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ABSTRACT
        This paper reports on a study, which is part of a broader
set of studies, designed to evaluate a violence prevention program entitled
Expect Respect conducted in Austin, Texas elementary schools. The qualitative
study was conducted to determine whether students in schools who received the
Expect Respect curriculum conceptualized bullying differently from their
cohorts in other schools. The program aims to improve peer relationships and
communication skills among students and to help bullies understand the
boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. Forty fifth-grade
students from four schools participated in the study. Two of the schools were
part of the Expect Respect program and two were not. The results showed that
students characterized a more diverse set of behaviors as bullying than
expected. Students who participated in Expect Respect curriculum were more
aware of instances of bullying and were more likely to think something could
be done about bullying. One recommendation of the study is that children need
to explain their definitions of bullying in order for teachers and
researchers to understand their existing cognitions about the topic. It was
apparent that students perceived a need for forums to allow them to discuss
bullying. Appended are the Expect Respect Interviews. (Contains 24 tables and
14 references.) (JDM)

The Effectiveness Of A Violence Prevention Program: Did It Influence

How Children Conceptualize Bullying?

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The Effectiveness Of A Violence Prevention Program: Did It Influence How Children Conceptualize Bullying?

Research on peer victimization in schools has increased dramatically in recent years. This issue is crucial because it is so prevalent, and because it has long-lasting consequences. A convincing case can be made for the negative social, academic, psychological, and physical impact of bullying in the schools. Exposure to bullying by peers has been found to be related to increased dropout rates, lower self esteem, fewer friends, declining grades, and increases in illness (Ballard, Argus, & Remley, 1999; Rigby, 1999; Sagarese & Giannetti, 1999). Bullies in elementary and middle school are more likely to be convicted of crimes (Olweus, 1994) and more likely to take part in sexual harassment and assault in high school and in adulthood (Stein, 1995). The period of transition between elementary and middle school is particularly critical, and has been called the "brutalizing period" due to the increased frequency and intensity aggression experienced by students (Cairns & Cairns, 1986).

This study is part of a broader set of studies designed to evaluate a violence prevention program entitled *Expect Respect*. Expect Respect was implemented in four elementary schools in a medium-sized city. This qualitative study was conducted in order to find out whether students in schools which had received the Expect Respect curriculum conceptualized bullying differently from the way their cohorts in other schools thought about bullying.

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The *Expect Respect* program used a prevention model that addressed social acceptance of bullying among students and school staff. Its primary aim was to improve peer relationships and communication skills among students. It attempted to help bullies understand the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors and taught targets of bullying skills for responding to such behaviors.

The *Expect Respect* project was taught to fifth graders in elementary schools by trained facilitators once a week throughout the semester and used a modified version of the curriculum developed by Nan Stein, Senior Research Scientist for the Center for Research on Women at Wellesley College. The curriculum given to students included core lessons comprised of writing activities, reading assignments, class discussions, role plays, case studies, and homework assignments. In pilots of these lesson plans, children gained a conceptual framework and a common vocabulary that allowed them to find the distinctions between appropriate and inappropriate, and between playful and hurtful behavior (Stein, 1995). It was offered in *elementary* schools because research suggested that interpersonal violence is a learned behavior that can be prevented through education and early intervention (Hazler, 1996; Stein, 1995). Without such early intervention, elementary school bullying has been shown to be predictive of more serious violent acts by individuals during later years (Marano, 1995; Stein, 1995; Fried & Fried, 1996; Besag, 1989). The program followed the direction of research suggesting that school-wide programs are more effective than those focusing on specifically identified bullies or victims (Salmivalli, 1999). School-wide interventions are believed to be more successful because they address the fact that approximately 75% of untreated elementary school students passively watch or actively support observed bullying behavior (O'Connell,

Pepler, & Craig, 1999). Fifth graders were chosen because they would be facing a major transition into middle school in the following year, a time that often shows significant shifts in the levels and nature of peer bullying and victimization as students move into a new school and social system (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000).

For the purposes of this study, bullying was defined as "unwanted words or physical actions that make a person feel bad" (Stein, 1995). This behavior is generally distinguished from teasing in the literature by the way it makes the recipient feel (Crick, Casas, & Ku, 1999, Hugh-Jones, & Smith, 1999, Pellegrini, Bartini, & Brooks, 1999). Children who are teased are not made to feel bad because it is clear that the behavior is done for fun.

Methods

Forty volunteer students from four schools participated in the study. Two of the schools had received the Expect Respect curriculum (intervention schools) and two had not (comparison schools). Eighteen of the participants were males, while 22 were females. A semi-structured interview (Appendix A) was designed and piloted by the researchers and educators involved in the project.

