

Submission
No 44

INQUIRY INTO BULLYING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Organisation: NSW Commission for Children and Young People
Name: Ms Gillian Calvert
Position: Commissioner
Date received: 25/03/2009

**Submission to the NSW Legislative Council General Purpose
Standing Committee No. 2**

Inquiry into the bullying of children and young people

March 2009

**Submission to the NSW Legislative Council General Purpose Standing
Committee No. 2**

Inquiry into the bullying of children and young people

March 2009

1. The NSW Committee for Children and Young People

The NSW Commission for Children and Young People ('the Commission') promotes the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people in NSW.

The Commission was established by the *Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998* (NSW) ('the Act'). Section 10 of the Act lays down three statutory principles which govern the work of the Commission:

- (a) the safety, welfare and well-being of children are the paramount considerations;
- (b) the views of children are to be given serious consideration and taken into account; and
- (c) a co-operative relationship between children and their families and community is important to the safety, welfare and well-being of children.

Section 12 of the Act requires the Commission to give priority to the interests and needs of vulnerable children. Children are defined in the Act as all people under the age of 18 years.

Section 11(d) of the Act provides that one of the principal functions of the Commission is to make recommendations to government and non-government agencies on legislation, policies, practices and services affecting children.

2. Introduction

The Commission is pleased to make a submission to the Inquiry into the bullying of children and young people. This submission is informed by the growing body of research into bullying and our conversations with children and young people in NSW.

The Commission engages directly with children and young people about issues that affect their well-being. We are committed to communicating their views to policy makers so that solutions are also shaped by the voices of children and young people. We are pleased to share our unique perspectives into the lived experiences of children and young people in NSW.

Over the past ten years children and young people have been very keen to speak with us about issues that are important to them. Bullying is an issue that has been raised by many children in a number of forums. This submission includes some of the voices of those children and young people

we have spoken with during our work, including the Commission's Young People's Reference Group.

The focus of this submission is on what children and young people have shared with us and how we can use their experiences and the available evidence to better understand and assist them to prevent, and deal with, bullying.

We note there are a number of programs currently being developed and implemented to address bullying, most notably in schools. This submission is not focussed on reporting on the efficacy of these approaches. However we have attached a brief overview of some examples of methods of intervention in cases of bullying in schools at appendix A for the Committee's reference/information.

The submission is presented in 3 parts. Section 1 provides background to assist the committee in understanding bullying of children and young people. Section 2 provides information on preventing and intervening early in bullying including schools and cyberspace. Section 3 outlines some possibilities for developing child centred approaches and a summary of recommendations.

Perhaps the Commission's most significant finding from our decade of research and conversations is the importance of relationships to children and young people. Whenever we have spoken to children and young people they have told us that relationships are very important.

All children and young people, regardless of age, race, gender, vulnerability or disadvantage tell us that their relationships, with friends, family and their communities, are crucial to their experience of well-being.

Experiences that rupture a child's relationships, or leave a child feeling isolated and alone, increases their vulnerability.

SECTION 1: UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

3. What is bullying?

The emergence of "bullying" as a phenomenon is relatively recent.

It has only been since the 1980s that there has been an increase in research into bullying.

Bullying has been defined by researchers as unjustified aggressive action (behaviour) that takes place in situations in which there is an imbalance of power between the perpetrator(s) and the target(s). Bullying is understood broadly as the systematic abuse of power. It is this power imbalance, along with repetition and intention, that distinguishes bullying from other forms of aggression (Olweus, 1999, Rigby, 2002, Nation et al., 2008, Vaillancourt et al., 2007).

In research, bullying is often classified according to whether the actions are direct, such as face to face physical or verbal aggression or indirect, through excluding someone, spreading malicious rumours and discouraging others from making social contact.

Australian research into bullying in school settings found around 50% of school children reported having been bullied, in one way or another, at least once during a school year. A much smaller proportion, around 15%, reported being bullied on a weekly basis (Rigby, 1998a).

There may be differences between what adults and children understand as bullying (Naylor et al., 2006). The exploration of how children understand and define bullying is an area for ongoing investigation.

Bullying is often confused with peer violence. Community understanding of bullying may be influenced by media representations of peer violence as "bullying" and coverage of violent reprisals by reported victims of bullying. While these events are disturbing and tragic they are infrequent.

More common are the less visible experiences of loneliness, helplessness and confusion that children have shared with us about bullying.

And if you don't have friends you will be so lonely at school. Like when you go out to play and there is no-one to play with you. And all the other friends, all of the other friends are playing with someone else. It is like if you don't have friends you never have friends. (Girl, 10 years)

I get really sad and emotional and I try, it is hard for me to ignore it because it happens like every day. (Girl, 10 years)

When children have spoken with us about bullying what they describe are actions directed at an individual, by another person or a group of persons. The following are some of the behaviours that a group of children and young people identified when we asked them for a definition of bullying.

What is Bullying?

