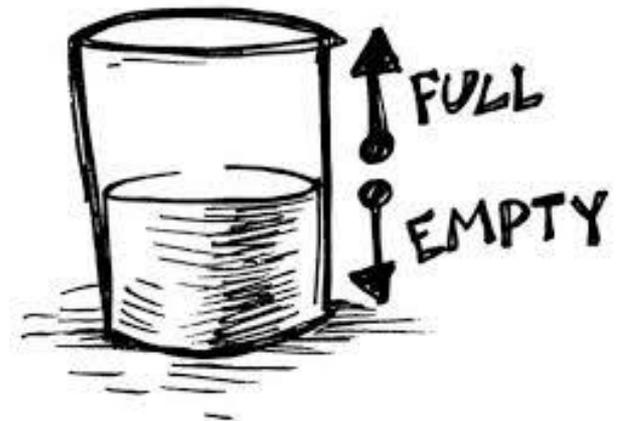
*Johns Hopkins School of Public Health*

Michael Sulkowski, PhD

*University of Arizona*

# Do bullying prevention programs work?

- Some argue...
  - ▣ There are relatively few effective universal “bullying” prevention programs (Merrell et al., 2008; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011; National Academies; Bradshaw, 2016)
    - 23% decrease in perpetration of bullying
    - 20% decrease in victimization



# What works in school-based prevention of bullying and other aggressive behavior problems?



- Teach *social-emotional skills* directly in real context
- Foster *respectful, supportive relations* among students, school staff, & parents
- Support & *reinforce positive* academic & social behavior through comprehensive systems
- Invest in *multiyear, multi-component* programs
- Combine *classroom, school- & community-wide* efforts
- *Universal prevention* efforts

# Recommended Core Components

- Training for all school staff
- Activities for students
- Parent activities
- Multi-component programs
- School-wide
- Continuum of positive supports
- Data-driven process



(HRSA; Limber; Bradshaw, 2013; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011)

# Multi-tiered Prevention Approaches

## □ Three-tier public health model/ Multi-tiered System of Supports

- (WWW.PBIS.org; Bradshaw & Waasdorp 2011)

### **Indicated (1-5%):**

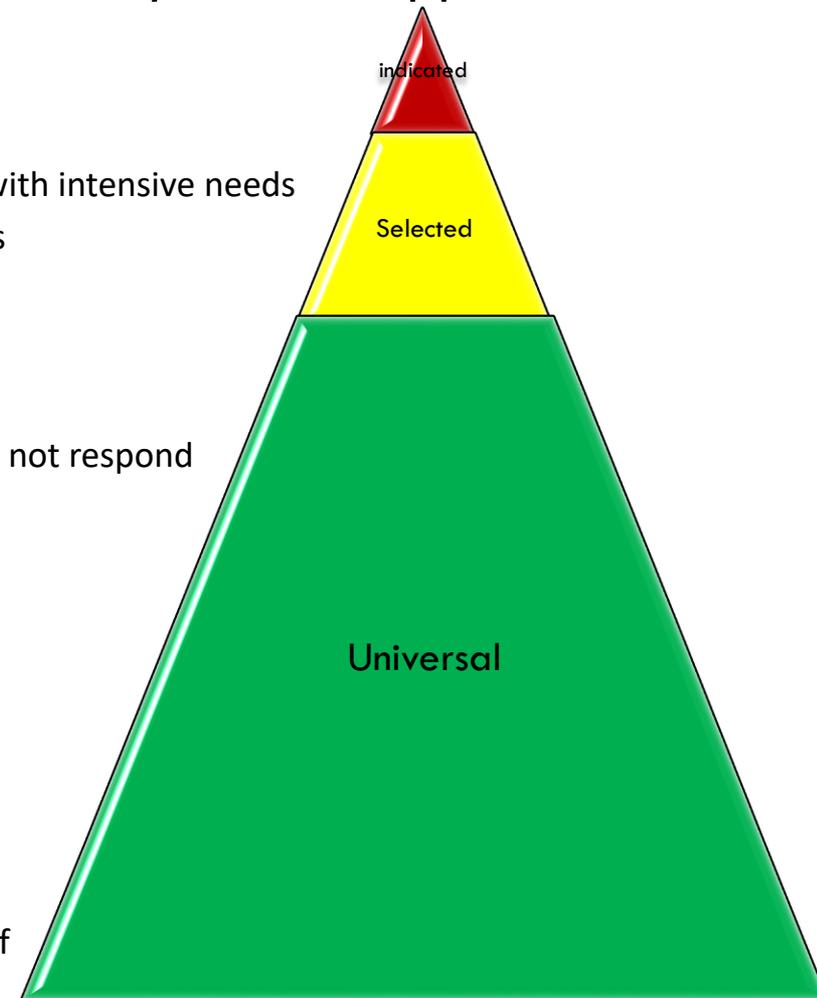
Strategies to address needs of individual students with intensive needs  
High intensity, durable strategies

