

About SSA: Research Report

Literature Review on Bullying and Its Prevention: Implications for the Safe School Ambassadors® Program

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This document serves to assess the literature in relation to the core components of the Safe School Ambassador® (SSA) program. The SSA program is a variant of a student watch program (Ross, 1996) that recruits and trains socially influential youth from the different social groups that exist in schools to note and report instances of bullying and other antisocial behavior (Community Matters, 2003). However, SSA is considered a second generation student watch program because a much greater emphasis is placed on training youth bystanders on methods to intervene as warranted by the situation rather than simply noticing and reporting bullying to school staff. The overall goal of the SSA program is to improve the school climate by empowering students who are neither bullies nor victims of bullies, but have a good probability of being a bystander, to play a clear role in preventing episodes of bullying and related activities.

The aims of this preliminary review of the literature are to:

- Provide a brief overview of the bullying problem,
- Establish the importance of utilizing bystanders in the prevention of bullying,
- Discuss core factors in effective bystander interventions, and
- Assess the literature for outcomes of bullying prevention programs and bystander interventions.

General Overview of the Bullying Problem

Violence as well as the *fear* of violence is prevalent in U.S. society. Although overall rates of violent crime have declined from their peak in the 1980s, intentional violence still accounts for one-third of all injury deaths (Hamburg, 1998), and violent injury and death continues to disproportionately affect children, adolescents and young adults (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Over the last several decades, violence has come to be defined as a public health issue and greater public

attention has been paid to its prevention, not simply its deterrence and control (Elliot, 1998).

During the 1980s and increasingly throughout the 1990s, major national initiatives to address youth violence were mounted, including the passage of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1994. Violence also became an established field of research study. Over time, these prevention and research efforts helped define *bullying* prevention as an important area of violence prevention by drawing attention to the:

- Cycle of violence in which victimization begets future perpetration
- Violence prevention needs in the school environment
- Establishment of a bully prevention program as one of the ten Blueprints for Violence Prevention (Elliot, 2000).

Today, bullying is considered to be one of the most common and pervasive forms of school violence (Swearer & Doll, 2001). Much of what has been learned to date comes from studies conducted in Scandinavian countries, Great Britain, Ireland, Spain, Australia, the Netherlands, and Japan (Banks, 1997; Olweus, 1993). An important conclusion drawn from this research is the universality of bullying behaviors (Macklem, 2003). Bullying is a problem in all schools and countries around the world.

Throughout the 1990s, a number of studies were conducted to understand the prevalence and incidence of bullying. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2004) reported that approximately 50% of all children had been bullied while in school and that 10% of those that had been bullied were victimized on a regular basis. A subsequent study, representing the first nationwide research on bullying in the U.S., was conducted by the National Institute of Child Health and Development. This study found that in grades sixth through tenth, 16% of students indicated that others had bullied them during the current term. Almost 30% reported that they had been involved as a bully, a victim, or both (Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton, and Scheidt, 2001). Ericson (2001) used these data to estimate that 1.6 million students in these grades were bullied at least once a week. Moreover, based on the original study, the National Institute of Child Health and Development found that bullying behaviors were a marker for involvement in future violence-related behaviors. In fact, it reported that children and youth that engaged in

bullying behaviors were the group most at risk for engaging in violent behaviors over time (Nansel, T.R., Overpeck, M.,D., Haynie, D.L., Ruan, W.J., & Scheidt , 2003).

Importance of Utilizing Bystanders for Bullying Prevention

Peers are present in 85% of bullying episodes in school settings (Bonds & Stoker, 2003, Craig & Pepler, 1995) and up to 92% of elementary school students have observed instances of bullying in their schools (Henderson & Hymel, 2002, as cited in Macklem, 2003). Because bystanders are almost always present whereas adults rarely witness bullying, their participation in school-based bullying programs is considered instrumental. Researchers using a variety of data collection methods, including unobtrusive observation, describe various roles that bystanders may take in a bullying episode (Craig & Pepler, 2000; Cowie & Wallace, 2000; O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig 1999; Salmivalli, 1999). These include:

- Becoming an assistant of the bully,
- Defending the victim, or
- Remaining an outsider.

Bystanders can reinforce the bully by laughing or cheering on behavior. They can also pretend not to notice what is going on but often are described by the victim as cooperating with the bully because of their nonverbal behavior (Macklem, 2003).

