FEATURED INTERVIEW

Cyberbullying and Its Relationship to Other Forms of Violence: The Risks and Dangers of Polyvictimization

Ernest N. Jouriles, PhD

Ernest N. Jouriles, PhD, is a Dedman Family Distinguished Professor in the Department of Psychology at Southern Methodist University. His research addresses violence in adolescent romantic relationships and the development of intervention programs to prevent such violence. His research also examines children's exposure to interparental conflict and violence, and interventions to help children in violent families.

Kelli S. Sargent, BA

Kelli S. Sargent, BA, is a clinical psychology doctoral student in the Department of Psychology at Southern Methodist University. Her research focuses on intervention evaluation, specifically targeting violence prevention among adolescents and young adults. Her research interests also include adolescent risk factors that render teens more susceptible to negative consequences of violence and adverse experiences.

In This Issue

This issue of *Joining Forces Joining Families* (*JFJF*) features an interview with Ernest Jouriles, PhD, and Kelli Sargent, BA, on the perpetration of and effects on victims of bullying with an emphasis on cyberbullying. We provide a brief review of traditional bullying, cyberbullying, and recent research on risks and benefits of digital technologies that are often used by children and adolescents. In our regular research methods article, we describe differences in cross-sectional and longitudinal research studies. We also describe the longitudinal study on cybervictimization conducted by Ms. Sargent and colleagues. Websites of interest lists useful online resources for families, counselors, educators, and healthcare providers on violence prevention and healthy relationships.

CONTENTS

Dr. McCarroll: Bullying is a complex form of interpersonal violence that includes perpetration and victimization. Your research has investigated traditional bullying as well as cyberbullying, which occur through electronic media. What are the similarities and differences in these two?

Dr. Jouriles: Cyberbullying is not that different from other forms of violence, but it is a different mechanism or vehicle by which to deliver the violence. In some ways, it is like what we have been studying and dealing with for years as an act of violence. It might fall under emotional violence; it might fall under stalking. However, the perpetration of cyberbullying does things that cannot be done with face-to-face violence, and the effects can be longer lasting. Let's say you post something on

The perpetration of cyberbullying does things that cannot be done with face-to-face violence, and the effects can be longer lasting.

social media such as a harassing message or a picture. It is not just one act, but also one that can be distributed among many people. You are not just delivering it to an intended victim, but you are letting everyone know that this is your thought toward this intended victim. The effects of cyberbullying may be comparable to a rumor that can be gradually spread to many, many different individuals.

Ms. Sargent: There are two components to consider. First, there is the permanence aspect that makes repeated victimization possible. Second, it can be quickly passed along to many other students. It is not like the note in the classroom.

Dr. Jouriles: The perpetrator can also get at the intended victim by threatening to show a photo or other embarrassing material. This can be devastating to certain age groups, like adolescents.

Dr. McCarroll: They may also be able to disguise it to make it look like someone else is the perpetrator.

Ms. Sargent: That is catphishing - the act of impersonating another person and using emotional manipulation in order to extort money or sexually explicit pictures under the guise of being someone else. That opens up the field to

a whole array of other problematic actions that the perpetrator can undertake against potential victims.

Dr. Jouriles: Are the effects more harmful if a victim knows their perpetrator or if the perpetrator is unknown? In addition, the perpetrator is not always aware of who is affected.

Dr. McCarroll: What do you teach kids about how to protect themselves from being victimized in these and other potentially harmful situations?

Ms. Sargent: The field absolutely needs more evidence-based prevention and intervention efforts addressing both perpetration and victimization. With cyberbullying, we are kind of shooting in the dark at this point. But, given how similar it can be to everyday in-person bullying, a lot of ongoing classroom-based or home-based prevention efforts and interventions can be tweaked to apply to cyberbullying. Some of these ongoing efforts to prevent perpetration of traditional bullying are relevant to cyberbullying. Examples are working on interpersonal characteristics like empathy-building as well as promoting individual skills for adolescents like self-regulation, anger management, not blowing up when there are heated emotions, and not jumping straight to the insults or the harassment. A lot of how you interact with your peers depends on how you interact at home. So, when there is family violence at home, or hostile parent-child interactions, bullying is modeled. That environment is a training ground for how they interact with their peers and it is subsequently reinforced outside of the home environment.

Dr. McCarroll: So, you are talking about addressing those issues in the home as well as in the school?

Ms. Sargent: Yes, and focusing on promoting open communication between parents and children so there is not this sudden, "Oh, no! Let's shut down the kid's Facebook." Rather than taking it away, teach them, "You can come to us with anything and we are here for you and we can support you," and making warm communication a very common experience for adolescents.

Dr. McCarroll: You would think that is better if it comes from the home.

