

RESEARCH-INFORMED BULLYING PREVENTION: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING & SCHOOL CLIMATE IMPROVEMENT APPROACHES

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Espelage Research Lab

- **SOCIAL-ECOLOGY & SCHOOL-BASED PREVENTION** (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Espelage, 2012, 2014)
- **EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE STUDY** (Espelage, 1998; Low & Espelage, 2014)
- **SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS STUDY** (Birkettt & Espelage, 2014; Espelage, Holt, & Henkel, 2003; Espelage, Green, & Wasserman, 2007; Espelage, Green, & Polanin, 2012)
- **SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DATING VIOLENCE, & BULLYING STUDIES** (Holt & Espelage, 2003; Holt & Espelage, 2005; Espelage & Holt, 2006; Espelage, Basile, & Hambuger, 2012, 2014)
- **THEORY OF MIND, EMPATHY, & PEER RELATIONS** (Espelage et al., 2004; Mayberry & Espelage, 2006)
- **SEXUAL VIOLENCE, & BULLYING** (Poteat & Espelage, 2006; Espelage et al., 2008; Espelage et al., 2012)
- **YOUTH & MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES** (Espelage, Aragon, Birkett, & Koenig, 2008; Poteat, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009; Birkett, Espelage, & Koenig, 2009; Robinson & Espelage, 2012, 2013)
- **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES - Victimization & Psychological Correlates & SEL prevention** (Rose et al., 2010; Rose & Espelage, 2012; Espelage, Rose, & Polanin, 2015)
- **SCHOOL CLIMATE, ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT** (Espelage et al., 2014, 2015)

Espelage Mantra:
With Awareness Comes Misperception

Misperception in Media

-Bullying is an epidemic.

-Bully-suicide linked.

-Bully are young criminals.

-Bullies need to be punished.

-Bullies – dysfunctional families

-Bullying is hard-wired in youth

Scientific Evidence

-Bully Rates Vary

-Bully Only One of Many Predictors

-Bullies are diverse in their outcomes

-Ignores Group Phenomena

-Good kids get involved in bullying

-Environment matters – gene expression

Definition of Bullying (CDC; Gladden et al., 2014)

Bullying is unwanted aggressive behavior(s) among school-age children that has a high likelihood of causing physical or psychological harm or injury and is characterized by:

1) an imbalance of **real or perceived power** that favors the aggressor(s);

2) is **repeated or has a high likelihood** of being repeated;

3)The victim(s) of bullying may feel **intimidated, demeaned, or humiliated as a result of the aggression**.

Components Matter
(Ybarra, Espelage, & Mitchell, 2014; *JAH*)

- Nationally-representative samples: (1) 2008: 1,157 12- to 17-year-olds; (2) 2010-11: 3,989 13- to 18-year-olds.
- Youth who reported **neither differential power nor repetition** had the lowest rates of interference with daily functioning.
- Youth who reported **either differential power or repetition** had higher rates.
- Highest rates of interference with daily functioning were observed among youth who reported **both differential power and repetition; these youth report highest level of helplessness.**
- Youth were victims of online generalized peer aggression (30%) or both online generalized peer aggression and cyberbullying (16%) **but rarely cyberbullying alone (1%).**

Bullying Prevalence

Among 3rd – 8th graders:

- 15% Chronically Victimized
- 17% Ringleader Bullies
- 8% Bully-Victims
- 60% Bystanders
  - Only 13% intervene to help victim

(Espelage, 2015)

Cyber-Bullying Prevalence

- 7% of students in U.S. public schools nationwide reported being cyberbullied in 2013 (Zhang, Musu-Gillette, & Oudekerk, 2016).
- Rate of cyberbullying is lower than the rate of face-to-face bullying victimization (22%), th
- Cyberbullied students were less likely to notify an adult than face-to-face bullying victims (23% vs. 39%; Zhang et al., 2016).
- Review of cyberbullying literature by the rate to be anywhere between 4% and 78% (Aboujaoude, Savage, Starcevic, & Salame, 2015).

Transactional Associations Between School-Based Aggression/Bullying & Cyberbullying

This research was supported by Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (#1U01/CE001677) to Dorothy Espelage (PI)

Method

Participants

- 1,132 students (49.1% female)
- 3 cohorts (5th, 6th, 7th graders)
- Assessed across 4 waves including Spring/Fall 2008, Spring/Fall 2009
- Racially diverse (51% Black; 34% White; 3% Hispanic; 3% Asian; 9% Other)