With the exception of two interviews, boys were interviewed by male interviewers and girls were interviewed by female interviewers. The interviews took place in a private room at school in order to encourage the children to speak openly and candidly. We experienced only a few inadvertent interruptions by school staff during the 40 interviews. The trained interviewers tape-recorded the interviews (with children's knowledge and permission) and recorded extensive field notes. All the interview tapes were transcribed for analysis. Interviews lasted between 30 to 60 minutes.

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Data Analysis

We read the transcribed interviews and data records and coded the data independently from each other (both of us had conducted some of the interviews). We then came together to examine each other's codes and to discuss how to sort the codes into categories. We were aware that coding and categorizing rich interview data has the potential of removing children's expressions from their contexts and therefore distort their intended meanings. We wanted to avoid losing sight of the richness of the information that the children shared with us. Therefore, during the coding and categorizing process we routinely referred back to typed transcripts and data records. We didn't simply "count" the number of times a specific code name (such as "calling people names") was mentioned. Each time the code-word was named, we referred to the interview transcript to understand the context in which the child mentioned the code-words in order to understand the *meaning* the child wished to convey. In other words, the code categories are not simple word counts, but rather a count of the number of times children *referred* to a code category, no matter which specific *word* or *name* they used.

After coding the responses into these initial categories (and analyzing differences in student responses within these categories), we grouped them into higher level codes. For example, the four initial coded categories for students' statements about characteristics of the bully ("Crowd Pleaser", "Poor Emotional Self-Control", " Mean", and "Arrogant") were later grouped into the higher-level code of "Personality Characteristics". It is these higher level codes whose analysis forms the basis of this paper.

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Once we were satisfied that our categories and codes accurately reflected children's responses, we summarized the data for evaluation purposes. We counted the number of children in each of the two groups who referred to a specific code. The two student groups and the number of children from each group who participated in the interviews are listed in Table 1.

Table 1
Number of students from each group who participated in the interviews.

	Comparison Schools	Intervention Schools	Total
Boys	10	8	18
Girls	12	10	22
Total	22	18	40

The analysis of student responses to interview questions that are related to conceptualization of bullying follows. For each interview question, a summary discussion of overall findings is listed first. The results for each higher-level code within an interview question are listed next. These codes are ordered from most frequently mentioned to least frequently mentioned. For each category, the numbers and percentages of responses for children in each of the two categories are listed in a table.

Each table is followed by sample quotes from children. Where the number of students' comments is large, comments are grouped according to the initial lower-level codes for ease of interpretation. In addition, the source of each quote is identified according to type of school (comparison or intervention) and gender. Comments are attributed to either a comparison girl (CG), a comparison boy (CB), an intervention girl (IG), or an intervention boy (IB).

Interview Question: What do kids do or say to make other kids feel bad?

Every single child mentioned some form of *"verbal aggression"*. It is remarkable than even when we specifically asked each student to talk about things that children *do* to make other kids feel bad, most children still mentioned a verbally aggressive act, such as laughing at others (for example, their appearance, race, academic or athletic abilities), cursing at them, or spreading rumors about them.

More children in the comparison schools than in the intervention schools mentioned name calling in the specific areas of appearance, academics, and athletics. The largest of these differences was in the "name calling-athletics" category, with twice as many children in comparison schools (most of them girls) mentioning it than those in intervention schools.

About half of the children in each group mentioned *"physical aggression"*. This category included comments such as hitting, punching, pushing and shoving, destroying someone's property, and physically intimidating someone. There were no differences between the two groups in this category.

The third major code was *"isolation"*. A higher percentage of children in the comparison group mentioned this category than those in the intervention schools (41% and 28% respectively).

Table 2
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "verbal aggression" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	10 100%	8 100%	18 100%
Girls	12 100%	10 100%	22 100%
Total	22 100%	18 100%	40 100%

Verbal Abuse (General Name Calling)

- "Fruitcake" (IB)

- "They could hurt your feelings when they talk about your parents" (CG)

- "Some people call people 'Lesbians'" (CG)

Verbal Abuse (Appearance)

- "You're ugly, you're fat"(CB)

- "They call them square head, fat, poor, make fun of how they dress" (CG)

- "They make fun of this boy who looks like a girl. When teacher says 'Girls, go get your lunch' they say...go get your lunch." (IG)

Verbal Abuse (Academics)

- "He's geeky and knows too much stuff" (CB)

- "Someone asks a question, say 'that's a dumb question'" (IG)

- "You are on the honor roll because the teacher felt bad for you." (IB)

Verbal Abuse (Athletics)

- "You wimp, you can't kick the ball" (CB)

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- "…you can't dribble." (IB)

