

Annotated Bibliography of Girls' Relational Aggression and Cyber Bullying

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1. Middle Childhood Development

In this book, Zembar and Blume discuss different types of aggression that occur in middle childhood. The three different types of aggression are physical, verbal and relational. Physical aggression typically involves violence to cause physical harm to someone. Verbal aggression implies using words to psychologically hurt a person. Relational aggression involves excluding others to reject them socially. During the elementary school years, it is apparent that girls tend to use verbal and relational aggression while boys usually engage in physical aggression. It is uncommon for girls to engage in physical aggression and if they do, their behavior is seen as unusual. One of the most prevalent forms that aggression can take is bullying. This can involve frequent acts of physical, verbal, or relational aggression that are directed at a particular person. A recent and growing trend in bullying involves the use of the Internet to harass a person through e-mails, "blogs" or networking sites. This is known as "cyberbullying". Cyberbullying can involve spreading rumors, posting photographs and other malicious content.

2. School Bullying Among Adolescents in the United States: Physical, Verbal, Relational, and Cyber.

School bullying is a problematic behavior that has been shown to affect school achievement, pro-social skills, and psychological wellbeing for both perpetrators and victims. Bullying is defined as a specific form of aggression, which is repeated and involves the status of and victims (Wang, Iannotti, & Nansel, 2009). There are two types of bullying: direct and indirect. The direct form of bullying involves in physical and verbal bullying, such as: pushing, kicking, hitting, teasing in a hurtful way, and name-calling. The indirect form of bully involves spreading rumors, and social exclusion. Studies have shown that boys are more involved in direct

bullying and girls are more involved in indirect bullying. Additionally, this study had shown that cell phones and computers are new way for school-age children to bully one another. Cyber bullying is defined as a form of aggression that occurs through the computer, such as; instant messaging, e-mail, and through cell phones by text messaging. Studies have indicated that having positive parental guidance, that show warmth and support, can prevent adolescents from being involved in cyber and school bullying. This study shows that 6th graders are more involved in cyber bullying than 7th or 8th graders. When compared to 9th and 10th graders; 6th graders still had a higher cyber-bullying rate than any other grade level. The methods of the study used self-report data to collect information on bullying; this was collected from 7,508 adolescents in the United States from 2005/2006 by HBSC (Health Behavior in Schoolaged Children). A three-stage (school districts, schools and school classes) stratified design was used to measure a sample of Hispanic and African-American students. The three-stage design involved collecting data from school districts, schools and school classes in order to obtain and represent a national sample with controllable errors. An anonymous self-report questionnaire was distributed and collected in class from grades 6 – 10; therefore only 7,508 students completed the questionnaire. Data was collected from 230 schools, of which 9,016 were HBSC eligible participants. Gender was measured between males or females and grade level was measured only in grades 6 – 10 (five levels). Race/ethnicity was measured in four groups and FAS was used to measure SES (socioeconomic status). The Olweus Bully/Victim questionnaire was used to measure verbal, physical and relational forms of bullying with two items added in order to obtain information regarding cyber bullying. Each questionnaire had four categories: victim, bully, bull-victim and not involved. A Parental Bonding Instrument was used to measure the four types of parental support: help them when needed, loving, understanding, and making

them feel better when down. Results were indicative of lower parental support and higher parental support. Additionally, the number of friends was measured with the result of two categories: fewer than three friends or three or more friends. In the results, African-American adolescents were more involved in bullying physically, cyber and verbally but they were less likely to be victims of bullying. Rates of having been bullied or being bullied at school for the past two months only once, were 51.4% socially, 13.6% electronically, 53.6% verbally, and 20.8% physically. Additionally, boys were involved more in verbal and physical bullying and were more prone to being cyber bullied. Girls were involved in a relational bullying and were more likely to be victims of cyber bullying. All four forms of bullying could have been prevented with higher parental support. More bullying was associated with having more friends and they were less likely to be victimized verbally, physically or relationally. Having a higher parental support can help adolescents from being involved in all four forms of bullying. However, friends are associated differently in school bullying and cyber bullying. Cyber bullying is another form of school bullying, and higher parental support will help decrease the chance of being a victim or participants of school bullying and/or cyber bullying.