Dr. Jouriles: Not necessarily. It is better if it comes from multiple sources, the home as well

Some interventions for adolescents that are relevant to the perpetration of cyberbullying involve working on interpersonal characteristics like empathy-building, promoting individual skills like self-regulation, anger management, and not blowing up and jumping straight to the insults or the harassment.

as from peers. Unfortunately, with teens, parents lose a little bit of credibility with certain topics like this. So, getting it from peers and from websites is going to be important. If we just relied on the parents, even if the parents are doing a great job, they just may not have as much of an effect.

We could do more community-wide interventions that try to change attitudes about the acceptability of this kind of behavior, by going beyond who are the perpetrators and who are the victims. This is one of the keys to a multi-pronged approach, particularly in a school environment or even in the military.

Dr. McCarroll: Maybe how people handle their relationships is the larger issue.

Dr. Jouriles: One example is how people, and not just adolescents, handle the breakup of a relationship. Cyber technology can be used as a way to stalk or monitor another person's activity. Sometimes, this is promoted by jealousy, sometimes by more of a controlling attitude. It is important to talk about what is acceptable relationship behavior, what is unhealthy relationship behavior, and seeking where to draw the line.

A good analogy to what you are saying is that relationships are important for adolescents. Adolescence is a time where you really start to learn about relationships, especially with romantic relationships. You learn about negotiating different things in romantic relationships. A lot of harm can happen in romantic relationships. Does that mean you shield your child from those relationships or from the Internet and electronic media? I don't think so.

Dr. McCarroll: One of the most important issues that you have brought up is that of polyvictimization. Where do you see this area of research going?

Dr. Jouriles: There are many different types of victimization and not all victimization experiences are the same. Polyvictimization is part of the article that Kelly first authored (See article in this issue entitled "Multiple Types of Victimization Contribute to Mental Health Symptoms.") We were trying to alert people that cybervictimization is likely to be part of a pattern of victimization. I think that people are going to start trying to identify unique aspects of victimization, and also start to conceptualize victimization more broadly. For example, intimate partner violence may relate very differently to child problems if it is occurring in

the context of other forms of victimization than if it is not.

Dr. McCarroll: Certain kinds of child victimization experiences may have different effects depending on when they occur.

Dr. Jouriles: I agree with you and I also think that what you are talking about is adding a lot more complexity. Emotional abuse might be particularly harmful to adolescents if it is at the hands of peers, whereas emotional abuse from parents might be more damaging when you are younger as opposed to when you are an adolescent.

Dr. McCarroll: How should social service providers, and especially parents, think about cyberbullying, both perpetration and victimization? What do you tell parents?

Ms. Sargent: I think awareness among adults is helpful because we are all coming at it from the same united front. However, you want to know how victims are handling it in their lives. For those who are perpetrating it, what are their motives?

Dr. Jouriles: From the parent's role, we are trying to mitigate harm. A parent can do a couple of things. They can try to reduce their child's exposure to cybervictimization, but I am not sure how feasible that is going to be. Parents can let their children know that there are people who will help them get through this. Another way is to talk, to communicate with the child in terms of reducing the impact of the event, working on how the events are interpreted. This is an appraisal mechanism, from experiencing the victimization to the outcome it is going to have.

It is worthwhile to bring up the perpetration of cyberbullying with school personnel. "What are the policies about this?" "Is the school trying to do anything?" It is very likely that if your child is being victimized, then it is probably not just your child. Also, getting other professionals involved is important, but sometimes that is hard with adolescents because the last thing they want is for everyone to know that they are being bullied this way. Moving forward with this is complicated.

There are different levels of bullying. Teasing could be interpreted as bullying by a person who is very sensitive. Spreading false information is at a much higher level than teasing.

Dr. Jouriles: There are a lot of definitional

Cross-sectional or Longitudinal Research Design: What are the Differences and When Do You Use Them?

By James E. McCarroll, PhD, and Joshua C. Morganstein, MD

A cross-sectional study is like a snapshot whereas a longitudinal study is like a movie.

A key part of a research project is to determine the best approach to collecting and analyzing the information obtained (i.e., the research design). The researcher's choice of a design depends on the purpose of the study. There are methodological and practical considerations in selecting either of these two. The same research question can usually be approached in different ways depending on many factors such as the time frame in which it is possible to conduct the research, the availability of a study population, the financial cost of the research and others.

If the question under study is one that can be answered with a single data collection, it is cross-sectional. A study is called *cross-sectional* because a sample of the population is measured once. If your study requires knowledge of changes in individual participants over time, the study is *longitudinal*. Changes in a population can also be found in sequential cross-sectional studies, but in this research, individuals are not compared over time. In multiple cross-sectional studies, data collection consists only of measures of the sample as a whole in which different participants may appear in each cross-section. However, in a longitudinal study, researchers conduct several observations of the same subjects over a specified period of time. The easiest way to think of a cross-sectional study is to compare it to a photographic snapshot whereas a longitudinal study is like a movie.

