

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is research-based

Two types of evaluation design have been used to assess the program. Several evaluations used an 'age-cohort design' with time-lagged contrasts between adjacent but age-equivalent cohorts. One strength of this quasi-experimental design is that several of the cohorts serve both as intervention and control/baseline groups (in different comparisons). In one evaluation project, a traditional control group design was used.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is a research-based program that has been shown to result in:

- *a 30 to 70 percent reduction in student reports of being bullied and bullying others; peer and teacher ratings of bully/victim problems have yielded roughly similar results.*
- *significant reductions in student reports of general antisocial behavior such as vandalism, fighting, theft, and truancy.*
- *significant improvements in classroom social climate, as reflected in students' reports of improved order and discipline, more positive social relationships, and more positive attitudes toward schoolwork and school.*

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is nationally recognized

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program has received recognition from the following organizations:

Model Blueprints Program, Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, University of Colorado at Boulder

Model Program, substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Promising Program, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice

Program Benefits

- Reduction in existing bullying/victim problems
- Prevention of the development of new cases of bullying
- Improvement in peer relations at school, thereby improving the school environment

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Olweus Bullying Prevention Program

Program Information



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*Harris County
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What is the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program?

The Olweus (*pronounced ohl-VAY-us*) Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) is a multilevel, multi-component, school-based program designed to prevent or reduce bullying in elementary, middle, and junior high schools (students six to fifteen years old). By restructuring the school environment, the program helps reduce opportunities and rewards for bullying. School staff are largely responsible for introducing and implementing the program. Their efforts are directed toward improving peer relations and making the school a safe and positive place for students to learn and develop.

While intervention against bullying is particularly important to reduce the suffering of the children who are bullied, it is also valuable for the sake of the aggressive students, as children who bully others are much more likely than other students to expand their antisocial behaviors. Research shows that reducing aggressive, antisocial behavior may also reduce substance use and abuse.

Program Goals:

- to reduce existing bully/victim problems among elementary, middle, and junior high school children in and outside of the school setting.
- to prevent the development of new bully/victim problems.
- to achieve better peer relations at school and create conditions that encourage students to respect each other and to function better in and outside of the school setting.

Target Audience:

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is designed for students in elementary, middle, and junior high schools. All students participate in most aspects of the program, while students identified as bullying others, or as targets of bullying, receive extra attention.

Core Components

School-level components include:

- anonymous student questionnaire assessing the nature and prevalence of bullying at each school,
- school training day for discussing bullying problems and planning the program's implementation,
- the formation of a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee to oversee all aspects of the program
- development of a school-wide system of supervising students in locations where bullying is likely to occur.
- establishing and enforcing school-wide rules against bullying.

Classroom-level components include:

- holding regular classroom meetings with students to increase knowledge and empathy
- encouraging pro-social norms and behavior
- meetings with parents to foster their active involvement are highly desirable both at the classroom and school levels

Individual-level components include:

- interventions with children identified as children who bully others and children who are bullied
- discussions with their parents

Community-level components include:

- reinforcement of the no-bullying message community-wide through community-wide campaigns, billboards, and other promotional efforts.

Program Implementation

Implementation requires significant and ongoing commitment from school administrators, teachers, and other staff. Important elements of the initial phase include:

- establishing a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee and selecting an on-site coordinator (who also should be a member of the committee).
- conducting an anonymous student survey with the questionnaire (for grades 3-5 and 6-12).
- holding a two-day training with members of the Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee to discuss the nature and prevalence of bullying, the elements of the program, and initial steps such as organizing teacher discussion groups and planning a (relatively) fixed schedule of meetings.
- arranging a half-day to full-day training with all teachers and other staff at school (including members of the Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee). During the school training day, results of the student survey are presented and the overall plan for the program implementation is discussed in detail.