While over half of surveyed children reported that they would intervene in a hypothetical bullying situation, their reports do not match with observed playground behavior (O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999). Actual intervention occurred by bystanders on average in about 11% of the bullying episodes (Craig & Pepler, 1997). In a study conducted by O'Connell, Pepler, and Craig (1999) 54% of the time children (ages 5-12) passively watched a bullying dynamic, 21% of the time joined in on bullying, and 25% of the time intervened on behalf of the victim. Older children are less likely to report intervening and more likely to report encouraging a bully than younger children (Jeffrey, Miller, & Linn, 2001; Rigby & Slee, 1992).

According to Lazarus (2001), bystanders may not report abuse because they:

- Do not recognize behavior as bullying
- Fear getting a friend in trouble

- Fear alienation
- Fear retaliation
- Believe that adults will not help

Moreover, Khosropour and Walsh (2000) found that bystanders prioritized the intentions of the bully over the victim's feelings even after a bully prevention program that taught the opposing lesson. Over 50% of sixth and seventh graders felt that the victim could control the reason for being mistreated and many bystanders believed that the victim would learn something from the encounter. In addition to blaming the victim, Sutton and Keogh (2000) showed that students who seek to be accepted by a social group that supports bullying are less willing to become involved or take action.

Prevention of bullying is further undermined by the fact that there is a strong taboo among students against informing school staff when episodes of bullying occur (Crary, 2001 as cited in Macklem 2003). Many students report concerns that they would not be protected in unsupervised areas of the school (Suderman, Jaffe, & Schiek, 1996 as cited in Macklem 2003). Some bystanders also feel relieved when they are not a target and often distance themselves from the victim, reducing empathy and making it easier to walk away from the situation.

As bullying-prevention in schools begin to place greater emphasis on encouraging bystanders during episodes of bullying to intervene rather than simply report, empowering students to act becomes an important focal point. In addition to addressing the barriers described above, giving youth the knowledge and skills for effective behaviors to engage in as well as providing a network of support from peers and school staff is critical (Garrity, Jens, Porter, Sager, Short-Camilli, 1994).

Core Factors in Effective Bystander Interventions

Group Processes that Facilitate Bullying

Children are highly motivated by the need to belong. Social groups start forming as early as the preschool years. During this period, children may be excluded from groups because often the inclusion of a new member causes deterioration in play. For example, two children who are playing a make-believe setting and are interrupted by a third 'outsider' may lose focus of what they were doing and that particular play

activity may come to an end. According to Macklem (2003), children learn early on that they can exclude others and use the concept of 'friend' to control play activity.

By elementary school children are still largely motivated by wanting to belong, and many peer groups become established by third grade. Children are now forced to find their place using social power. Social groups have established rules of how children are supposed to act to be accepted by a particular group. This includes how aggression is expressed, which accounts for the finding that aggressive children hang out and play with other aggressive children (Cairns & Cairns, 1991). These norms are often established by the most popular child in the group; the child with the most social power. However, being popular is not the same as having many friends. While having the ability to establish and maintain friendships is associated with social competence and prosocial behaviors, popularity tends to be associated with dominance, aggression, and power (LaFontana & Cillessen, 2002). By fifth grade, both boys and girls will choose popularity over friendship and will reject a 'friend' to be accepted by a group (Macklem, 2003).

Because social groups have a hierarchy, the child with the most social power has tremendous influence on the behavior of the other members and determines the status of others in the group. Macklem (2003) describes these group dynamics as follows:

“The leader or leaders of cliques use their popularity to control the group. Clique leaders may manipulate and rearrange the hierarchy by extending favor on a particular child who is lower in the hierarchy. Leaders hang on to their power by manipulating the feelings and status of other children. Leaders also manipulate clique members into bullying others, and then withdraw themselves so that others take the blame” (pp. 110-111).

Macklem (2003) further describes that by fourth or fifth grade, students in schools with greater than 80 individuals per grade are often split into four groups. The popular group makes up approximately one third of all students in any given grade level. This group drives the school climate, and is motivated to protect their power. There may be a select group of leaders within the popular circle that determine the ever-changing status of the followers. The next group, the 'wannabes', makes up about 10% of students in a grade level. These are students who have their own small group of friends, but would prefer to be in the popular group. The third group includes about

50% of the students of a class that is made up of a middle group of students who mostly operate on their own. These students are generally accepting of others, but do not wish to be a part of the popular clique, and are also critical of the wannabes. The remaining 10% of the class is made up of isolated children. These children lack support, and even tend to reject one another.