- "If they mess up or do something wrong, they'll just keep bringing that up. Like if you fall down during gym class later on-they'll just keep teasing you about it." (IG)

Spreading Rumors

- "Talk behind their back and start rumors" (IG)

- "Pass notes" (IG)

Laughing at Someone's Misfortune

- "If a classmate fell out of a chair, he might laugh and say you deserve that" (CG)

Prejudice

- "White trash, Black trash, Mexican trash"(CB)

Table 3
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "physical aggression" Category

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	7 70%	5 63%	12 67%
Girls	6 50%	7 70%	13 59%
Total	13 59%	12 67%	25 63%

Physically Hurting

- "Push somebody down" (IG)

Pranks / Mean Games

- "Kick their lunchbox and then say 'pick it up'" (CG)

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- "They will also tell them to do stuff for them and make them feel bad because they're doing something they don't want to." (CG)

- Destroying Property

- "spitting on this girls jacket" (IG).

Table 4
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Isolation" Category

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	2 20%	2 25%	4 22%
Girls	7 58%	3 30%	10 45%
Total	9 41%	5 28%	14 35%

- "They may say "seat saved" but just don't want somebody sitting by them" (CG)

- "Exclude people from class games" (CB)

Interview Question: What are the characteristics of the people who do or say things that hurt other people's feelings a lot? How would you describe them?

It is important to note that we did not use the word "bully" in asking for these descriptions. The word bully is used in discussion of results as a shortcut to referring to "people who do or say things that hurt other people's feelings a lot", which are the words used in the interview question.

The majority of students from both groups (about two thirds) mentioned characteristics which we coded under the *"personality characteristics"* category. The word "mean" was the most popular term for describing bullies. About one third of the

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students used the word "mean" to characterize bullies. Thirty one percent of the students characterized bullies as "arrogant" or "show-off". Twenty six percent of the comparison group, but none of the intervention group, characterized bullies as "crowd pleasers".

Thirty five percent of all students described *"physical characteristics"* of bullies. These descriptions were not consistent, although more children mentioned "tall" or "big" rather than "short" or "small". Many more children in the comparison group described physical characteristics of the bully than those in the intervention group (50% compared to 17%). It is likely that comparison school students have a more stereotypical view of bullies than students in the intervention group.

Another one third of students described bullies as having a *"poor support system"*. Slightly more students from the intervention group noted this category than those in the comparison group. Twenty two percent of the students described bullies as being from troubled homes. Students stated that bullies' troubles at home are because they're mistreated by their parents ("abused", "yelled at"), their parents are divorced, or they are "poor".

Students' remaining descriptions fall under the *"behavioral characteristics"* category. More students in the comparison group described bullies as "getting in trouble with the teachers" than students in the intervention group.

Overall, students in the comparison group seemed more interested in this question than the students in the intervention group. The comparison group students made a total of 52 mentions of bully characteristics, whereas the total for the comparison group was less than 30. The reason for this difference may be that students in the comparison group really wanted to have an opportunity to talk about bullies (as is evident by their

comments in the last question of the interview), or it may be due to their stereotyping of bullies and not yet learning to notice bullying behaviors outside of this stereotypical characterization of bullying ("taking you lunch money" for example is a mention only by comparison group students).

Table 5
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Personality Characteristics" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	7 70%	6 75%	13 72%
Girls	7 58%	6 60%	13 59%
Total	14 64%	12 67%	26 65%

Mean:

- "they're mean" (all of the children who are counted in this category used the word "mean");

Arrogant:

- "they act like cool and stuff and they try to be handsome and they think they're all that" (CB);

- "they usually act cool like they're better than everyone else" (IG);

Poor emotional self-control:

- rude, in your face (CB, IB);

- "he was wild, no one could clam him. I always was thinking he had ADD" (CG);

Crowd pleaser:

- "they always want to be the class clown" (CG);

- "they go with what their friends say—not what their body tells them" (CG);

Table 6
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Physical Characteristics" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	2 20%	2 25%	4 22%
Girls	9 75%	1 10%	10 45%
Total	11 50%	3 17%	14 35%

- "for the guys—wear those baggy pants or shorts" (CB);

- "sometimes they're tall and they have this mean face" (CG)

Table 7
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Poor Support System" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	3 30%	3 38%	6 33%
Girls	2 17%	4 40%	6 27%
Total	5 23%	7 39%	12 30%

They have troubles at home:

- "they have poor parents, so they pick on kids with rich parents" (CB);

- "I used to be like a grumpy bully sometimes—in second grade. My grandfather used to hit me with a belt, treat me meanly and I used to contribute that onto other kids" (CB);

Isolated:

- "they don't have friends" (IG);

- "they're jealous because they're not as popular" (IB);

Table 8
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Behavioral Characteristics" Category

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	1 10%	3 38%	4 22%
Girls	5 42%	2 20%	7 32%
Total	6 27%	5 28%	11 28%

Get in trouble with teachers:

- "they would talk a lot and get in trouble with the teacher" (IB);

Poor academic achievement:

- "they usually don't do well in school" (IG).