Name calling	Staring and spreading	Cyber bullying
Ganging up on one person	rumours	(via the internet, SMS, email, MSN, social networking sites like Facebook, BeBo and MySpace)
Making false promises	Bitching	Manipulating
Talking about people behind their backs	Pushing people	Blackmailing
Stopping others from talking to people	Belittling	Pressuring people
Drawing on pictures of people	"you're worthless"	Making threats
	Stealing things	
	Not talking to people	
	Passing notes	
	Gossiping	
	Bashing	

4. Where does bullying occur?

Children and young people have told us that bullying can occur in a variety of settings. The Commission's Young People's Reference Group, at their March 2009 meeting, identified the following as places where children and young people get bullied:

- School and around school
- Cyber space
- At sport and other recreational activities
- On the bus and train
- Public places like the street, shopping centre, road
- At work
- At home.

School and around school

The most common place for bullying to occur is at school or on the way to and from school.

Bullying often occurs during breaks between lessons when children are in the playground (Rigby, 1996). However more covert bullying can occur in classrooms.

Most research on bullying of children and young people has focussed on school environments. This is not surprising given the amount of time children spend at school and the centrality of school to their social lives.

Just 'cause we are there like every day and it plays a big and it plays a big part in our lives. It is what we do every day. (Girl, 14 years)

When we spoke with children about the relationship between school and their well-being they told us that being bullied is the antithesis of well-being at school. In our research on well-being, bullying was found to be the most consistently negative and singularly most powerful experience at school that undermines well-being. Children describe its impacts as being severe on their self-esteem, morale, quality of life, school performance and general happiness and feeling of well-being.

Home

Bullying can become a problem in the home, especially when siblings are frequently in conflict. In one study, some 30% of parents reported that bullying occurred between siblings. A small proportion (8%) agreed with the statement: 'I'm scared that my brother or sister will hurt me badly one day' (Duncan, 2004). Children involved in bullying in the home are frequently reported as bullying others at school.

Workplaces

Many children and young people in NSW work, formally and informally, in a variety of industries. In 2005 the Commission reported on research

undertaken with almost 11,000 children in New South Wales about work (NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2005).

Nearly 48% of children and young people reported verbal harassment at work (being shouted at, being sworn at and made fun of). Verbal harassment was reported by children working in food preparation/ food service, sports-related work, sales work, agricultural and horticultural work and labour.

Customers swearing hurts me (Child, 15 years)

Manager at [name of shop] always makes sexual remarks about me (Child, 16 years)

Almost 23% of the children had experienced some sort of physical harassment with 12% reporting multiple incidents of harassment. Physical harassment included having tricks played on them, being threatened and intimidated, physically hurt or pushed, having personal possessions damaged and being touched in an uncomfortable way.

I got abused. The person I worked with threatened to hit me (Child, 15 years)

Ignoring me, pushing me around, not letting me go on lunch/toilet breaks (Child, 16 years)

A boy once put this other boy's hand on my bum (Child, 13 years)

We found that the likelihood of experiencing verbal or physical harassment increased with the number of hours worked, the regularity of work and the formality of work conditions.

“Cyberspace”

Advances in communication technology have provided new ways of communicating with one another and in some cases new languages. In recent years bullying has been described as taking place in cyberspace (Kowalski et al., 2007). Geographically locating such occurrences is uncertain as the perpetrator, often anonymous, may be almost anywhere and as might the target.

The use of technology to bully peers mainly involves older post-primary children. It has been estimated as occurring about one third as often as more 'traditional' forms of bullying (Smith et al., 2008). It should be noted that estimating the prevalence of bullying using new communications technologies can be problematic. There may be problems with children reporting occurrences. For example young people may be reluctant to tell parents about cyber bullying for fear that their access to social forms of contact may be restricted (Juvonen & Gross, 2008).

Research has found that perpetrators are likely to be peers from school or other off line contexts (Juvonen & Gross, 2008, Vandebosch and Van

Cleemput, 2008). Taking this into consideration it may be useful to regard cyber bullying as an extension of bullying behaviour rather than a new threat at this stage.

5. How does bullying impact on children and young people?

With few exceptions, young people report that being bullied is hurtful or upsetting.

Research into bullying has found that children who are victims of bullying are more likely to be shy, introverted, withdrawn and physically smaller than other children (Beaty & Alexeyev, 2008). The relationship between being bullied and having low self-esteem has been supported in many studies (Olweus, 1993; Mynard and Joseph, 1997).

A good deal of research has focussed on the psychological effects of being bullied (Rigby, 2003; 2005a). The most commonly reported effect is upon mental health, especially in inducing depression, anxiety and lowering self-esteem (Hawker et al, 2000; Bond et al.2001). Some studies have reported that the effects can be long-term: the loss of confidence and fear of others can persist into adult years (Olweus, 1993).

Contrary to what is sometimes believed, verbal bullying can be at least as hurtful as physical bullying and indirect forms of bullying such as social exclusion can be most hurtful of all (Rigby and Bagshaw, 2001).

From the literature, the impact of bullying on the victim seems to be influenced by the severity, frequency and duration. The more frequent the bullying, the greater the likelihood that the victim will experience thoughts of self-harm and suicide (Rigby and Slee, 1999).

