

Bullying Prevention and Intervention at School

Jacob U'Mofe Gordon
Editor

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Integrating Theory and Research
into Best Practices

 Springer

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Preface

The prevalence of bullying and its negative impact on American society has been well documented in related literature. Millions of children and youth are also victims of bullying throughout the globe. The consequences of bullying may constitute an eminent danger to global peace and security as a health and safety issue. The impact on all segments of the global community, especially around educational settings, undermines human rights and the capacity of the educational sector to train the future leaders. The response to this disturbing phenomenon has been widespread; they have been mostly school-based. These anti-bullying programs are primarily designed to reduce bullying and its related negative impact in the schools. It is important to note that there are about 14,000 school districts in America and about 81.5 million K-12 students with a budget in excess of \$500 billion per year. Thus, the reduction and eventual elimination of bullying in American schools poses a tremendous challenge to American society.

The nature of the challenge may be examined from four perspectives: (1) the development of appropriate bullying prevention theories, (2) the policy dimension, (3) program development (prevention, intervention, and recovery), and (4) program evaluation. The response to bullying from anti-bullying community has been multifaceted; they range from school district bullying zero tolerance policy to T-shirts, social and emotional learning (SEL) training, restorative and disciplinary approaches to the most comprehensive Olweus model, and the Friends for Change. Yet research findings indicate the lack of adequate program evaluation to determine the effectiveness of anti-bullying efforts and their cost-effectiveness. Equally important are existing gaps between bullying prevention theories and practices. This book promises to change the situation. It examines emerging theories in bullying continuum of service.

The book has been organized into eight chapters. The first chapter is an in-depth literature review of the current state of bullying. The chapter presents a systematic review of the literature on bullying theories; policies; anti-bullying programs, especially school-based programs; and the state of program monitoring and evaluation. The second chapter examines the predictors of bullying behaviors; using Adlerian theoretical model explains that individuals who engage in social useless behaviors

would be more likely to engage in bullying and other negative behaviors. The third chapter explores the application of bibliotherapy as a strategy for advancing the continuum of service in bullying: prevention, intervention, and recovery. Bibliotherapy may be defined as the use of books, literature, and library materials as therapy in the treatment of mental health or psychological disorder. The fourth chapter focuses on the importance of coaching teachers and school administrators on how to detect and intervene in bullying at school settings. The objective is to improve the teacher detection of bullying behaviors. Chapter 5 proposes a promising approach to reduce cyberbullying in youth and society in general. It acknowledges the current lack of empirical data in cyberbullying prevention and intervention; it provides recommendations for moving forward. Chapters 6 and 7 bring an international perspective to focus. Chapter 6 evaluates bullying in secondary schools in Greece. With a collaborative evaluation research between researchers from Greece and Australia, the chapter documents the outcome of an anti-bullying program that places emphasis on the training of students and teachers on bullying coping strategies. Chapter 7 draws on the team work of researchers from the University of Cape Town in South Africa. It examines the impact of mobile bullying in South Africa with a focus on the victims of mobile bullying. It builds on previous research on violence in Southern Africa by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The final chapter is a response to the research findings which document the lack of empirical data on program evaluation. It examines several evaluation models, including the Olweus, the social and emotional learning (SEL), and the ecological approach, and probes the application of the logic model as the most effective tool for conceptualizing, monitoring, and evaluating anti-bullying programs. The chapter concludes with recommended standards for program evaluation and guiding principles for evaluators.

The final word in the chapters is a conclusion drawn from the research findings of each chapter and recommendations for future directions in the anti-bullying enterprise.

Lawrence, KS, USA

Jacob U’Mofe Gordon

Acknowledgments

The path to completing this book has been challenging and rewarding in many ways. The journey began in 2015 when I became a member of the Board of Directors of the International Bullying Prevention Association (IBPA). Since my first meeting as a board member and attendance at its Annual International Conference in Denver, Colorado, in 2015, I have been inspired to embark on this journey to produce this volume. My overarching goal is to enhance current anti-bullying theories and illuminate successful and effective practices. Of course, I could not have done it alone. Many professionals who are committed to bullying prevention/intervention/recovery research and practice made significant contributions to the process and to the final outcome.

First, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board of Directors of the IBPA, especially Executive Director Ms. Lynn Lonsway for the opportunity to learn and to serve on the Board. Second, I would like to acknowledge and thank all of the contributors to this volume for submitting their valuable research in this field. I appreciate their thoughtful consideration of my editorial suggestions. Third, I want to acknowledge the role of Senior Editor, Ms. Judy Jones, for navigating me through the process of publishing this book with Springer. And, finally, I express my appreciation to my wife, Dr. Barbara McDade Gordon, Associate Professor Emerita, University of Florida, for her technical assistance and editorial comments.

Contents

| | | |
|----------|---|------------|
| 1 | The State of Bullying in Schools | 1 |
| | Bridgitt L. Mitchell | |
| 2 | Predictors of Bullying Behavior: An Adlerian Approach | 17 |
| | Susan E. Henderson, Reade Dowda, and Rebecca A. Robles-Piña | |
| 3 | Bibliotherapy as a Strategy for Bullying Prevention | 37 |
| | Kristen Pennycuff Trent and Stephanie J. Richards | |
| 4 | Coaching Teachers in Bullying Detection and Intervention | 53 |
| | Catherine P. Bradshaw, Tracy E. Waasdorp, Elise T. Pas, Kristine E. Larson, and Stacy R. Johnson | |
| 5 | Cyberbullying Prevention and Intervention: Promising Approaches and Recommendations for Further Evaluation | 73 |
| | Patricia Agatston and Susan Limber | |
| 6 | “Coping with Bullying” Program in Greek Secondary Schools: An Evaluation | 95 |
| | Christina Roussi-Vergou, Eleni Andreou, Eleni Didaskalou, Phillip Slee, and Grace Skrzypiec | |
| 7 | Factors in Reporting Mobile Victimization in South African Schools | 119 |
| | Michael Kyobe and Shallen Lusinga | |
| 8 | Measuring Bullying Prevention and Intervention | 139 |
| | Jacob U’Mofe Gordon | |
| | Index | 151 |

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