Bullying Perpetration & Cyberbullying Perpetration

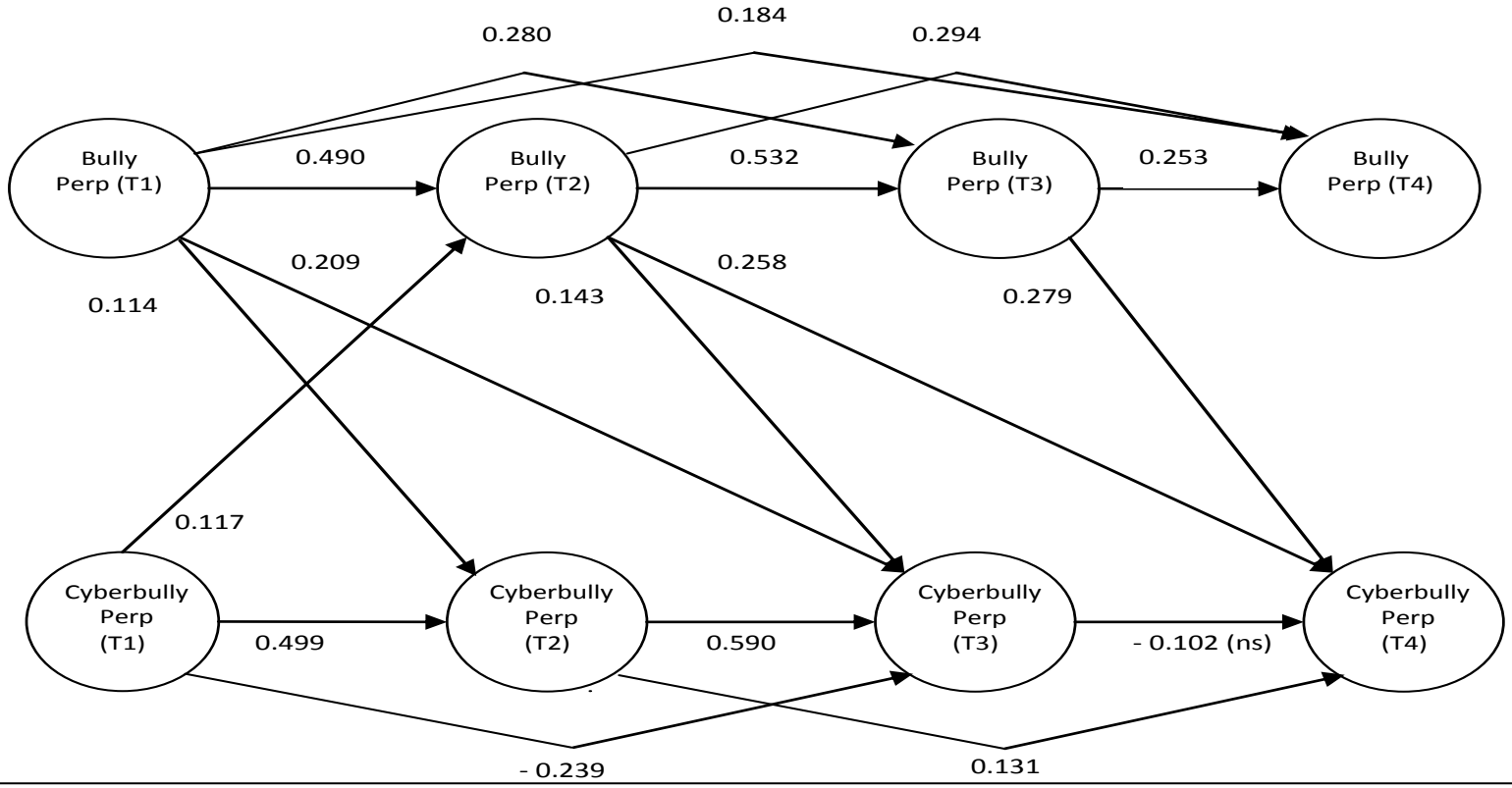


Figure 1. Model Fit: $\chi^2_{(219,\ n=1132)} = 945.318$; RMSEA = 0.0542 $_{(0.0506\ ;\ 0.0577)}$; NNFI = .0975; CFI = 0.980

Espelage, Rao, & Craven, 2013

Bullying Victimization and Cyberbullying Perpetration

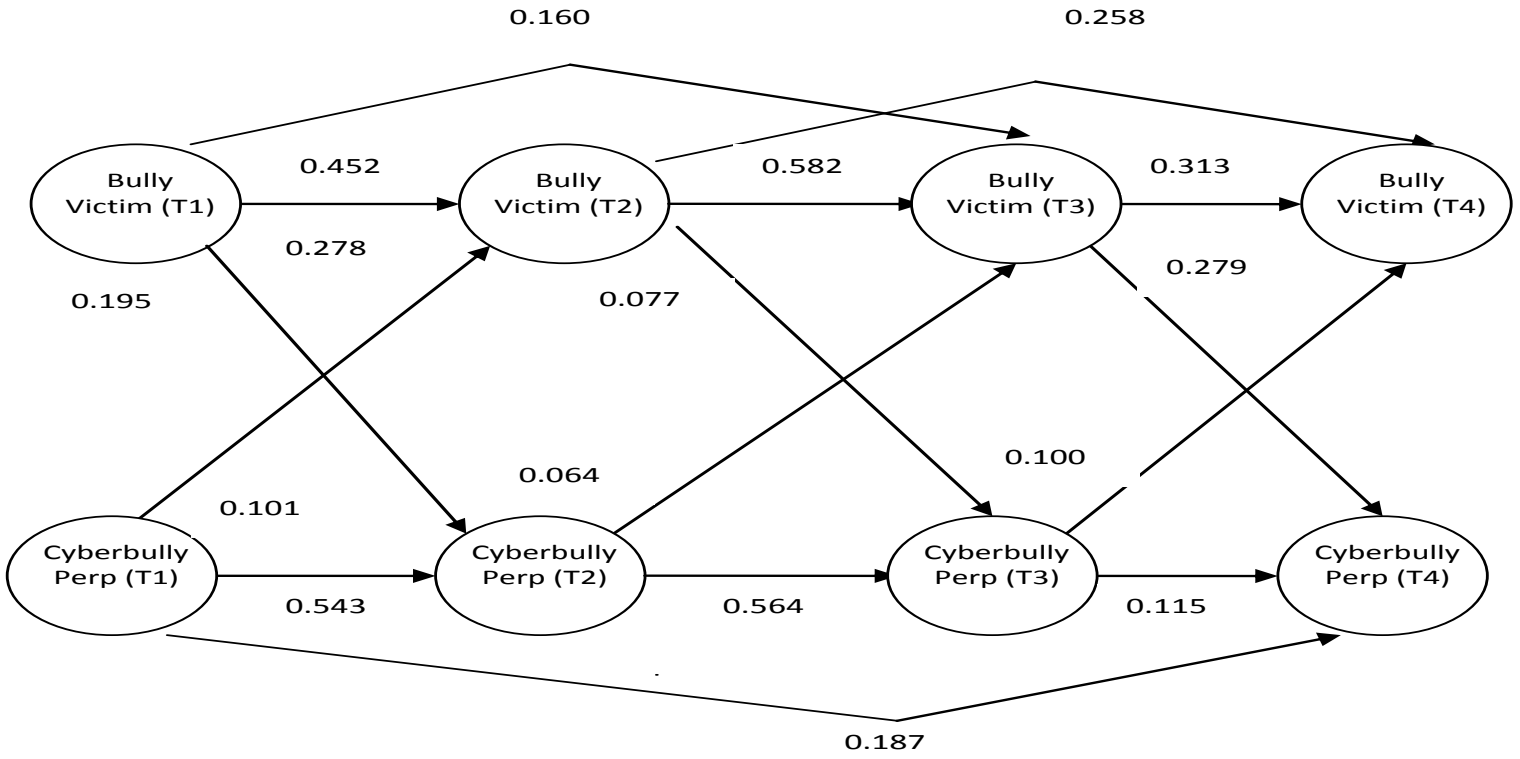


Figure 2. Model Fit: $\chi^2_{(222,\ n=1132)} = 854.147$; RMSEA = 0.0486 $_{(0.0453\ ;\ 0.0525)}$; NNFI = .0965; CFI = 0.972

Espelage, Rao, & Craven, 2013

Bullying Perpetration & Sexual Violence Perpetration Among Middle School Students: Gender-Based Bias Matters

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University of Florida
Lisa De La Rue, Ph.D.
University of San Francisco
&
Kathleen C. Basile, Ph.D.
Division of Violence Prevention
Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia
Merle E. Hamburger, Ph.D.

Journal of Adolescent Health (2012), Journal of Interpersonal Violence (2014)

