REPORT ON EVALUATIONS AND GOOD PRACTICES OF BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAMS[1]

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Abstract

The report on bullying prevention programs highlights the evolution of school bullying research and focuses on the effectiveness of various anti-bullying programs. It presents review of meta-analyses and then precise structure and implementation of the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) and KiVa. Both antibullying programs incorporate comprehensive, whole-school approaches involving school policies, classroom strategies, and community engagement. Key components of successful programs include intensive and long-lasting interventions, effective supervision, firm disciplinary methods, parental involvement, and continuous evaluation. The report also notes the importance of addressing bullying through structured, evidence-based practices that focus on empathy, social skills training, and promoting prosocial behaviour among students. By integrating these elements, schools can create safer and more inclusive environments that effectively reduce bullying and support all students.

Introduction

Ever since the first systematic studies of school bullying in the 1970s (Olweus, 1978) and the application of the first intervention programs at the beginning of the 1980s,[3] bullying remains the focus of governments and educational systems in most Western countries. Bullying causes negative consequences for direct victims, their families, perpetrators, schools, teachers and other school employees, and also wider communities. Bullying compromises children's fundamental rights defined by international conventions (Menesini, Salmivallli, 2017; Olweus, 1993).

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[3] The first systematic prevention program was Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, implemented in Norway in 1983, when Norwegian government decided to implement it after suicides of three young boys, which were most likely the consequence of peer bullying (Limber, 2011; Olweus, Limber, 2010a).

Research in this field through decades was marked by conceptual disagreements and difficulties with the translation of the term into non-English languages.[4] Although various authors used different definitions, they shared common basic characteristics of the phenomena (imbalance of power, harm, peer-to-peer relations, repetition). During the years, and especially with the development of information-communication technology, bullying and its definition progressed and included new forms, explicitly cyberbullying. This form is, in some contexts, recognised as a separate form of victimisation, and the authors refer to these two issues as classical/traditional bullying and cyberbullying. OECD's report on cyberbullying research and policies argues that "the strong correlation between traditional bullying and cyberbullying infers that cyberbullying at least in the majority of countries does not occur in a virtual vacuum. For this reason, schools can be important places of cyberbullying prevention and policy implementation, as this is where the majority of traditional bullying takes place" (Gottschalk, 2022: 16).

Recently, a Working Group convened by UNESCO and WABF revised the definition of bullying and developed an integrative definition (UNESCO Chair on Bullying and Cyberbullying at Dublin City University, 2024), which reads:

> School bullying is a damaging social process that is characterized by an imbalance of power driven by social (societal) and institutional norms. It is often repeated and manifests as unwanted interpersonal behaviour among students or school personnel that causes physical, social, and emotional harm to the targeted individuals or groups, and the wider school community.[1]

Further, when designing preventive programs and activities, we must remember that strict adherence to the scientific definition of bullying can be counterproductive for school violence prevention and efforts to increase school safety (Astor and Benbenishty, 2019: 30-31). The strict scientific definition excludes many situations that heavily impact school climate and perception of safety at school. Extreme incidences of nonrepeating violence at school (e.g. school shootings such as in Belgrade in 2023 or killing and hurting students with a knife as in

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[4] In the With Knowledge Against Bullying (KnowBullying) project we use the term »medvrstniško nasilje« in Slovene and »vršnjačko nasilje« in Croatian language. After years of various attempts to translate term bullying to Slovene language, which included "nadlegovanje", "ustrahovanje", "trpinčenje" and recently even "bulanje", researchers (see for example Klemenčič et al., 2016; Košir et al., 2024) and also Government of Republic of Slovenia started to use term "peer violence" (medvrstniško nasilje) as a translation for bullying. They even state "In school environment peer violence [orig. medvrstniško nasilje] (English: bullying), which is …" (Government of Slovenia, 2024).

Zagreb in 2024), carrying guns or other weapons to schools, rape etc., are not events that can be considered bullying but have a strong impact on the school environment, students, teachers, parents and even community and perception of safety in schools.

The conceptualisation of bullying and school safety have, in recent decades, moved from psychology, social work, and medicine to fields directly related to the educational goals and the mission of the school. School safety is becoming an educational cornerstone goal and policy aim (Astor and Benbenishty, 2019: 5). In this context, preventive programs should address bullying and other cases of peer violence at schools and provide support.

Aim of the present report

The primary objective of this report is to synthesize conclusions from evaluations of bullying prevention programs. We wish to present the strengths and limitations of current bullying prevention programs, identify best practices and provide recommendations for the development of bullying prevention programs. Therefore, we first present an analysis of evaluations of bullying prevention programs and afterwards present the most known scientifically evaluated & proven to be efficient bullying prevention programs, their components and their overall approach. We adopt the understanding of the WHO (2015) report "Preventing youth violence: an overview of the evidence", which concludes that youth violence can be predicted and prevented:

> Youth violence does not "just happen". On the contrary, whether in the shape of bullying at school, alcohol-related violence in bars, clubs and private spaces, gang violence, or violence associated with the illegal drug trade, youth violence is often predictable and therefore preventable (p. vii).

Project group KnowBullying follows the ecological-system approach to understanding the causes of bullying (Hong, Espelage, 2012) and integrates this approach in the design of bullying prevention. Therefore, we explore the role of different stakeholders, including educators, school leaders, school counsellors, social workers, parents, police, representatives of the wider community (opinion makers, sport clubs), and policymakers, in the successful implementation of bullying prevention programs (to this we will also add specific reports for Slovenia and Croatia).

School bullying prevention programs

Practices of different countries/schools show various ways of dealing with school bullying, which vary from systematic and centralised prevention programs to individual interventions in (extreme) cases of bullying. In recent decades, many countries, educational systems, and/or institutions have developed programs or activities to address bullying. For example, Farrington and Ttofi (2009) provided a description of 44 bullying prevention programs included in their meta-analysis. One of the latest meta-analyses (Gaffney et al., 2019a) included 65 different bullying prevention and intervention programs and practices of countries that can be divided into the following categories:

1. Countries developed their own bullying prevention programs and implemented them at schools (e.g. Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)[5] in Norway (Olweus, Limber, 2010a), Kiusaamista Vastaan (KiVa) (finish against bullying) in Finland (Salmivalli, Poskiparta, 2012)[6]; The Viennese Social Competence Program (ViSC) in Austria (Strohmeier et al., 2012)[7]);[8]

2. Countries or individual schools adopted bullying prevention programs developed in other countries and adjusted them to their cultural specifics (e. g OBPP in U.S. (Limber, 2011, 2012; Limber et al., 2018; Olweus, Limber, 2010a; 2010b) in Lithuania (Povilaitis & Bulotaite, 2014) and in Malaysia (Yaakub et al., 2010), KiVa in Italy (Nocentini and Menesini, 2016) and UK (Hutchings & Clarkson, 2015), ViSC in Cyprus (Solomontos-Kountouri and Strohmeier, 2018) and Turkey (Doğan et al. 2017);

3. Individual schools use local resources and knowledge in bullying prevention and intervention (workshops, trainings, awareness-raising materials, etc.);

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[5] Norwegian Ministry of Education initiated a nationwide campaign against bullying in schools. What has later become known as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) was developed and initially evaluated within this context (Olweus, Limber, 2010a: 377).