The impact of bullying is not limited to the victims. Bullying can also have a negative impact on the bully. Research has found that the mental health of children who repeatedly bully others tends to be below average, for example, they are more prone than others to depression (Rigby, 1998b). Children who bully are much more likely than others to engage in violent acts in the wider community, both while they are students at school (Rigby and Cox, 1996; Andershed et al., 2001) and subsequently when they leave school (Olweus, 1993, Farrington, 1993).

Bullying often occurs in public places and typically bystanders are present when bullying occurs. It has been observed that bullying is much more likely to occur when it is reinforced by approval or admiration from onlookers or bystanders (Salmivalli, 1999).

One study found that bystanders were present about 85% of the time among children attending primary school. Interestingly, this study found that when bystanders objected to bullying on about 50% of occasions the bullying stopped (Pepler and Craig, 1995).

The impact of bullying on bystanders is less well understood, however it is likely that some are anxious and apprehensive about becoming victims themselves.

It is not nice to see someone get hurt (Girl, 9 years).

6. What children and young people tell us about bullies

One reason children gave us for why children bully at school was that these children had often been ostracised and isolated at school themselves, their frustration and anger with this meant that they took it out on others.

Other reasons children offered for the behaviour included the bully coming from a family where the example was poor; wanting to be powerful or popular in the year group or school.

Yeah. Bully is like, they've found in tests and stuff that bullying, people who get bullied in some part of their life are more likely to be bullies when they get older or later on. Yeah Cause they experience it and they see I'm going to do it to someone else. Yeah. To take their anger off. And then they become bullies. I've noticed it with this guy. If he wasn't bullied from like when he was small. Really small. He used to always get bullied. No one plays with him, everyone takes his food and everything. Then that guy didn't ask for help or nothing. He stayed like that and kept getting bullied. And now he is a big bully himself. (Boy, 13 years)

Other explanations offered to us by children include the need for attention and lack of a satisfying home life.

I think bullying comes back to the insecurities of the bully ... and I think that comes back to the home situation because if that person isn't getting the attention that they're wanting in the home, then they're gonna look for other sources. (Girl, 14 years)

We asked the Commission's Young People's Reference Group for their views on who bullies are and this is what they told us.

Who bullies are...

Bored people, Popular people, Mean people, People with a point to prove, People who have been beaten up at home or come from tough backgrounds, People who want to be powerful, Insecure people, People who are over confident or up themselves, Angry people, People trying to pick themselves up by picking on others, People who have been bullied themselves

7. Don't bullies grow out of it?

Large scale surveys of schoolchildren in different countries have shown that bullying tends to become less frequent as children mature (Olweus, 1993, Rigby, 1996).

While many children and young people "grow out" of bullying, recent research has identified clusters of individual students whose trajectories of bullying differ markedly. In a Canadian study the trajectories of four clusters of students were assessed from late primary to late secondary school (Pepler et al., 2008). These clusters consisted of: (i) 41% of students who never bullied; (ii) 35% who tended to bully moderately throughout their school lives; (iii) 13% who engaged in bullying but eventually desisted; and (iv) 10% whose level of bullying remained high throughout their school careers. The study found that a small proportion of students, around 10%, were responsible for a high proportion of the bullying.

There has also been research to suggest a genetic or inherited predisposition to bullying in some people (Ball et al., 2008).

SECTION 2

8. Preventing and intervening early in bullying

Supporting caregiver relationships

The growing body of evidence of the importance of the early years, particularly in regards to attachment and the infant/ caregiver relationship is also relevant. The strength of the bond, the attachment, between babies and their mothers can have important consequences for the subsequent behaviour of a child.

There is evidence to suggest that a child who lacks secure attachment to a caregiver in the early years is likely to experience difficulties in relating to others at school and to become involved in bully/victim problems (Troy and Sroufe, 1987).

Difficulties can also arise when infants are placed in inadequate childcare centres at too early an age and for too long a period (Manne, 2005). Research into the impact of Quebec's universal childcare program (Baker, Gruber and Milligan, 2005) found evidence that babies who entered childcare in the first year of life were worse off on a variety of behavioural and health measures, ranging from aggression to motor-social skills to illness. Their analysis also suggests that the program led to more hostile, less consistent parenting, worse parental health and lower-quality parental relationships

Children and parents should be supported so that they form the attachments children need for their healthy development. One of the most effective ways to do this is through of a parental leave scheme.

Recommendation:

- A universal paid parental leave scheme of at least one year should be introduced to enable and support children's development.
- Other policies that support children's development such as flexible workplace practices, high quality child and maternal health services and sustained home visiting programs should be expanded.

Identifying and intervening early in problematic aggressive behaviour young children

Research has found that humans begin to show aggression early in life. Aggression is important for our physical survival. Children display physical aggression very early in childhood and as babies grow aggressive behaviour increases until about 4 years of age (Trembley et al., 2008). The diminishing of aggressive behaviour that occurs as children grow is associated with frontal cortex development (the part of the brain that controls reactions to strong emotions) (ibid, p6).