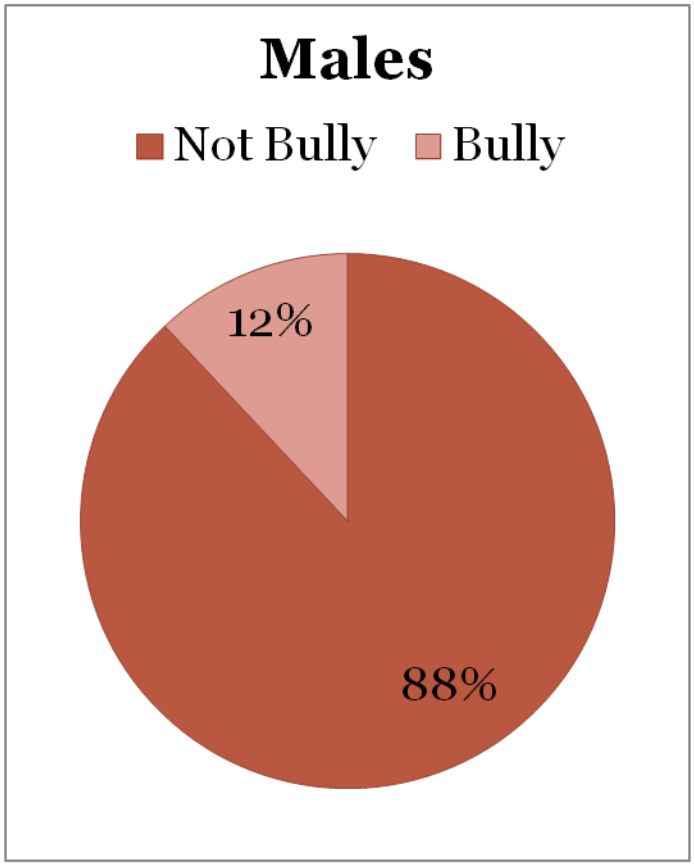
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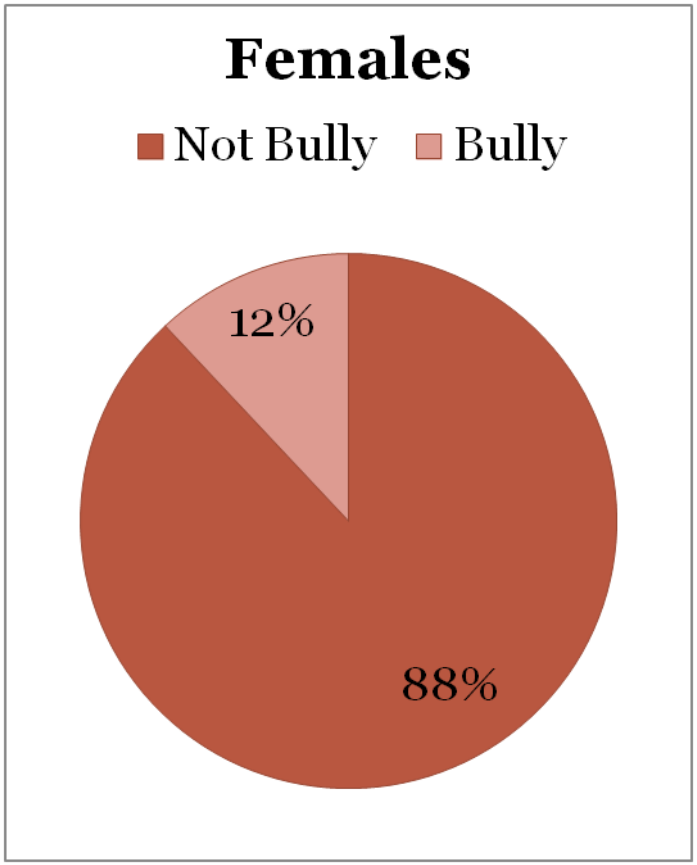
2008-2010 CDC Study Participants

- Demographics:
  - 1,350 students (49.1% female)
  - 3 cohorts (5th, 6th, 7th graders)
  - Racially diverse (51% Black, 34% White)
  - 60% Free/reduced lunch

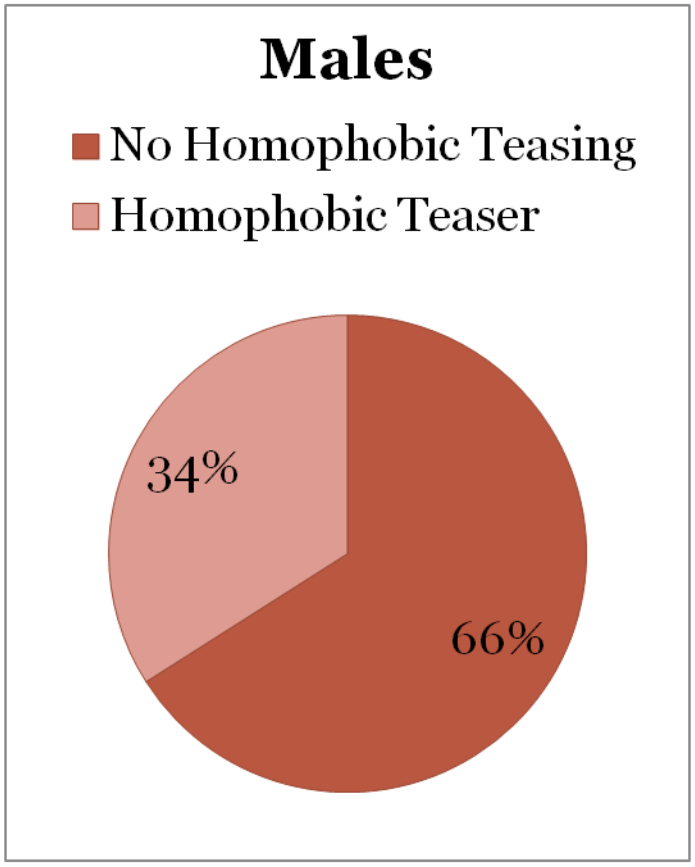
5 waves of data collection
(from spring 2008-spring 2010)