[6] KiVa antibullying program has been developed at the University of Turku, Finland, University of Turku, in collaboration between the Department of Psychology and the Centre for Learning Research with funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture (Salmivalli, Poskiparta, 2012).

[7] ViSC Social Competence Program was funded between 2008 and 2011 by the Austrian federal Ministry for Education (Strohmeier et al., 2012).

[8] Although bullying prevention has been an important issue in some countries, we must not overlook the fact that even there not all schools are included in high-level evidence based preventive programs. Olweus and Limber (2010a) estimated that the majority of schools in the United States and Norway (and of course worldwide as well) are not implementing evidence-based bullying prevention initiatives in schools. OBPP was implemented in a relatively limited percentage of schools in Norway (approximately 25%) and in a small percentage in the United States (approximately 4%).

4. Prevention is not part of a national or school policy, and schools use only individual interventions.

Two countries included in the KnowBullying project with the application of preventive programs in their elementary schools – Slovenia and Croatia – take different positions on this categorisation. Croatia developed and, in 2024, started to implement the prevention program "Abeceda preventive" (though not dealing strictly with bullying, with the development of broader social skills) coordinated by the Education and Teacher Training Agency. This would place the country in group 1, whereas in Slovenia, there is no such centralised support, and schools use individual approaches or can use individual training listed in the Ministry of Education's Katis catalogue, which places the country in group 3. In Slovenia, there were attempts to build a centralised system, though they stayed at the level of projects (eg. Project Systemic approach towards peer violence in educational facilities (orig. Sistemski pristop k medvrstniškemu nasilju v VIZ – vzorčni model in smernice) run by the Institute of Criminology at the Law Faculty, University of Ljubljana in 2015-2016 and co-financed by Norway Grants. Another project which did not bring systemic change was the Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS) project "Preventing bullying and reducing violence among minors in Slovenia". This project started upon the request of the Slovene Police and Ministry of education, science and sport (2018-2020). Still, due to restrictions for preventing the spread of coronavirus and COVID-19, its result was only an online presentation of good practices). Another project that included only schools that individually decided to implement activities was UNICEF's project (2006-2012) "Povej! Spregovorimo o nasilju med otroki. Za varno šolo." (Tell! Let us speak about bullying. For safe school) (UNICEF, n.d.)

Similar to Menesini and Salmivalli (2017: 249), the KnowBullying project argues that "schools should be provided with guidance regarding most effective practices and programmes". Even more, we believe schools should have regular training and constant support from experts in bullying prevention and intervention and help to direct and indirect victims as well as those who commit bullying.

An overview of existing bullying prevention and intervention programs shows that they use different approaches, which range from the inclusion of specific groups of individuals to the whole-school approach. Programs target different groups (students committing bullying/students who are bullied/bystanders, teachers, and parents); some rely on prevention, whereas others rely on intervention or on the use of a three-tiered public health model that includes universal, selective, and indicated preventive interventions. Some programs rely on online or direct communication to reach students, whereas some incorporate both.

Scientific Evaluations of Bullying Prevention Programs

WHO (2015) concludes that recently, we have seen an increase in scientifically published studies dealing with violence prevention programs. This is seen also in the field of bullying prevention evaluations. Ttofi and Farrington (2011) argue that new anti-bullying initiatives should be inspired by existing successful programs (i.e. scientifically tested and proven to be efficient) however aside from this, they should be modified in light of the key program elements that we have found to be most (in)effective (or ineffective). Further, they have identified the program elements most strongly linked to effectiveness. However, this does not prove that these elements directly cause effectiveness. Nevertheless, it remains the strongest existing evidence at this time. Menesini and Salmivalli, 2017 (248) argue that some programmes do not lead to positive outcomes, some have never been evaluated, and some have been evaluated so poorly that no conclusions can be drawn regarding their effects. In addition, even those programmes that have been evaluated are rarely evaluated more than once, and even at least at different locations by different evaluators (Gaffney et al., 2019a).[9] However, some programs have been meticulously evaluated (e.g. OBPP, KiVa). In the last two decades, there have been meta-analyses of more studies and, recently, even meta-analyses of the efficiency of program components.

Bullying prevention programs have been evaluated by internal evaluations by program teams & external evaluations by governments and/or researchers, which have used different approaches in evaluating the effectiveness of prevention programs (Ttofi, Farrington, 2011): 1) randomized experiments; 2) Intervention-control comparisons (before/after measures of bullying perpetration/victimisation – self-report & peer nominations); 3) other intervention-control comparisons; 4) age-cohort designs (students age X after the intervention were compared with different students the same age X in the same school before the intervention). In addition, there are quite some systematic reviews & meta-analyses of many other evaluations. In the following paragraphs, we will present the first conclusions of some of the most well-known and widely cited meta-analyses and later evaluations of the most well-known prevention programs.

Farrington, Ttofi (2009) and Ttofi, Farrington (2011) conducted their meta-analysis of evaluations of 44 programs (in 89 studies). They concluded that the overall school-based anti-

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[9] Among 65 programs only 8 have been repeatedly evaluated and only 4 more than twice across different locations (i.e. OBPP, KiVa, NoTrap! and ViSC) (Gaffney et al., 2019a).

bullying programs are effective. In analysed programs, on average, ***bullying perpetration decreased by 20–23%, and victimisation decreased by 17–20%.*** Meta-analysis of 100 evaluations conducted by Gaffney et al. (2019a) identified that bullying programs significantly reduce school bullying perpetration (OR = 1.324; 95% CI 1.27–1.38; p < 0.001) and school bullying victimization (OR = 1.248; 95% CI 1.27–1.38; p < 0.001). This corresponds to an approximate ***reduction of 19–20% for bullying perpetration and 15–16% for bullying victimization*** (Gaffney et al., 2019a).[10] However, we must remember that there are important variations in effects among programs. Further, Hensums et al. (2023) conducted a large-scale individual participant data meta-analysis using data from 39.793 children (M_{age}=12.58; SD =2,34) who participated in quasi-experimental or randomized controlled trials of school-based anti-bullying interventions. They concluded that school-based ***anti-bullying interventions significantly reduced victimization*** (t = − 6.61, OR = 0.77, 95% CI = 0.71; 0.83, p < .001, d = − 0.14) ***and bullying perpetration*** (t = − 2.30, OR = 0.88, 95% CI = 0.79; 0.98, p < .05, d = − 0.07) in schools.[11] Similar conclusions are made for the efficiency of ***cyberbullying prevention programs***. Results of the meta-analysis conducted by Gaffney et al. (2019b) indicate that anti-cyberbullying programs can reduce cyberbullying perpetration by approximately 10%–15% and cyberbullying victimization by approximately 14%.