For example, suppose we want to determine the relationship of exercise to symptoms of depression. There are many ways to approach this question including what population to sample. Some factors to consider in selecting a population include age, gender, physical conditioning, mental health symptoms and health habits such as smoking and alcohol consumption. In addition, the investigator must consider the resources available to conduct the research. Ultimately, resources amount to time and money.

One approach to the design would be to collect data on depression among people who exercise regularly and compare the results to data collected from sedentary persons. The study can become more sophisticated if the sample is selected and analyzed by subgroups. This is called stratification. In this case, strata can be selected by gender and age group. Data from men and women can be analyzed separately and younger persons can be compared to those who are older. Smokers and heavy alcohol users can be excluded, as their data would add an additional level of complexity. The biggest drawback of a cross-sectional study is that it can provide no information about cause and effect. We do not know if those who were not depressed had the energy to take up exercise whereas those were depressed were more sedentary. If it is found that those who exercise regularly have fewer symptoms than sedentary persons, one has the basis of a hypothesis that can be tested by a longitudinal study.

One type of longitudinal study would be to take a group of men and women with no prior exercise history or depressive symptoms and randomly divide them into two groups: one group is given an exercise schedule that they will be asked to follow over a set period of time and the other is asked not to exercise. Symptoms of depression are measured at the beginning of the research and thereafter periodically. If it is found that people with no prior history of regular exercise or depressive symptoms who have completed an exercise program have fewer depressive symptoms than those persons who did not exercise, one can conclude with a strong hypothesis that regular exercise is beneficial in preventing depressive symptoms. However, many other factors would have to be investigated to confirm this conclusion. Such research would require replication and inclusion of additional information about the participants.

The study conducted by Sargent and colleagues (2016) was cross-sectional. Participants completed questionnaires in a single classroom setting. This approach was economical in that only a single data collection occurred, but enough information was collected to test the hypotheses proposed. Questionnaires measured

The biggest drawback of a cross-sectional study is that is can provide no information about causes and effects.

cybervictimization, psychological intimate partner violence (IPV), depressive symptoms, and antisocial behavior. They first found that cybervictimization and psychological IPV were correlated. A second analysis found that both cybervictimization and psychological IPV were positively associated (i.e., correlated) with depressive symptoms. The third analysis used cybervictimization and psychological IPV (the same predictor variables) to predict antisocial behavior. Only cybervictimization was correlated with antisocial behavior.

Because this was a cross-sectional study, no conclusions can be reached regarding whether cybervictimization or psychological IPV causes depression or antisocial behavior. It is possible that persons who are depressed might be more likely to be victimized; similarly, those who engage in antisocial behavior may be more likely to be cybervictimized. Further research could be conducted with sequential cross-sectional studies investigating the same or with additional variables. If feasible, a longitudinal study could be conducted with those persons who volunteer to provide further data on the variables in question over a specified time period, such as during their first year in college.

This study demonstrates the importance of testing for polyvictimization. That is, whether having more than one type of victimization has a more significant effect on the outcome than a single type. In this case, persons who experienced both cybervictimization and psychological IPV had significantly more depressive symptoms than persons who experienced no victimization, cybervictimization only, or psychological IPV only.

Reference

Sargent KS, Krauss A, Jouriles EN, & McDonald R. (2016). Cyber victimization, psychological intimate partner violence, and problematic mental health outcomes among first-year college students. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking; 19 (9)*: doi: 10.1089/cyber.2016.0115.

Multiple Types of Victimization Contribute to Mental Health Symptoms

By James E. McCarroll, PhD

Both cybervictimization and psychological IPV contributed to depressive symptoms, indicating the need to consider the effects of multiple types of victimization on mental health symptoms.

Sargent, Kraus, Jouriles, and McDonald (2016) explored the relationship between cybervictimization, psychological intimate partner violence (IPV) and mental health outcomes in a sample of first-year college students (N=342, Mean age=18.33 years; 50% male). Their hypotheses were that (1) cybervictimization and psychological IPV will be correlated; (2) cybervictimization and psychological IPV will be uniquely associated with depressive symptoms; and (3) cybervictimization and psychological IPV will be uniquely associated with antisocial behavior. Antisocial behavior was considered a correlate of cybervictimization in that perhaps those who engaged in antisocial behavior were more likely to be attacked online by others. Depression was conceptualized as an outcome. These hypotheses suggest that both cybervictimization and psychological IPV are part of an individual's broader experience of victimization, or polyvictimization.

