


AGOSCI 10th Biennial Conference, 14 May, 2011



Emotional Resilience to Bullying for
Children With and Without Disabilities:
Frequency and Severity of Bullying: An
Online Approach

Louisa Salmon – PhD Candidate, Southern Cross University, NSW


Supervised by

Dr Gail Moloney, Southern Cross University, NSW

Dr Lewis Bizo, University of Waikato, NZ

Dr Iona Novak, CP Institute, University of Notre Dame Australia, NSW

AGOSCI 10th Biennial Conference, 14 May, 2011



Emotional Resilience to Bullying for
Children With and Without Disabilities:
Frequency and Severity of Bullying: An
Online Approach

Louisa Salmon – PhD Candidate, Southern Cross University, NSW

Supervised by

Dr Gail Moloney, Southern Cross University, NSW

Dr Lewis Bizo, University of Waikato, NZ

Dr Iona Novak, CP Institute, University of Notre Dame Australia, NSW

Overview

- Background
- Outline of studies
- Predictions and Implications

BACKGROUND



What is Bullying?

- Bullying involves
 - A stronger person and a weaker person (Farrington, 1993)
 - Intent distress over time (NSW Department of Education, 2009)
 - The oppressor given a sense of enjoyment and the oppressed must feel wronged (Rigby, 2003)

Prevalence of Bullying

- Most bullying occurs at school (Delfabbro et al., 2006)
- One in ten children bullied often (Rigby & Slee, 2002)
- More likely to experience bullying
 - Boys (Bacchini, Esposito and Affuso, 2009)
 - Younger children (Rigby & Slee, 2002)

Types of Bullying

- Direct bullying
 - Physical or verbal aggression
- Indirect bullying (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995)
 - Social exclusion


Resilience to Bullying

- Prosocial acts reduce victimisation (Raskauksa et al., 2010)
- Depression and suicide ideation response to direct bullying in girls, no difference between boys or girls to indirect bullying (van der Wal et al., 2003)
- Exposure to adversity crucial (Rutter, 1990)

Bullying Prevalence and Disability

- Children without disabilities bullied less than
 - Those with cerebral palsy (Nadeau & Tessier, 2006)
 - Those with learning disabilities (Sabornie, 1994)
 - Those with communication issues (Knox & Conti-Ramsden, 2003)
- No data about children with severe disabilities

Severe Disabilities: the Literature

- Social and academic benefits of peer support
- General limitations of the research literature
 - Severity not well defined
 - Lack of data on negative social experiences 

Narrowing the Scope of Disability

- Research on children with cerebral palsy
 - Developmental disability
 - Prevalence approximately 0.2-0.25% (Stanley & Watson, 1992)
 - Non-progressive
 - Can range from mild to severe


OUTLINE OF STUDIES




Aim of Study One

- To study the severity and types of bullying experienced by Australian school children
- To see if experiencing bullying influences a child's ability to cope emotionally with bullying and non-bullying social experiences

Study One Materials

- Multidimensional Peer-Victimisation Scale (MPVS) (Mynard & Joseph, 2000)
 - Measures physical, verbal, social manipulation and attacks on property 
 - Internal reliability very good (Chronbach's alpha = .91)

Study One Materials

- Children's Social Experiences Questionnaire – Peer (SEQ-P) (Crick & Bigbee, 1998)
 - Measures direct/indirect victimisation and receipt of prosocial acts 
 - Internal reliability good (Chronbach's alpha = .79)

Study One Materials

- **Impact of Events Scale (IES)** (Horowitz, Wilner & Alvarez, 1979)
 - Measures intrusive/avoidant reactions to stressors
 - Stressful event 1 – Bullying
 - Stressful event 2 – Peer criticism
 - Internal reliability good (Cronbach's alpha = .88)

Study One Procedure

- Forty-one children without disabilities (10-12 years old)
 - Completed on-line questionnaire in four groups
 - Self-reported, peer-reported victimisation and emotional response to bullying and arguing with peer