Zych et al.'s (2015) systematic review concluded that programs might effectively reduce bullying and victimization and that some programs and components work better than others. Further, they claim that, unfortunately, the impact of these programs is negligible.[12] Similar conclusions are made by Jiménez-Barbero et al. (2015). Their meta-analysis of 14 studies concluded that prevention programs in school settings are obtaining beneficial, albeit discrete, results in the outcome measures when evaluating bullying perpetration and victimisation.

Evaluations show that bullying prevention programs are efficient in lowering the frequency of bully perpetrations and victimisations. Still, the important question is, "Which are the

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[10] In later research and updated analysis authors (Gaffney et al. 2021) report on slightly different data: bullying programs were effective in reducing bullying perpetration by roughly 18–19% and bullying victimization by roughly 15–16% (bullying perpetration (RE: odds ratio [OR] = 1.309; 95% confidence interval [CI]: 1.24–1.38; z = 9.88; p < .001) and bullying victimization (RE: OR = 1.244; 95% CI: 1.19–1.31; z = 8.92; p < .001).

[11] Authors (Hensums et al., 2023) explain, that effects seem to be statistically small and offer explanation fort his. »Perhaps, because school-wide anti-bullying interventions target all children and adolescents in the school, even youth who are not victimized or who do not bully« (p. 1441).

[12] However, this conclusion has to be understood as a relative estimation and a matter of perspective, since authors report numbers connected to the previously mentioned Ttofi and Farrington's (2011) study, which shows reasonably good result (perpetration – 20 to 23%; victimisation –17 to 20%).

elements/components of efficient bullying prevention programs?". Until recently, evaluations of preventive programs were conducted for programs as a whole and not by their components. Consequently, each specific component's contribution to the program's overall effect remained unknown. It is also possible that programs reached the best impact when all components were used together, but it is also plausible that some components contribute more and others less or nothing (Menesini, Salmivalli, 2017). Gaffney et al. (2019a) focused on individual components. They concluded that various components and anti-bullying activities show better results and efficiency in reducing bullying in schools (more about this in the next section). However, statistical analyses suggest that program richness does not significantly predict more desirable outcomes, which means that interventions that included many or all of the intervention components did not result in substantially greater effectiveness. Effectiveness and the number of intervention components included in a program are not connected. In other words, programs should focus on key components and deliver them in a planned and structured way.

Evaluations of Bullying Prevention Programs Components – What works?

Hensums et al. (2023) report that there are no significant differential effects in reducing victimization across different subgroups (of sex, age, ethnicity, SES, and initial bullying or victimization levels). Further, they found that anti-bullying interventions were more effective in reducing victimization in participants who reported higher initial victimization before the intervention compared with participants who reported lower initial victimization. This means that programs showed success to those who needed support the most. In contradiction to the conclusions of Farrington, Ttofi (2009) and Ttofi, Farrington (2011), who reported on the success of bullying prevention programs with older students, Hensums et al. (2023) report that interventions were less effective in reducing bullying perpetration for adolescents of 12 years and older. Based on this conclusion, they expose the need to find a way for bullying prevention programs to increase adolescents' popularity through prosocial ways. Importantly, they emphasise that school assemblies and playground supervision negatively affect students with high initial levels of perpetration. Compared with youth with low initial levels of perpetration, these children and adolescents reported higher levels of perpetration instead of lower levels of perpetration *after interventions* that included school assemblies and playground supervision. School assemblies and playground supervision may be preventive measures for youth who do not often bully others but may be counterproductive for a subgroup of more severe bullies. Elements of revenge can explain this: teachers are

undeliberate, they enhance the bully's image/power, they raise awareness, which increases self-reports, etc.

Farrington, Ttofi (2009) and Ttofi, Farrington (2011) report in their meta-analysis on the following components of bullying prevention programs and their efficiency (see Appendix to this report). They conclude that the ***intensity and duration of a program are directly linked to its effectiveness*** (programs need to be intensive (intensity for teachers means 10 hours or more) and for children (20 hours or more) and long-lasting (for teachers, 4 days or more and children 270 days or more) to have an impact). For ***bullying perpetration, playground supervision and "hot spots", "hot times" supervision were some of the elements that were most strongly related to program effectiveness*** (OR 1.53). ***Disciplinary methods*** (i.e., firm methods for tackling bullying such as including serious talks with bullies, sending them to the principal, making them stay close to the teacher during recess time, and depriving them of privileges) was an intervention component that was significantly related to reductions in both bullying perpetration (OR 1.59) and victimization (OR. 1.44). Programs have a bigger impact on bullying prevention among older children (11 and older) (cf. with conclusions above). ***Parent training/parent meetings*** prevent bullying and victimisation (perpetration OR 1.57; victimisation OR 1.41). Additionally, classroom rules, whole-school anti-bullying policy, school conferences, information for parents, and cooperative group work were concluded to bring good results. Formal inclusion of peers in bullying prevention is not recommended.

This later recommendation on non-recommended inclusion of peers in bullying prevention fuelled academic discussion (Smith et al., 2012 and Ttofi, Farrington, 2012) and led to a changed coding system in later research (see Gaffney et al., 2019a; 2021). Although formal peer help in bullying prevention was not recognised as effective in a meta-analysis of Ttofi and Farrington (2011) and not recommended, we should not overlook that other studies found it can be effective in reducing bullying among adolescents (Gaffney et al., 2019a; 2021; Palladino, Nocentini, & Menesini, 2015; Menesini, Salmivalli, 2017; Smith et al., 2012). Further, mobilising bystanders, or the silence of the majority witnessing bullying, is key to success. Research has demonstrated that peer witnesses' responses are crucial to inhibit or fuel bullying (Menesini, Salmivalli, 2017). Addressing, educating, and activating bystanders and defenders are important components of a successful KiVa bullying prevention program (see the description of programs below). Smith et al. (2012) argued that a well-designed peer support methods educate students to take responsibility for their own actions and provide training in a range of interpersonal, social and conflict resolution skills. Students (bystanders and others) have an essential role in supporting victims after the bullying has occurred. Classroom norms can also be reflected in students' behaviours when witnessing acts of

bullying. As the reactions of peers in bullying situations provide direct feedback to the bullies, they have important implications for the emergence and maintenance of bullying. The frequency of bullying perpetration is indeed higher in classrooms where reinforcing the bullies' behaviour is common and defending the victimised classmates is rare, implying that bullying is socially rewarded (Salmivalli, Voeten, & Poskiparta, 2011).