Cybervictimization and psychological IPV were related to each other. Both contributed uniquely to depressive symptoms, but only cybervictimization contributed uniquely to antisocial behavior. They suggested that these findings indicate a need to consider multiple forms of victimization when considering relations between specific types of victimization and mental health problems.

Reference

Sargent KS, Krauss A, Jouriles EN, & McDonald R. (2016). Cyber victimization, psychological intimate partner violence, and problematic mental health outcomes among first-year college students. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking; 19 (9)*: doi: 10.1089/cyber.2016.0115.

Traditional Bullying, Cyberbullying, and the Internet: Risks to Children and Adolescents

By James E. McCarroll, PhD, and Joshua C. Morganstein, MD

Both bullying perpetration and victimization are associated with serious and long-term psychological and physical consequences.

Digital technology has made great strides in the last 10 years in hardware and software (Gallagher, 2016). Smartphones have made communication and Internet access available 24/7 and social media sites have worldwide networks. While these advances have improved many aspects of modern life, the understanding of their social effects has lagged behind the technologies. This lack of understanding has been particularly important when it comes to their use by children and adolescents and young adults. Perhaps no aspect of digital technology is more important than the need to protect these often-vulnerable groups from abuse via the Internet. Mental health and social service providers should be aware of these risks as well as the role of law enforcement and legal issues in the use of digital technologies

Traditionally, being a victim of bullying has been considered a relatively harmless, but unpleasant rite of passage for children. More recently, it has been found to be associated with long-term serious psychological and physical consequences (Rettew & Pawlowski, 2016). For example, being a victim of bullying is an independent risk factor for the development of future externalizing behavior (e.g., aggressive and delinquent behavior) (Hwang, Kim, Koh, Bishop, & Leventhal, 2017). As a result of evidence of negative consequences, it has received increased research attention, and prevention and education programs fostering awareness of its effects have been developed. Definitions of what constitutes the perpetration of bullying vary, particularly when electronic methods are involved, but they generally involve intentionally aggressive actions toward another person who is perceived as vulnerable due to size, status, peer relation, jealousy, or other social factors. Bullying of children tends to occur mostly on school grounds. Physical appearance is the most common target, followed by sexual orientation. Boys tend to bully more than girls, but this depends on the type of bullying being perpetrated. Boys tend to bully outside their social network whereas girls are more likely to bully within. It can be identified in elementary school children, but it tends to peak in middle school, adolescent years.

The perpetration of face-to-face (traditional) bullying has not been replaced by cyberbullying. Traditional bullying can be physical, verbal, and relational (Waasdorp & Bradshaw, 2015). Students (n=28,104) of school grades 9-12 in the US participated in a web-based survey of bullying victimization during the past 30 days. Perpetration of bullying included 11 different bullying behaviors that were grouped into four different categories: relational, verbal, physical, and electronic. Examples included threatening, teasing, name-calling, ignoring, rumor-spreading, sending hurtful e-mails and text messages, and leaving someone out on purpose. Most victims reported being victims of both traditional bullying and cyberbullying. Relational and verbal had the most overlap. Cyberbullying victimization was associated with higher symptoms of internalizing and externalizing symptoms and there appeared to be an additive effect suggesting that cyberbullying may signal an overall higher level of victimization. Girls received more cyberbullying than boys, but girls were also more likely than boys to use cell phones. The association between cybervictimization and depression was stronger for girls. The authors reported that the most troubling finding was that youth who were cyberbullied did not tell an adult.

A study of 2,745 pupils aged 11-16, from UK secondary schools aimed to determine if cyberbullying creates many new victims beyond those already bullied with traditional means (e.g., physical, relational), and whether it has similar impacts on psychological and behavioral outcomes beyond those experienced by traditional victims (Wolke, Lee, & Guy, 2017). Responses to an electronic survey found that 29% of pupils reported being bullied, but only 1% of adolescents were pure cybervictims. Cyberbullying victimization had similar negative effects on behavior and self-esteem compared to traditional bullying victimization. Importantly, however, those victims bullied by multiple means (polyvictimization) had the most difficulties with behavior and lowest self-esteem. It was concluded that cyberbullying creates few new victims, but is mainly a new tool to harm victims already bullied by traditional means

*Traditional Bullying,
Cyberbullying, and the
Internet,* from page 6

*Among the benefits
of the use of digital
technology by youth
are that it helps them
stay in touch with
family and friends,
makes downtime
less boring, allows
participation in adult
worlds, and makes
armchair adventures
much less risky than
they may be offline.*

and extends the reach of bullying beyond the school gate. Consequently, intervention strategies against cyberbullying may need to include approaches against traditional bullying and its root causes to be successful.