Study One Key Findings

- While girls and boys bullied equal amounts
 - more social manipulation reported for girls (Mann-Whitney U test, $z = -2.07$, $p = .04$, $r = -.44$)
 - more physical behaviour reported for boys (Mann-Whitney U test, $z = -2.07$, $p = .04$, $r = -.48$)

Study One Key Findings

- A child's emotional reaction to both being bullied ($r = 0.33, p < .05$), and having an argument ($r = 0.37, p < 0.05$) was positively predicted by self-perceived bullying

Aims of Study Two

- To examine the amount of bullying and level of resilience to bullying experienced by children with and without varying degrees of physical disabilities

Study Two Materials

- Children's Social Experiences Questionnaire – Self (SEQ-S) (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996)
- Children's Social Experiences Questionnaire – Peer (SEQ-P) (Crick & Bigbee, 1998)
- Impact of Events Scale + story (adapted from Carney, 2000)

Measuring Degree of Disability

- *Gross Motor Function Classification System*
(Palisano *et al.*, 1997)
- *Manual Ability Classification System* (Eliasson, 2006)
- *Communication Function Classification System* (Hidecker *et al.*, 2008)

Study Two Procedure

- One hundred and fifty students with cerebral palsy and 450 class peers (11-13 years)
- On-line questionnaire
 - Self-reported and peer-reported victimisation and responses to bullying or arguing with a peer

PREDICTIONS and IMPLICATIONS



Predictions

- Mild disabled will be bullied more
 - Hence may be more sensitive to bullying
- Communication a barrier to social inclusion
- Better communication for severely disabled but ..
 - May increase rate and nature of bullying




Implications

- Contribution to what is known about bullying in relation to physical disability
- Increased awareness of issues facing school children



Acknowledgements

- My wonderful supervisors and mentors
 - Dr Gail Moloney, Dr Iona Novak, Dr Lewis Bizo
- My technical team
 - Spy Hall, Czesia Huxley, Duncan Blair 
- Southern Cross University staff
- My participants, their parents, their school

References

- Carney, J.V. (2000). Bullied to death: Perceptions of peer abuse and suicidal behavior during adolescence. *School Psychology International*, 21, 44–54.
- Crick, N.R & Bigbee, M.A. (1998). Relational and overt form of peer victimization: A multi-informant approach. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 66(2), 337-347.
- Crick, N. R., & Grotpeter, J. K. (1995). Relational aggression, gender, and social-psychological adjustment. *Child Development*, 66, 710-722.
- Crick, N. R., & Grotpeter, J. K. (1996). Children's treatment by peers: Victims of relational and overt aggression. *Development and Psychopathology*, 5, 367-380.
- Eliasson, A. C., Krumlinde-Sundholm, L., Rosblad, B., Beckung, E., Arner, M., Ohrvall, A. M., & Rosenbaum, P. (2006). The Manual Ability Classification System (MACS) for children with cerebral palsy: scale development and evidence of validity and reliability. *Developmental Medicine & Child Neurology*, 48, 549-554.
- Hidecker, M. J. C., Paneth, N., Rosenbaum, P., Kent, R. D., Lillie, J., Johnson, B., et al. (2009). *Development of the Communication Function Classification System (CFCS) for individuals with cerebral palsy*. Poster presented at the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine (AACPD) Conference, Scottsdale, Arizona.
- Horowitz, M., Wilner, M., and Alvarez, W. (1979). Impact of Event Scale: A measure of subjective stress. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 41, 209-218.
- Knox, E., & Conti-Ramsden, G. (2003). Bullying risks of 11-year-old children with specific language impairment (SLI): does school placement matter? *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 38(1), 1-12.
- Nadeau, L., & Tessier, R. (2006). Social adjustment of children with cerebral palsy in mainstream classes: peer perception. *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, 48, 331-337.
- Palisano, R., Rosenbaum, P., Walter, S., Russell, D., & Wood, E. (1997). Development and reliability of a system to classify gross motor function in children with cerebral palsy. *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, 39, 214-223.
- Rigby, K., & Slee, P. T. (2002). Bullying among Australian school children: Reported behaviour and attitudes toward victims. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 131, 615-627.

Questions



For questions or comments I would be happy to
chat on email

louisa.salmon@scu.edu.au