Based on research conducted by Adler and Adler (1998), by late elementary school, students have a strong sense of:

- Social status based on power and popularity,
- Pressures to conform to group norms, and
- Consequences that result from going against group norms.

During middle school, the social hierarchy is still rooted in popularity. Although popular peers may not necessarily be well-liked, their influence on members within the group remains. They effectively use both positive and negative behaviors to achieve their desired goals and often are controlling and manipulate others. According to Macklem (2003):

“Social groups among adolescents have gate-keeping regulations which assure that new members are selected because they are similar to others who already belong to the group. The group helps the individual student establish identity and helps meet the individual’s need to belong, but at the same time the group controls the student’s behavior, particularly the expression of aggression... Students move up and down in status within the larger group, but do not change from one large group to another. Once a new member of the group is allowed to participate, further socialization takes place. Students learn the values of the group and take on the social problems of the group.” (p. 113).

Since peers reinforce the harmful group dynamic of antisocial perpetration, intervention must incorporate the youth network (Macklem, 2003). For this reason, effective bystander intervention programs must focus recruitment strategies to select influential members that cut across the social groups and cliques that exist in school settings. However, the difference between ‘tattle telling’ and prosocial behavior must be taught and reinforced by peer networks. Since social pressures dictate a tacit response, student participants need regular and ongoing support.

Involvement of Influential Youth

Social groups in middle and high schools commonly referred to as cliques, have sophisticated hierarchies. According to Greener (2000), popular children are more prosocial than other children. Leader(s) of cliques use their popularity, often maintained by prosocial behavior, to control the social group. Popular students may also manipulate others to bully particular students. The dynamics and hierarchies of these cliques are fluid; social status can be manipulated by leaders who work hard to maintain their heightened social status. Students who are eager for acceptance do not stand up to bullies. If a group does not support intervening in a bullying situation, these students hesitate to aid bully victims (Sutton & Keogh, 2000).

According to a study by Ginsburg and Miller (1981), the small number of boys who intervened in playground fights were children who held high social status among their peers. Similarly, studies have found that group leaders or children well-liked by their classmates were more likely to self-report intervening in a potential bullying episode (Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Kaukiannien, 1996). Research on modeling and social influence shows that greater impact is achieved by individuals that are well-liked and who have high social status (Bandura, 1977; Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). These studies suggest that children with social influence are more likely to intervene on behalf of a victim. These influential children, already more prosocial than other children, are an untapped resource for modeling appropriate bystander intervention. These leaders may influence their peers who are seeking acceptance to stand up bullies or include marginalized youth. Therefore training students who have been identified as leaders to intervene may be the most efficient and successful means to increase bystander intervention.

Because modeling prosocial behavior is a major function of bystander intervention programs, the characteristics of individual members and the groups that they represent are quite important.

The relationship between prosocial youth and popularity may also encourage students to become involved in programs such as the SSA programs. In other words, youth may be motivated to enhance their prosocial skills and help bullying victims if they felt these skills might maintain or enhance their popularity.

Empathy-building

To mobilize bystanders to intervene on behalf of a victim, youth must feel empathy toward victims and guilt for not intervening (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987). Can prosocial behavior be trained? Hoffman (1984) reports that there is modest evidence that practice in role taking in a noncompetitive context can teach prosocial behavior. Similar studies found that empathy trained children displayed more prosocial behaviors than that of the control group (Feshbach, 1982). However, the literature concludes that children respond more empathetically to children of the same race (Hoffman 1982, 1984). Moreover, empathy is mediated by gender. Boys are more likely to feel sympathy for females than males (Pellegrini & Long, 2002).

Empathy is undermined by strong social and cultural norms concerning the attribution of blame to victims in social situations (Brigham, 1991). If a bystander believes the victim caused the perpetration, then empathetic discomfort is reduced and often replaced by anger. Victims with bad reputations (immoral, deceitful, etc.) are often seen as deserving maltreatment. The most compassionate student may not feel empathy, and therefore intervene, if the victim can be blamed.