Patterns of the perpetration of bullying were investigated in 7,508 US adolescents in grades 6–10. Types perpetrated were physical bullying, verbal bullying, social exclusion, spreading rumors, and cyberbullying (Wang, Iannotti, & Luk, 2012). Boys were more likely than girls to be involved in all types of bullying perpetration (10.5% vs. 4.0%, respectively). Verbal/ social bullying was approximately equal (29%). Those perpetrating cyberbullying belonged to a group of highly aggressive adolescents and were at highest risk of using substances and carrying weapons.

A longitudinal study of the adult consequences of being the victim of malicious teasing, and other peer victimization experiences in childhood was conducted on a sample of 206 boys in the US at ages 10-12 from high delinquency neighborhoods (Kerr, Gini, & Capaldi, 2017). While the long-term consequences of bullying victimization have been investigated, this study extended victimization to focus on teasing that adults believed was notable and frequent rather than infrequent, equivocal, or transient. The perpetration of other types of bullying was also included if it included cruelty or meanness to others, but teasing was the primary focus of the study. Mother, father, and teacher reports identified perpetrators of teasing: victims, perpetrator-victims, or uninvolved boys (n=26, 35, 29, and 116, respectively). Family income, parent and child depressive symptoms, and child anti-social behavior served as controls. Boys were assessed to age 34 for suicide attempt history, suicidal ideation, depressive symptoms, alcohol use, patterned tobacco and illicit drug use, and arrest. Odds were higher for suicide attempts among perpetrator-victims, criminal arrest and tobacco use among perpetrators. It was concluded that childhood involvement in teasing, for both perpetrators and victims, predicted serious adverse outcomes in adulthood. Peer victimization prevention programs that identify individuals already involved in teasing or bullying may have positive impacts on the diverse public health problems of suicide, crime, depression, and tobacco use.

The relationship of bullying perpetration and victimization to substance abuse (recent alcohol, cigarette, and inhalant use) was studied in a sample of 809 adolescents in a US school-based substance abuse prevention program (Sangalang, Tran, Ayers, & Marsiglia, 2016). Bullying was classified by perpetrators, bullying victims, those who were perpetrators and victims (bully-victims), rarely involved bully-victims, and non-involved youth. Those perpetrating bullying were more likely to engage in alcohol and cigarette use, and bully-victims were more likely to use alcohol, cigarettes, and inhalants. In contrast, victims were not significantly at risk of substance use compared to non-involved youth. Thus, chronic bullying perpetrators and bully-victims were particularly at risk for substance use, with chronic bully-victims reflecting the greatest risk of using multiple substances. The authors concluded that prevention and early intervention programs aimed to reduce bullying perpetration could also work to decrease other risky behaviors, such as substance use. While this study did not report whether reducing substance abuse decreased bullying perpetration, this outcome is also likely.

Children and adolescents are potential victims of sexual predators, a type of cybervictimization. Privacy is often assumed, but never guaranteed when accessing Internet sites or communicating by e-mail and the identity of users can be faked to lure vulnerable individuals into harmful situations. With the loss of face-to-face contact in which there can be embarrassment or apprehension, these inhibitions can be reduced, a false sense of security created, and the boundaries between fantasy and reality can become blurred (McGrath & Casey, 2002).

Parents are concerned about their children's potential for high-risk behavior while in cyberspace and look for ways to prevent harm to them. However, the means to do this are limited. Parents may mediate children's Internet use through a variety of means. A longitudinal study of 568 adolescents (53% female) of ages 13-15 from a Midwestern US city was conducted to determine the relationship between cyberbullying victimization, parental mediation, and mental health outcomes (loneliness, anxiety, and depression) one year later (Wright. 2016). Participants were asked to rate their face-to-face and cybervictimization experiences and how often their parents were involved in their digital media use. Three types of parental mediation were inquired (restrictive, co-viewing, and instructive). Co-viewing mediation and instructive mediation reduced cyberbullying victimization. Restrictive mediation (limiting exposure, but not discussing ways to deal with unwanted exposure

Research could address the context of digital technology use from the point of view of the user, the child and youth, to investigate how it creates excitement and contributes to their development.

to digital media) did not reduce cyberbullying victimization. Mediation through high levels of co-viewing and instruction reduced adolescents' reports of anxiety and depression, but not loneliness. The authors suggested that loneliness may be more stable than anxiety and depression and not influenced by parental mediation strategies. Further, they suggested that these mediation techniques are minimal, but yet may reduce adolescents' vulnerability to victimization. A key message of this study is that parental mediation is social support and that parents should recognize that their involvement in their children's use of digital media can help to offset negative effects of cybervictimization and adjustment difficulties.