Interview question: Without giving any names, tell me how you would describe the kids that have this kind of thing happen to them a lot. What are some of their characteristics?

Forty three percent of all students described targets of bullying in terms of "behavioral characteristics". The same percentage described "physical characteristics"

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of targets. Half of the students in the comparison group, but only one third of students in the intervention group, used descriptions that fit each of these categories.

Five percent of children stated that targets are academically inferior to their classmates. On the other hand, 24% of all children (all but one in the comparison group) believe that targets are academically superior to others. The sharp contrast between the intervention and the comparison group in the "academic-superior" category may reflect the stereotypical conceptualizations that children in the comparison group exhibited throughout the interview.

About an equal percentage of students from the two groups listed *"personality characteristics"* of targets. The two most frequently mentioned of such characteristics were "shy / quiet" and "sad / frightened" with about a third of the children mentioning each category.

An area of difference between the intervention and comparison groups was in the categories of "poor social skills", and "hot-tempered". These categories were mentioned *only* by children in the comparison group. It is possible that the Expect Respect program has succeeded in teaching students in the intervention group to not blame the target for the bullying they suffer.

Table 9
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Behavioral Characteristics" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	4 40%	2 25%	6 33%
Girls	7 58%	4 40%	11 50%
Total	11 50%	6 33%	17 43%

Cry; Frightened:

- "probably frightened, worried" (IG)

- "crybaby" (CG)

General Abilities – Inferior:

- "they are not very good at things we do here. Like when we do stuff in class they don't know much about it." (IG)

- "like, can't really do anything that good" (IB)

- "people who are not good at sports" (CB)

Being Different:

- "they don't look like anyone else. Something is wrong. Their teeth are different. They do weird stuff that is annoying. They act weird." (IB)

Academic – Inferior:

- "they're dumb...They're way behind in class. They don't know a lot." (CG)

Attitudes/Feelings:

- "really bossy and snotty" (CB)

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Poor Social Skills:

- "Interjects when people talk" (CG)

- "Laughs when something is not funny" (CG)

Table 10
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Physical Characteristics" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	4 40%	4 50%	8 44%
Girls	7 58%	2 20%	9 41%
Total	11 50%	6 33%	17 43%

Physical Characteristics

- "usually have some disability or something ..., like wear big glasses or are overweight - ADHD" (CB)

- "shrimpy and skinny. Or they're big ... fat. They don't look the same as everyone else... like their teeth are different" (IB)

- "wore an outfit that they shouldn't have worn to school" (CG)

- "they wear glasses or dress weird, with like Barney characters or old clothes with holes" (CG)

Academic – Superior:

- "get teased for doing stuff for the teacher" (CB)

- "they are really smart when other's aren't" (CG)

Different Nationality:

- "they are from other countries" (IG)

- "oriental and Korean" (CG)

- "looks Hispanic" (CG)

Table 11
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Personality Characteristics" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	2 20%	3 38%	5 28%
Girls	6 50%	5 50%	11 50%
Total	8 36%	8 44%	16 40%

Shy; Quiet:

- "they're real shy" (IB)

- "kind of a nerd. Not very social" (IG)

Weak, helpless:

- "they're helpless. Sometimes they can't get out of it when people are picking on

  them" (CB)

- "bully picks on people that they think are weak" (IB)

Hot Tempered:

- "easily provoked if somebody bumps into them they'll just get really mad" (CB)

Nice:

- "they try to be as nice as they can to other people" (IB)

- "a good kid" (IG)

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Interview Question: What does "bullying" mean to you?

A fascinating finding here is that the responses of students to this question are very similar for the two groups. There seems to be a consistent definition of bullying among children. Eighty three percent of children's definitions fit in the *"verbal aggression"* higher-level category. Slightly more than half of the children mentioned *"physical aggression"*. The most-mentioned categories within this code was inflicting (or threatening to inflict) physical harm. Only the comparison group mentioned "taking your money or lunch", again reflecting a stereotypical characterization of bullying.