While students may benefit from empathy training, they also need to be taught to recognize bullying, feel concerned about this behavior, and avoid blaming the victim. According to a U.K. study, 50% of students reported sympathy for victims, 25% were neutral, and 25% reported no sympathy (Macklem, 2003; Smith & Sharp, 1994). Jeffrey, Miller, and Linn (2001) reported that 9% of students did not care about the victim and 36% did not care about bullying episodes. Apathy appears to increase with age, especially among boys, as myths about victims are perpetuated and maintained. By grade eight, two times as many boys as girls reported victims deserved being bullied. Over 50% of sixth and seventh graders felt that the victim could control the reason for being mistreated. Bystanders who blame the victim can also feel anger toward the victim.

School-wide Intervention

In addition to educating students, teachers need to be aware of their own misconceptions and reinforcing behaviors. One study of elementary school students found that adults ignored 71% of bullying episodes (Froschl & Gropper 1999). Ignoring adults believed that children should learn to handle their problems when in reality bullying involves an imbalance and abuse of power that cannot be solved by

the victim alone (Garrity et al., 1994). When asked why victims and bystanders do not report the maltreatment, victims reported fearing that school personnel will not handle the event appropriately (Macklem, 2003) while bystanders believed that the adults would not help (Lazarus, 2001).

In addition to peer support, strong relationships with trusted adults are important for empowering bystanders to report bullying. School personnel must be trained and made available for support. It is essential that students know and feel that this support is available. If students feel that teachers don't care about maltreatment (even if teachers have been trained to avoid reinforcing bullying behavior), then even prosocial students may feel uncomfortable enlisting help from adults in more serious bullying episodes. Students cannot and should not handle all bullying episodes alone. Positive rapport and relationships between teachers and students must be established for bystander intervention participants to successfully intervene on behalf of victims. Concern about student's welfare and the danger of antisocial behaviors must be palpable in the school climate. Dedicated and trained peers will fail without adequate support from school personnel, ongoing support from peers, and an overall change of the school climate.

School-wide interventions that are designed to change school climate are needed to change normative responses to bullying behaviors. According to Macklem (2003), prevention efforts should incorporate the following elements:

- Provide accurate information regarding bullying and the attitudes of peers about bullying to dispel myths and minimize misconceptions about bullying behavior, victims, and tacit compliance
- Re-sensitize peers to bullying behavior. This includes learning to recognize bullying and differentiating bullying behavior from innocuous banter.
- Promote empathy and healthy guilt.
- Reinforce helping behavior and distinguish between reporting behavior as opposed "tattle telling".

Outcomes of Bullying Prevention Programs and Bystander Interventions

Prompted by three suicides attributed to bullying, the National Campaign Against Bullying headed by Dan Olweus and Erling Roland was implemented in Norway in 1983 and resulted in a 50% reduction in bullying episodes and fewer new victims in Bergen schools at one year follow up (Ross, 1996). In addition to a reduction in episodes of bullying, there was a change in the school climate and a reduction of bullying in the greater community. Subsequent evaluations of the Olweus program in other countries have also found positive results, but to a much lesser degree than the original 50% reduction (Elliot, 2000).

Two other major bully prevention programs that used core components of the Olweus Bully Prevention Program, known as the Sheffield and Safe Cities projects, found positive results with an average reduction of about 15% (Macklem, 2003). Although Olweus original evaluation results pointed to a dramatic reduction in bullying, others have had much less success, with some programs reporting negative results (Macklem, 2003; Ross, 1996). However, Olweus and other researchers have concluded that these wide differences in outcomes are largely due to poor program planning and implementation of individual programs (Macklem, 2003). For example, Olweus provided a high level of support to the Bergen schools, which increased program implementation fidelity that resulted in greater reduction in bullying (Smith et al., 1999). Moreover, the evaluation results as a whole emphasize the importance of utilizing a multi-pronged in bullying prevention (Macklem, 2003; Olweus, 1991).