Digital technology can be used to support parents and help to safeguard children. Such a program, *Netmums,* in the UK provides family support services (Lamberton, Devaney, & Bunting, 2016). This program functioned as a discussion forum through posting specific topics such as babies, children, food and feeding, and an advice and support section. The latter addresses such issues as prenatal and postnatal depression, domestic violence support, and others of a serious nature. Applicants to the site sign up with their name, postal code, and e-mail address. Members can receive peer and practitioner support.

A total of 13 staff of *Netmums* participated in semi-structured interviews on procedures, challenges, and child safeguarding. Key themes developed were satisfaction with the work, high levels of motivation, and challenges in identifying and responding to child safeguarding in the online community. The authors believed that *Netmums* provided social support that buffered stress, decreased parental sense of isolation, and provided access to advice and companionship. However, there were also concerns about confidentiality, informed consent, and anonymity of members. This was an exploratory study, but such online resources are very likely to proliferate and increase support and information available to parents.

There is little information on how to intervene with those who perpetrate bullying. Such methods as group therapy, zero tolerance (such as school expulsion or suspension), or mediations sessions between the bully and victim have not been shown to be particularly effective (Rettew & Pawlowski, 2016). Bystander intervention may prevent or stop bullying. Education about such intervention may be a useful strategy for parents, educa-

tors, and others. A study of caregiver advice and children's bystander behavior was conducted with 106 racially/ethnically diverse 4th- and 5th-grade students and their caregivers (Grassetti, Hubbard, Smith, Bookhout, Swift, & Gawrysiak, 2017). Data collected in school classrooms consisted of peer reports of children's bystander behaviors. In home visits, caregivers and children completed a coded interaction task in which caregivers advised children about how to respond to situations in which they might be victims of bullying at school. Bystander intervention was positively predicted by caregivers' advice to help or comfort the victim, while bystander passivity was predicted by caregivers' advice to not intervene and not advice to help or comfort the victim. Contrarily, bystander reinforcement or assistance of the person perpetrating the bullying was predicted by caregivers' advice not to intervene and not to tell adults.

A measure of bullying perpetration, the Bullying, Harassment, and Aggression Receipt Measure (BullyHARM), consists of 22 items and 6 subscales: physical bullying, verbal bullying, social/relational bullying, cyber-bullying, property bullying, and sexual bullying, was developed on a sample of 275 middle school students (Hall, 2016). The authors indicated that the BullyHARM scale and its subscales have very good internal consistency reliability and good properties regarding content validation and respondent-related validation. They further suggested that it is a promising instrument for measuring bullying victimization in school.

While there are many concerns about all types of bullying, the prevalence of its perpetration and the effects upon victims are poorly understood except in general terms. Differentiating the effects of traditional bullying from cyberbullying also is fraught with difficulties for researchers, parents, and the various authority stakeholders. Not the least of these is identifying persons who are bullies, victims, or both, vulnerabilities, and subtypes of each. In other words, all bullies and victims are not the same. Cyberbullying is a new form of victimization that complicates the problems for researchers. Among suggested research challenges are the explicit assessment risk and harm associated with risk, longitudinal designs, studies of pre-adolescent children, protective factors, and evaluation of risk awareness training (Livingstone & Smith, 2014).

Professional organizations give a great deal of information on detection and intervention for victims and perpetrators. (See Websites of Interest.) Reviews have highlighted epidemiological, psychological and physical impacts, and the role

of health care providers in prevention, detection, and intervention (Livingstone & Smith, 2014; Rettew & Pawlowski, 2016). All of these emphasize early intervention, particularly by parents, as well as engagement by others such as a pediatricians, teachers, principal, school counselors, or family physicians.

The Internet poses risks to children and adolescents beyond being victims of cyberbullying. How great a risk is the Internet to them? While much recent literature seems to give the impression that the digital environment is inherently perilous for youth, this premise ignores the balance between risks and benefits, the latter, which are rarely acknowledged. Among benefits of the use of digital technology by youth are that it helps stay in touch with family and friends, makes downtime less boring, and allows participation in adult worlds and makes armchair adventures much less risky than they may be offline (Finkelhor, 2014). Research could address the context of digital technology use from the point of view of the user, the child and youth, to investigate how it creates excitement, and contributes to their development.

Much remains to be learned about bullying perpetration and victimization (Rettew & Pawlowski, 2016). Among the questions to be considered are: intentionality, the role of mental health factors, peer relations (e.g., dominance within a social hierarchy), subtypes of bullies and victims, and interventions for both. Finally, if a culture shift is to occur within schools making bullying a socially unacceptable behavior, it will require participation from all stakeholders: students, parents, teachers, counselors, and community leaders.