3. Cyberbullying in Schools

In this empirical research study, the amount and type of bullying that occurs in middle schools is examined, as well as the effects of gender. It primarily focuses on gender differences in respect to cyberbullying experiences and secondarily focuses on student's perception of school climate. In this modernized era technology is becoming more and more prevalent. Even schools are starting to incorporate the use of computers into their teaching methods and it has become part of the curriculum. Along with the benefits of technology come the possible risks and problems associated with middle school children. Access to new technology creates another

mechanism that can be used to harm others through bullying; this is referred to as cyber bullying. Electronic communication can be used for cyberbullying through e-mails, networking sites, photographs, cell phones and other forms of communication.

The participants in this study were randomly selected from three middle schools in Canada. A questionnaire was completed by 264 students who were in grades 7-9. There were 130 males and 134 females. The ethnicity breakdown was 75.4% white, 6.4% Asian, and 18% Black, Hispanic or other groups. The survey provided included questions about student demographics and their experiences related to cyberbullying. They were also asked how often they used computers. The data was analyzed by a statistical package.

The results indicated that more than 34% of students have bullied others traditionally (not using technology), and 17% had used cyberbullying. Almost 50% of the students reported being bully victims and about 25% had been cyberbullied. Taking gender into consideration, 22% of males and 12% of females were cyberbully perpetrators. Additionally, 25% of males and 25.6% of females reported that they were victims of cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is an increasing issue among middle school students and adolescents today that needs to be addressed. Teachers, families and communities can help stop this problem by joining together to make an effort to educate people about bullying. More research should also be done to analyze this kind of bullying at other ages such as elementary and high school students. Hopefully people will be aware of this problem and will take it seriously.

4. Teens and Mobile Phones

In this empirical study, found on Dr. Sax's website, researchers desired to determine the relationship between U.S. youth today and their mobile phones to better understand how friendships and family relationships are influenced, positively or negatively from the use of such

a device. The study focused on how many youths actually own mobile phones, how much time they spend on them, how often they use their mobile phones, and with whom. A random digit-dial telephone survey was conducted nationwide by the Pew Internet Project from the months of June through September 2009. The sample included 800 teenagers, ages 12-17, and a parent or guardian of the child. The guardian/parent was interviewed separately from the teen. Overall, the participants were 50.9% female and 49.1% male. The age range for the participants was from 12-17 and there were 16.7% from each group each group. Ethnicities were 63.6% White, 11.9% Black, 18.1% Hispanic, and 6.3% other.

Results showed that the majority of American teens favor the mobile phone as their primary means of communication. Some 75% of 12-17 year-olds now own cell phones and 88% of those teen cell phone users use text messaging. With all the new features available currently, cell phones have become more than just a device for calling and texting and are now multimedia recording devices and pocket-seized computers with Internet connections. The most popular features include listening to music and taking and sharing pictures. These pictures are not always innocent. In fact, 4% of teens have used text messaging as the means for sending sexually suggestive nude or partially nude images of themselves to someone else. Furthermore, girls are more likely to utilize their mobile phones than boys and they are more likely to text for social reasons, privately, and about schoolwork.

5. The Role of School Psychologists in the Assessment, Prevention, and Intervention of Cyber Bullying

In this journal article, Diamanduros, Downs, and Jenkins discussed an effective prevention plan regarding cyberbullying. An important person in the prevention program is the school psychologist. The first step is for the school psychologist to develop a prevention plan for

anti-cyberbullying that will coordinate throughout the whole district. This is important because it will be a more effective plan if students receive consistent anti-cyberbullying training at each grade level in each school. The school psychologist, counselors, and teachers will form a committee to develop a prevention plan. All of the committee members will be knowledgeable on cyberbullying.

The prevention plan will involve students, parents, and teachers. Students will participate in a mentoring program. Older students will have the opportunity to inform younger students about cyberbullying and appropriate use of the Internet. This is important for the prevention plan because it will encourage the students to be active in preventing cyberbullying. A second important prevention factor for students is role-playing in classrooms. Having children act out a situation will teach them how to respond to cyberbullying. Teachers are an important part of role-playing because they will need to be educated on how to facilitate the discussion during each role-play scenario.

The prevention program will include parents by educating them on cyberbullying. The school will provide resources for the parents to use while teaching their children about cyberbullying. They will be encouraged to keep home computers in a common area as well as teach their children about safety and respect while online. Parents will hold a discussion about what cyberbullying is as well as the importance of talking to an adult. After the discussion, it is important for the parent and child to sign a contract stating the appropriate behavior that will be used while on the computer.

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