While traditional programs that target instances of bullying tended to only focus on the bully-victim dyad and not the social process of bullying, most researchers conclude that the effectiveness of programs can be greatly enhanced using a whole school approach (Macklem, 2003; Olweus, 1994). These researchers argue that approaches that focus only on identified victims and bullies underestimate the incidence of bullying, place undue pressure on the victim to solve the problem, and perpetuate myths about bullying and negative attitudes concerning victims. An approach that includes all students and incorporates adults increases the likelihood that an enduring change in overall school climate will occur over time. To improve bully reduction rates from the average 15% reported in work conducted since Olweus original evaluation work, researchers need more innovative strategies. One such innovation is incorporating an understanding of group dynamics into program development. Currently, researchers are encouraging the mobilization of bystanders to

reduce school bullying (Macklem, 2003; Smith, Twemlow & Hoover 1999; Salmivalli, 1999).

Macklem (2003) concludes that most researchers feel that soliciting help from bystanders is the *key* variable in decreasing bullying. For example, Dr. Ronald Slaby has demonstrated that bystanders can be effective agents for resolving conflicts and preventing future cruelty and violence in school settings (Slaby & Roedell, 1982; Slaby & Guerra, 1988). However, much less is known about the individual- and school-level outcomes that are realized from bystander intervention programs such as SSA. Although peer interventions in general have been established as effective in many domains (Deck & Einspruch, 1999), little empirical evidence has linked bystander intervention programs to specific bullying-related outcomes. At the same time, a meta-analysis of 143 drug prevention programs conducted by Tobler (1986) showed that school-based bystander interventions can be quite effective in reducing substance use and abuse among youth. Because there are a number of similarities between many of these drug prevention programs and bystander intervention programs, these results are encouraging.

The SafePlace: Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Survival Center that developed the *Expect Respect* school-based program to address sexual and domestic violence state in their handbook that “ of greatest significance was the impact of the project on increasing students’ willingness to intervene to help a target of bullying and to seek help from an adult on campus”. According to Macklem (2003), evaluation of the *Expect Respect* Program found an increase of awareness about bullying, knowledge of sexual harassment, and positive attitudes toward helping peers. The change of bystander behavior appears vital to program developers from diverse disciplines in changing school climate and reducing a variety of antisocial behaviors. Within the field of school-based bully prevention, Maher (1987) provides a good example of the effective use of a student watch program in a New York high school and reported that antisocial behavior had decreased and overall school climate increased as a result of the program. Specifically, Maher (1987) and others argue that these programs help to break down the code of silence that protects the antisocial, by presenting “telling on” as positive manner. Equally important, though one might feel that the potential for negative stigmatization for student members is high, Maher (1987) showed that because membership was presented as a high status activity, this did not occur. Additionally, to the extent that these programs effectively recruit

socially influential youth from a broad section of the student body, the possibility of retributions or reprisals are greatly diminished.

Similar to Maher's student watch program, peer support programs have recently been developed to include students in monitoring peer behavior. In addition to monitoring, these programs also encourage and teach students to play an active role in changing relationships and group dynamics. Cowie (2000) and colleagues have found that programs that focus on students' social interactions through encouraging peers to befriend others, teaching conflict resolution skills, and supporting informal counseling-based approaches, help protect victims and increase prosocial attitudes and behaviors.

Menesini, Codecasa, Benelli and Cowie (2003) recently published a study that tested the peer support model and reported promising results in two Italian middle schools. The curriculum for this program included promoting awareness in bullies of their and others' behavior(s), enhancing the ability to support victims (befriending by peers), encouraging responsibility and involvement of bystanders, and improving the quality of interpersonal relationships. This peer support model resulted in negative attitudes and behaviors to remain stable in students who received the intervention while these factors increased in a control group. Moreover, feelings of support for the victim decreased in the control group and remained stable in the experimental group. The preliminary findings of this research suggests that the implementation of a peer support and intervention model in the middle schools years, when rates of bullying have been shown to increase, is an effective bullying prevention strategy. Since a number of components of the Italian intervention are similar to the SSA program, the results provide good support for the underlying model upon which SSA is based. The authors in the Italian study believed that their short-term intervention broke the code of silence, enhanced responsibility, and promoted empathy among students at an age with a heightened risk for bullying behaviors.