Gaffney et al., (2021) meta-analysis showed that the following components were significantly correlated with larger mean effect sizes for school-bullying perpetration positive outcomes (reduction) (see Appendix B and C at the end of the report): *a) whole-school approach, b) anti-bullying policy, c) classroom rules, d) information for parents, e) informal peer involvement, f) work with victims, g) co-operative group work, and h) mental health approaches.* Classroom management and punitive disciplinary measures resulted in larger mean subgroup effect sizes (marginally significant). School bullying victimization was affected by only two intervention components (i.e., *informal peer involvement* and *information for parents*), significantly correlated with larger subgroup summary effect sizes. At a less conservative level of statistical significance, there were also differences between groups that included or excluded the "*encouraging bystanders"* intervention component. Specific components were notably linked to greater overall effectiveness in reducing both bullying perpetration and victimization. For instance, incorporating *informal peer involvement* (e.g. class discussions or role-playing activities) and *providing information to parents* (e.g. through letters or leaflets about bullying and interventions) was significantly associated with improved outcomes in decreasing school-bullying perpetration and victimisation.

Kovalenko et al. (2022) conducted a systematic review of reviews on violence prevention among young people, including a review of bullying prevention reviews. Their conclusion from various studies can be summarised in the following measures: 1) Anti-bullying programs should be well-planned, intensive, and of longer duration; 2) Programs should be based on theories of bullying and include training in empathy, social perspective-taking, emotional control, problem-solving, and peer counselling; 3) Programs should derive from Whole-school approach and implement school rules and sanctions, and provide training for both students and teachers; 4) Programs should use various delivery methods such as media, face-to-face interaction, and physical-environment redesign to ensure consistency and complementarity; 5) Families should be involved in the planning and implementation of programs; 6) Programs should take into account student's needs, school climate, and playground supervision; 7) Programs should recognize bullying behaviours as group processes and address the roles and social status of each participant; 8) programs should be tailored to different age groups, with

a focus on secondary schools due to the decreasing impulsiveness and increasing rational decision-making in older students.

Presentation of most known and scientifically evaluated bullying prevention programs

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP)

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program (OBPP) is the oldest and meticulously researched bullying prevention program. It applies the whole-school approach, including school, classroom, individual, and community components. OBPP has been evaluated and showed efficient on many occasions and in different cultural environments. For example, in the evaluation of the long-term effectiveness of the OBPP in Norway, researchers followed students from 14 schools (with 3000 students at each assessment) over 5 years and **observed reductions in self-reported victimization of 40% and self-reported bullying of 51%** (see Olweus et al., 2019).

The presentation of OBPP in the following paragraphs is based on the following texts: Limber et al. (2018), Limber (2011; 2012), Olweus and Limber (2010b, 2010c), and Olweus (1993).

The main *goals of the OBPP are to reduce existing bullying problems among students, prevent new bullying problems, and achieve better peer relations.* These goals are achieved by restructuring the school (social) environment to reduce opportunities and rewards for bullying behaviour and to build a sense of community.

The OBPP is built on *four basic principles.* Adults at school should:

1) *show warmth and positive interest in students;*
2) *set firm limits to unacceptable behaviour;*
3) *use consistent positive consequences to acknowledge and reinforce appropriate behaviour and non-physical, non-hostile consequences when rules are broken;*
4) *function as authorities and positive role models.*

The abovementioned principles have been translated into specific program components at the school, classroom, individual, and (in some contexts) the community level and are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Components of the OBPP

School-level components
• Establish a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee (BPCC)
• Conduct trainings for the BPCC and all staff
• Administer the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire (Grades 3–12)
• Hold staff discussion group meetings
• Introduce the school rules against bullying
• Review and refine the school's supervisory system
• Hold a school-wide kick-off event to launch the program
• Involve parents
Classroom-level components
• Post and enforce school-wide rules against bullying
• Hold regular (weekly) class meetings to discuss bullying and related topics
• Hold class-level meetings with students' parents
Individual-level components
• Supervise students' activities
• Ensure that all staff intervene on-the-spot when bullying is observed
• Meet with students involved in bullying (separately for those who are bullied and who bully)
• Meet with parents of involved students
• Develop individual intervention plans for involved students, as needed
Community-level components
• Involve community members on the BPCC
• Develop school-community partnerships to support the school's program
• Help to spread antibullying messages and principles of best practice in the community

Source: Limber, 2011: 73

Program components & operationalization of OBPP

School Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee

The School Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee consists of 8-15 members from school administration, teachers, non-teaching staff, counsellors, parents, and sometimes 1-2 from the broader community. Student members may also be included where developmentally appropriate. However, many schools have determined that developing a separate advisory

committee of students may permit them more meaningful involvement in the planning and implementation of the program.

The responsibilities of the committee are mainly:

      a) Attend 2-day training by certified OBPP trainers;
      b) Develop a plan for implementation of OBPP;
      c) Communicating the plan to teachers, school staff, students, and parents;
      d) Ensuring that OBPP is coordinated with school activities.

Training and Consultation

In addition to 2 days of training for committee members, the OBPP instructor provides at least 1 year of consultation (in person or via telephone, depending on location) to the on-site coordinator (typically 12–18 hours/year).

Bullying Prevention and Coordination Committee members (usually with assistance from the Olweus trainer) provide a full day of training to the school staff before implementing the program & yearly catch-up training for new staff members. Additionally, they organize training about specific topics exposed by the school staff.

Administration of the Olweus bullying questionnaire

An anonymous self-report measure is administered to students in Grades 3–12 before implementation of the OBPP and at regular intervals (ideally yearly) after.

Staff discussion group meetings

Schools are encouraged to form discussion groups of teachers & other school staff (monthly meetings, to discuss aspects of the OBPP (15 school staff + member of BP Committee)

School Rules

Each school in OBPP adopts 4 basic rules about bullying:

      1. We will not bully others.
      2. We will try to help students who are bullied.
      3. We will try to include students who are left out.
      4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.

School rules are **posted widely and visibly in each classroom** and discussed frequently with students.

School staff members apply consistent positive and negative consequences to reinforce the rules.

Supervisory System (Control of "hot spots" etc.)

The BPC Committee in each school reviews and updates the supervisory system to minimize bullying behaviour. School staff are encouraged to increase supervision of students, particularly in known "hot spots" for bullying, particularly of students who are known or suspected of bullying. Identifying bullying "hot spots" is done by using data from the Olweus Bullying Questionnaire, creating strategies to enhance supervision in these areas, establishing methods for tracking and reporting bullying incidents, evaluating the attitudes and skills of supervising staff, and assessing the school's physical layout to reduce opportunities for bullying.

School Kick-Off Event

Every school begins its program with a unique kick-off event designed to raise awareness about bullying, introduce the OBPP to students, and explain the school's rules and procedures regarding bullying. Schools are encouraged to host a kick-off event each year to familiarize new students with the program and remind returning students of the school's ongoing anti-bullying efforts.

Classroom meeting

Weekly classroom meetings about bullying and related issues (build cohesion, discuss rules, role-play, etc.). A key component in the reduction of bullying (classes with regular meetings and role play were more successful in bullying prevention).

There has been a greater reduction in bullying among those classes that held regular class meetings and among those that used role play to explore issues of bullying.