As physical aggression decreases verbal and indirect aggression generally increases, as children's social skills and language develop. Research has identified that girls generally use indirect aggression more often than boys.

Research has demonstrated that interventions with children early, at pre school age has more beneficial long terms effects than interventions with adolescents and argue that:

'in order to be maximally effective interventions that target physical aggression must start when children are below the age of five' (Trembley et al., 2008, p.3) .

Young children need to be supported to develop social skills in areas such as:

- Playing with others
- Cooperation
- Negotiation
- Expressing emotions
- Caring about others feeling (empathy)
- Identifying emotions in themselves and others.

Recommendations:

- Parenting programs, such as the triple P program, that help build positive relationships should be available to all parents in NSW who need help dealing with children's problem behaviours.
- In order to increase the capacity of early childhood education and care services to identify and manage aggressive behaviour, regulation of children's services should require:
 - staff to child ratios of:
 - ideally 1:2, but at least 1:3 for 1-2 year olds
 - 1:5 for 2-3 year olds

- 1:8 for 3 year olds
- 1:10 for 4-5 year olds
- o small group sizes and high quality trained staff in line with professionally recommended standards.

Parenting styles

It has also been suggested that the style of parenting provided for children can have important implications for how they relate to others at school. Cold, authoritarian parenting which disrespects and alienates a child may lead that child to bully others at school (Baldry and Farrington, 2000). For children who are strongly predisposed to act aggressively, a neglectful or permissive style of parenting in which there is inadequate control and supervision can also result in a child who will engage in unrestrained peer victimization. (Curtner-Smith, 2000).

Research into a cluster of students responsible for a high proportion of bullying (Pepler et al., 2008) found that there were a number of factors that influenced their behaviour. On average this group received the least parental monitoring, had the most negative and untrusting relationships with parents and was the most susceptible to peer group pressures. The researchers also described the students in this high risk group as being 'morally disengaged', having the least concern for the well being of others.

Supporting the development of children's relationship skills

Not all children have well developed relationships skills. Children learn relationship skills at home and some children do not have the home environments that foster the development of listening and helping skills. There are a number of factors that can impact on a child's capacity to develop peer relationships. During our inquiry into vulnerable children and young people we found that there are some children who have difficulty making friends.

Children have told us that having no friends makes them more likely to be bullied.

Um, well generally you know if you, if you don't have a group to hang out with then really you know you are open to be picked on by anyone. (Girl, 15 years)

Recommendations:

- Further research should be carried out to confirm the exploratory findings about children's friendships being a protective factor from bullying.
- Interventions should be developed to assist children who have difficulties making friends and sustaining relationships.

9. Interventions in schools

Interventions in schools are very important. School is the place where most bullying of children young people occurs and it is where they spend most of their time. Numerous educational and social policies and programs have been

developed and implemented to address bullying in schools both in Australia and overseas (Smith et al., 1999).

It should be noted however that progress both worldwide and in Australia has been slow and attempts to reduce the prevalence of bullying have thus far been only modestly successful (Rigby, 2002a; Smith, Pepler & Rigby 2004; Rigby & Slee, 2008).

Research has identified some important steps that schools need to take to address bullying.

Obtaining reliable data on what bullying is occurring in a school, and the harm it is doing, is widely regarded as an essential first step to intervening (Rigby, 1998a). Schools need to provide relevant and appropriate education for children on the nature and unacceptability of bullying, promote pro-social attitudes and behaviour, offer guidance and support to student victims, where needed, and take effective action to prevent any bullying from continuing.

The sharing of effective approaches between schools is also important (Rigby and Thomas, 2003).

Anti bullying policies

The production of a school anti bullying policy is mandatory in all government schools and has been adopted as a practice by most non-government educational jurisdictions. Anti bullying policies outline the agreed course of action schools have to take to address bullying.

Generally schools have adopted a 'whole school approach' (Olweus, 1993). This approach commits a school to addressing bullying in a coordinated way at the level of school management, the classroom and the individual student. The rigour and consistency of implementation of anti bullying policies determine their effectiveness in reducing bullying (Salmivalli et al., 2004). How likely it is to be implemented is dependant on the extent of school staff's meaningful involvement in the development of the policy (Smith et al., 2004).

Activities undertaken by schools to reduce bullying are commonly classified as preventative or interventive.

Examples of preventive strategies include: surveillance of students; informing students of the school policy and who to go to for help; and activities that help students to develop skills and qualities (such as assertive and non-aggressive ways of responding and the capacity to relate empathically with others). Interventions by teachers in cases of bullying have limited success, especially in secondary schools. Research with bullied students who went to teachers for help (a minority of those who are bullied) found an improvement in the situation in around 70% of cases in primary schools and about 40% of cases in secondary school (Rigby and Barnes, 2002). In about 10% of cases students reported that the situation got worse for them. It is not surprising that most students who are bullied do not inform school authorities. They prefer to go to other students for help or to their parents (Smith and Shu, 2000).