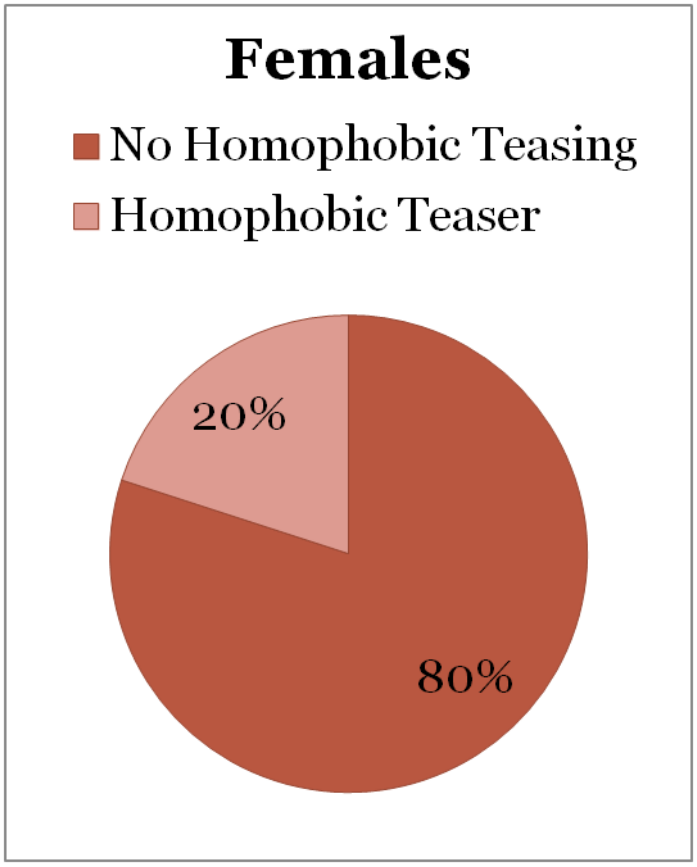
Percentages of Youth who Bully





Percentages of Youth Who Engage in Homophobic Name-Calling





Bullying – Homophobic Teasing Perpetration

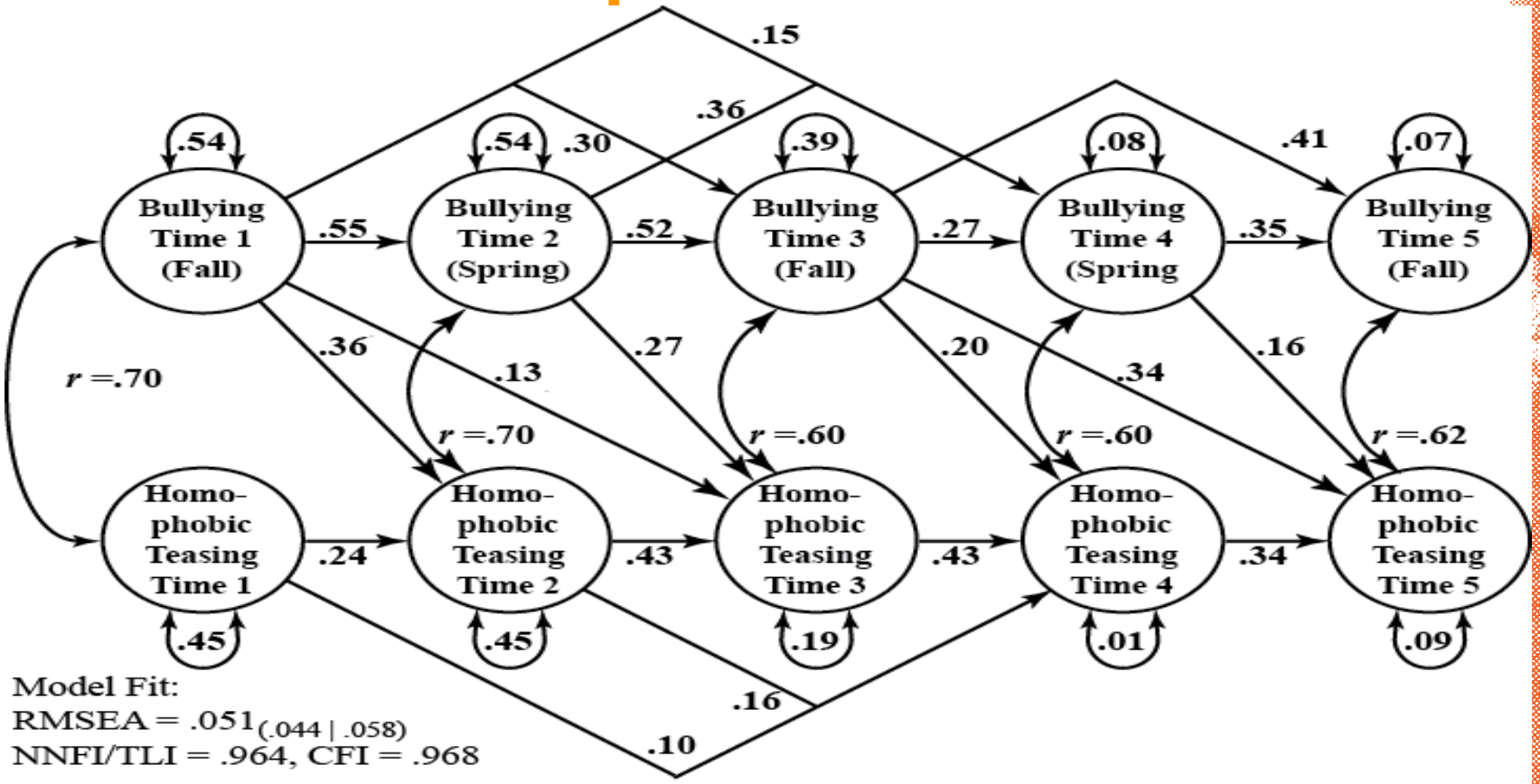
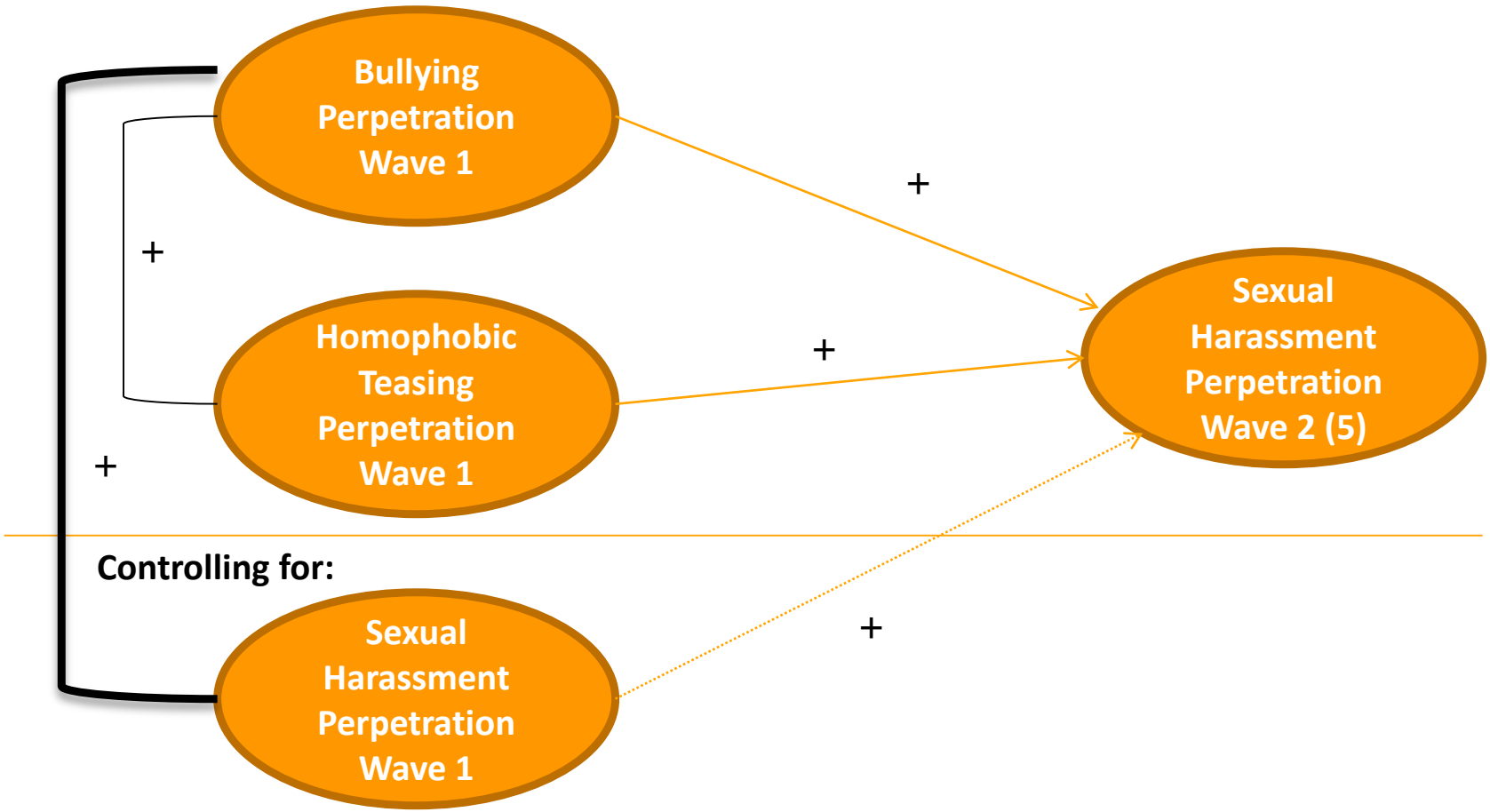


Figure 1. *Standardized parameter estimates from the panel model of the relations among bullying and homophobic teasing.*