At least four students (3 from the comparison schools and one from an intervention school) used the word "teasing" to describe bullying. Six boys in the comparison group, and two boys in the intervention group, used some of the *same words* to define both bullying and teasing. (The question about the definition of teasing comes right after the one about the definition of bullying). Several students used the word "teasing" consistently throughout the interview to refer to what we have been calling "bullying". For example, a CB said (in response to "describe the characteristics of the bully): "Like the people who do the teasing. A lot of times they pick on a single person and tease and tease so that person then tries to tease back. That ends up turning the person who's been teased into a teaser."

Table 12
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Verbal Aggression" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	9 90%	6 75%	15 83%
Girls	10 83%	8 80%	18 82%
Total	19 86%	14 78%	33 83%

Being "mean"; picking on someone; calling people names; making others feel bad:

- "making fun of someone continuously" (IB),

- "insulting someone" (CB);

- "calling mean names" (CG);

- "hurting feelings; ...saying you are wimpy or wuss" (IG).

Teasing:

- "teasing you a lot" (CB);

- "bullying is kinda' like being teased" (IG).

Miscellaneous:

- "being surrounded by people", (IB);

- "dares them to do things, like shoplift" (IG)

Table 13
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Physical Aggression" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	7 70%	6 75%	13 72%
Girls	6 50%	4 40%	10 45%
Total	13 59%	10 56%	23 58%

Physically hurting someone, pushing, shoving, or threatening to physically hurt someone.

- "hurting kids...it's more of a physical process rather than a word process" (IB);

- "someone who beats up people" (CG);

Bossing people, telling them what to do, putting them down:

- "making them like your servant" (CB);

- "treating another human being the way they don't want to be treated" (IB);

- "bossing someone around" (IG).

Taking your property or threatening to take your property:

- "saying, like, 'give me your lunch money'" (CG).

Interview Question: What does "teasing" mean to you?

Responses to this question fell into three higher-level categories: *"verbal aggression"*, *"playful"*, and *"physical aggression"*. More than two thirds of children overall mentioned "verbal aggression" with the majority of them being from the

comparison schools (86% vs. 44%). Students in the comparison group mentioned a category that intervention students did not bring up. Almost a third of the students in the comparison group mentioned annoying/bothering someone as definitions of teasing.

Interestingly, only 15% of the students stated that teasing was friendly and nice for both people. *All* of these students were in the intervention group.

Finally, one student from each group (both boys) described teasing as a physically aggressive act.

Table 14
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Verbal Aggression" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	8 80%	3 38%	11 61%
Girls	11 92%	5 50%	16 73%
Total	19 86%	8 44%	27 68%

Name calling; cussing:

- "it's calling them names, cussing at them; like a bully, except for not physically, but verbally" (CB);

- "calling names, but not a threat" (IB);

Taunting, making fun of someone, intimidating someone:

- "intimidation" (CB);

- "staring at them" (IG);

Annoying, upsetting, or bothering you:

- "bother or annoy someone" (CB);

- "like taking your stuff...when they bully, they don't give it back; when they tease,

  you just give it back. They like make you sing for it or something. (CG)

Table 15
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the
"Playful" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	0 0%	2 25%	2 11%
Girls	0 %	4 40%	4 18%
Total	0 %	6 33%	6 15%

It's friendly; it's nice and fun for both people.

- "calling somebody else names that they're kind of ok with, that they don't get

  mad about" (IB);

- "something fun for both people" (IG);

Table 16
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the
"Physical Aggression" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	1 10%	1 13%	2 11%
Girls	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
Total	1 .05%	1 .06%	2 .05%

- "it's like bullying, you push someone, but it doesn't make you feel *that* bad" (IB);

- "taking things" (CB);

Interview Question: If a kid does something that makes another kid feel bad, does it make a difference to you if he or she was actually *trying* to make the other kid feel bad or if he or she wasn't really thinking about making the other kid feel bad?

Half of the children from comparison schools and one third of students form intervention schools indicated that "*yes, intent makes a differe*nce". The difference between the two groups was more striking in their respective percentage indicating that "no, intent makes no difference". For 56% of the intervention group intent makes no difference, while that percentage is only 14% for children in the comparison schools.

Table 17
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Yes-Intent makes a difference" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	4 40%	4 50%	8 44%
Girls	7 58%	2 20%	9 41%
Total	11 50%	6 33%	17 43%

- "Worse if the person wasn't thinking about how it affected me" (CG)

- "It's different. On purpose, meaner" (IG)

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Table 18
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "No-Intent Makes No Difference" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	2 20%	4 50%	6 33%
Girls	1 8%	6 60%	7 32%
Total	3 14%	10 56%	13 33%

- "It doesn't matter to me, because I don't like people do that to me" (CB)

- "It doesn't matter because they feel bad anyway" (IG)

Interview Question: Do you think bullying is a problem in schools in general?