In some schools special training has been provided to students to act as peer-supporters, befrienders or pro-active bystanders (Menesini et al., 2003; Cowie and Wallace, 2000; Rigby and Johnson, 2006). These activities can be helpful to individual students, especially to victims of school bullying and their supporters, but have not yet demonstrated a consistent and significant impact upon the overall level of bullying in a school (Vreeman and Carroll, 2007).

Recommendation:

- Schools should collect data on bullying to assist with establishing prevalence and developing responses.
- School programs should be evaluated for their effectiveness. Evaluations should include children and young people's views.
- Further research should be undertaken to explore the efficacy and potential of programs, such as peer support programs, that directly involve young people.

10. Workplaces

The children at work research highlighted the importance of work to children's well-being. Children's early work experiences lay important foundations for the transition into their adult working lives.

This study found that children and young people involved in the research were generally satisfied with the types of work they were doing and their working conditions. Children value the opportunity to develop new skills, exercise more responsibility and self-reliance, earn money and make a contribution

Children don't like being treated unfairly. The research also identified concerns about safety, and freedom from bullying or exploitation.

Recommendation:

- It is recommended that consistent national approach to the regulation of children's employment is commenced. This should cover the areas of work distinct to children and where children need specific protection to support their well-being. This regulation should include appropriate penalties for harassment and victimisation of children and young people.

11. Cyber bullying

As highlighted earlier it is helpful to consider cyber bullying as an extension of bullying behaviour rather than a new threat.

Seeking to address cyber bullying through restricting or limiting children's access to the technology is understandable. However caution should be exercised when considering strategies that limit access or use of the technologies.

Although restricting access to technology may protect children and young people, however, the technologies are also sources of connection and support. Children and young people enjoy using new forms of communication. These forms of communication can also offer protection and solution to the bullying that occurs via their use.

Some young people have shared with us the ways they use technology to address bullying. Changing numbers, blocking contacts and “giving out the rejection line instead of real mobile number” are some of the ways they have told us they use technology to protect themselves.

Many adults are not as adept at using the technology as are children. The generation gap in the understanding and use of technologies between adults and children may make it difficult for young people to turn to adults for help.

Recommendation:

- Further research should be undertaken to determine the prevalence of cyber bullying.

SECTION 3: TOWARDS A CHILD-CENTRED APPROACH TO ADDRESSING BULLYING

Children tell us they do employ strategies to address bullying. Ways children have told us they deal with being bullied include; ignoring it, befriending the bully, using the support of friends and getting help from adults (teachers and parents).

Friends are considered the best support as children believe they will understand; they can also intervene on the spot sympathetically; they can assist with developing effective strategies; they can get help and they can offer protection in numbers.

Children and young people need to be supported in forming and maintaining their friendships, at school at home, work and in virtual spaces. Adults need to help children to further develop their relationships skills and help them maintain friendships that build resilience.

Children and young people’s ways of solving relationships problems need to be valued and recognised. Programs to address bullying need to assist children to enhance their existing solutions and help them develop other approaches and not impose adult solutions over the top of their successful strategies.

Summary of Recommendations

- A universal paid parental leave scheme of at least one year should be introduced to enable and support children's development.
- Other policies that support children's development such as flexible workplace practices, high quality child and maternal health services and sustained home visiting programs should be expanded.
- Parenting programs, such as the triple P program, that help build positive relationships should be available to all parents in NSW who need help dealing with children's problem behaviours.
- In order to increase the capacity of early childhood education and care services to identify and manage aggressive behaviour, regulation of children's services should require:
 - staff to child ratios of:
 - ideally 1:2, but at least 1:3 for 1-2 year olds
 - 1:5 for 2-3 year olds
 - 1:8 for 3 year olds
 - 1:10 for 4-5 year olds
 - small group sizes and high quality trained staff in line with professionally recommended standards.
- Further research should be carried out to confirm the exploratory findings about children's friendships being a protective factor from bullying.
- Interventions should be developed to assist children who have difficulties making friends and sustaining relationships.
- Schools should collect data on bullying to assist with establishing prevalence and developing responses.
- School programs should be evaluated for their effectiveness. Evaluations should include children and young people's views.
- Further research should be undertaken to explore the efficacy and potential of programs, such as peer support programs, that directly involve young people.
- It is recommended that consistent national approach to the regulation of children's employment is commenced. This should cover the areas of work distinct to children and where children need specific protection to support their well-being. This regulation should include appropriate penalties for harassment and victimisation of children and young people.
- Further research should be undertaken to determine the prevalence of cyber bullying.