(Espelage et al., under revision; Little, 2013)

Longitudinal Results

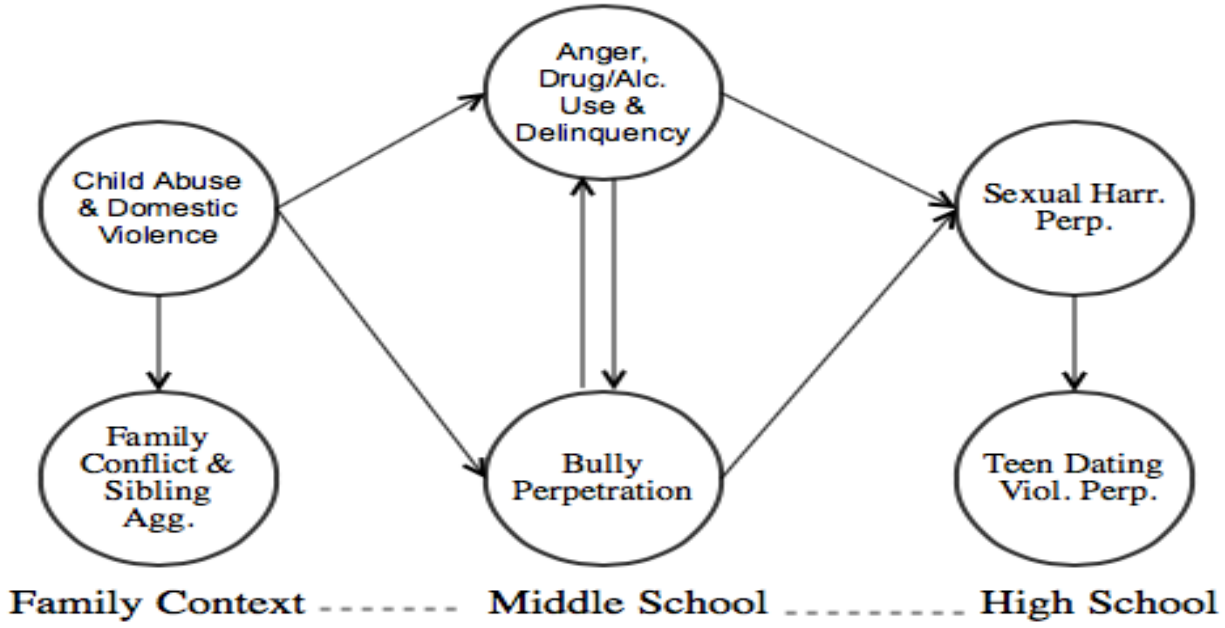


(Espelage, Basile, & Hamburger, 2012; Espelage, Basile, & De La Rue, 2014)

Take-Away Messages

- Homophobic name-calling is prevalent in middle school (Meyer, 2009, 2010).
- Youth who bully resort to homophobic name-calling over the middle school years.
- Bully prevention programs should include a discussion of language that marginalizes gender non-conforming and lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) youth.

Developmental model of bullying, sexual harassment and dating violence



NIJ Grant (MUOFX-0022) to Dorothy Espelage (PI)

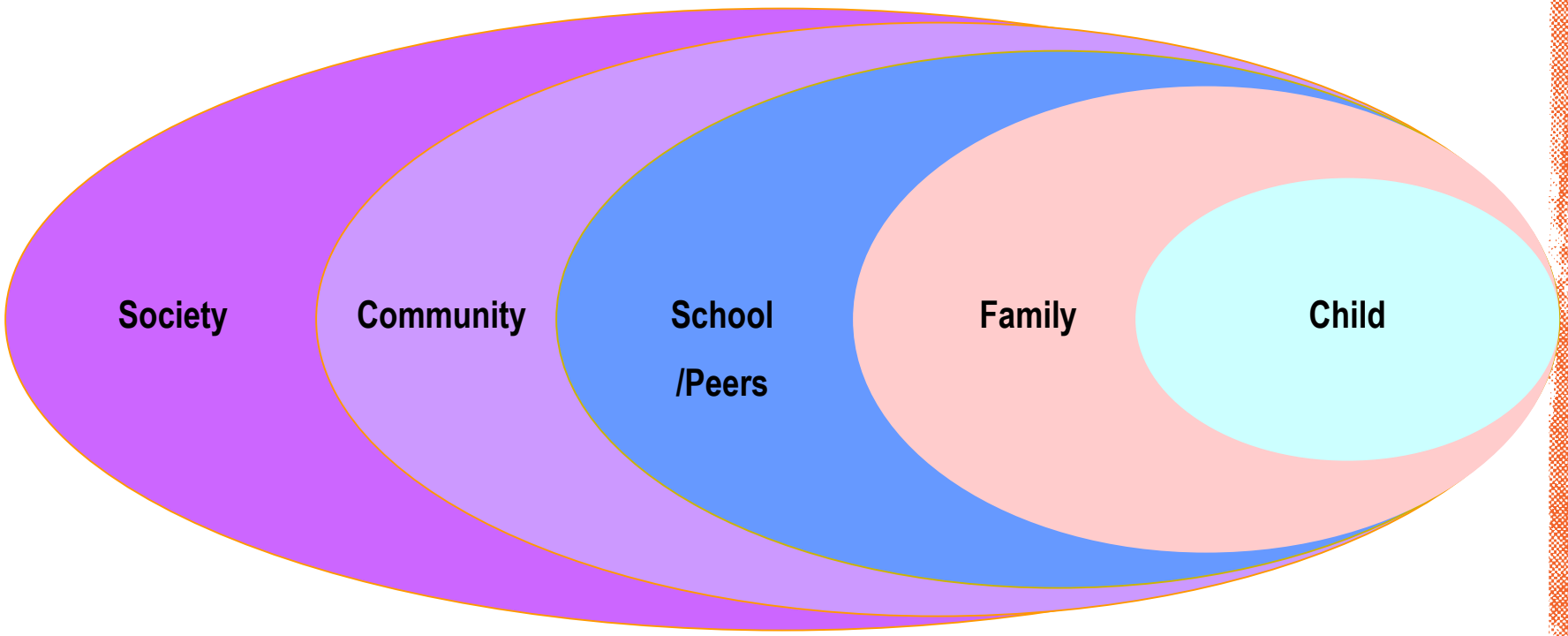
Espelage, Low, Anderson, & De La Rue, 2014

Implications for Prevention

- Research must consider multiple contexts to identify longitudinal predictors, mediators, moderators associated with outcomes for youth who bully and later forms of violence.

- Bullying programs need to incorporate discussion of gender-based name-calling, sexual violence, and gender expression (homophobic language; Birkett & Espelage, 2010; Meyer, 2009, 2010; Espelage, 2016).