Interventions on-the-spot and follow-up interventions

Schools need training, policies and procedures to react when bullying appears or is suspected. All staff should:

1) react on-the-spot if they observe and suspect bullying;
2) follow-up meetings with involved students (separately with those who bully and are bullied (and their parents)

These interventions send a clear message: **the bullying will be stopped, and the situation will be closely monitored by adults in the school (and often at home).** Bullied students are provided support, and safety plans are developed with them, as appropriate. Schools are encouraged to work with parents and mental health professionals to create individualized plans, where applicable, to provide support and other help for students who have been bullied and to correct the behaviour of students who bully other students.

Community involvement

The original OBPP implemented in Norway did not include the community. However, experience from the US showed the advantage of this component. Community inclusion in bullying prevention is done through the engagement of youth clubs, sports clubs, opinion makers, etc., that spread the message of the antibullying approach at other organizations. Community involvement could also mean including other (state/national and local) institutions and organizations in bullying prevention.

Parent involvement

Parents should attend school kick-off meetings and parent meetings about the program, the school should send regular communication to parents about OBPP and include parents in the BPC Committee.

In classrooms, teachers should organize 2-3 classroom meetings with parents per year, discuss OBPP and primarily build class cohesion. The purposes of these meetings are to help parents understand problems associated with bullying and ways that the school is addressing bullying through the OBPP, to explain and encourage parent's involvement in the program. Classroom-level meetings with parents can also reaffirm the relationships between parents and teachers and create cohesion among parents of students in the class.

Parents are also included if their child is involved in a bullying incident. Parents are key agents in community engagement and support in bullying prevention.

KiVa Bullying Prevention Program

KiVa is an acronym for Kiusaamista Vastaan, "against bullying", whereas "kiva" is also the Finnish adjective for "nice" (Salmivalli & Poskiparta, 2012: 42). KiVa antibullying program is based on evidence that positive changes in the behaviours of peers reduce the rewards gained by bullies and consequently their motivation to bully (Salmivalli et al., 2010). Research indicates that the desire for high status and power within peer groups partly drives bullying. Bullying is also seen as a group phenomenon where bystanders play a crucial role. Bystanders can, on one side, reinforce bullying by supporting the bully, thus giving them power, or on the other side, they can defend the victim, which can undermine the bully's status. The KiVa program is based on the idea that changing bystanders' behaviour to reduce the rewards for bullies can decrease their motivation to bully (Kärnä et al., 2013). KiVa is intended to train teachers and includes effective strategies to change bystanders into defenders (Salmivalli & Poskiparta, 2012). It enhances the empathy, self-efficacy, and antibullying attitudes of

bystanders, who are neither bullies nor victims (Williford et al., 2013). Kärnä et al. (2013: 536) stated, "An important aim of KiVa is to make bystanders show that they are against bullying and support the victim instead of encouraging the bully."

Recent research highlights that the relationship between individual risk factors (like social anxiety and peer rejection) and victimization varies across classrooms. Vulnerable children are more likely to be bullied in environments where bullying is reinforced and there is little peer defense. Peer group dynamics and teacher characteristics influence classroom differences. Bullying is more prevalent in hierarchical classrooms where power and status are concentrated among a few individuals. Classroom norms, such as low anti-bullying attitudes and positive views of bullying, increase the risk of bullying involvement. **This suggests that personal vulnerabilities are more likely to result in victimization when the classroom environment permits it.** Vulnerable children are more likely to be targeted by bullies in classrooms where bullying is highly reinforced and there is little defence of the victim by the peers (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017; Saarento et al., 2015).

KiVa antibullying program was scientifically tested, evaluated and proved to be efficient. In a study, Yang & Salmivali's (2015) sample consisted of 23,520 participants (age range 8–15 years) from 738 intervention classrooms and 647 control classrooms in 195 Finnish schools. There were 12,450 primary (grades 2–6, 52.9%) and 11,070 secondary (grades 8–9, 47.1%) school students. The evaluation was pre-and post-test, where data were collected in two waves 12 months apart, always at the end of a school year. The KiVa intervention lasted one school year (nine months). The effects on bully-victims, as well as on pure bullies and pure victims, were examined by prevalence changes as well as by statistical analysis (two-level multinomial logistic regression analyses). The prevalence changes of bully victims in intervention schools with the KiVa program, compared with control schools, were −8% in self-reported and −41% in peer-reported data. The difference in bullying perpetration was -12 % in self-reported and −14% in peer-reported data. The difference in bullying victimisation was – 14% for self-reported and -6 % for peer-reported data (see Table 2 below).

In another study, Kärnä et al. (2013) investigated the effectiveness of the KiVa in two samples of students, one from Grades 1–3 (7–9 years old, N 6,927) and the other from Grades 7–9 (13–15 years old, N 16, 503). The study involved Grades 1–3 students from 74 schools and Grades 7–9 students from 73 schools, randomly assigned to intervention and control groups. After 9 months, the intervention showed beneficial effects on self-reported victimization and bullying in Grades 1–3, with some differences by gender. In Grades 7–9, positive results were found on 5 out of 7 criteria, though these results varied by gender and sometimes age. This showed that the KiVa program effectively reduces bullying and victimization in Grades 1– 6, but the results are more mixed in Grades 7–9.

KiVa's efficiency was also tested for cyberbullying prevention. Williford et al. (2013) concluded that, in general, exposure to KiVa reduced cyberbullying for younger students (in their 2007-2009 sample, intervention (N 9,914) and control students (N 8,498)) but not for older students.

Table 2: Pre- and post-test data on the prevalence of bullying/victimisation between schools with KiVa program and control schools.

	Pre	Post	% Change	Difference in % change
Self-reported				
Bullies				
Control	3.3%	2.6%	−21%	−12%
KiVa	3.6%	2.4%	−33%	
Victims				
Control	10.2%	7.2%	−29%	−14%
KiVa	10.1%	5.8%	−43%	
Bully-victims				
Control	2.6%	1.9%	−27%	−8%
KiVa	2.3%	1.5%	−35%	
Peer-reported				
Bullies				
Control	7.0%	7.5%	+7%	−14%
KiVa	7.4%	6.9%	−7%	
Victims				
Control	7.1%	7.2%	+1%	−6%
KiVa	7.3%	6.9%	−5%	
Bully-victims				
Control	1.7%	2.3%	+35%	−41%
KiVa	1.6%	1.5%	−6%	

Source: Yang & Salmivali, 2015: 86

The study found that around the age of 11.30 years, students in the control group were 69% more likely to engage in frequent cyberbullying compared to those in the intervention KiVa group. However, there was no difference in cyberbullying frequency among students at the average age or older. This suggests that the KiVa program effectively reduced cyberbullying among younger students but not among older students. The authors concluded that data show that school-based antibullying interventions, such as KiVa, may need to incorporate additional components aimed specifically at reducing cyberbullying. They propose that involving parents may be critical in preventing cyberbullying since these experiences may occur at home.