Thirteen percent of children think bullying is not a problem in schools, but 53% believe that it is. More students in intervention groups than in comparison groups acknowledge the problem (61% vs. 45%). The largest differences in this category are between boys and girls. More than twice as many girls than boys believe bullying is a problem in schools.

Table 19
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Yes-Bullying Is a Problem" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	5 50%	3 38%	8 44%
Girls	5 42%	8 80%	13 59%
Total	10 45%	11 61%	21 53%

- "I think so. Bullying can happen anywhere." (IG)

- "we don't have much bullying here. I think other schools would have more if they didn't have Expect Respect." (IB)

Table 20
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "No-Bullying Is Not a Problem" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	4 40%	5 63%	9 50%
Girls	4 33%	0 0%	4 18%
Total	8 36%	8 44%	13 33%

- "uh, no I think it was before, when my parents were kids because they didn't have monitors." (CG)

- "I don't think it's a big problem here because they keep it under control. If someone sees someone getting bullied; they will tattle tale." (IB)

Interview Question: What do you think should be done about bullying in schools?

The most frequently mentioned category was "*education/discussion*". Students in the comparison group were more likely than intervention students to list solutions that fit in this category.

The next most-mentioned group of suggestions fit under the category of "*intervene/get involved in bully's life*". There was no difference between the percentage of children in the comparison and intervention groups in this category. However, a closer examination at the specific adults children mentioned reveals that children in the

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comparison group suggest a parent should intervene, whereas children in the intervention

group are more likely to suggest an adult at school should intervene.

Children in the intervention group were the only ones to suggest public

discussions about bullying (23% vs. 0%). Several children named Expect Respect as a

model for what could be done about bullying. It should be pointed out that interviews at

intervention schools were conducted by people who had not been involved in delivering

the Expect Respect curriculum to the children. Furthermore, no association was

suggested between the interview and the Expect Respect project.

A third group of suggestions fit in the *"punish the bully"* category. The

percentages of students were similar for the two groups (about one third), however, only

students in the comparison group suggested "suspensions".

A difference between the two groups was in the percentages of mentions that

"nothing can be done about bullying". None of the children in the comparison group

expressed this opinion, whereas 9% of the comparison group (all girls) did.

Table 21
**Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the
"Education/Discussion" Category.**

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	4 40%	3 38%	7 39%
Girls	7 58%	3 30%	10 45%
Total	11 50%	6 33%	17 43%

Educate the Bully

- "talk about what they have done and how that made the other person feel." (CB)

- "ask why they do it. They have to have a reason, they can't just spontaneously want to bully you." (IB)

Public Discussion

- "they should have a talk about it just like Expect Respect." (IB)

- "learn more about bullying." (IG)

- "more classes like Expect Respect." (IG)

Table 22
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Intervene/Get Involved in Bully's Life" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	5 50%	2 25%	7 39%
Girls	5 %	4 %	9 41%
Total	10 45%	6 33%	16 40%

Adults should intervene:

- "adults should know so they can fix the problem." (CB)

- "I think adults should try to stop it. Be more aware about people who are getting picked on." (IB)

Involve Parents:

- "sending a note home to parents; letting the parent deal with it." (CB)

- "parents should teach kids to have confidence; to stand up for themselves." (CB)

See if there is a problem at home:

- "talk to the bully. Find out what's going on at home." (CG)

- "talk to bullies' parents. Sometimes a bully becomes a bully because his parents mistreat him." (CB)

Other kids should help target:

- "you should just go and try to help them." (CB)

- "should be lots of safety patrols watching." (IG)

Table 23
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Punish the Bully" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	5 50%	4 50%	9 50%
Girls	3 25%	3 30%	6 27%
Total	8 36%	7 39%	15 38%

Loss of Privileges:

- "get shorter recess." (IG)

Punished:

- "sometimes the kids who do the bullying a lot actually don't get punished for it since they do it so often." (CB)

Isolate (School/Class):

- "they have to go to different schools; that would keep them out of other kids way." (CB)

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Suspension:

- "the mom could take him home for a day." (CG)

- "suspended from school." (CB)

Table 24
Number and Percentage of Students from Each Group who Mentioned the "Nothing Can Be Done About Bullying" Category.

	Comparison Number %	Intervention Number %	Total Number %
Boys	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%
Girls	2 17%	0 0%	2 9%
Total	2 9%	0 0%	2 5%

- "nothing really." (CG)

Discussion

Students' responses to the questions of "what do kids do or say to hurt other kids", and "what does bullying mean to you" were consistent with each other. It appears that bullying is mostly conceptualized (and perhaps experienced) as verbal aggression. Every single student listed an example of verbal aggression in describing how kids hurt each other, while only about half of them described a physically aggressive acts. Similarly, 83% of all children defined bullying as verbal aggression, whereas about half mentioned physical aggression. Considering that the stereotypical image of a bully is someone who beats up other kids, it is surprising that not very many students defined bullying in terms of physical aggression.