Social-Ecological Perspective



(Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Espelage, 2014; Hong & Espelage, 2012)

Meta-Analytic Study

Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim, & Sadek (2010)

- Reviewed 153 studies since 1970
- Youth who bully other students: have significant externalizing behavior, social competence and academic challenges, negative attitudes toward others, family characterized by conflict
- Peer Status & Bully varied by age: Adolescents who bully have higher peer status than children who bully others

Individual Correlates of Bullying Involvement

- Depression/Anxiety
- Empathy
- Delinquency
- Impulsivity
- Other forms of Aggression
- Alcohol/Drug Use
- Positive Attitudes toward Violence/Bullying
- Low Value for Prosocial Behaviors
  - For review (Espelage & Horne, 2007; Espelage & Holt, 2012)

Family & School Risk Factors

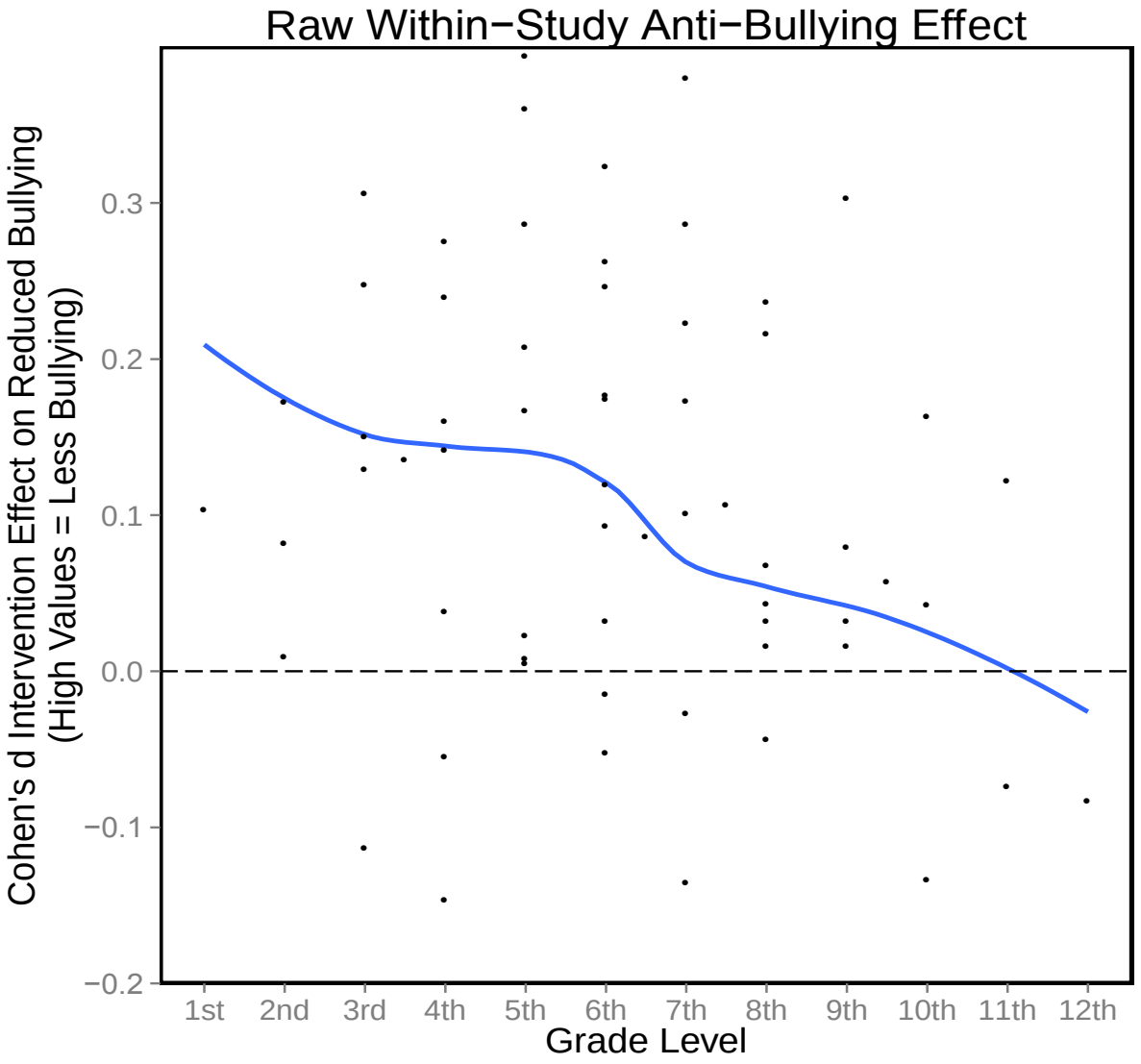
- **FAMILY**
  - Lack of supervision
  - Lack of attachment
  - Negative, critical relationships
  - Lack of discipline/ consequences
  - Support for violence
  - Modeling of violence
- **SCHOOL**
  - Lack of supervision
  - Lack of attachment
  - Negative, critical relationships
  - Lack of discipline/ consequences
  - Support for violence
  - Modeling of violence

For review (Espelage, 2012; Espelage & Horne, 2007)

Developmental Lens

Meta-Analysis:

Yeager, Fong, Lee, & Espelage (2015)



Bullying Prevention – Pushing The Field Forward

- Bullying co-occurs with other types of aggression and other risky behavior (delinquency, AOD).
- Overlapping risk and protective factors need to be targeted in school-based programs in order to address spectrum of problem behavior (Cataliano et al., 2002).
- Need to consider interventions that target multiple forms of violence and aggression that are salient for early adolescents, including peer victimization, homophobic teasing, and sexual harassment/violence (Espelage, Basile, & Hamburger, 2012; Hamby & Grych, 2013)

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

- SEL focuses on the systematic development of a core set of social and emotional skills that help youth more effectively handle life challenges, make better decisions, and thrive in both their learning and their social environments through a climate that supports the practicing of skills.
- A meta-analysis of 213 programs found that if a school implements a quality SEL curriculum, they can expect better student behavior and an 11 percentile increase in test scores (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011).

MULTI-SITE EVALUATION OF SECOND STEP: STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH PREVENTION (SECOND STEP – SSTP) IN PREVENTING AGGRESSION, BULLYING, & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Dorothy L. Espelage, Ph.D.
Professor, Psychology,
University of Florida

Sabina Low, Ph.D.,
Arizona State University
Josh Polanin, M.A., DSG
Eric Brown, Ph.D., University of Miami

Journal of Adolescent Health (2013), Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology (2015); School Psychology Review (2015)

Research supported by Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (#1U01/CE001677)



Committee for Children, 2008

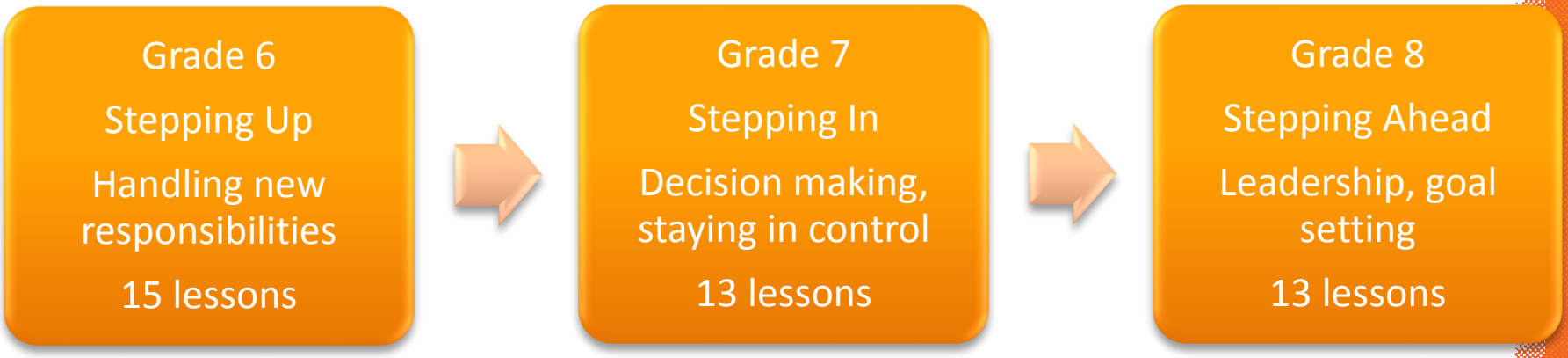
Program Goals

- Research Foundations
  - Risk and Protective Factors
  - Bullying
  - Brain Research
  - Positive Approaches to Problem Behavior
  - Developmental Needs of Young Adolescents