Program components & operationalization of KiVa

The presentation of the KiVa antibullying program in the following paragraphs is based on the texts: Ahtola et al., 2013; Kärnä et al., 2013; Salmivalli & Poskiparta, 2012; Yang & Salmivalli, 2015; Williford et al., 2013.[13]

KiVa distinguishes itself from other intervention programs through its structured teacher training and comprehensive teacher's guide. These resources offer detailed, step-by-step instructions for curriculum lessons, ensuring consistent teacher behaviour. KiVa also provides a parents' guide with information on bullying, including cyberbullying, and practical advice for prevention and reduction. The classroom activities, teacher-training modules, specific actions, and parents' guides address both traditional and cyberbullying, emphasizing the importance of bystanders in sustaining bullying (Willford et al., 2013).

KiVa has two main aims: 1) to prevent bullying and victimization and 2) to intervene in bullying cases that have already emerged.

The prevention involves ***universal actions*** targeted at all students and all classes; ***indicated actions*** are targeted at students who have been identified as targets or perpetrators of bullying.

Both universal and indicated actions are conducted by teachers and school personnel trained to the KiVa program in a two full-day face-to-face trainings andsupervised in four to five meetings during the school.

KiVa Universal Actions (general prevention)

The KiVa program has three distinct versions tailored for different age groups: Grades 1, 4, and 7. During the evaluation study, these versions were implemented in Grades 1–3, 4–6, and 7–9, respectively. For Grades 1–3, the program includes 10 double lessons, each lasting 45 minutes, delivered by classroom teachers throughout the school year. These lessons cover topics such as getting to know each other, understanding emotions, promoting inclusion, and supporting victims. The primary goals are to raise awareness about the role of the group in maintaining bullying, increase empathy towards victims, and empower children with strategies to support victims, thereby enhancing their self-efficacy. The lessons incorporate various activities like discussions, group work, role-play exercises, and short films about bullying. Class rules based on the central themes are gradually adopted as the lessons progress.

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[13] Presentetion of KiVa bullying prevention program is available also on youtube as a video presentation made by Tiina Turunen at a conference World Antibullying Forum, Stockholm, 2021:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXQws5WTdKk

For Grades 7–9, the KiVa program is structured around four main themes: group interaction, self and others, forms of bullying, and the consequences and counterforces of bullying. These themes can be introduced through lessons, whole theme days, or other formats, with a total recommended duration of 13–23 lessons. The program emphasizes the importance of understanding group dynamics and the impact of bystanders on bullying. The included themes are: "Group Interaction," "Me and the Others," "Forms of Bullying," and "The Con-sequences and Counterforces of Bullying." The recommended time to spend on the kick-off session, the four themes, and the concluding session compose 13–23 lessons (45 minutes each).

A unique feature of KiVa is its virtual learning environments, which are integrated across all grade levels. Additionally, the program includes visible symbols such as bright vests for recess supervisors to enhance visibility and signal the school's commitment to addressing bullying. Schools also receive presentation graphics to introduce the program to staff and parents, and a parents' guide with information on bullying and advice on prevention and reduction. The lessons involve various activities, including class and small group discussions, role-plays, videos of people discussing their experiences with bullying, and group work. Online games linked to lesson topics reinforce the learning objectives and can be played at school or home.

KiVa program deploys visual materials. KiVa posters are displayed throughout the school, and staff wear high-visibility vests during breaks to remind everyone of the program's presence (in Italy, this is adjusted to badges). Parent involvement is encouraged through a public access website that provides resources on bullying and strategies to support children in speaking up against bullying. Parents receive a guide that includes information about bullying, the KiVa program, and advice about recognizing if their child is a victim or a bully.

KiVa Indicated actions (indicated prevention)

In schools implementing the KiVa program, a team of three teachers or other school personnel, along with the classroom teacher, addresses each reported case of bullying. The team first determines if the case is bullying or another type of conflict. If it is bullying, individual discussions are held with the victim to understand their experiences and assure them of support. The bully is then taken individually, without prior notice, to discuss the incident, preventing them from preparing a common story. During the program evaluation, two discussion methods were tested: a confronting approach, where bullies are told to stop immediately, and a non-confronting approach, where the bully is asked for suggestions to improve the situation. The team then meets with the bullies to confirm individual agreements, followed by a meeting with the victim to ensure the bullying has stopped. About 1 or 2 weeks later, follow-up meetings are organized with the victim and the bully (or bullies) separately in order to monitor the possible expected changes. If the situation improves, another group meeting is held to confirm the bullying has ceased permanently.

Additionally, the classroom teacher meets with two to four high-status classmates to encourage them to support the victim by including them in activities and treating them kindly. The KiVa team, including teachers, school staff, educational psychologists, and others, handles cases that meet the KiVa definition of bullying. About 60% of referred cases are accepted by the KiVa team, averaging nine cases per school annually. The indicated actions are scripted and solution-focused, with follow-up meetings arranged for both the victim and the bully. High-status peers identified by the victim are also involved in providing ongoing support.

Conclusion

Scientific evaluations of bullying preventive programs show that bullying prevention works, and schools and the wider community have the tools to address this issue successfully. Based on meta-analyses and overviews of successful bullying prevention programs, we can conclude that these programs should use the following approach and include these elements (presented also below in Figure 1):

- Whole-School Approach: Clear policies, a coordinating committee, community involvement, and the definition of clear rules.
- Sufficient duration and intensity of programs: for both teachers and students (10 hours for teachers and 20 or more for students)
- Adequate Supervision: Monitoring bullying hotspots and times, thus paying attention to severe and repeated bullying cases and working with these students.
- Parental Involvement: Regular training and meetings, providing information for parents.
- Work with students: structured program, developing skills, regular discussions, role play, encouraging supportive peer behaviour, promotion of prosocial (non-bullying) norms among students (increase adolescents' popularity through prosocial ways)
- Effective and consistent interventions and disciplinary measures: react to bullying, support for bullied students and work with students who bully (and bystanders).
- Continuous Evaluation: Regular assessments and adjustments.