Most children seem to use the word teasing to refer to "verbal bullying". Only a small percentage of the children in the intervention group (15%) defined "teasing" the way the Expect Respect curriculum does—as something fun for both parties involved.

Bullies are described by both groups mostly in terms of their personality characteristics. Children from intervention schools don't seem to have a consistent list of bullies' physical characteristics, while about half of the students in comparison schools describe physical characteristics of bullies. Overall, students in comparison schools demonstrated a more stereotypical characterization of bullies. Further, intervention-school students were more likely than their cohorts in comparison schools to characterize bullies as having a poor support system.

Similarly, descriptions of bullying targets were different for the two groups in a pattern which may indicate stereotyping of targets by comparison students. Twenty four percent of children -- all but one from the *comparison* group -- believe that targets are academically superior to others. Further, the categories of "poor social skills", and "hot-tempered" were mentioned only by children in the *comparison* group.

Another indication that the comparison and intervention groups may be different in their conceptualizations of bullying is that many more intervention students than comparison students correctly identify that in defining bullying, the *intent* of the bully is not an important factor. As the Expect Respect curriculum had taught the intervention students, more than half of them (compared to 14% of the comparison group) stated that intent makes no difference. Still, about one third of the intervention group (and half of the comparison group) believe that intent of the bully *does* make a difference.

More students in intervention groups than in comparison groups acknowledge that bullying is a problem in schools. The Expect Respect curriculum may be heightening students' awareness of problems in children's relationships in intervention schools. These students seem to have a more accurate and realistic definition of bullying in schools compared to their peers in comparison schools. They are more equipped to spot bullying around them.

It is interesting to note that many of the same students who had described episodes of bullying at their schools during the course of the interview stated that bullying is *not* a problem at schools. It remains to be studied whether they *expect* bullying as a part of the school social environment, or they don't perceive it as a *problem* since they are not targets of it, or there is another explanation.

For solutions to bullying in schools, students in the comparison group were more likely than intervention students to list *"education/discussion"*. Since these suggestions were completely unprompted and were made by students who were naive to the Expect Respect program, they may be interpreted as validating a need for an educational intervention program such as Expect Respect.

An equal percentage of students in the two groups suggested that adults should intervene in solving bullying problems. However, children in the comparison group tended to suggest a *parent* should intervene, whereas children in the intervention group were more likely to suggest an adult *at school* should intervene. Overall, children in comparison schools suggested involving parents and considering problems at home at a much higher rate than children in intervention schools. This is evidence that Expect

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Respect's curriculum has effectively communicated that adults at schools should be accountable for taking care of bullying at schools.

Children in the intervention group were the only ones to suggest public discussions about bullying. Several children named Expect Respect as a model for what could be done about bullying.

An important difference between the two groups was in the percentages of mentions that *"nothing can be done about bullying"*. None of the children in the comparison group expressed this opinion, whereas some of the comparison group girls did.

Summary

- Students characterize a more diverse set of behaviors as "bullying" than expected.

- The most-often mentioned definition of "bullying" is verbal aggression, *not* physical act.

- Students use the words "bullying" and "teasing" both to describe hurtful behaviors.

- Students may use the term "teasing" to refer to non-physical bullying behaviors. Name calling, for example, may be called "teasing" not "bullying", even when it is intended to hurt the other's feelings.

- Students who participated in the Expect Respect curriculum were more aware of instances of bullying at their school and offered more elaborate descriptions of bullying behaviors.

- Students from comparison schools showed a more stereotypical conceptualization of bullies and targets.

- Children who report instances of bullying don't necessarily characterize bullying as a problem in schools.

- Students in intervention schools tend to hold adults at *schools* accountable for solutions to bullying rather than parents at home, and are much less likely to believe that *nothing* can be done about bullying.

Limitations

Most of the interview questions were written with the intent to elicit responses from children that reflected their general conceptualizations of bullying and teasing. Children's responses to the interview questions, however, were mostly biographical; that is, they tended to talk about what they had seen children do or say, rather than talk about their general impressions. This outcome, though not totally unexpected, makes it more apparent that children's reported conceptualizations of bullying, bullies, and targets are perhaps influenced by their recent encounters at school or exposure to television shows or stories they may have read.

