School-Based Preventive Interventions

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Programs Aimed at Preventing Bullying

• Meta-analysis of “bullying” prevention programs (Ttofi & Farrington, 2011)
  – Campbell Systematic Review of 53 rigorous evaluations and randomized trials
  – majority conducted outside of the US or Canada (66%)
  – over a third of the programs were based in part on the work of Olweus (1993)
  – effects generally were stronger in the non-randomized controlled trial designs
  • 23% decrease in perpetration of bullying
  • 20% decrease in victimization
Findings from Ttofi & Farrington (2011)

- **Most effective elements**
  - use of parent training activities, meetings, and information
  - high levels of playground supervision
  - use of consistent disciplinary methods
  - classroom management strategies
  - classroom and school-wide rules related to bullying
  - training of teachers
    - Aspects of training
      - amount of time and the intensity of the training
    - **multicomponent prevention approaches** (Olweus, 2005; Smith, 1997)
      - Caveats
        - impacts largest among older children (ages 11-14) relative to younger children
        - programs were generally more effective in Europe than in US or Canada
Does bullying prevention work?

• Some argue…

  – There are relatively few effective universal “bullying” prevention programs
    (Merrell et al., 2008; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011)
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>primary and secondary students</td>
<td>primary and secondary students</td>
<td>primary and secondary school students</td>
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<td>kindergarten, primary and secondary students</td>
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<td><strong>Informants</strong></td>
<td>no restrictions: * student reports * peer reports * parent reports * teacher reports * school records (see p. 549 and table 1, pp. 551 – 552)</td>
<td>no restrictions: * student reports * peer reports * parent reports * teacher reports * school records (see p. 185)</td>
<td>not specified (see pp. 406 – 407)</td>
<td>not specified (see p. 79 and tables 1 and 2, pp. 80 – 84)</td>
<td>outcome measures based only on: * student reports * teacher reports (see table 1, p. 29)</td>
<td>no restrictions: * student reports * peer reports * parent reports * teacher reports * school records (see pp. 31 – 32)</td>
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<td><strong>Effect size magnitude</strong></td>
<td>not applicable</td>
<td>Perpetration: Reductions within programs (percent change) from: − 1% to − 80% Increases within programs (percent change) from: + 1% to + 59% Victimization: Reductions within programs (percent change) from: − 3% to − 62% Increases within programs (percent change) from: + 2% to + 44%</td>
<td>* Perpetration: Fisher’s z (bullying) = 0.12 Fisher’s z (violence) = 0.13 * Victimization: not applicable (only a summary effect size across studies is presented; standardized effect sizes within each program are not shown)</td>
<td>not applicable</td>
<td>* Perpetration: d = 0.04 * Victimization: d = 0.27 (only a summary effect size across studies is presented; standardized effect sizes within each program are not shown)</td>
<td>* Perpetration: summary OR across 44 studies = 1.36 summary ORs within each methodological design also given individual ORs within studies ranging from 0.68 to 2.56 * Victimization: summary OR across 44 studies = 1.29 summary ORs within each methodological design also given individual ORs within studies ranging from 0.40 to 3.14</td>
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(Bradshaw & Ttofi, under review; Ttofi, Bradshaw, & Eisner, 2013)
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Reducing Bullying and Rejection

- School-wide efforts, which involve all school staff, and are implemented across all school settings show the most promise (Espelage & Swearer, 2004; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011)
Reducing Bullying and Rejection

• Universal school-wide prevention models that prevent violence and disruptive behaviors may also impact bullying
  – Classroom management
  – Social-emotional learning programs
A Multi-tiered System of Support: A Public Health Approach to Prevention and Integration

Universal Prevention
Core Instruction, all students, preventive, proactive

Selective or Targeted Intervention
Supplemental, some students, reduce risk

Indicated or Intensive Intervention
Individualized, functional assessment, highly specific for few

Students within Schools

(IOM, 2009; Walker et al., 1996)
Summary of PBIS Effects From Randomized Trials

- Significant Impacts for the School Environment
  - Systems changes are sustainable over multiple years
  - Significant improvements in school climate

- Significant Impacts for Students
  - 32% reduction in school-level suspensions
  - Students 33% less likely to receive an office discipline referral
  - A positive effect on academic performance
  - Significant reductions in teacher-reported bullying, victimization, aggressive behavior, concentration problems, and improvements in prosocial behavior and emotion regulation
    - Effects strongest among “at risk” and “high risk” students

(Bradshaw et al., 2008; 2009; 2010; 2012; Horner et al., 2009; Waasdorp, Bradshaw & Leaf, 2012)
Recommended Core Components

• Teacher training
• Activities for students
• Parent activities
• Multi-component programs
• School-wide
• Continuum of positive supports
• Data-driven process

(HRSA; Limber; Bradshaw, 2013; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011)
NOT Recommended Strategies

- Zero tolerance (i.e., automatic suspension) policies
- Grouping students who bully together
- Brief assemblies or one-day awareness raising events
- Conflict resolution/peer mediation
- Providing details on bullying-related suicides

(HRSA; Limber; Bradshaw, 2013; Duong & Bradshaw, in press; Ttofi & Farrington, 2011)
Topics for Increased Focus over the Next Decade

- Developmental considerations
- Context (urban vs. rural, western non-western)
- Cyber
- Multicomponent vs. focused
- Tiered interventions
- Impact of policy
- Youth involvement
- Social marketing campaigns
- Parents