References

- Alsaker, D.A. & Valkanover, S (2001) 'Early diagnosis and prevention of victimization in kindergarten', in J Juvonen and S Graham (eds) *Peer harassment in school: the plight of the vulnerable and victimized*. New York: The Guilford Press. 175-195.
- Andershed, H, Kerr, M, & Stattin, H (2001) 'Bullying in school and violence on the streets: are the same people involved?' *Journal of Scandinavian Studies on Crime and Crime Prevention*, 2, 31-49
- Baker, M., Gruber, J., Milligan, K. (2005) *Universal childcare, maternal labor supply and family well-being*, Working Paper 11832, National Bureau of Economic Research
- Baldry, A. C. & Farrington, D. P. (2000). 'Bullies and delinquents: Personal characteristics and parental styles' *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 10,17-31
- Ball, H.A., Arseneault, L., Taylor, A., Maughan, B., Caspi, A & Moffatt T.E (2008) 'Genetic and environmental influences on victims, bullies and bully-victims' *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry and Associated Disciplines*, 49, 104-112
- Bauman, S, Rigby, K & Hoppa, K (2008) 'US teachers' and school counsellors' strategies for handling school bullying incidents', *Educational Psychology*, 28, 837-56
- Bond, L, Carlin, J B, Thomas, L, Ruin, K & Patton, G (2001) 'Does bullying cause emotional problems? A prospective study of young teenagers', *British Medical Journal*, 323, 480-484
- Boulton M J (1995) 'Patterns of bully/victim problems in mixed race groups of children'. *Social Development* 4 277-293
- Bowers, L. Smith, P. K & Binney, V. (1992). 'Cohesion and power in the families of children involved in bully/victim problems at school' *Journal of Family Therapy*, 14, 371-387
- Cowie, H. & Wallace, P. (2000). *Peer Support in Action*. London: Sage
- Curtner-Smith, M.E.. (2000) 'Mechanisms by which family processes contribute to school-age bullying' *Child Study Journal*, 30, 169-186.
- Duncan, R D (2004) 'The impact of family relationships on school bullies and victims' in Espelage, D & Swearer, S. (eds) *Bullying in American schools* (pp 227-244) London :Erlbaum
- Farrington, D P (1993) 'Understanding and preventing bullying', *Crime and Justice*, M Tonny & N Morris (Eds), 17, Chicago, University of Chicago Press
- Hawker D J & Boulton, M J (2000) 'Twenty years' research on peer victimization and psychosocial maladjustment: a meta-analytic review of

cross-sectional studies', *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 42, 441-55

Junger M (1990) 'Intergroup bullying and racial harassment in the Netherlands', *Social Science Review*, 74, 65-72.

Juvonen, J & Gross, E.F. (2008) 'Extending the School Grounds? – Bullying Experiences in Cyberspace' in *Journal of School Health*, Sept 2008, Vol. 78, No.9

Kowalski, R., Limber, S & Agatson, P. (2007) *Cyber Bullying* (Oxford: Blackwell).

Manne, A. (2005). *Motherhood: How should we care for our children?* Allen & Unwin.

Menesini, E., Codecasa, E., Benelli, B. & Cowie, H. (2003) 'Enhancing Children's Responsibility to Take Action Against Bullying: Evaluation of a Befriending Intervention in Italian Middle Schools' *Aggressive Behavior* 29, 1–14

Nation, M., Vieno, A., Perkins, D., and Santinello, M. (2008) 'Bullying in School and Adolescent Sense of Empowerment: An Analysis of relationships with Parents, Friends, and Teachers' in *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 18: 211-232

NSW Commission for Children and Young People (2008), *Schools and well-being project, Summary notes on major themes*, Unpublished.

NSW Commission for Children and Young People (2005). *Children at Work*. Researched and written by Toby Fattore, Sydney: NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2005.

NSW Commission for Children and Young People (2002), *Report of an inquiry into the best mean of assisting children with no-one to turn to*, NSW Commission for Children and Young People.

Olweus, D (1993) *Bullying at school*, Oxford and Cambridge, MA, Blackwell Publishers

Pellegrini, A.D (2004) 'Bullying during middle school years'. In Sanders. C. E. Pyne, G. D., (Eds) *Bullying: Implications for the classroom*. New York: Elsevier Academic Press, 177- 199.

Pepler, D. J. & Craig, W. M. (1995). 'A peek behind the fence: naturalistic observations of aggressive children with remote audiovisual recording'. *Developmental Psychology*, 31, 545-553.