Second, we attempted to dissociate the interviews from the Expect Respect program by having students at those schools interviewed by people who were not directly involved in teaching the Expect Respect curriculum. Additionally, interviews were conducted four weeks after the program sessions ended at these schools. Still, students could not help but perceive a relationship between the interview and the Expect Respect Program. It is possible that such a perceived association primed them for giving

responses compatible with the program's teachings. It is our hope that Expect Respect students will be similarly primed for remembering these lessons when they encounter real bullying episodes.

Third, we constructed a self-report instrument to measure the *extent* of bullying among these before these interviews were conducted. Although that instrument did a fairly good job of measuring changes in amount of bullying at schools from before to after the Expect Respect program, it did not cover the full range of behaviors that students mentioned in these interviews.

Finally, having data from observations of students at schools would have provided a richer context for interpreting students' comments.

Conclusion and Implications

When we began the Expect Respect program, we felt as if our extensive literature review combined with our experiences in working with children had given us a clear understanding of the bullying and teasing that fifth graders experience. The first lesson in the curriculum asks the students to sort a list of behaviors under two categories: "bullying" and "teasing". The objective is to help students learn which behaviors are hurtful to others (listed under "bullying") and which are not hurtful (listed under "teasing"). Based on the preliminary findings, it appears that referring to the "non-hurtful" or "playful" behaviors as "teasing" may be confusing to children since they seem to be using the term "teasing" to refer to non-physical bullying behaviors such as name-calling.

As our work with the students continued, it became clear that we had to let the children tell us *their* definitions of bullying and teasing. In order to devise effective

programs to teach children to be more sensitive to bullying and to know management

strategies for bullying, we needed to understand their existing cognitions about the topic.

It is important to speak the students' language, (i.e., use their own terminology, and use

examples from their own experiences,) so that they are more likely to listen and

remember the lessons.

From comparison students' responses it seems that surveys that simply ask

students to report whether they "feel safe" at schools, or if bullying is a problem, may

have results that are artificially low. Even many students who describe personal

examples that based on their *own* definitions of bullying would be considered bullying,

report that bullying is not a problem at schools. Further, it seems apparent that students

perceive a need for forums which allow them to discuss bullying. They also state that

adults need to pay attention to bullies – in the form of educating them or punishing them.

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Appendix A
Expect Respect Student Interviews
Shirin C. Khosropour

Sometimes kids say or do things that make other kids feel bad.
1. What kinds of things do kids *say* that make other kids feel bad?
2. What kinds of things do kids *do* that make other kids feel bad?
3. What kinds of things do kids do or say specifically *in class* that make other kids feel bad?
4. What kinds of things do kids do or say at places other than the class that make other kids feel bad? Places like on the playground, hallways, cafeteria, the bus, or any other places you can think of that kids come in contact with each other outside of class.
5. Are there people at your school who do this kind of thing a lot?
6. Without giving me any names, tell me how would you *describe* the kids who do this kind of thing a lot? What are some of their characteristics?
7. Are there people at your school who have this kind of thing happen to them a lot? Like they get picked on a lot by other kids?
8. Again, without giving me any names, tell me how you would describe the kids that have this kind of thing happen to them a lot. What are some of their characteristics?
9. What does *bullying* mean to you?
10. What does *teasing* mean to you?

If by this point, the student has not been using a specific word to consistently refer to what we call "bullying" suggest this word for the sake of brevity in questions. Say something like:
"Some people use the word "bully" to talk about kids who do or say things that make other kids feel bad a lot. So from now on, if I use the word "bully", I'm just talking about kids who do or say things that make other kids feel bad a lot of the time."

11. How do you think bullying makes the person who's being bullied feel?
12. How do you think bullying makes the bully feel?
13. Sometimes when someone is being bullied, there are other kids around who don't do any bullying themselves, but can see what's happening. How do you think the kids who are watching the bullying feel?

If by this time, the issue of "intent" has not come up, ask:
14. If a kid does something that makes another kid feel bad, does it make a difference to you if he or she was actually *trying* to make the other kid feel bad or if he or she wasn't really thinking about making the other kid feel bad?
Let me read this question again. It's kind of a long question. There's no right or wrong answer to this question. *(Read question 9 again).*
   • Can you tell me how you decided on your answer?

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15. Do you think bullying is a problem at schools in general?
16. What do you think should be done about bullying at schools?
17. There may be other things about how you feel or think about bullying, teasing, or watching bullying happen that I haven't asked you about? Are there any other things you think I should know?
18. Do you have any suggestions about other questions I should ask the other children about bullying?
19. Do you have any suggestions about questions I should ask the adults about bullying?
20. If you could talk to your principal about bullying and knew that they'd take what you say seriously, what would you say to your principal?

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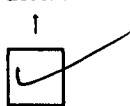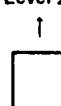| The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents	The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents
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