### **Selected (5-10%):**

Targeted, Group Interventions  
Small, needs-based groups for at-risk students who do not respond to universal strategies  
High efficiency/ Rapid response

### **Universal Interventions (80-90%)**

Core Curriculum  
All settings, all students  
Preventive, proactive  
School-wide or classroom systems for ALL students and staff



# Reducing Bullying and Rejection

- School-wide efforts, which involve all school staff, and are implemented across all school settings show the most promise (Espelage & Swearer, 2004; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011)



# The Broader Issue

- 40-60% of students reported feeling chronically disengaged by the time they reach high school (Klem & Connell, 2004)
- Only 29% of students feel like school is a caring or emotionally-supportive learning environment
  - ▣ Less than half (29%-45%) report that they had developed social-emotional competencies (Benson, 2006).

# Links to Bullying

- Disengaged students and students who lack social-emotional competencies are more likely to:
  - Bully
  - Be victimized
  - Both bully and be victimized
- They are also less likely to:
  - Be a proactive bystander
  - Provide a victimized peer with social support
  - Report bullying to an adult who can help

# Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2005)

**Manage emotions and behaviors to achieve one's goals**

**Recognize one's emotions, values, strengths, and limitations**



**Show understanding and empathy for others**

**Make ethical, constructive choices about personal and social behavior**

**Form positive relationships, work in teams, deal effectively with conflict**

# CASEL Model of SEL in Context



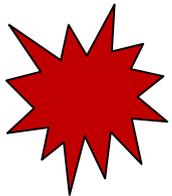
# Near-term Impacts of SEL

- Meta-analysis of 213 school-based, universal SEL programs (270,034 kindergarten through high school students)
  - ▣ Significantly improved SEL skills, attitudes about school, aggressive behavior, and academic performance (11-percentile-point gain)
    - Effective at all educational levels assessed (e.g., elementary, middle, high school)
    - Across the different types of communities in which they were implemented (e.g., urban, suburban, rural)

(Durlak et al., 2011; *Child Development*)

# Long-term Impacts of SEL

- Meta-analysis of 82 different SEL programs (over 97,000 students) from K to high school
  - effects assessed at least 6 months and up to 18 years after programs ended
  - 3.5 years later, SEL students' academic performance was an average 13 percentile points higher
  - other follow-up periods: conduct problems, emotional distress, and drug use were all significantly lower for SEL students
  - effects similar regardless of students' race, socioeconomic background, or school location



(Taylor et al., 2017; *Child Development*)

# How does SEL programming relate to bullying prevention?

- Has been found to reduce:
  - ▣ Internalizing and externalizing problems
  - ▣ Deficits in empathy
  - ▣ Perspective taking limitations
  - ▣ Maladaptive coping
  - ▣ Problem-solving skill deficits
  - ▣ Aggressive behavior at school
- Has been found to increase:
  - ▣ Emotional well-being
  - ▣ Academic/school performance
  - ▣ School climate
  - ▣ Resilience