References

Finkelhor D. (2014). Commentary: Cause for alarm? Youth and Internet risk research — A commentary on Livingstone and Smith. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry; 55(6):* 655–658.

Gallagher B. (2016). The role of digital technology in child protection: Still helping and harming. *Child Abuse Review; 25:* 327–331.

Grassetti SN, Hubbard JA, Smith MA, Bookhout MK, Swift LE, & Gawrysiak MJ. (2017). Caregivers' advice and children's bystander behaviors during bullying incidents. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology;* 20 March: 1–12.
doi: 10.1080/15374416.2017.1295381.

Hall WJ. (2016). Initial development and validation of the BullyHARM: The Bullying, Harassment, and Aggression Receipt Measure. *Psychology in the Schools; 53(9):* 984–1000.

Hwang S, Kim YS, Koh YJ, Bishop S, & Leventhal BL (2017). Discrepancy in perception of bullying experiences and later internalizing and externalizing behavior: A prospective study. *Aggressive Behavior;* Mar 22.
doi: 10.1002/ab.21707.

Kerr DC, Gini G, & Capaldi DM. (2017). Young men's suicidal behavior, depression, crime, and substance use risks linked to childhood teasing. *Child Abuse & Neglect; 67:* 32–43.

Lamberton L, Devaney J, & Bunting L. (2016). New challenges in family support: The use of digital technology in supporting parents. *Child Abuse Review; 25:* 359–372.

Livingstone S, & Smith PK. (2014). Annual research review: Harms experienced by child users of online and mobile technologies: the nature, prevalence and management of sexual and aggressive risks in the digital age. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry; 55(6):* 653–654.

McGrath MG, & Casey E. (2002). Forensic psychiatry and the Internet: Practical perspectives on sexual predators and obsessional harassers in cyberspace. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law; 30:* 81–94.

Rettew DC, & Pawlowski S. (2016). Bullying. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America; 25:* 235–242.

Sangalang CC, Tran AG, Ayers SL, & Marsiglia FF. (2016). Bullying among urban Mexican-heritage youth: Exploring risk for substance use by status as a bully, victim, and bully-victim. *Child and Youth Services Review;* 61:216–221.

Waasdorp TE, Bradshaw CP, & Leaf PJ. (2012). The impact of schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports on bullying and peer rejection: a randomized controlled effectiveness trial. *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine; 166:*149–156.

Wang J, Iannotti RJ, & Luk JW, (2012). Patterns of adolescent bullying behaviors: Physical, verbal, exclusion, rumor, and cyber. *Journal of School Psychology; 50:* 521–534.

Wolke D, Lee K, & Guy A. (2017). Cyberbullying: A storm in a teacup? *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. Feb 10.
doi: 10.1007/s00787-017-0954-6.

Wright MF. (2016). The buffering effect of parental mediation in the relationship between adolescents' cyberbullying and victimization and adjustment difficulties. *Child Abuse Review; 25:* 345–358.

Family Violence Increases Child and Adolescent Bullying Victimization and Perpetration: A Global Public Health Problem

By James E. McCarroll, PhD, and Joshua C. Morganstein, MD

Recent studies from four different countries have explored the effects of family violence on the occurrence of bullying perpetration and victimization. In a sample of 3,175 middle school Chinese students, the annual prevalence of witnessing family violence was 30.3% and the annual prevalence of bullying victimization was 44.5%. The co-occurrence of witnessing family violence and bullying victimization was 30.4%. Family violence was a unique risk factor in predicting bullying victimization, (Zhu, Chan, & Chen, 2015).

A nationally representative sample of 3,197 youth ages 14-15 in Sweden found that 36% of girls and 26% of boys reported bullying victimization and 24% of girls and 36% of boys reported bullying perpetration. Physical and emotional violence in the home, including witnessing, were significantly associated with both bullying perpetration and victimization (Lucas, Jernbro, Tindberg, & Janson, 2016).

In Japan, 17,530 adolescents in grades 7–12 responded to a survey to explore the association of current violence from adults with adolescent bullying involvement and suicidal feelings. Both current bullying perpetration, victimization, and bully perpetration-victimization were associated with increasing odds of current suicidal feelings (Fujikawa et al., 2016).

A study of 2,060 Spanish high school students found that bullying aggression by girls was related to physical punishment by parents. For boys, parental psychological aggression predicted bullying aggression (Gómez-Ortiz, Romera, & Ortega-Ruiz, 2016).

There are multiple effects of family violence on the bullying perpetration and victimization experiences of children and adolescents. Such experiences can indicate the presence of severe victimization in the home. When evaluating children involved in bullying perpetration and those who are victims, it is important to explore family factors that can influence their behavior and put them at risk for additional harm.