Because the idea of empowering bystanders to *intervene* rather than monitor and report is relatively new, the outcomes associated with this approach is quite limited. However, much more is known about the deleterious effects of bullying on both victims as well as bystanders. For victims of bullying, fear can become so ingrained that they adopt fugitive-like routines to avoid places likely to be frequented by the bully (Macklem, 2003). This avoidance deprives the target of essential formal and

informal social experiences that are important for social development (Ross, 1996). Victims also can experience active rejection (Perry, Kusel, & Perry, 1988) by peers who formerly were friends or at least friendly toward them. This climate of fear from chronic bullying coupled with peer rejection leads to poor school performance among victims (Turkel & Eth, 1997). For example, Hazler, Hoover, & Oliver (1993) reported a significant drop in grades for 90% of the victims of bullying in their study. Overall, victims can be caught in downward spiral leading to:

- Low morale and acute despair manifested in truancy (Reid, 1990).
- Chronic illness such as recurrent abdominal pain of unknown origin (Ross & Ross, 1988).
- Running away, and in extreme cases, suicide (Beck, 1986; Besag, 1989; Elliot, 1991).

Equally important is research that shows that bystanders, who are neither bullies, nor target of bullies, are negatively impacted by witnessing episodes of bullying (Ross, 1996). Ross (1996) reports that bystanders can be affected by bullying in the following ways:

- Anger and feeling helpless at not knowing how to help victim.
- Guilt for not intervening.
- Worry that they might be the next target.

Furthermore, Ross (1996) argues that when bullying is witnessed by others and goes unpunished, it can create a climate of fear with widespread effects that:

- Inhibits learning and is a major distraction
- Undermines enjoyment of free-time periods.
- Creates fear of certain areas of school such as lunchroom.
- Elevates the sense of vulnerability on the way to and from school.

Because school environments that are characterized by a high incidence of episodes of bullying clearly undermine the learning process for all students, improved academic achievement is an important medium-term outcome to expect from implementation of an effective prevention program.

Conclusion

The SSA bystander intervention program includes many core components that are thought to be effective in promoting a positive school climate and reducing individual incidents of bullying. Specifically, the use of bystanders and the guidance provided on recruitment strategies are consistent with recent discussions on effective bullying interventions provided in the literature.

One challenge of implementing and evaluating bully prevention programs is the finding that bullying is not evenly distributed over schools (Ross, 1996). Some schools have higher or lower rates of bullying; therefore a program with one narrow focus will not be effective for every school. The need for a multi-faceted approach is supported by the work of Olweus (Macklem, 2003). Comprehensive programs that intervene on different levels and can be adapted to the needs of the individual school may be more successful in reducing antisocial behaviors and victimization. This applies to the Safe School Ambassador program in that the program includes several opportunities of prevention and intervention. During a bullying episode, the leader may intervene as a bystander by defending the victim, distracting member(s) of dyads, or diffusing the situation through other social techniques. This immediate response may reduce escalation of a teasing or bullying episode to something more violent. The immediate response may also model prosocial behavior for other bystanders, diffuse the power of the bully, and support the victim. In this way, the effect of the leader can transcend beyond the immediate episode to influencing other peers, changing the classroom, and hopefully the overall school climate. Building trust with teachers and staff personnel allows students leaders to solicit support from teachers when they do not feel safe handling situations alone and introduces another opportunity to impact the school environment. The literature on successful outcomes of comprehensive programs supports the multidimensional approach of the Safe School Ambassador program.

While the SSA program addresses a number of important antecedents and outcomes associated with bullying, its overall effectiveness is somewhat dependent on the extent to which a participating school is part of a more comprehensive and district-wide bullying prevention strategy in place. The literature underscores the fact that the social dynamics that lead to bullying need to be addressed very early on in the developmental process (Boxer & Dubow). Because SSA is designed for middle and high school youth, the effectiveness of the SSA program will be greatly improved by

districts and communities that have early education and elementary school bullying prevention programs in place. Additionally, complementing the SSA program with programs and activities that impact other aspects of the school environment should result in stronger outcomes. Examples include school staff awareness training and school-wide student sensitization to the problem of bullying.

Because empowering students to intervene *during* episodes of bullying is a relatively new approach, there is currently a lack of empirical evidence linking positive outcomes to these types of interventions. However, the experts in the field appear to be encouraging the use of these bystander interventions and preliminary evaluation results are encouraging. Ongoing comprehensive evaluation is needed for all violence prevention programs to determine the best practices for keeping children safe and facilitating the learning process.

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