(Bird & Sultmann, 2010; Caldarella, Christensen, Kramer, & Kronmiller, 2009; Wilson & Lipsey, 2007)

(Greenberg et al., 2003; Guerra & Bradshaw, 2008; Payton et al., 2008; Zins et al., 2004)

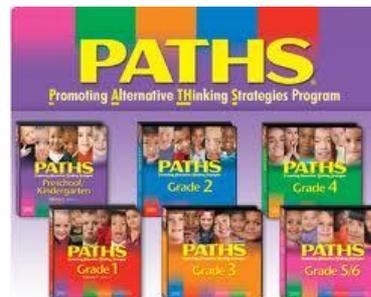


# Research-based Prevention Programs

- Universal school-wide prevention models that prevent violence and disruptive behaviors may also impact bullying
  - ▣ Social-emotional learning programs
  - ▣ Classroom management



## Coping Power



# Role of Families & Communities

## □ Involving families and communities

### ▣ Parents may need training in

- How to talk with their children about bullying (Lindstrom Johnson et al., in press)
  - Promote disclosure
  - Foster coping skills
  - Modeling in the home
- How to get actively involved in school-based bullying prevention efforts (Waasdorp et al.)

### ▣ Raise community-wide awareness

- Social marketing campaigns encouraging all youth and adults to intervene

# Intervening with Cyberbullying

## □ Schools

- ▣ Causes a disruption at school
- ▣ Often occurs in person as well
- ▣ May not be able to administer consequences if outside the school day
- ▣ Programs already in place for reducing bullying can impact cyberbullying

## □ Parents

- ▣ Students may not want to tell because they fear losing privileges
- ▣ General monitoring and strong parent/child relationships are most effective at reducing incidences of cyberbullying (Casas et al., 2011)
  - Need more than 1 discussion
- ▣ Save the evidence
  - Contact school (is any bullying occurring at school?)
  - Contact police (threats of physical harm, stalking, harassment, etc.)

# Role of the Medical Community



- Early screening and identification
- Prevention programming for children and families
- ED based prevention programming
- Trauma-informed approaches
- Training medical professionals
- School-based health staff (e.g., school nurses)



# Things to Consider Regarding Bullying Prevention

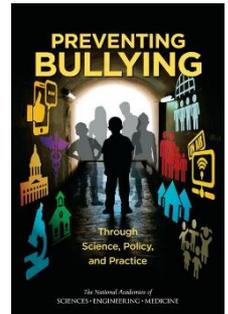
- All states have passed laws related to bullying prevention which encourage the use of programs...
- Some responses do not work or may be damaging:
  - ▣ Zero-tolerance not effective, may deter reporting
  - ▣ Little evidence that one-day assemblies are sufficient
  - ▣ Peer-led groups
  - ▣ Grouping students who bully together
  - ▣ Conflict resolution (peer mediation between bully & victim)

# Change the Script . . .

- From stopping bullying to preventing bullying
  - ▣ Need safe, supportive, and healthy learning communities
  - ▣ Promotion of social and emotional skills
  - ▣ A district, school, and classroom approach
  - ▣ Everyone is a stakeholder

# Resources

- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
  - <https://casel.org/>
- Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
  - [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)
- Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention
  - [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)
- National Academies Report “[Preventing Bullying Through Science, Policy, and Practice](https://www.nap.edu/catalog/23482/preventing-bullying-through-science-policy-and-practice)”
  - <https://www.nap.edu/catalog/23482/preventing-bullying-through-science-policy-and-practice>



# Contact Information

- Tracy Waasdorp, PhD
  - [waasdorpt@email.chop.edu](mailto:waasdorpt@email.chop.edu)
- Catherine Bradshaw, PhD
  - [Catherine.Bradshaw@virginia.edu](mailto:Catherine.Bradshaw@virginia.edu)
- Michael Sulkowski, PhD
  - [sulkowski@email.arizona.edu](mailto:sulkowski@email.arizona.edu)

# Questions?



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