Grade Levels & Lessons

50 minutes to teach a complete lesson

Each lesson is divided into two parts that can be taught separately



Major Study Objective

To rigorously evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Second Step: Student Success Through Prevention program on impacting bullying behavior, peer victimization, and sexual harassment/violence among a large sample of 6th graders in a nested cohort longitudinal design.

Study Timeline

Intervention Schools	6th Graders----------7th Graders----------8th Graders **O_1 X_1 O_2 X_2 O_3 X_3 O_4**					
Comparison Schools	6th Graders----------7th Graders----------8th Graders **O_1 O_2 O_3 O_4**					
	Fall	**Spring**	**Fall**	**Spring**	**Fall**	**Spring**
O = Assessment **X** = Intervention	**Year 1 (2010-11)**		**Year 2 (2011-12)**		**Year 3 (2012-13)**	

Pre-Post (Year 1) Results

- The HGLM analysis indicated that students from the Second Step intervention schools had a significantly decreased probability of self-report fighting (γ_{01} = -.36, p < .05, O.R. = .70) in comparison to students in the control schools.

- The adjusted odds ratio indicated that the treatment effect was substantial; **individuals in intervention schools were 42% less likely to self-report fighting perpetration than students in the controls.**

Espelage, Low, Polanin, & Brown, 2013, *Journal of Adolescent Health*

Year 2 Results

•The adjusted odds ratio indicated that the treatment effect was substantial; **the odds of endorsing homophobic teasing victimization were 56.3% less likely for students in Illinois intervention schools and the odds of endorsing sexual violence perpetration were 38.8% less for students in Illinois intervention schools than students in control schools.**

•Further, schools where teachers spent more time prepping the lesson, invested additional financial resources, and consulted with others (fellow teachers) showed greater reduction in global statistic of all seven forms of aggression/victimization (Polanin & Espelage, 2014).

Espelage, Low, Polanin, & Brown, 2015, *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*

Year 3 Results

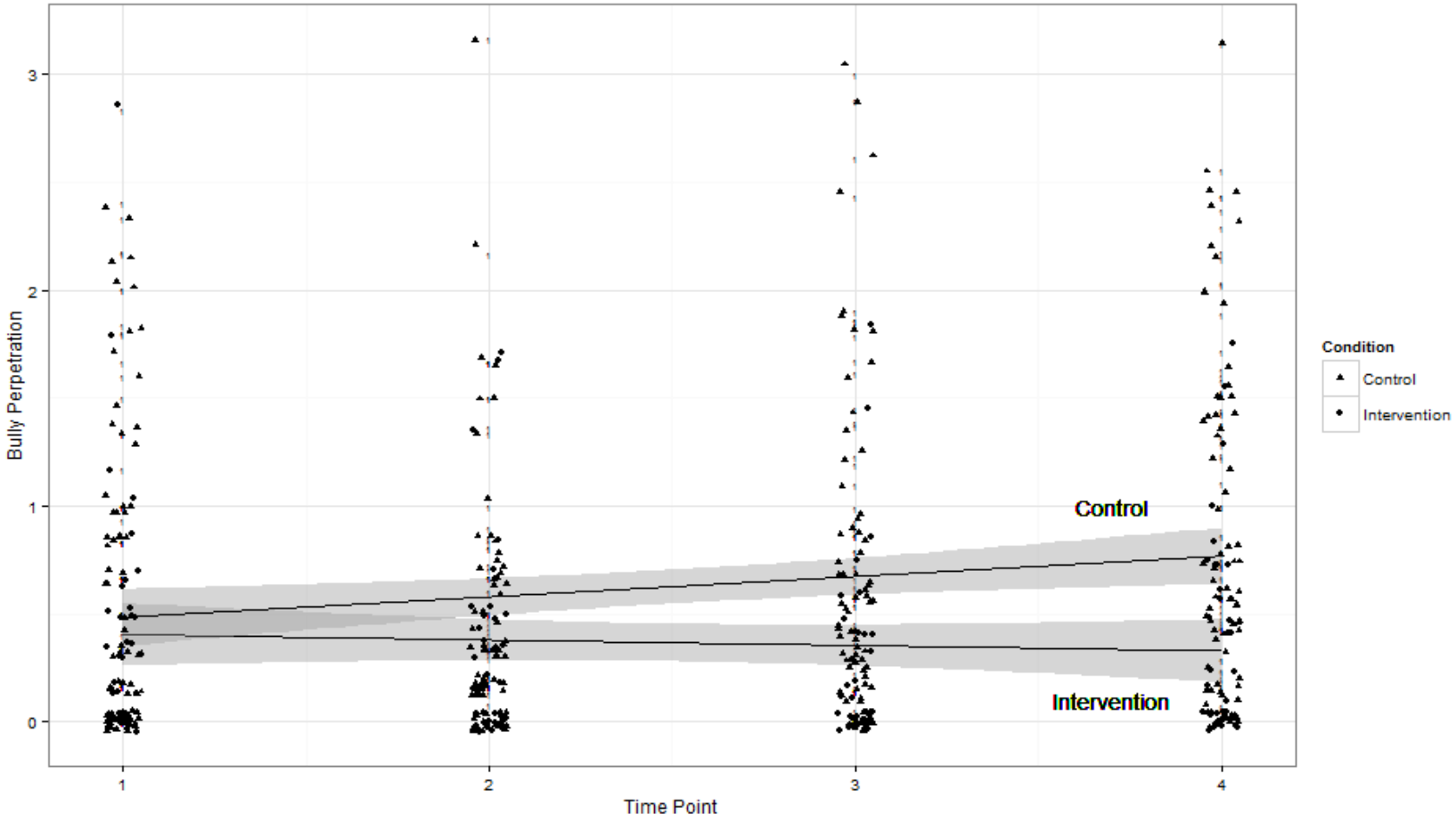
- Indirect effects of Second Step on outcomes Wave 4 by means of individual delinquency trajectories (Waves 1-3).

- More specifically, the Second Step intervention reduced delinquency across Waves 1-3, which in turn reduced all major aggression outcomes.

- Decrease in delinquency may contribute to youth being in more prosocial peer groups; less likely to engage in bullying and other forms of aggression.

Espelage, Van Ryzin, Low, & Polanin (2015) *School Psychology Review*

Students with Disabilities – Bully Perpetration (Espelage, Rose, & Polanin, 2015; 2016)



Teacher/Staff Perceptions of School Culture: Links to Student Reports of Bullying, Victimization, Aggression, & Willingness to Intervene

Dorothy L. Espelage, Ph.D.