- Pepler, D., Jiang, D., Craig, W. & Connolly, J. (2008) 'Developmental trajectories of bullying and associated factors.' *Child Development*, 79, 325-338.
- Rigby, K. & Barnes, A. (2002) 'To tell or not to tell: the victimised student's dilemma' *Youth Studies, Australia*, 21, 3, 33-36
- Rigby, K. & Cox, I. K. (1996) 'The contributions of bullying and low self-esteem to acts of delinquency among Australian teenagers', *Personality and Individual Differences*, 21, 4, 609-12
- Rigby, K., & Johnson, B. (2006) 'Expressed readiness of Australian school children to act as bystanders in support of children who are being bullied' *Educational Psychology*, 26, 425-441
- Rigby, K., & Slee, P.T. (1999) 'Involvement in bully/victim problems and perceived low social support', *Suicide and Life-threatening Behavior*, 29, 119-30
- Rigby, K., & Slee, P. T. (2008) 'Interventions to reduce bullying', *International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health*, 20, 165-83
- Rigby, K., & Thomas, E. B. (2003) *How schools counter bullying: policies and procedures in selected Australian schools*, Point Lonsdale, Australia, The Professional Reading Guide
- Rigby, K (2002a) *A meta-evaluation of methods and approaches to reducing bullying in pre-schools and in early primary school in Australia*, Commonwealth Attorney- General's Department, Canberra
- Rigby, K (1996) *Bullying in schools and what to do about it*. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.
- Rigby, K (2003) Consequences of Bullying in schools. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*, 48, pp 583- 590.
- Rigby, K (1997) 'Attitudes and beliefs about bullying among Australian schoolchildren', *Irish Journal of Psychology*, 18, 2, 202-20
- Rigby, K (1998a) *Manual for the Peer Relations Questionnaire (PRQ)*, Point Lonsdale, Victoria, Australia, The Professional Reading Guide
- Rigby, K (2005a) 'Bullying in schools and the mental health of children', *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 15, 195-208
- Rigby, K & Bagshaw, D. (2001) 'What hurts? The reported consequences of negative interactions with peers among Australian school children'. *Children Australia*, 26, 4, 36 – 41

Rigby, K. (1994) 'Psycho-social functioning in families of Australian adolescent schoolchildren involved in bully/victim problems', *Journal of Family Therapy*, 16 (2) 173-189

Rigby, K (1998b) 'The relationship between reported health and involvement in bully/victim problems among male and female secondary school students', *Journal of Health Psychology* 4, 465-476

Salmivalli, C, Kaukiainen, A, Voeten, M & Sinisammal, M (2004) 'Targeting the group as a whole: the Finnish anti-bullying intervention', in Smith, P.K., Pepler, D. & Rigby, K (Eds): *Bullying in schools: how successful can interventions be?* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Siobhan, M., Smith, P.K (1995) 'Bullying and the child who stammers', *British Journal of Special Education*, v22 n1 p24-27

Smith, P.K., Mahdavi, J., Carvalho, M., Fidher, S., Russell, S. & Tippett (2008) 'Cyberbullying: its nature and impact in secondary school pupils'. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 49, 376-385.

Smith, P.K., Morita, Y., Junger-Tas, J., Olweus, D., Catalano, R. & Slee, P. (Eds) (1999) *The Nature of School bullying*, London, Routledge

Smith, P K & Shu S (2000) What good schools can do about bullying, *Childhood*, 7, 193-212

Smith, P. K., Pepler, D. & Rigby, K. (2004) *Bullying in schools: how successful can interventions be?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Smith, P.K., Sharp, S., Eslea, M. & Thompson, D. (2004) 'England: the Sheffield project'. in Smith, P.K., Pepler, D. & Rigby, K. (Eds): *Bullying in schools: how successful can interventions be?* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Troy, M. & Sroufe, L. A. (1987). 'Victimization among preschoolers: Role of attachment relationship history.' *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 26, 166-172.

Vaillancourt, T., Duku, E., Decatanzaro, D., Macmillan, H., Muir, C. and Schmidt, L.A. (2009) 'Variation in Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis Activity Among Bullied and Non-bullied Children' in *Aggressive Behaviour*, Vol. 34, pp. 294-305.

Vandebosch, H and Van Cleemput, K (2008) 'Defining cyber bullying: A qualitative Research into the perceptions of Youngsters' in *CyberPsychology & Behaviour*, Volume 11, No. 4, pp.499-503

Vreeman, R. C. & Carroll, A. E. (2007) 'A systematic review of school-based interventions to prevent bullying', *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine*, 161, 78- 88

APPENDIX A

Methods of intervention in cases of bullying in schools

There are six major methods of intervention used in addressing school based bullying. The most commonly employed may be called the traditional disciplinary method. According to results from on-line surveys of teachers and counselors in the USA and Australia approximately 75% of school staff are in favour of students automatically being punished if they engage in even relatively mild forms of bullying (Rigby and Bauman, 2007; Bauman and Rigby, 2008).

Unfortunately this approach tends to be limited in its effectiveness in that it often fails to deter. The positive reinforcement in the form of approval and admiration obtained from supporters of the perpetrator tends to be stronger than the deterrent effect of the sanctions or penalties, such as detentions or internal suspensions that can be imposed by the school. Moreover when students are punished for bullying someone they are often motivated to resume the bullying, often employing less overt methods that are difficult to identify, but which are at least as hurtful. Where this method is employed care should be taken to make the rules relating to the treatment of children who bully clear and, as far as possible, supported by most students. Close monitoring of outcomes is vital, though often difficult.

Sanctions are likely to prove more effective in discouraging bullying with younger students who are less resistant to disciplinary measures (Stevens et al, 2000). With extremely serious and criminal forms of bullying the use of disciplinary action such as suspensions and legal procedures, is sometimes unavoidable.

A second method of dealing with cases of bullying is that of restorative justice or restorative practice. This aims at eliciting a sense of remorse from the perpetrator (often described as the wrongdoer) and guiding him or her towards undertaking restorative action, for example through an apology or compensation, as a step towards mending a damaged relationship.