References

Fujikawa S, Ando S, Shimodera S … Nishida A. (2016). The association of current violence from adult family members with adolescent bullying involvement and suicidal feelings. *PLoSOne.* October 6, 2016. doi: 10.1371.journalpone.0163707.

*Gómez-Ortiz O, Romera EM, & Ortega-Ruiz R. (2016). Parenting styles and bullying. *Child Abuse & Neglect; 51*: 132–143.

Lucas S, Jernbro C, Tindberg Y, & Janson S. (2016). Bully, bullied and abused. Associations between violence at home and bullying in childhood. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health; 44*: 27–35.

Zhu Y, Chan KL, & Chen J. (2015). Bullying victimization among Chinese middle school students: The role of family violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence;* First Published 27 Dec 2015. doi: 10.1177/0886260515621082.

---

issues in this area. Some people will define cyberbullying as requiring intent to harm. On the other hand, some of this can happen in a more teasing context, joking, and still have devastating effects. There are certain age periods where people are much more sensitive.

Other definitional issues occur when you mix scientific issues with legal ones. The perpetration of cyberbullying is not often mentioned in many definitions of violence or abuse, but many state statutes that include stalking as a crime very clearly mention receiving repeated unwanted e-mails.

Consider polyvictimization from the awareness perspective. If you find out that your child is being harassed via the Internet or through unwanted e-mails and texts, basically, your child is experiencing cybervictimization. The research on polyvictimization suggests that this may not be the only form of violence or aggression that your child is experiencing and it might be a more pervasive issue than just getting unwanted e-mails.

Dr. McCarroll: So, you ask the question, "What else is going on?"

Dr. Jouriles: Exactly. Because, again, according to the literature on polyvictimization, more often than not, there is more going on.

Ms. Sargent: It is ok if parents are not able to keep up with every social media outlet or messaging system. None of us can. It is just going to outpace our research abilities right now. We can foster their awareness without the need to have all of the facts all of the time. Having the conversation with their kid about what else is going on may be more important.

Dr. McCarroll: So, you are saying, "You are never going to know everything, but at least you can offer to be there and to understand." Thank you, Dr. Jouriles and Ms. Sargent, for your work.

Dr. Jouriles and Ms. Sargent: You are welcome.

Websites of Interest

Traditional bullying is addressed in many websites. For example, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry website: **https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Bullying-080.aspx** emphasizes the importance of early engagement by parents and intervention by a pediatrician, teacher, principal, school counselor, or family physician.

Connected Kids was developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics as a patient education program for pediatricians and their staff. It addresses violence prevention, and contains a variety of resources including clinical guides, a counseling schedule for children by age group, educational brochures, and a power point presentation on the program for staff training. **https://patiented.solutions.aap.org/DocumentLibrary/Connected%20Kids%20Clinical%20Guide.pdf**
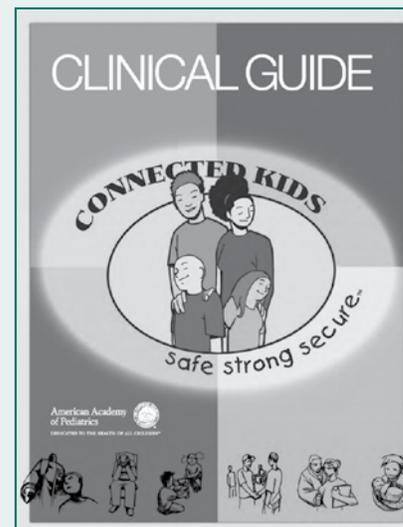
www.stopbullying.gov is managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. It defines cyberbullying, provides prevention tips to parents and kids, and describes reporting and documenting procedures. Under Get Help Now, are state laws and policies on bullying that can be searched on a map of the U.S. states and territories. It also includes suicide prevention tips.

Websites of Interest, Continued

The National Crime Prevention Council and the Office of Victims of Crime (Office of Justice Programs) http://www.ncpc.org/topics/cyberbullying have a variety of resources on cyberbullying including a power point presentation for community educators about cyberbullying prevention designed to educate and increase awareness of cyberbullying training.

Several websites exist to help young people with relationships as well as cyberbullying.

http://endcyberbullying.squarespace.com/why-do-people-cyberbully
is a program to stop online harassment. It has resources that answer a lot of questions that parents might have as well as news articles about initiatives people have taken to stop cyberbullying.

http://www.loveisrespect.org/ is another website that teaches about relationships. One interesting aspect is that it features quizzes about healthy relationships and dating abuse. Help is offered through chats, calls, and texts.

https://thatsnotcool.com/ is a program for decreasing teen violence and raising awareness about healthy dating relationships. It also has tips for adults.