Joshua Polanin, Ph.D.

Sabina Low, Ph.D.

School Psychology Quarterly (2014)

This research was supported by Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (#1U01/CE001677) to Dorothy Espelage (PI)

School Culture Matters

- “school policies, attitudes and behaviors of teachers, administrators and the student body, and the overall atmosphere or school ethos, determine the internal life or social, emotional, and motivation climate of the school.” (Kasen et al., 2004).

School Environment Scale

Six scales emerged from factor analyses, measuring teacher/staff PERCEPTIONS OF:

- **Student intervention (5 items; α = .83)**
- **Staff intervention (5 items; α = .89)**
- **Aggression being a problem (5 items; α = .80)**
- **School is doing professional development/administrator support (8 items; α = .90)**
- **Positive school climate overall (7 items; α = .85)**
- **Gender Equity/Intolerance of Sexual Harassment (7 items; α = .79)**

Final Multi-level Model

Variable	Bullying Perpetration		Peer Victimization		Physical Aggression		Willingness to Intervene	
	β (SE)	B	β (SE)	B	β (SE)	B	β (SE)	B
Intercept	.39 (.03)**	-	.96 (.04)**	-	.96 (.05)**	-	2.03 (.04)**	-
Individual								
Female	-.03 (.02)	-.03	-.05 (.03)	-.05	-.20 (.03)**	-.21	.14 (.02)**	.14
Mother's Education	.01 (.01)	.01	.01 (.03)	.03	-.01 (.01)	-.03	.02 (.01)**	.08
White	.17 (.02)**	-.15	.11 (.05)*	.10	-.51 (.05)**	-.47	.18 (.03)**	.17
Hispanic	-.17 (.02)**	-.17	-.23 (.05)**	-.23	-.47 (.05)**	-.46	.09 (.03)**	.09
Asian	-.22 (.04)**	-.07	-.13 (.07)	-.04	-.64 (.06)**	-.21	.19 (.05)**	.06
Bi-racial	.11 (.03)**	-.08	-.01 (.08)	-.01	-.29 (.05)**	-.2	.12 (.03)**	.08
School-level								
Student Intervention	.15 (.14)	.04	-.03 (.18)	-.01	.19 (.20)	.05	-.07 (.10)	-.02
Staff Intervention	.15 (.10)	.04	.30 (.22)	.07	.02 (.19)	.01	-.02 (.11)	-.01
Aggression Problem	-.07 (.08)	-.04	-.14 (.12)	-.08	.09 (.12)	.05	**-.18 (.06)****	-.10
School Commitment to Bully Prevention	**-.20 (.06)****	**-.13**	**-.42 (.09)****	**-.27**	**-.17 (.08)***	-.11	.08 (.05)	.05
Positive Teacher-Staff-Student Interactions	-.01 (.11)	.01	.14 (.16)	.04	-.23 (.21)	-.07	-.13 (.08)	.02
Gender equity/intolerance of sexual harassment	**-.23 (.10)***	-.08	**-.71 (.20)****	-.24	-.13 (.14)	-.05	-.13 (.08)	-.05
State	.05 (.05)	.05	-.04 (.03)	-.04	.05 (.07)	.05	.03 (.04)	.03
Free/Reduced Lunch	.01 (.01)	.05	-.01 (.01)*	-.14	.01 (.02)*	.26	-.01 (.01)*	-.12
% Female	-.66 (.29)*	-.07	-.71 (.32)*	-.08	-.45 (.42)	-.05	.17 (.25)	.02
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Intercept	.39 (.03)**	-	.96 (.04)**	-	.96 (.05)**	-	2.03 (.04)**	-
Individual								
Female	-.03 (.02)	-.03	-.05 (.03)	-.05	-.20 (.03)**	-.21	.14 (.02)**	.14
Mother's Education	.01 (.01)	.01	.01 (.03)	.03	-.01 (.01)	-.03	.02 (.01)**	.08
White	.17 (.02)**	-.15	.11 (.05)*	.10	-.51 (.05)**	-.47	.18 (.03)**	.17
Hispanic	-.17 (.02)**	-.17	-.23 (.05)**	-.23	-.47 (.05)**	-.46	.09 (.03)**	.09
Asian	-.22 (.04)**	-.07	-.13 (.07)	-.04	-.64 (.06)**	-.21	.19 (.05)**	.06
Bi-racial	.11 (.03)**	-.08	-.01 (.08)	-.01	-.29 (.05)**	-.2	.12 (.03)**	.08
School-level								
Student Intervention	.15 (.14)	.04	-.03 (.18)	-.01	.19 (.20)	.05	-.07 (.10)	-.02
Staff Intervention	.15 (.10)	.04	.30 (.22)	.07	.02 (.19)	.01	-.02 (.11)	-.01
Aggression Problem	-.07 (.08)	-.04	-.14 (.12)	-.08	.09 (.12)	.05	**-.18 (.06)****	-.10
School Commitment to Bully Prevention	**-.20 (.06)****	**-.13**	**-.42 (.09)****	**-.27**	**-.17 (.08)***	-.11	.08 (.05)	.05
Positive Teacher-Staff-Student Interactions	-.01 (.11)	.01	.14 (.16)	.04	-.23 (.21)	-.07	-.13 (.08)	.02
Gender equity/intolerance of sexual harassment	**-.23 (.10)***	-.08	**-.71 (.20)****	-.24	-.13 (.14)	-.05	-.13 (.08)	-.05
State	.05 (.05)	.05	-.04 (.03)	-.04	.05 (.07)	.05	.03 (.04)	.03
Free/Reduced Lunch	.01 (.01)	.05	-.01 (.01)*	-.14	.01 (.02)*	.26	-.01 (.01)*	-.12
% Female	-.66 (.29)*	-.07	-.71 (.32)*	-.08	-.45 (.42)	-.05	.17 (.25)	.02
% White	.17 (.11)	.06	-.49 (.15)**	-.18	.64 (.24)**	.23	-.25 (.11)*	-.09

Teacher/Staff perceptions of school culture: Links To Student Reports Of Gender-based Bullying

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Psychology of Violence (2015)

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What about Homophobic Name-calling?

Variable	Homophobic Name-calling Perpetration		Homophobic Name-calling Victimization	
	β (SE)		β (SE)	
Gender equity/intolerance of sexual harassment	**-.40 (.11)****		**-.36 (.12)****	

Rhinehart & Espelage, 2015

Conclusions

- Prevention programs yield reductions in bullying and victimization, and gender-based aggression.

- Effects are strongest among elementary school children & diminish has youth mature.

- Perceptions of staff matter – intolerance for sexual harassment is critical to reduce gender-based bullying and other forms of aggression.

- Finally, to narrow the research-practice gap, the research must be RIGOROUS & RELEVANT

Next Steps

- **Bullydown Text-Messaging SEL middle school program** (Ybarra, Prescott, & Espelage, 2016).

- **Gender-enhanced SEL Middle School Trial** (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention #1RO1CE002340)

- **SEL, Restorative Problem-Solving/Justice, & Student-Led Campaigns (**National Institute of Justice w/Univ. of Oregon # 2015-MU-MU-K003]

- **Sources of Strength High School Suicide Prevention Evaluation for sexual violence outcomes** (Centers for Disease Control & Prevention #CE0002841-01)