Procedures have been developed to address issues at the level of the community, through community conferences, in the classroom and through work undertaken primarily with the protagonists. (Thorsborne & Vinegrad, 2007).

In cases where a sense of remorse is readily aroused, the method can proceed more easily; otherwise some social pressure needs to be applied to bring this about. The method is very much 'solution focus' as opposed to one seeking retribution. Much depends on the skill of a trained practitioner and the application of the method with suitable cases. Although successful outcomes from individual cases have been reported, it has not been established that the use of this approach can reduce the overall level of bullying in a school (Youth Justice Board, 2004).

Other methods have been devised to avoid the unintended negative consequences and difficulties associated with those described above. These include strengthening the targets of the bullying by improving their social skills, for example by helping them to become more assertive (Field, 1999); and the use of mediation employed by trained adult or student practitioners to resolve conflicts between students (Cowie and Wallace, 2000). Each of these methods can be used effectively in some situations; Mediation can be effective when both parties desire to bring about a fair and mutually satisfactory outcome. In cases where the imbalance of power between the protagonists is relatively small and the target is willing and able to develop relevant coping skills, strengthening the target can sometimes achieve a positive outcome. Unfortunately these conditions are often not present and so these approaches have limited use.

Two other approaches have been developed which avoid antagonizing the perpetrator and potentially making matters worse. One is the so-called Support Group Method devised by Robinson and Maines (1997) formerly known as the No Blame Approach. This method seeks to get the children identified as having bullied someone to feel concern for the distress of their target and to become motivated to improve the situation. Meetings are held

with the 'bullies' together with other selected students who can be expected to apply some peer pressure to encourage those who had engaged in bullying to resolve the problem. This approach has been criticized for being too soft on those who bully, however it has been shown to be both popular among teachers and frequently effective in bringing selected cases of bullying to an end (Smith et al, 2008, in press).

The second method, the so-called Method of Shared Concern devised by Pikas (1989, 2002) and reviewed by Rigby (2005b) is also based upon the idea that erstwhile bullies can be motivated to improve the situation for the person they have targeted by a trained practitioner who is able to share concern for the plight of the victim. It differs from the Support Group Method however, in that it begins proceedings by conducting interviews with individual suspected bullies and gaining their cooperation before they come together later as a group to discuss ways of resolving the situation. Subsequently the group meet with the person they had victimized to work out an agreed solution. A DVD has been produced to train school staff in its use (Readymade Productions, 2007). Research evidence indicates that when applied in suitable cases – where bullying involves group participation and is not of extreme severity – a high proportion of positive outcomes are achieved (Smith and Sharp, 1994; Duncan, 1996; Rigby and Griffiths, submitted, 2009)

References

- Bauman, S., Rigby, K. & Hoppa, K. (2008) 'US teachers' and school counsellors' strategies for handling school bullying incidents', *Educational Psychology*, 28, 837-56
- Cowie, H. & Wallace, P. (2000). *Peer Support in Action*. London: Sage
- Duncan, A. (1996) 'The Shared Concern Method for resolving group bullying in schools', *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 12, 2, 94-98
- Field, E. M. (1999,) *Bully busting*, Lane Cove, NSW, Finch Publishing Pty
- Pikas, A. (1989) 'The common concern method for the treatment of mobbing', *Bullying, an international perspective*, E Roland & E Munthe (eds), London, Fulton
- Pikas, A. 2002, 'New developments of the Shared Concern Method', *School Psychology International*, 23, 3, 307-36
- Readymade Productions (2007) *The Method of Shared Concern: a staff training resource for dealing with bullying in schools*, Adelaide, Readymade Productions
www.readymade.com.au/method
- Rigby, K., & Bauman, S. (2007) 'What teachers think should be done about cases of bullying', *Professional Educator*, ACER, Melbourne
- Rigby, K., & Griffiths, C. (2009 submitted) *Applying the Method of Shared Concern in Australian schools: an evaluative study*. Canberra: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Rigby, K. (2005b) 'The Method of Shared Concern as an intervention technique to address bullying in schools: an overview and appraisal', *Australian Journal of Counselling and Guidance*, 15, 27-34

Smith, P. K. & Sharp, S. (Eds) (1994) *School bullying: insights and perspectives*, London, Routledge

Smith, P. K., Howard, S. & Thompson, F. (2008, in press) 'Use of the Support Group Method to tackle bullying and evaluation from schools and local authorities in England', *Pastoral Care in Education*.

Stevens, V., de Bourdeaudhuij, I., & Van Oost, P. (2000) 'Bullying in Flemish schools: an evaluation of anti-bullying intervention in primary and secondary schools', *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 70, 195-210

Thorsborne, M. & Vinegrad, D. (2006) *Restorative practice and the management of bullying: rethinking behaviour management*, Queenscliff, Victoria, Inyahead Press (check whether this is 2007)

Youth Justice Board, United Kingdom (2004) *National Evaluation of the Restorative Justice in Schools Programme*, London, Youth Justice Board