Figure 1: Suggested components of bullying prevention programs

Components at the policy & organizational level	*Skill-oriented components*	*Interventions when bullying occurs or there is a higher risk of bullying*
• Whole-School Approach, regulations, school rules, codes of conduct, disciplinary measures (combined work school staff & teachers, students, parents) • Formation of a team/committee for preventive work and intervention in cases of peer violence • Training & meeting plan for employees, students, and parents • Regular staff meetings on the topic of peer violence • Cooperation of the school with external entities (Social Work Centres, Police, NGOs, associations, etc.) • Activities/Measures at the school (increased supervision during breaks, on playgrounds, and other exposed areas, specific actions in case of violence) • Plan of involvement of parents, local community, neighbourhood, sport clubs, NGO. • Measuring of the effects (pre/post program research) & feedback from teachers, students, parents	• Raising awareness among school leadership, teachers, counsellors; students; parents about bullying • Teaching social and cognitive-emotional skills • Teaching empathy, responsibility, solidarity • Teaching how to respond to peer violence (victim, observer, perpetrator) • Creating a positive, inclusive, responsible, cohesive environment in the classroom and school	• Measures to protect victims of violence • Measures to work with perpetrators of violence • Measures to work with observers • Involvement of parents (& other institutions if necessary) • Measures to work with the class & school & parents • Disciplinary measures

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APENDIX A:

Components of bullying prevention programs and their efficiency in reducing bullying perpetration or victimisation

Element	Description	Bullying (n) OR	Victimization (n) OR
Whole-school anti-bullying policy	Involves the presence of a formal anti-bullying policy on behalf of the school.	Yes (24) 1.44 p=.008	/
Classroom rules	Use of rules against bullying that students were expected to follow. These rules were often the result of cooperative group work between teachers and students and were displayed in the classroom.	Yes (30) 1.44 p=.006	/
School conferences	Organization of school assemblies during which children were informed about bullying. These conferences aimed to sensitize students about bullying and announce the formal beginning of the intervention program.	Yes (20) 1.49 p=.008	/
Classroom management	Emphasis on classroom management techniques in detecting and dealing with bullying behaviour.	Yes (28) 1.44 P=.005	/
Cooperative group work	Cooperation among different professionals (usually teachers and other professional groups) in working with bullies and victims of bullying.	Yes (22) 1.48 p.019	Yes (23) 1.38 p.001
Work with peers	Formal engagement of peers in tackling bullying, including strategies like peer mediation and peer mentoring.	None;	No (25) 1.39 Yes (16) 1.13 p=0001
Information for parents & teachers	Many programs offered information for teachers and parents, including manuals, newsletters, and guides on dealing with bullying.	Yes (28) 1.44 p.013	/
Improved playground supervision	Some programs aimed to identify 'hot-spots' or 'hot-times' of bullying and provided improved playground supervision.	Yes (11) 1.53 P=.0001	/
Disciplinary methods	Some programs emphasized punitive methods in dealing with bullying situations.	Yes (13) 1.59; p=.0003	Yes (13) 1.44 P=.0001
Teacher training	This component was coded by authors as present or absent. The duration and intensity of the training were also	Yes (28) 1.46 p=.006	/

	considered, with some programs providing detailed information on these aspects.		
Parent training/meetings	Refers to the organization of 'information nights/educational presentations' for parents and/or 'teacher-parent meetings' during which parents were given information about the anti-bullying initiative in the school.	Yes (17) 1.57; p=.0001	Yes (17) 1.41; p=.0001
Based on Olweus Bullying Prevention Program	Programs relied on OBPP	Yes (16) 1.50 p=.011	/
Videos	Some programs utilized technology in their anti-bullying materials such as the use of anti-bullying videos or virtual reality computer games to raise students' awareness regarding bullying.		Yes (19) 1.38 p=.0004
Duration for teachers	The duration of the program for teachers, dichotomized into 3 days or less versus 4 days or more.	3- (19) 1.22 4+ (19) 1.50 p=.0004	/
Intensity for teachers	The intensity of the program for teachers, dichotomized into 9 hours or less versus 10 hours or more.	9- (16) 1.19 10+ (20) 1.52 p=.0001	9- (15) 1.22 10+ (21) 1.37 p=.028
Duration for children	The duration of the program for children, dichotomized into 240 days or less versus 270 days or more.	240- (20) 1.17 270+ (20) 1.49 p=.0001	240- (20) 1.15 270+ (20) 1.35 p=.0001
Intensity for children	The intensity of the program for children, dichotomized into 19 hours or less versus 20 hours or more.	19- (19) 1.25 20+ (13) 1.62 p=.0001	19- (18) 1.21 20+ (14) 1.42 p=.002

Source: Adjusted from Farrington, Ttofi (2009) and Ttofi, Farrington (2011)

APPENDIX B:

Subgroup analysis for school-bullying perpetration (meta-analysis)

Intervention Component	Component present			Component absent			Q_b	p
	N	OR	95% CI	N	OR	95% CI		
School-level								
Whole-school approach	43	**1.263**	1.159 – 1.377	39	1.095	0.955 – 1.256	10.291	.001*
Increased supervision	21	1.238	1.117 – 1.371	61	1.194	1.073 – 1.329	.812	.368
Anti-bullying policy	25	**1.288**	1.167 – 1.422	57	1.150	1.013 – 1.282	7.992	.005*
Classroom-level								
Classroom rules	31	**1.289**	1.205 – 1.379	51	1.137	1.290 – 1.002	9.787	.002*
Classroom management	22	**1.265**	1.166 – 1.372	60	1.165	1.038 – 1.307	4.222	.039**
Teacher-level								
Information for teachers	66	1.219	1.124 – 1.321	16	1.155	0.894 – 1.492	.533	.465
Teacher training	51	1.194	1.089 – 1.309	31	1.292	1.118 – 1.492	2.501	.114
Parent-level								
Information for parents	35	**1.280**	1.177 – 1.392	47	1.141	1.078 – 1.209	8.149	.004*
Involvement of parents	21	1.149	0.964 – 1.370	61	1.226	1.125 – 1.335	1.368	.242
Peer-level								
Informal peer involvement	57	**1.294**	1.199 – 1.396	25	1.022	0.948 – 1.102	27.440	.001*
Encouraging bystanders	25	1.170	1.066 – 1.285	57	1.237	1.178 – 1.298	1.729	.188
Formal peer involvement	13	1.324	1.129 – 1.553	69	1.194	1.096 – 1.301	3.544	.059
Individual-level								
Work with Bullies	27	1.147	1.116 – 1.179	55	1.166	1.045 – 1.301	0.163	.686
Works with Victims	31	**1.285**	1.177 – 1.404	51	1.151	1.025 – 1.292	7.593	.006*
Co-operative group work	37	**1.329**	1.207 – 1.464	45	1.148	1.029 – 1.279	12.619	.001*
Intervention-specific								
Curriculum materials	69	**1.263**	1.172 – 1.361	13	0.980	0.762 – 1.260	21.343	.001*
Socio-emotional skills	27	1.027	0.866 – 1.218	55	**1.307**	1.217 – 1.403	30.733	.001*
Mental Health	8	**1.523**	1.157 – 2.004	77	1.163	1.091 – 1.239	11.201	.001*
Punitive disciplinary methods	16	1.279	1.162 – 1.409	66	1.178	1.066 – 1.302	3.966	.046**
Non-punitive disciplinary methods	11	1.284	1.125 – 1.466	71	1.196	1.096 – 1.306	1.994	.158

* = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.05$, i.e. the difference between mean effect sizes for subgroups is statistically significant at the respective p level.
Odds ratios presented in **bold** had a significantly larger subgroup mean summary effect size.
Values for Q_b were estimated using the fixed effects model.

Source: Gaffney, Ttofi and Farrington (2021, p. 48)

Appendix C:

Subgroup analysis for school-bullying victimisation (meta-analysis)

Intervention Component	Component present			Component absent			Q_b	p
	N	OR	95% CI	N	OR	95% CI		
School-level								
Whole-school approach	42	1.186	1.096 – 1.307	44	1.226	1.065 – 1.412	0.575	.448
Increased supervision	21	1.215	1.077 – 1.371	65	1.179	1.071 – 1.297	0.607	.436
Anti-bullying policy	26	1.219	1.101 – 1.351	60	1.169	1.051 – 1.300	1.158	.282
Classroom-level								
Classroom rules	30	1.236	1.125 – 1.358	56	1.152	1.033 – 1.285	3.209	.073
Classroom management	22	1.196	1.114 – 1.285	64	1.159	1.038 – 1.294	0.646	.420
Teacher-level								
Information for teachers	70	1.249	1.199 – 1.301	16	1.151	0.904 – 1.465	1.205	.272
Teacher training	55	1.192	1.091 – 1.303	31	1.211	1.065 – 1.377	0.115	.735
Parent-level								
Information for parents	36	**1.246**	1.132 – 1.371	50	1.125	1.007 – 1.257	6.492	.011*
Involvement of parents	24	1.197	0.979 – 1.463	62	1.196	1.111 – 1.289	0.001	.992
Peer-level								
Informal peer involvement	55	**1.246**	1.138 – 1.363	31	1.096	0.975 – 1.232	9.36	.002*
Encouraging bystanders	25	1.199	1.049 – 1.369	62	**1.293**	1.225 – 1.366	4.042	.044**
Formal peer involvement	15	1.263	1.087 – 1.466	71	1.178	1.085 – 1.279	2.151	.143
Individual-level								
Work with Bullies	28	1.203	1.073 – 1.349	58	1.191	1.082 – 1.311	0.071	.791
Works with Victims	36	1.214	1.129 – 1.305	50	1.178	1.072 – 1.295	0.581	.446
Co-operative group work	43	1.213	1.089 – 1.349	43	1.184	1.072 -1.307	0.385	.535
Intervention-specific								
Curriculum materials	71	1.192	1.049 – 1.354	15	1.118	0.976 – 1.281	1.481	.224
Socio-emotional skills	30	1.039	0.884 – 1.221	56	**1.252**	1.161 – 1.349	16.859	.001*
Mental Health	8	1.103	0.811 – 1.501	78	1.201	1.114 – 1.294	0.775	.378
Punitive disciplinary methods	14	1.257	1.092 – 1.447	72	1.169	1.073 – 1.273	3.044	.081
Non-punitive disciplinary methods	11		1.126 – 1.370	75	1.182	1.084 – 1.289	1.211	.271

* = $p < 0.001$; ** = $p < 0.05$, i.e. the difference between mean effect sizes for subgroups is statistically significant at the respective p level.
Odds ratios presented in **bold** has a significantly larger subgroup mean summary effect size.
Values for Q_b were estimated using the fixed effects model.

Source: Gaffney, Ttofi and Farrington (2021, p. 48)

Feedback on the report

The report on *KnowBullying* project concisely reviews the main literature on bullying and good practices of bullying prevention programs. The authors start with the work of Olweus in 1973 and study closely the main further research publications which also consist of an evaluation of bullying prevention. They also include older and revised definitions of bullying, which is an important task in evaluating the complexity of interpersonal violence. Examples of successful preventative projects are well presented. The aims of the project are clear and understandable as well as achievable.

The research part is actually a review of meta-analyses and other research on bullying which give promising perspectives for the development of preventative programs, including knowledge base, policy documents, awareness raising, practice orientation and (self)evaluation. As the project is school-oriented, the contents are appropriate and well-adjusted for the school environments. Scientific evaluations are a contribution to science as well as to evidence-based practice. A substantial number of evaluations are presented, and the results are very informative. The project report also consists of an overview of evaluations on what works which is an important aspect of practice. However, contextualised research is needed and this is one of the goals of the *KnowBullying* project. In this initial phase of the project, all important perspectives are included needed for further work, a literature review, main findings from cross-sectional studies, evaluations and general criminological and victimological theory (on perpetrators, victims and circumstances/bystanders/witnesses, etc.). As such, the document proves that the researchers are on a good path in the implementation of the project, including presenting and briefly discussing the most important perspectives of understanding and potentially preventing school bullying.

Prof. dr. Gorazd Meško, full professor of criminology,
Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security, University of Maribor

Poročilo o projektu KnowBullying sistematično in jedrnato obravnava referenčno literaturo o medvrstniškem nasilju ter osvetljuje učinkovite prakse programov za preprečevanje le-tega. Pionirsko delo Olweusa je ustrezno izpostavljeno, prav tako pa so temeljito analizirane ključne raziskave, ki vključujejo ocene preventivnih ukrepov. V poročilu so vključene tako starejše kot posodobljene definicije medvrstniškega nasilja, kar omogoča boljše razumevanje kompleksnosti tega fenomena. Primeri uspešnih preventivnih projektov so predstavljeni na jasen in prepričljiv način. Cilji projekta so natančno opredeljeni, razumljivi in dosegljivi. Raziskovalni del poročila vsebuje pregled meta-analiz in drugih raziskav, ki nudijo trden temelj za nadaljnji razvoj preventivnih programov. Poročilo napotuje na sklep, da je raziskovalna ekipa na dobri poti k uspešni realizaciji zastavljenih ciljev.

Izr. prof. Veronika Tašner
Pedagoška fakulteta, Univerza v Ljubljani

Poročilo »Report on evaluations and good practices of bullying prevention programs", ki ga je pripravil prof. dr. Aleš Bučar Ručman, ponuja celovit pregled razvoja raziskav o medvrstniškem nasilju v šolah in učinkovitosti empirično evalviranih preventivnih programov. Poudarja pomen celostnega pristopa, ki vključuje šolske politike in pristope na šolah, vključevanje skupnosti, kot je razvidno iz programov kot

sta na primer Olweusov program za preprečevanje nasilja (OBPP) in KiVa. Poročilo predstavlja odlično izhodišče za oblikovanje lastnega preventivnega pristopa, saj pokaže katere so ključne sestavine učinkovitih preventivnih programov. Te vključujejo intenzivne in dolgotrajne intervencije, učinkovit nadzor, jasne in dosledne vzgojne aktivnosti in ukrepe, vključenost vseh deležnikov (vodstva šol, zaposleni, starši in otroci ter nakaže tudi vlogo lokalne skupnosti) in poudari pomen stalne evalvacije. Poročilo poudarja potrebo po strukturiranih, na dokazih temelječih praksah, ki se osredotočajo na empatijo, usposabljanje socialnih veščin in spodbujanje prosocialnega vedenja za ustvarjanje varnejšega in bolj vključujočega/vzpodbudnega šolskega okolja.

Dr. Simon Slokan, glavni inšpektor, Inšpektorat RS za šolstvo